

Safety Behaviors In Social Anxiety

Safety behaviors are strategies or actions that individuals with social anxiety engage in to try and reduce their anxiety or avoid potential negative outcomes in social situations.

While these behaviors may provide temporary relief, they can maintain and even reinforce social anxiety over time.

- Avoiding conversations with people.
- Avoiding eye contact with others.
- Avoiding situations where social anxiety has occurred in the past or where it may occur in the future.
- Carrying a bottle of water to help with anxiety symptoms.
- Carrying medication just in case.
- Drinking alcohol before going out to relax.
- Drinking out of a bottle rather than a glass to hide shaking hands.
- Having someone with you when going to social situations.
- Having stories ready to have something interesting to say.
- Holding onto a tissue to conceal sweaty hands.
- Holding onto or leaning onto something supportive to hide any shaking or trembling.
- Keeping conversations as short as possible.
- Mentally rehearsing what you're going to say.
- Preparing excuses about a need to leave.
- Sitting close to an exit so as to escape unnoticed.
- Standing in a corner to keep a low profile.
- Trying to control facial expressions.

- Using heavy make-up to avoid others noticing blushing or covering face with hair.
- Using medication to produce a calming effect before social events or business meetings.
- Wearing light clothing or standing near a window or a doorway to prevent over-heating.
- Wearing more clothes to conceal sweating.
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