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Think Outside The Box

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Social Support Is Vital

Regardless of whether we perceive ourselves as extroverts or introverts, the fact is that we need other people in our lives. We need their presence, their company, and their support.

Quality social support is vital to our wellbeing, and our need for such support is even greater, when we are employing our resources in order to overcome anxiety and build better lives for ourselves.

The banner features the Explorable logo and the text "Quiz Time!" at the top. Below are three quiz thumbnails:

-  Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
-  Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2
-  Quiz: Flags in Europe

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Why Do You Need Support?

When faced with extraordinary circumstances, receiving support from other people can make a significant difference. The simple act of talking to another human being about your problems, or even being supported in silence, can be very empowering. Anyone who has experienced the effect such support is aware of how powerful it can be. Social support can have a variety of forms, which means that others can help us in much more specific ways, than simply being present.

How Can Others Help?

When you are preparing for a public speech, you can only benefit from receiving all the help you can get. If you have a friend, colleague, or relative who is willing to take part in your battle with the fear of public speaking, then you and that person can consider engaging in the mutual activities listed below, as they can create a greatly beneficial difference.

Share Their Experience

If the one helping you has experience with public speaking, and most people have at least some, they can tell you about how they've dealt with it. Gaining this type of information is valuable, since it has been derived from someone's real-life experience and can provide a new perspective for you. Sharing experiences can help you become aware of other important aspects of public speaking you may have overlooked before. Besides, another person's story can inspire you to create new types of solutions. However, most of all, hearing another person's story will help you feel like your experience is something normal, and there is nothing wrong with you. We, humans, are social beings, and so we have the innate need to know that we can fit in with others, rather than be drastically different in a negative way. Understanding that other people struggle with the same issues as we do, can take away the idle drama and help you focus on the solutions.

Help You Create and Execute a Plan

Remember how you learned that having a good plan for action is of the essence? However, that doesn't mean that you need to do it on your own. In fact, asking someone to help can provide you with a valuable advantage, because two heads are always better than one. You will receive an extra pair of eyes to check for important details, rehearse in front of, and add everything you didn't think of. Having the support of a trusted someone can be especially beneficial, when you reach the stage where you have to execute your plan. If you ever feel demotivated or run the risk of giving up out of fear, social support can provide the necessary incentive. Your confidant can also monitor your progress and help you stay on your path.

Others Can Be a Part of the Plan

Not only can other people help you create and execute your plan, but they can be a part of it as well. Whether you have found someone with the same problem and have decided to team up in challenging it, or if your friend is simply someone who wants to help you, they can make a difference for the better. Remember, that person cannot assume the role of your therapist, but they are valuable enough as a trusted friend. If our loved ones help us to get over a painful breakup or pick out a new dress, they can help us with public speaking and exposure as well. They are valuable for several reasons, but the most important is their primary role in our lives: they are here because they know us and care about us.

Free Rehearsal Audience

One of the key moments of your preparation for public speaking is rehearsing. So, others can be your audience long before you stand in front of a real one. Your comrade in overcoming fear of public speaking can listen to you and give you valuable feedback on how you look and sound. On the other hand, you can feel more relaxed to speak in front of them, so it can be easier for you when the real thing comes. He or she can, also, be in the actual audience as your support so that you can speak to him or her as you already did before. That can help you build the sense of familiarity with the audience.

Be Considerate

If you choose to involve another person in your process of getting ready for the next public speaking, make sure you first discuss your expectations. Don't forget that your loved one is helping you voluntarily, so do your best to be flexible, considerate and show them how much you appreciate what they are doing for you. If you decide to create a plan of the extent to which you will involve that person in your activities, then they will have a better understanding of how much of their time will be needed. Even with a quality plan, they may not always have time or energy, and they too will need support and understanding at those times. Having others help you win your battles can be a wonderful experience, but make sure they are comfortable with their role in the process and are willing to participate.

What If You Don't Have a Trusted Someone?

Perhaps your life has developed in a way that has separated you from your friends and family, or you simply never forged any strong and long-lasting relationships with others. Certainly, this is something that should be addressed, since social support and quality relationships are beneficial to your well-being, mental and physical health. However, for now, there are other options as well, and just because you don't have a trusted loved one doesn't mean that you can't receive social support. Seek out online or physical support groups, in order to share experiences and encouragement with others.

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