

The Extroverts Are Not Alright

Greetings Everyone,

Welcome to NEWSLETTER #3! As always, I hope this email finds you well and your hair isn't getting too long. I know my anxiety has been on a fun 3-day power loop where every third day my brain decides to remind me what adrenaline feels like. Getting outside for the last couple of days has been very helpful. I hope you have been engaging in different kinds of self-care as well. If you have noticed your emotions on an equally fun roller coaster ride, I encourage you to plan accordingly and save the best self-care for your "planned" worst days.

This week I wanted to talk about how being stuck at home can be impacting our extroverted and/or introverted social natures. As I told my introverted wife about writing this topic she laughed at me. "Oh how the tables have turned" she smirked. We share a common bond of delightful sarcasm. She has a point though. Being cut off from most in person social interaction has taken its toll on this self-identified extrovert. I thought this would be a good topic this week to see what can be done not just for my fellow extroverts, but my introverted brothers and sisters (and non-binary folks) as well.

I like to conceptualize introverts and extroverts on a spectrum. I think most of us may recognize we lean toward one end or the other but we all can shift based on differing circumstances. First things first, how do you identify? There are some pretty basic ways to discern your style when it comes to this dynamic. Ask your self a couple of questions; 1. When I want to relax, would I rather be with other people or hanging out by myself? 2. When I want to have a fun evening does going out with friends sound more appealing or would I rather stay in and read/binge Netflix? 3. After I have finished spending time with a large group of people do I feel energized or exhausted? If your answers skew more toward being by yourself and relaxing you may fall closer to the introvert side, if your answers were going out with friends and feeling energized, then you may be more extroverted. If you are interested in a longer more scientific test to find out your personality type, Psychology Today has a free 25 minute test [HERE](#) you can take. For the purposes of our conversation today, it is important for you to know who you are as it relates to this.

So why is this important? We all have an internal battery that we use every day. Typically, when this battery is charged, we feel better both emotionally and physically. We are the best versions of ourselves. When this battery is drained however, we tend to react negatively. We become irritable, sad, fatigued, or apathetic. Take a second and think through your own personal red flags and warning signs.

Extroverts typically recharge with other people. We (myself included) like to talk and share our thoughts and feelings. I sometimes like to talk about how extroverts like to “perform”. We like to include others in our conversations and at times be the life of the party. Even when we are drained, we tend to recharge with a friend connecting in person. This is very problematic now being stuck at home. You may have started to notice some signs that you are having trouble to recharge your batteries because you can’t use the same tried and true methods you may have used in the past. That’s ok. We just have to be flexible and solution focused. These are some tips I have come across that may help some of you recharge. 1. Regular phone calls/discord/zoom meetings with friends. Get creative try board games using FaceTime on your phone! You can play Cards Against Humanity with 6 friends online, get directions [HERE](#). I have seen picture of people driving to empty parking lots and sitting in/on the trunks of their cars (6 or more feet apart) to just talk and catch up. Host a virtual dinner party with your friends. Netflix is offering watch parties now. Don’t let your current circumstances block your options to recharge your batteries.

Introverts typically recharge the opposite way. They prefer to chill by themselves or sit quietly with others reading, working on a puzzle, watching YouTube or just listening to music. I want to make clear that just because someone is an introvert doesn’t mean they “hate” socializing or dislike being with friends. It can just be exhausting at times. Now more than ever we all need social support, introverts included! To my introverted clients and friends, let me be the first to apologize for any extroverted neediness you may be experiencing. You (introverts) may be feeling overwhelmed with the number of requests to FaceTime or talk on the phone. I give you permission right now to have healthy boundaries for yourself and make sure you are also recharged. Just because we are stuck at home doesn’t mean that you suddenly have to become more social than ever before. I encourage you to listen to your body and allow your needs to be met.

I have linked a couple of resources that you all may find interesting. I encourage you to watch them to help gain perspective and grow empathy for each personality type. Susan Cain has an awesome Ted Talk titled [The power of introverts](#). AsapScience created a short YouTube video summarizing Introverts and extroverts [HERE](#). This article from the Associated Press hopefully help all of us normalize some of our current circumstances [HERE](#).

I don’t have much to report in terms of relevant Ferris news. I did want to let you know that the counseling center is offering another town hall style zoom meeting. I am going to lead an engaging conversation around mental health and pop culture. It will be pretty laid back and informal. The goal is to give people an opportunity to connect with others and talk about fun nerdy things that intersect with mental health. For example, lets talk about how depression and PTSD is portrayed in the Marvel Cinematic Universe! If this is something you may be interested

in, check out the Personal Counseling Center's webpage for more details. I hope to see some of you there.

For all of us, this is a great opportunity to learn from each other. I know that I grew up in an extroverted family and had no idea there was an alternative. It was quite a wake-up call when I met my wife's family and they were all perfectly content with just sitting and reading quietly (I am sure I was quite needy early on). I want you to focus on your own battery. Do your best to keep it as charged as you can. Extroverts your homework is to be mindful of your needs as it relates to connecting with others. Find ways to connect with friends and family in new creative ways. Introverts your homework is to be mindful of your boundaries and communicate them with confidence. Seek social support (in various fun ways) when you need it and give yourself space when it is called for. We are all managing the best we can. Let me know if any of you need anything from me.

Take Care and Wash Your Hands,

Andy