

Stages of Social Anxiety

Before ●○○○

Anticipatory anxiety

- *Thinking of the worst-case scenario*
- *Thinking about different ways it could go wrong*
- *Focusing on how bad it feels*

The Problem

During ○●○○

Excessive self-focus / Effort to stay safe

Monitoring:

- *how I think I look*
- *how I think I sound*
- *how I feel*

Doing things to keep me safe

- *staying quiet*
- *rushing*
- *trying to control how I look or sound*
- *worrying what others think of me*

After ○○○●

Dwelling on what went wrong

- *Focusing on parts that went 'wrong'*
- *Worrying about how I looked or sounded*
- *Thinking about what I 'should' have done or could have done differently*
- *Being self-critical (speaking to myself harshly / bullying)*

The Solution

Before ●○○○

Calming down

- *Imaginal rehearsal*
- *Thought challenging*
- *Decatastrophising*
- *Relaxed breathing*
- *Muscle relaxation*

During ○●○○

Notice what is actually happening

Look around and check

- *what are others saying*
- *what are they doing*

Be mindful

- *stay with the anxiety*
- *resist / notice the urge to escape or hide*

After ○○○●

Focusing on what went well

- *Write down what went well*
- *Commit to repeating the experience*