failure. The evaluation of one’s own behavior in terms of success and failure plays a very important role in shaping an individual’s goals and new plans.

In a final evaluation step, an individual determines whether success or failure is global or specific. Global attributions come about when a person is inclined to focus on the total self. Some individuals, some of the time, attribute the success or failure of a particular action to the total self; they use such self-evaluative phrases as “I am bad (or good).” On such occasions, the focus is not on the behavior, but on the self, both as object and as subject. Using such global attribution results in thinking of nothing else but the self. During these times, especially when the global evaluation is negative, a person becomes confused and speechless. The individual is unable to act and is driven away from action, wanting to hide or disappear.

In some situations, individuals make specific attributions focusing on specific actions. Thus, it is not the total self that has done something wrong or good; instead, a particular behavior is judged. At such times, individuals will use such evaluative phrases as, “What I did was wrong, and I must not do it again.” Notice that the individual’s focus here is not on the totality of the self, but on the specific behavior of the self in a specific situation.

The tendency to make global or specific attributions may be a personality style. Global attributions for negative events are generally uncorrelated with global attributions for positive events. It is only when positive or negative events are taken into account that relatively stable and consistent attributional patterns are observed. Some individuals are likely to be stable in their global and specific evaluations under most conditions of success or failure. Such factors are thought to have important consequences for a variety of fixed personality patterns. For example, Beck (1979) and others have found that depressed individuals are likely to make stable, negative, global attributions, whereas nondepressed individuals are less likely to be stable in their global attributions.

**Shame and guilt**

An important determinant of whether shame or guilt follows failure to live up to a standard is whether a person believes he could have avoided the violating act. If not, shame is likely. If the person feels he could have done otherwise, guilt is likely to occur.

Shame or guilt occurs when an individual judges his or her actions as a failure in regard to his or her standards, rules, and goals and then makes a global attribution. The person wishes to hide, disappear, or die (Lewis, 1992; Nathanson, 1987). It is a highly negative and painful state that also disrupts ongoing behavior and causes confusion in thought and an inability to speak. The body of the shamed person seems to shrink, as if to disappear from the eye of the self or others. Because of the intensity of this emotional state, and the global attack on the self system, all that individuals can do when presented with such a state is to attempt to rid themselves of it. Its global nature, however, makes it very difficult to dissipate.

The power of shame drives people to employ strategies to rid themselves of this feeling. These strategies may generate behavior that is generally considered abnormal. Some people readjust their notions of success and failure, at least as they apply to their own actions. The narcissistic personality, for example, perceives its actions to be successful while others perceive them as failure. The narcissist is characterized by an exaggerated sense of his or her own accomplishments and is likely to appear hubristic. But underlying the bombast is an attempt to avoid the exaggerated shame the narcissist may really feel. In contrast to the narcissist, a depressed person may be acutely aware of shame and feel helpless, hopeless, and worthless.

Shame and guilt are not produced by any specific situation, but rather by an individual’s interpretation of an event. Even more important is the observation that shame is not necessarily related to whether the event is public or private. Although many theorists hold that shame is a public failure, this need not be so. Failure attributed to the self can be public or private, and can center around moral as well as social action.

Guilt is produced when an individual evaluates his or her behavior as a failure, but focuses on the specific features of the self that led to the failure. A guilty person is likely to feel responsible and try to repair the failure. Guilty individuals are pained by their evaluation of failure. Guilt is often associated with a corrective action that the individual can take (but does not necessarily take) to repair the failure and prevent it from happening again (Barrett, 1995; Tangney, 1990). In guilt, the self is differentiated from the object.

**Hubris and pride**

Self-consciousness is not entirely a negative feeling. Self-evaluation can also lead to positive and even overly positive emotions. Hubris, defined as exaggerated pride or self-confidence, is an example of the latter. Hubris is the emotion elicited when success with regard to one’s standards, rules, and goals is applied to a person’s entire self. People inclined to be hubristic evaluate their actions positively and then say to themselves: “I have succeeded. I am a success.” Often, hubris is considered an undesirable trait to be avoided.

Hubris is difficult to sustain because of its globality. The feeling is generated by a nonspecific action. Be-
cause such a feeling is alluring, yet transient, people prone to hubris ultimately derive little satisfaction from the emotion. Consequently, they seek out and invent situations likely to repeat this emotional state. According to Morrison (1989), this can be done either by altering their standards, rules, and goals, or by reevaluating what constitutes success.

