
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute English

Introvert... and proud!



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm Neil...

Alice

And I'm Alice.

Neil

So Alice how did you spend Saturday night?

Alice

Curled up on the sofa with a good book. You?

Neil

I went out on the town. Met some friends, had a few drinks, then went on to a party.

Alice

Well that illustrates the difference between us – you're an extrovert. And I'm... not. And where we are on the spectrum between introvert and extrovert is the subject of today's show.

Neil

So would you call yourself an introvert, Alice?

Alice

No, I'm an **ambivert**, which means a mixture of introvert and extrovert.

Neil

Well, whichever you are, Alice, staying in on your own on a Saturday night is pretty boring!

Alice

Not to me. And you shouldn't be so judgemental, Neil. You're reflecting the general view that people seem to have these days, that being an introvert is somehow less valuable than being an extrovert. Introverts have many valuable qualities. They're **reflective** – that means

thoughtful – and have **inner resources**. In other words, they don't rely on other people to enjoy themselves.

Neil

OK, well if you're feeling reflective at the moment, how about answering today's quiz question?

Alice

OK.

Neil

Can you tell me: who first used the term 'extrovert'? Was it...

a) Sigmund Freud?

b) Friedrich Nietzsche?

Or c) Carl Jung?

Alice

I think the answer is c) Carl Jung.

Neil

Well, we'll find out if you got the answer right or not later in the show. But before we get there, let's listen to Lisa Kaenzig, researcher and Associate Dean for William Smith College, New York State, telling us a bit more about what being an introvert typically means.

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Lisa Kaenzig, researcher and Associate Dean for William Smith College, New York State

Introverts are people of any age who really get their energy from within themselves. And who often have sort of a running dialogue in their head going on thinking before they're talking, like to have a little more time to think through things before they're commenting on them or answering a question, need some time to recharge their batteries by being by themselves, and enjoy having alone time.

Neil

Lisa Kaenzig there – who says that introverts think about what they're going to say before they say it.

Alice

Do you do that, Neil?

Neil

Nope!

Alice

You should try it sometime. Now, Lisa also talks about the different ways people **recharge their batteries** – introverts tend to need time alone to regain their strength and energy when they're feeling **drained** – or very tired – whereas extroverts often prefer to recharge by being with other people.

Neil

So introverts create their energy internally – from within themselves – and extroverts recharge from being with other people.

Alice

Exactly. But in some situations, for example at school or in the workplace, things can be made suitable for – extroverts. Extroverts typically love being with others – in a big class or an open plan office – where there's a lot going on. They enjoy the external stimulation. But introverts can find these big, noisy environments uncomfortable.

Neil

I can see that. And these days, people are wild about group work and brainstorming – job ads frequently ask if you are a people person, a team player ... and so on.

Alice

That's right. Introverts like to work alone or in small groups and need a quieter space to perform well. Let's listen now to **Dr Peter Aloka, a researcher and psychologist in Kenya**. He's been working with introvert teenage mothers in Bondo who are returning to school after having their babies. And schools are being asked to develop new strategies to support their learning.

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Dr Peter Aloka, psychologist, Bondo, Kenya

Introverts might find it easier working in groups, but with smaller groups, and they work in pairs with extroverts... The teachers should design a classroom for all the students too, to contribute. Whenever a teacher is teaching a question in class let them allow for wait time for students to process the information before answering the question. Just for people to think through that question. Thinking, pairing, and sharing: those three strategies will help the introverts to speak out.

Neil

Dr Peter Aloka is talking about some very clever pairing there. If you put two introverts together they might not say anything. An extrovert is likely to talk, but won't **intimidate** – or overpower – their introvert partner as much as a large group would.

Alice

So the idea is that with fewer people – in a small group or a pair – the introvert will have enough time and space to express their ideas. And because their ideas have been **thought**

through – or carefully considered – , their contribution is likely to be worth waiting for. So... Think. Pair. Share.

Neil

Hmm. I like that. OK, so I think it's time to share the answer to today's quiz question. I asked: who first used the term 'extrovert'? Was it...

- a) Sigmund Freud?
- b) Friedrich Nietzsche?
- Or c) Carl Jung?

Alice

I said... Carl Jung.

Neil

And you were... right, Alice. So thinking things through really works! 'Introvert' and 'extrovert' are the two basic personality types according to the theories of the 20th-century Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung. According to these theories, an introvert is a person whose interest lies with their own feelings and thoughts, in contrast to an extrovert, whose interest lies with other people and the outside world.

Alice

OK. Now, let's hear the words we learned today:

- ambivert
- reflective
- inner resources
- recharge their batteries
- drained
- intimidate
- thought through

Neil

Well, that's the end of this edition of 6 Minute English. Join us again soon! Meanwhile, visit our website: bbclearningenglish.com, where you'll find guides to grammar, exercises, videos and articles to read and improve your English.

Alice

And we are on social media too. Make sure to visit our profiles on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

Both

Goodbye!

Vocabulary

ambivert

a mixture of introvert and extrovert

reflective

thoughtful

inner resources

capabilities of the mind

recharge their batteries

regain their strength and energy

drained

very tired

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overpower

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consider carefully