



Yeah, she really hated being centre of attention

How to be confident IRL

Texting, Tweeting, Tindering? Easy. Connecting in person? Not so much. Get your confidence reboot here

On the internet you're a powerhouse of self publicity – a stream of Instagram photos and *hilarious* Tweets. In person? You're flagging. With more people now communicating by text or online rather than actually speaking to each other, social courage is at a low. "We're a generation that likes to be in control, and because we're out of verbal practice we're wary of situations where we might look stupid or not be liked," says Alice Stapleton, a life and career coach who's researched the quarter-life crisis. But embrace the fear and it's seriously liberating.

1 | 2 | 3

TAP NUMBERS FOR MORE

STOP! WORRYING WHAT PEOPLE THINK

When Kerry Cronin, a philosophy professor at Boston College in the US, asked her students about relationships, she was shocked that only 12.5% of them had ever asked someone out in person. "These clever, successful people had no idea how to approach someone," she reveals. So she gave them two weeks to orchestrate a date in person – and they came back brimming with confidence. "Going out on a limb empowered them, and they were surprised by how sincere the conversations were."

Now flex your social muscle

The secret of fearless socialisers? "They focus on being interested, not interesting," says Stapleton. The latter we know you've got covered, but it's an easy icebreaker to be curious about others first, as it takes the onus off you. And if you bomb? No sweat. "Life moves on unbelievably fast," she adds. "Just think how quickly you can forget a stranger's name."