

Special Topics in Applied Psychology
PSYCH 470
Risk and Resilience – The Secret Strengths of Shy Children
Winter 2023

Friday 8:30 – 11:20am, HH150
University of Waterloo
Department of Psychology

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Course Description: From the moment infants enter the world, they vary widely in how they respond to new people, places, and things. In turn, these inborn tendencies affect the way children think about, and participate in, their social worlds. In this class we will use a bioecological framework, to discuss proximal (e.g., interactions with parents, peers) and distal (e.g., experiences at school and in extracurricular activities) factors that influence the development of shy children. Each week we will be reading and discussing pivotal works on the topic of shyness and introversion. Each class we will discuss chapters from *Quiet Power* as well as empirical and/or theoretical papers related to the chapter topics. These papers are selected to reflect cross-disciplinary approaches to studying shyness with papers selected from diverse fields of psychological science including educational psychology, social psychology, and developmental psychology. Our goal will be to use these sources of information to debunk several common myths about shyness and to reflect upon policies and practices that can help optimize developmental outcomes for shy children.

Learning Outcomes:

- Synthesize information about the proximal and distal factors that influence the development of shy children using a bioecological framework
- Develop the ability to use empirical data to challenge lay beliefs about shyness and human development
- Prepare different types of communications using accessible but scientifically accurate language to increase understanding of shyness among non-experts who work with children (i.e., teachers)
- Participate in and facilitate discussions that reflect diverse viewpoints and opinions

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

Readings

Book

Cain, S., Mone, G., & Moroz, E. (2017). *Quiet Power: The Secret Strengths of Introverted Kids*. New York, NY: Puffin Books.

Articles

Additional readings will be posted on LEARN. Each week, the instructors will post two readings (see list below) and a small group of student discussion facilitators will select *one additional related reading* of particular interest to them. Students are expected to complete readings PRIOR to class so they can fully participate in class discussions (see below).

Evaluation:

Attendance and Participation (15% of final grade): This portion of your grade is based on your attendance and the *quality* of your contributions to class discussions (both on discussion boards and in-class).

- For Weeks 2 – 9, students will submit to the discussion board a) 2 ideas or themes from the assigned readings they found most interesting or thought-provoking, and b) 1 wonderment (vs. factual) question they would be interested in discussing with the larger class. Discussion board posts are to be submitted each Wednesday by 11:59pm. Discussion board posts will be made accessible to the whole class and will be used by the weekly facilitators to guide the in-class discussion. Each student will be permitted to miss *one* week of posting without an impact on their grade.
- In Week 2, we will work together to develop a definition of high-quality classroom participation that reflects our understanding of individual differences. It is expected that students will actively participate in each class discussion.

Discussion Facilitation (15% of final grade): Students will be assigned to small groups to be discussion facilitators for *one class* (between Weeks 2 – 9) over the course of the semester. These discussions are anticipated to last for approximately 60-75 minutes. Using a link on LEARN, students will rank order their preferences for topics and groups will be created based on shared interests in topics. Students are responsible for selecting one additional reading to complement the chapters and assigned readings, and for directing/facilitating the discussion during those classes. Students will provide brief summaries of all readings and synthesize discussion posts to facilitate larger group discussion. With our focus being on discussion and casual conversation, PowerPoint slides should be used judiciously (i.e., as a guide for topics and thought questions vs. to be read from). There is no right or wrong way to facilitate a rich discussion –

Communication Outputs

Infographic (20% of final grade). Each student will generate one infographic to share with the class. You can use the infographic to explain the experiences of shy children or adolescents from a first-person perspective (i.e., how different contexts are experienced {meeting someone for first time, first day of school, etc.} by shy children) or as a way to suggest strategies for adults to create environments that optimize the “goodness of fit” for shy children. Be creative here – there really is no right or wrong.

Due: March 3rd, 2023 (a rubric will be posted on LEARN).

Op Eds (20% of final grade). Each student will write one Op Ed piece to share with the class. The Op Ed can be a maximum of 2 double-spaced pages in length. You can choose your audience, but the goal is to use the knowledge gained in class to debunk myths or common stereotypes about shyness/introversion. We will review some op eds in the field of child psychology during class, so you have some prototypes to follow. If you want to practice being efficient, you could cover the same topic in your infographic and Op Ed. I often find that drawing out my ideas help me organize my thinking and writing.

Due: March 17th, 2023 (a rubric will be posted on LEARN).

Group Presentations to Community Members (30% of final grade). Each student will work with in a small group (approx. 4 students) to prepare a 45-minute presentation for a specific target audience (parents, teachers, potential employers, school-aged children, teens, first-year university students). Students will rank order their preferences for target audience and groups will be created based on shared interests. The presentations will take place in the last two class meetings. Students will use the lessons learned through readings and discussions over the course of the semester to provide concrete recommendations for optimizing growth and development of shy children/adolescents either to caregivers, teachers, or students themselves. A rubric will be posted on LEARN.

Schedule of Classes

** Each week, students are *required* to read the Cain chapters and the additional reading assigned by the discussion group, as well as at least *one* of the two additional papers.

Week 1

Jan 13th

Introduction to Class; Organizational Meeting

Readings:

Cain Chapter: Introduction (pp. 1-14)

Papers: N/A

Additional readings: N/A

Week 2

Jan 20th

Shyness at School: Optimal levels of stimulation; Classroom context

Readings:

Cain Chapters: Chapter 1 & Chapter 2

Papers:

Kagan, J. & Snidman, N. (1991). Infant predictors of inhibited and uninhibited profiles. *Psychological Science*, 2, 40-44.

