**ANXIETY IN SOCIAL SETTINGS AND OVERCOMING SHYNESS**

**Male Speaker:** Welcome to the Chalene Show. Chalene is a New York Times bestselling author, celebrity fitness trainer, and obsessed with helping you live your dream life.

**Chalene Johnson:** Dude, so glad you’re here, seriously. You make my day. I have to start off by saying thank you to everyone who’s been super supportive this week about me making the decision to re-launch Build Your Tribe. It’s my business based podcast.

And the truth is I was going to ignore you even if you thought it was a dumb idea. I really was. But I’m pleasantly surprised by how cool you guys have been and the support behind it. And I really think it’s because I explained to everyone how I was doing it and how it’s still allowed me to honor my priorities which is to my family. And so it doesn’t take up any time - any more time than what I was already spending.

So if you haven’t yet subscribed to Build Your Tribe, it’s in the business category on iTunes. You can quickly get the link if you’d like by just texting the letters B-Y-T, Build Your Tribe, to 949-565-4337.

Anyways, all that I’m doing is I’m taking recordings of the real conversations between myself and my Marketing Impact Academy students where they’re asking me business questions, questions about starting a business, where to start, where to go, how to build a business online, how to use social media, et cetera. So it’s brief. It’s like 15, 20 minutes.

And this is what I do normally anyways. My Marketing Impact students pretty much have access to me in a private Facebook group and they have the ability to ask questions. So, when I record my replies, I’m like, “I’m recording these anyways, I should just put this out to the world.” So I just want to thank you because your response has been awesome on Facebook. And then the reviews that I’ve been getting on iTunes are super supportive. I love it.

So just a big, honest, heartfelt thank you because I really do feel like you guys have my back and I appreciate that. And I appreciate you keeping me accountable and making sure that I could justify adding this by explaining how it doesn’t really add any more time to my day or week.

Now let’s do something that I’ve been getting a lot of request about. Either one way or another, many of you have asked how to deal with social anxiety, feeling nervous, and uncomfortable around new people. Now some of you have described it as feeling shy or anxious. But most of you have just said, “I just don’t like the fact the fact that I think other people can tell I’m uncomfortable.” And I can tell you I myself from time to time experience this.

Even recently, I had an episode where I just found myself feeling insecure. Like socially a little anxious to be in an environment where I was around a huge group of people speaking at a conference in front of about, I don’t know, 500, 600, I’m not sure how many people were there. But I knew that they really weren’t familiar with my work. I assume that the audience was filled with experts who knew like way more than me, you know. And so your mind starts to play tricks on you. It starts to speak very negatively.

And I pulled into that venue, parking lot, and I started having that negative dialogue in my head, like, “These people are going to think you don’t look like one of them. And someone’s going to stand up in the audience with that pitch fork, and they're going to be like, ‘She’s a phony, we are the experts.’ And they would get all the townspeople and they would like light fires around town and chase me down the road.” Like, you know, in my head this is all the things that are going on.

And so I was letting this like event turn into a monster in my head and I started like dreading it, where when I originally signed up to speak at this event I was super excited. So what happens is sometimes that little tiny negative voice in our heads, if we don’t shut that voice out fast, it just keeps getting louder and louder. And then that voice starts to bully you. And when it starts getting louder, it gets bigger and more powerful.

So the first thing I want to tell you is you’ve got to quiet that voice immediately. And that was the mistake I made is I just kind of, you know - I was having like an off-week, I wasn’t feeling well. And I didn't quiet that voice soon enough.

My first recommendation to you, step number one, is to just shut that voice up. Well, how do you do that? Well, like without being a weirdo and like looking in the mirror and being like, “You are good enough, people do like you,” you know. Not being a weirdo but just - you just catch yourself. And I have a power phrase, a phrase that I say to myself is, “That’s not true.”

Now, I know that might sound kind of negative because some people’s power phrase is like, “You can do anything,” “You’re amazing.” You know, like they’re legitimately powerful, uplifting phrases.