An individual who considers himself or herself globally successful may be viewed with disdain by others. Often the hubristic person is described as “puffed up” or, in extreme cases, grandiose or narcissistic. The hubristic person may be perceived as insolent or contemptuous. Hubristic people have difficulty in interpersonal relations, since their hubris likely makes them insensitive to the wishes, needs, and desires of others, leading to interpersonal conflict. Moreover, given the contemptuousness associated with hubris, other people are likely to be shamed by the nature of the actions of the hubristic person. Narcissists often derive pleasure in shaming others by claiming their superiority.

If hubris is the global emotion that follows a positive assessment of an action, then pride is the specific emotion. A person experiencing pride feels joyful at the successful outcome of a particular action, thought, or feeling. Here the focus of pleasure is specific and related to a particular behavior. In pride, the self and object are separated, as in guilt, and unlike shame and hubris, where subject and object are fused. Heckhausen (1984, 1987) and Stipek et al. (1992) have made a particularly apt comparison between pride and achievement motivation, where succeeding at a particular goal motivates activity. Because the positive state engendered by pride is associated with a particular action, individuals are able to reproduce the emotion: pride’s specific focus allows for action.

**Shyness and embarrassment**

In addition to the emotions already discussed, two others bear mention—embarrassment and shyness, which are frequently confused. Some consider shyness to be sheepishness, bashfulness, uneasiness, or psychological discomfort in social situations. According to this definition, shyness is related to fear and is a nonevaluative emotion precipitated by an individual’s discomfort with others. Such a description fits Buss’s (1980) notion of shyness as an emotional response elicited by experiences of novelty or conspicuousness. For Buss (1980), shyness and fear are closely related and represent fear of others. One way of distinguishing shyness from shame, with which it is sometimes confused, is that it appears much earlier in childhood than either shame or guilt.

This approach to shyness seems reasonable because it fits with other notions relating the self to others, or what we might call the “social self.” Eysenck (1954) has characterized people as social or asocial by genetic disposition, and recently Kagan, Reznick, and Snidman (1988) have pointed out the physiological responses of children they call “inhibited.” Inhibited children are withdrawn, are uncomfortable in social situations, and appear fearful. Shyness may be a dispositional factor not related to self-evaluation. Rather, it may simply be the discomfort of being in the company of other social objects; in other words, it is the opposite of sociability.

If shyness does not seem to rely on self-evaluation, embarrassment often does. It is important, however, to distinguish among types of embarrassment. Sometimes, the self-consciousness of shyness can lead a person to become embarrassed (Buss, 1980). In certain situations of exposure, people become embarrassed, but this is not related to negative evaluation. Perhaps the best example of this is the case of a compliment. A speaker might feel embarrassed after a particularly flattering introduction. Surprisingly, praise, rather than the displeasure resulting from negative evaluation, elicits such embarrassment.

Another example of this type of embarrassment can be seen in people’s reactions to public display. When people observe someone looking at them, they are apt to become self-conscious, look away, and touch or adjust their bodies. Women being observed often adjust or touch their hair. Men may adjust their clothes or change their body posture. In few cases do the observed people look sad; if anything, they appear pleased by the attention. The combination of a briefly averted gaze and nervous touching characterizes the first type of embarrassment.

A related example of embarrassment from exposure can be seen in the work of Lewis et al. (1991) which demonstrates that embarrassment can be elicited just by exposure. In their experiment, a professor, announcing that he is going to randomly point to a student, and shows that pointing is random and does not reflect a judgment about the person, closes his eyes and points. The pointing invariably elicits embarrassment in the student selected, even though the student has done nothing, good or bad, to deserve attention.

In each of these examples, there is no negative evaluation of the self in regard to standards, rules, and goals. Nevertheless, work with children has shown that a sense of self is a prerequisite for feeling embarrassment (Lewis et al., 1989). In these situations, it is difficult to imagine embarrassment as related to shame. Since praise cannot readily lead to an evaluation of failure, it is likely that embarrassment resulting from compliments, from being looked at, and from being pointed to, has more to do with the exposure of the self than with evaluation. Situations other than praise come to mind, in which a negative