

There's Nothing Wrong with Me; I'm Just an Introvert



INTROVERSION IS NOT A DISEASE OR A disorder or a disability. It's not a condition that needs to be cured or overcome. It's a personality trait—no more, no less—just like extraversion, although very different.

But you wouldn't know that considering the ways people talk about introversion in America. Here's just a sampling of the references to introverts/introversion that you'll find, with very little effort, in the media (the *emphases* being mine):

- “Johnny Carson was an *admitted* introvert...”
- “Stress [to the introverted teenager] how *breaking free* from *the grips of introversion* will be challenging...”
- “...quiet and smart, *but* introverted”
- ““Most people don't know that I'm an introvert. I hear this *confession* from *surprisingly* many successful executives.”
- “You might be *suffering from* the *curse of the introvert.*”
- “Numerous politicians, entertainers, and CEOs have earned public acclaim *despite* having an introverted personality.”
- “*Crack* your introversion *shell* ...”
- “There are, however, ways for introverts to *overcome* their natural tendencies ...”

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- “I have a *handicap*. ... My *handicap* is being an introvert.”

And my personal favorite:

- “Oh, my God! I’m an introvert!?”

These statements too frequently are viewed as normal and accurate—par for the proverbial course. But what if you took a few of these snippets and substituted the word “extravert/extraversion” for the word “introvert/introversion”? To wit:

- “Johnny Carson was an *admitted* **extravert**...”
- “*Even if* you are an **extravert**, you can boost your business...”
- “Stress [to the extraverted teenager] how *breaking free* from *the grips of* **extraversion** will be challenging...”
- “*Crack* your **extraversion** *shell*...”

And, of course:

- “Oh, my God! I’m an **extravert**!?”

Suddenly, the statements are all ridiculous. You don’t “admit to” being an extravert. There’s no such thing as “the grips of extraversion.” Your “extraversion shell”? C’mon.

Well, the original statements are just as ridiculous.

So let’s lose the “suffer from” already. Enough with the “overcome.”

There’s nothing wrong with me; I’m just an introvert.

Well, actually, there’s plenty wrong with me. We all have our faults. But my introversion isn’t one of them.

No one’s is.