But for me, the moment that I need a power phrase is usually when I can hear my own self doubt. So whatever power phrase works for you, works for you. It’s a very individual thing. But if you listen closely to your inner dialogue, you probably already know your power phrase. Like maybe it is, “God is good” or “Everything will be all right” or “You know what to do, you got this,” like whatever it is.

My power phrase is to quiet any self doubt that I have. So my power phrase is, “That’s not true.” And then I complete that sentence by saying what is true. And then I turn into like a - this is going to sound braggy, but I just I do it in my own head to pump myself up. So I will say something like, “That’s not true. And what is true is that these people are excited to see you. And they haven’t heard from someone like you before or someone’s who’s going to deliver the message in this way. And there’s going to be a bunch of people in the audience who are going to fall in love with you, and you're going to make their day, and you’re going to make them feel special. And you’re going to be the highlight of their event.” Like whether that’s true or not, I start telling myself that.

And when I start telling myself that I start to feel it. And I start - it’s like I start becoming my own coach, right? Like, I start pumping myself up for the big game. Like, “You can do this. You got this. You’re going to knock it out of the park.” And it works. It works for me. So quiet the voice quickly.

Number two is you have to remove the label. You know when you buy a nice, beautiful down comforter or a new shirt and it always has this tag on it that says, “Do not remove label.” Well, that’s true for clothing, that’s true for new sheets and pillows. It is not true however for the labels that someone placed on you as a child.

Oftentimes, adults carry these negative labels that they were given as children. One of the most damaging of which is shy. It’s usually a mom, a dad or a brother, a sister, some relative who first labeled you as shy. And then as an adult, you’ve heard terms like socially awkward. And you’ve heard those terms related to someone who's shy. So then you start to take on, you attach those labels to the labels you were given and never cut-off as a child like being shy.

I mean, check it out. Next time you’re talking to a parent, just say to them, “So tell me about your children,” they will inevitably label each one of them, “Well, Johnny is our athlete and little Lisa is our dancer and Rebecca is the shy one.” Like they give kids labels.

And listen, I’m a parent. I do not and will never profess to be perfect because my kids will be quick to correct me. But we try our best. And that’s one thing we’ve really tried to be aware of is to not give them labels. Because unless it’s an incredibly positive label, you just never know how that’s going to affect them in the long run.

So if you’ve been labeled as shy or insecure or lacking self-confidence, would you please cut off that label? You can now call yourself formerly shy, formerly insecure. You’re now someone who’s confident, someone who makes other people feel comfortable. You’re now someone who people like to be around. Start giving yourself really positive labels.

Next, number three. My number three tip is it really helps to identify whether you are primarily an introvert or an extrovert. Now, you may have heard me talk about this before. And it is quite possible that you are a little bit of both. I think most of us are a little bit of both. However, we do have a predominant personality trait. Most people, not everyone.

My predominant personality trait - well, you know, I’m not going to tell you. First I’m going to explain a little bit about being an introvert and an extrovert.

Typically, introverts like to be by themselves to do their best work. They’re easily distracted. They can’t hear other voices because if they’re hearing other voices, they have to like tune in. They can’t tune other people out. And in fact that’s why they often feel very drained when they’re around other people or they’re hearing stories. It doesn't matter whether they’re people they love or people they’ve just met, if it’s too much time, it’s almost like it’s too much stimulus.

And so an introvert can love people but they really love their alone time and they need it. They need it to be creative. They need it to feel recharged. Introverts are often so easily distracted and taken off their mental course that if they’re in the middle of a project and someone - they can just hear two people having a conversation in the other room, they have to start over from scratch because they get involved - just by hearing the conversation, they’ll get involved.

Okay. So now let’s talk about an extrovert. An extrovert is someone who really likes the energy of other people around them. They don’t necessarily have to be interacting. They’re not always incredibly social, although they can be. They just feel more energized when they can feel the energy of others around them. So extroverts can be both shy and/or outgoing. They just like to have people around them.

Now a shy extrovert is someone who loves going to parties, loves having like, you know, a big office staff or a big family. They don't necessarily want to be the center of attention. They don’t like attention but they do like to have people around them. And in fact, most people know they are an extrovert if they really don’t like being alone for long periods of time. Extroverts will say that they feel kind of lonely, almost like they’re withering away if they haven’t seen people or spent time with people.