Coplan, R.J., & Hughes, K. (2018). Why classroom climate matters for children high in anxious solitude: A study of differential susceptibility. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 33, 94-102.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 3

Shyness at School: Leadership and Group Dynamics

Jan 27th

Readings:

Cain Chapters: Chapter 3 & Chapter 4

Papers:

Grant, A.M., Gino, F., & Hofmann, D.A. (2011). Reversing the extraverted leadership advantage: The role of employee productivity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54, 528-550.

Chen, X., Rubin, K.H., & Li, B. (1995). Social and school adjustment of shy and aggressive children in China. *Development and Psychopathology*, 7, 337-349.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 4

Shyness and Peer Interactions: Friendships and Social Groups

Feb 3rd

Readings:

Cain Chapters: Chapter 5 & Chapter 6

Papers:

Nelson, P.A. & Thorne, A. (2012). Personality and metaphor use: How extraverted and introverted young adults experience becoming friends. *European Journal of Personality*, 26, 600-612.

Closson, L.M., McVarnock, A., & Sanford, K. (2019). Social withdrawal and social surrogacy in emerging adulthood. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 48, 717-730.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 5

Shyness and Peer Interactions: Social Media, Do opposites attract?

Feb 10th

Readings:

Cain Chapters: Chapter 7 & Chapter 8

Papers:

Chan, M. (2011). Shyness, sociability, and the role of media synchronicity in the use of computer-mediated communication for interpersonal communication. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 14, 84-90.

Nelson, P.A., Thorne, A., & Shapiro, L.A. (2011). I'm outgoing and she's reserved: The reciprocal dynamics of personality in close friendships in young adulthood. *Journal of Personality*, 79, 1113-1147.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 6

Shyness and Extracurricular Activities: Creativity and Athletics

Feb 17th

Readings:

Cain Chapters: **Chapter 9 & Chapter 10 & Chapter 11**

Papers:

Liu, T., Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2020). FLOW among introverts and extraverts in solitary and social activities. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 167, 110197.

Findlay, L.C. & Coplan, R.J. (2008). Come out and play: Shyness in childhood and the benefits of organized sports participation. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 40, 153-161.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 7 Shyness: Passion Projects and Motivation

March 3rd

Readings:

Cain Chapters: **Chapter 12 & Chapter 13**

Papers:

Little, B.R. (2008). Personal projects and free traits: Personality and motivation reconsidered. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2/3, 1235-1254.

Jacques-Hamilton, R., Sun, J., & Smillie, L.D. (2019). Costs and benefits of acting extraverted: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 148, 1538-1556.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 8 Shyness: Family and Home

March 10th

Readings:

Cain Chapters: **Chapter 14 & Chapter 15**

Papers:

Zeytinoglu, S., Neuman, K.J., Degnan, K.A., Almas, A.N., Henderson, H., Chronis-Tuscano, A., Pine, D.S., & Fox, N.A. (2022). Pathways from maternal shyness to adolescent social anxiety. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 63, 342-349.

Graham, A.A. & Coplan, R.J. (2012). Shyness, sibling relationships, and young children's socioemotional adjustment at preschool. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 26, 435-449.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 9 Shyness: Cultural Considerations

March 17th

Cain Chapters: **N/A**

Papers:

An, D. & Eggum-Wilkens, N.D. (2019). Do cultural orientations moderate the relation between Chinese adolescents' shyness and depressive symptoms? It depends on their academic achievement. *Social Development*, 28, 908-926.

Xiao, B., Zhu, L., Kong, X., Li, Y., & Coplan, R. (*in press*). Shyness and social-emotional adjustment in early childhood in mainland China: Exploring the roles of maternal parenting practices and beliefs about shyness. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*.

Additional reading: TBD

Week 10 ** NO CLASS *******

March 24th

Week 11

GROUP PRESENTATIONS (Target Audiences: Parents, Teachers, School-Aged Children)

Mar 31st

Week 12

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS (Target Audiences: Teens, 1st Year University Students)
CONCLUSIONS and REFLECTIONS**

Apr 10th

Course Policies:

Office Hours: If you would like additional assistance in order to achieve the goals of this course, you can schedule a meeting with me or the course TA during our office hours (see top of syllabus). Given the large number of students in this class, neither the TA nor I can accept “drop in” appointments. If you need to meet with one of us outside of our scheduled office hours, please send an email to arrange an appointment. *If you are struggling in this course for any reason, please meet with one of us as early in the semester as possible.*

Administrative Policies:

Intellectual Property

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or the University of Waterloo.

Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student’s educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner’s permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA and/or the University of Waterloo for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow

distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

On Campus

Due to COVID-19 and campus closures, services are available only online or by phone.

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- **MATES**: one-to-one peer support program offered by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) and Counselling Services

Off campus, 24/7

- **Good2Talk**: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7**: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online on the Faculty of Arts [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information.

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

Official Version of the Course Outline

If there is a discrepancy between the hard copy outline (i.e., if students were provided with a hard copy at the first class) and the outline posted on LEARN, the outline on LEARN will be deemed the official version. Outlines on LEARN may change as instructors develop a course, but they become final as of the first-class meeting for the term.