





Make Your Introversion Work for You

Are you an introvert who thinks your reserved nature is a character flaw? Stop. It's far from it. Here's how you can use your introversion to your advantage.

Contrary to popular belief, introverts aren't antisocial, inhibited, or lonely. They just react and function differently from their more gregarious counterparts. Also, introverts aren't necessarily shy, because while shyness is the fear of social judgment, introversion is more about how a person responds to social stimulation.

It can be an asset

But just why is introversion viewed as a shortcoming in our society? Why do introverts usually get passed over for leadership positions at work? It's because there's an expectation to be more assertive and to speak up in school and the workplace.

Thankfully, this rather outdated mindset is slowly beginning to change, with more and more people recognising the positive aspects of a quiet personality.

In *The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength*, the author Dr. Jennifer Kahnweiler explains that introverts get their energy from alone time. This is where they recharge their batteries before going out into the world and connecting with people. On the other hand, extroverts derive energy from being surrounded by people.

Introverts are generally also excellent listeners, have great concentration, and think before they speak—which are all important qualities in the workplace or social situations.

Use it to your advantage

There are many benefits to being an introvert and there are plenty of ways you can make your introversion work for you. We ask two introverts, Jumaiyah Mahathir, co-founder of Halalfoodhunt; and Cassandra Chan, a life coach and founder of Ways of Life® Coaching, to share five advantages of being “quiet”.

You have an eye for detail

“As an introvert, and having coached many introverts like myself, I can say that introverts tend to look ‘inwards’ to process and synthesise thoughts.

We do have opinions and requests, but we need a little more time to process them before speaking up. Our answers and replies tend to have more depth and substance simply because we’re more reflective. We’re also great observers and listeners and tend to have an eye for detail. I can say many of us are innately intuitive.”

— Cassandra

You can work alone

“Introverts craft their best work when there are no distractions—when we’re left with our own thoughts.

If it’s possible, try to work from home or separately from your team at least once a week because it allows you to process your thoughts and the things you want to do in a shorter period of time.”

— Jumaiyah

You develop confidence from within

“Those with quiet natures should accept, embrace and love themselves. Do not feel inferior, judge yourself harshly or try too hard to fit in.

Being introverted doesn’t make you any less smart or opinionated. Have some self-acceptance—this will allow your inner confidence to shine and, in turn, acceptance from others will then come naturally.”

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You learn what helps you excel

“You should put yourself in situations where you’d excel. For an introvert, it would be private, one-on-one meetings. At work, choose team members that complement you so they can fill certain gaps. You may also find it helpful to build a good relationship with an extroverted teammate—they may be able to communicate your thoughts better.”

— Jumaiyah

You build meaningful relationships

“Don’t ever succumb to the pressure of putting your life in the public eye because you might not be comfortable when people start making comments about your life. Anonymity is a super power that introverts should harness. In doing so, we leave less room for judgement, making it easier for us to build meaningful, real relationships.”



Introvert

VS

Extrovert



Introduced by psychiatrist Carl Jung in 1921, the terms “introvert” and “extrovert” are used to distinguish between people who are self-conscious, passionate, quiet, and deliberate; and those who are assertive, social, and crave a high degree of stimulation.

It’s important to note that no one person is purely an introvert or extrovert. We all encompass a certain degree of both traits and it all boils down to where we fall on the introvert-extrovert spectrum—where one trait is more predominant than the other.

Some people may even fall in the middle of the continuum. The term used to describe having equal amounts of both tendencies is “ambivert”, and the advantage ambiverts have is they’re better at adjusting or switching their approach to people around them based on the situation. 📌