Now the reason why it’s important for you to know which one of these you are is because just by knowing that, you can help yourself by knowing that if you are an introvert, that doesn’t necessarily mean that you are shy.

So for example, I am what I consider an outgoing introvert. I love to be the center of attention. If I can make conversation and make people laugh, I dig that. I like being around people. However, I can’t do it for like a long period of time. I do feel tired after - I don’t know what the limit is, but there’s just a period of time where suddenly I feel like [makes noise], like my energy is gone, mentally I’m done. And then kind of like a cell phone that’s died, I have to plug myself back in. And the way I plug myself back in is by unplugging, by spending time by myself.

And because I know that, I kind of feel better about honoring it. In the past, I used to wonder like, “Well, am I just really shy? And I’m like, quote-unquote, “faking it” when I’m around people?” Like I couldn’t figure it out because it’s like I like people but then I got to this point where I was like, “Okay, get me out of here,” you know what I mean?

And so now I feel good about it. Now I’m like, cool, I can be on, I love people. But I am much more careful to protect my personal energy and make sure I plan for and respect the fact that I do better and I deliver more authentically and can connect with people better if I make sure I built in alone time.

All right, my number four tip is you’ve got to improve your body language. So first, most telling sign about a person’s confidence or their level of comfort in a social situation or how heightened their social anxiety is is their body language.

I recently attended another business conference with my very good friend, Dr. Mcayla. And Dr. Mcayla is - boy, I’m going to make you nervous if you see the two of us together, right? Because I don’t even pick up on this stuff as much as she does. But it was fun for me to attend this event with her because she could just kind of like point around the room and tell me just by glancing at people’s body language what they were likely experiencing.

So things that tell the world you are really uncomfortable are of of course the obvious like fidgeting, looking down, rounding your shoulders forward, getting smaller. So be aware the next time you’re in a social situation, are you trying to make yourself smaller so that people don’t notice you. Have you turned kind of away from where the activity or action is as if to make sure that no one makes eye contact with you and invites you into the conversation? Does your body language say, “Don’t come near me because I’m not smiling, my arms crossed and my shoulders are turned away from the conversation.”

Your body language starts with your smile, right, I mean, that’s the first thing that can help people identify whether you’re comfortable or not. If somebody is very comfortable they’re often smiling not like, you know, a big fake phony, giant smile but just like a comfortable, calm, peaceful smile. Their shoulders are down, away from their ears and they just look relaxed.

Someone who suffers from social anxiety will be sweating profusely, cheeks can turn red. Now those are involuntary activities like there’s not much we can do about controlling our sweat or cheeks. Like my cheeks turn red, sometimes it’s even weird I’m like, “Wait a second, why am I even blushing? This is so weird.” But I’m Scottish-Irish and so sometimes, my cheeks – my little chubby cheeks sometimes turn red. And there’s like nothing I can do about it except to – and in fact the more you think about like, “Why are my cheeks red? Please stop turning red.” They just get redder and redder.

Who cares, right? So if it’s a big deal and it’s really awkward for you because you know your face turns bright red, you can just bring it into everybody’s attention. I’ve done that before I’m like, “Oh, my gosh look at my cheeks, my cheeks have turned bright red. Because I’m so excited, this is like my favorite topic. I am so excited to here with you guys.” I’ve done that before or you can just ignore it because likely no one has noticed.

Number five, you’ve got to improve your communication style. So here’s one thing that’s really important when it comes to portraying to the world that you’re confident and comfortable and not sending off the message that you are socially awkward.

Number one, pay attention to people’s body language. You start watching other people’s body language. If someone is like kind of like trying to end the conversation and walking away, hello, pay attention to that. Just go, “Whoa, it’s great talking to you.” They’re trying to tell you by walking away that they’ve got someplace to be. It has nothing to do with you. They probably have a kid to pick up or another event to get to or a meeting, or a phone call, or a lunch, or a something. They’re trying to stay on time.

This one drives me kind of crazy. And I wonder why people do that like where they – you’re like, you don’t see it like, “I’m now in my car and like I’m putting on my seatbelt and you’re still trying to talk to me are you kidding me.” And I guess, maybe people do that because you’re trying to see if the other person – you’re just trying to get that like one more word, one more piece of the conversation, one more fragment to just, you know, make sure that they like you. Well, that’s not the way to do it.

The way to do it is to put the other person first. Be aware of people’s body language. If someone is trying to tell you I am in the mood to talk, I have my headphones on, I am looking down at my phone and I am turned away from you, that’s not someone who wants you to interact with them. They just don’t.

Now if you are the person with the headphones on and you’re looking down at your phone and you’re turned away, you’re telling the world you don’t want people to communicate with you. The point is, if someone is sending off body language that they don’t want to be talked to just honor that, make sure you’re not sending off that body language.

But don’t do the opposite and like harass somebody or getting to – oh, my can we talk about close-talkers for a second. If I can like see how many fillings you have and also smell what you had for breakfast you’re too close, back it up sister, back it up. And have a breath mint, please.

You know the other thing is when we’re nervous, guess what happen to our breath. Yeah, it’s not cute. Do you know want to know how I know that? Because I have to stand in these long photo lines sometimes like to meet people who have done my workout program which is totally cool. I dig that. It’s fun for me. But people stand there for so long that their anxiety level goes up. And I don’t know what they think I’m going to do like, you know – or why they would be intimated by me, I mean, I’m buds, we’re cool yo! So you don’t have to get nervous around me and you should probably have a breath mint that’s all I’m going to say about that.

I’d do the same thing when I’m at a speaking opportunity or I have been, you know, away from my toothbrush for more than a couple of hours, I pack breath mints. You can smell your own bad breath people. And bad breath tells others that you are nervous, so pop a breath mint.

Next your facial expressions. Now I talked about this a little bit with a smile. But I’m going to talk to you again about a smile. If you have dead face or what I call deadpan face or what others call resting **[blip 0:18:28]** face, your lack of facial expression might simply be because you’re thinking too hard, right. And you weren’t even aware that you weren’t smiling. But when someone is talking to you and they have a – and you the listener have a dead face like you’re just like eye is dead, no smile, that’s rude. All you’re telling them is either you’re completely uninterested or you’re very nervous both of which are not polite. They’re not fun and it’s comfortable for the other person.

And I know what you’re going to say, “Well, why should I be smiling if I’m uncomfortable, wouldn’t that be fake and phony?” Yeah, fake it until you make it. I don’t care whether it’s uncomfortable for you to smile. It’s more uncomfortable for all the people around you to have to deal with your face that’s saying, you don’t like them. At least that’s what it feels like, right. And you don’t want people to feel uncomfortable, so smile, just smile, put a big smile on your face.

Right now. Okay. Can you tell them talking right now with a smile? I can tell when people are talking with a smile. So put a big smile on your face.

Cool. Here’s the next one. When you feel anxious and nervous about going into an environment where maybe you don’t know people, right, or you’re wondering like, “Are they going to judge me? What are they going to think about me? Am I going to be too tall, too short? Am I going to be too old, too young? Are they going to think I have the right credentials, the wrong credentials? Are they going to think I’m dumb? Are they going to think, why is she dressed like that? What are they going to think about me?” That’s what goes through our heads.

Okay. But here’s what’s going through the other person’s head. “Am I too tall, am I too short? Am I too young, am I too old? Am I smart? Am I dumb?” Like everybody is doing that. So the person who wins is the person who gets out their own head and into somebody else’s heart.

So the best way to handle this is to imagine that instead of worrying about what other people think about you, worry about them, worry about taking care of them. So when I’m walking into a situation that I start to feel that little bit of social anxiety that’s the first thing I do is I change my mind set. I make it not about me; I make it about their heart. And I want to take care of people. I’m a people pleaser. I want people to feel comfortable and happy and confident like it almost hurts my feelings.

I shouldn’t say this because I don’t want you to feel bad if you’ve ever said it to me. But when someone says to me, “Oh, my gosh I’m so nervous to meet you. You make me nervous.” I’m like, “Why would I –” no don’t say that. I don’t want to make anyone nervous. Come here; let me give you a hug. But I don’t want someone tell me I make them feel nervous. I want people to feel comfortable, right, don’t you?

So that’s what I use on myself to change my mind set when I’m in my own head. For example, when I was recently speaking at that conference where I felt like, “Oh, no, I’m not going to fit in.” That’s the first thing I did is I shifted my thinking. And I said, “These people are going to be intimated by me. They’re going to think that they’re not...” You know, I started like placing whatever the thoughts I had on my own head on them. And realizing I would never want someone to feel that way.

So it’s going to be my goal to put a big smile on my face. I’m going to warmly greet every person. And I’m going to imagine that this is kind of a – I don’t want this to sound morbid but when I’m feeling social anxiety I will pretend that every person I’m about to meet has experienced some incredible tragedy this week. So whether they look like me or don’t like me, whether they’re like the kind of person I would usually turn away from or not be friends with or whatever I just imagine that the most horrific tragedy has happened to them this week. They’ve had just the worst week of their life.

And how can you not gave compassion and empathy if you were to know that the person you are about to meet maybe lost a loved one this week or lost their job, or went through like just a terrible week. What it does for me is it gets me out of my own head and into their hearts.

The next time you have a social setting whether it’s going to the grocery store or a big meeting at work or everyone around the conference table and you’re super uncomfortable, or maybe you’ve got to go to a party where you’re going to meet a bunch of people you’ve never met before just go through that exercise, get out of your own head and take care of their hearts.

All right. Drum roll please, here’s my last and final tip for you. This works like a charm. Anytime you’re going to into an environment where you’re just not quite sure what to do, what to say, how people are going to feel about you. I create a list of relevant questions.

So for example at that last event that I was speaking at I was like, “Oh, I know what to do.” And I pulled out my phone and I started just brainstorming a long list of random questions that I could pretty much ask anyone such as, “Oh, how many years have you attended this conference? What has been your favorite session? How did you find out about it? So cool that you’ve signed up for mine. What are you hoping to get out of it? Where do you live? So tell me what you do? Oh, that’s an interesting job title. So what does the average day look like for you? How did you get into that line of work? So do you love it? Is this your life’s passion or if you had a magic wand, is there something else you would rather be doing?”

And you just keep coming up a follow-up questions. I’m not kidding, people just beam. And you know what happens, it takes the focus off of you by asking them a series of questions and the first time you do this you’re going to think, “Oh, my gosh this person is going to think I’m so nosy.” It won’t happen, if it happens tell me about it because you will be the first.

People never feel that way. We love talking about ourselves, don’t we? When someone takes an interest in you, you automatically like them. You’ll walk away from a conversation when someone is asking you a ton of questions and you’ll go, “That guy is the best conversationalist.” And they didn’t say anything other than ask you about you.

These tips should help you to overcome social anxiety, feeling nervous, and help you to understand what shyness really looks like as an adult. Now these are things I go into in great detail in the Courageous Confidence Club. But I do offer free webinars because as you know this is my push goal this year is to help people feel better about themselves, improve their self-esteem, be able to walk into a room with their shoulders pulled back and just make other people feel comfortable for you to be comfortable in your own skin and to step into your greatness.

So if you would like to join me on a free webinar. If you are not a part of the Courageous Confidence Club but you love that free training, I’d like to invite you to join me on a free webinar. All you have to do is text three letters, CCC, which stands for Courageous Confidence Club, CCC and you text that to my phone number. It’s 949-565-4337. And I will send you a link to my next webinar on confidence. And we’ll go into the stuff in detail; you’ll really get some great takeaways. I hope that you’ll join me.

But in the meantime I just want to tell you practice this stuff like right now, like as soon as you hear this within the next 24 hours I want to know how this worked for you. You can leave me a voicemail message by going to chalenejohnson.com/podcast. Don’t forget to leave me your name and your email address and just share with me your story. I can’t wait to hear how this goes. I know it’s going to work. And you’re going to start – every time you do this you’ll start to feel a little less anxious and a lot more confident.

Lifers you are awesome. Thank you so much for subscribing to the Chalene Show, for leaving me reviews and for just being as cool as you are. You are the bomb dot com.

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