

The undeveloped introvert

4.1 Two sisters

Think of your two temperaments as sisters. They got on well enough to travel through life together – but there were clearly understood parameters. The extrovert was in charge. If the introvert was under pressure, or being challenged in any way, before she had time to think for herself, the extrovert stepped in and sorted the problem. The introvert never had to process anything. In fact, she wondered at times what she was there for, what value she had. She felt quite useless.



4.2 Two sisters next door

This will stretch your imagination! You live next door to a young family that consists of two sisters with their parents. You realise over time that the older, more outgoing child is given all the attention from her parents. In fact, they are all acting as if the younger child hardly exists. They don't communicate with her, and she has given up trying to express anything. What is so difficult to understand is that they come across as devoted, caring parents. The older child is brought up impeccably.



The years go by and then, one day to your amazement, the parents and older sister move away – and simply leave the younger child. What do you do with this young lady, now in her teens, who has been abandoned? In your kindness, you invite her in, her parents don't want to know, so you take her into your home and bring her up as your child. Imagine the problems this poor girl will have – her sense of worthlessness and the difficulty of convincing her otherwise. That might be how your introvert feels.

4.3 Missed and therefore undeveloped

In both of our stories, the introvert is being missed. In the first one, she is missed by herself! In the second she is missed by her parents and sister. The point is that no development has taken place and her experience of life and the gaining of wisdom has been minimal.

There is more. Not only will her development process be badly stunted, but she will have been left with a set of feelings about how she has been treated.

In the case of the double introvert, the Phlegmatic steps in and assumes control and that has a negative effect on the Melancholic. It would be especially important that the Melancholic is solid and secure so she can be a foundation for the Phlegmatic, thereby allowing her to function properly. A double introvert with no solid foundation has double the challenges to overcome – the fear and anxiety of the Phlegmatic and the depression of the Melancholic. Equally the double introvert can choose to constructively use the considerable strengths of both introverts.



4.4 Distinguish between the place and the events



Imagine a beautiful parkland with a lovely lake surrounded by trees. Everything is idyllic and peaceful. One day something terrible happens there. A man is murdered. Everyone knows about it. It would be difficult to still think of that scene as idyllic and peaceful. Nothing has changed. It was down to what happened there.

The introvert temperament is where we feel things deeply, where we feel the pain and hurt, but that doesn't mean there's anything fundamentally wrong with the introvert.

Just because we are aware of feeling things keenly within our introvert does not make that the 'bad part' of who we are.

4.5 Change of residence

You have always wanted to climb Snowdon. You plan the day, check the forecast and get everything ready. Finally, the big day arrives, the sun is shining and off you go. A final forecast check showed cloud coming in later in the day – rather worryingly for the introvert – but of no concern to the extrovert.



The first two hours couldn't have been better. The introvert is feeling bad for fussing about the cloud in the forecast until, half-way through the morning, the cloud appears earlier than expected. The sky darkens and the wind picks up and it starts to snow, hard. Now there is a major row going on within you, with the introvert desperate to turn back and the extrovert equally desperate to reach the summit. As usual, the extrovert

wins and you plod on – until you realise, to your horror that the snow is getting so deep that you cannot see the track. In fact, the blizzard conditions mean that your footprints are quickly covered. You sink into the snow, lost, exhausted, wondering what to do.

The next thing you know is that your extrovert has jumped up and is running as hard as she can, over the ridge in front of you – and disappears. You can't believe that she has simply abandoned you. Now, what are you going to do? The introvert is completely on her own sitting there in the snow. For the first time that she can remember, she has got to work this problem out for herself – and that is exactly what she does. By refusing to panic and thinking clearly, she works out a way of slowly retracing her steps using landmarks she recalled from the ascent. Eventually, she reaches the base, gets herself home and was none the worse for her ordeal.



Two days later, there is a knock on the door – and there stands your extrovert, expecting to be invited in and to pick up where she left off. What are you going to say? What you need to say is, 'You cannot come back unless you accept that I am going to make the decisions from now on. You can have your input but not make the final decision.'

4.6 Going it alone

There comes a point when the introvert will find herself alone. This is part of God's processes in our lives. We find ourselves unable to call on the extrovert to rescue us. God will do this because he wants to convert our introvert as much as our extrovert.

Our introvert becomes exposed when situations arise that the extrovert was not designed to deal with. For example, someone in your life is looking for a proper connection with you - a meaningful, heart connection. Or a situation requires more emotional involvement than you feel able to give. Many decisions require getting a feel of a situation. You need that introvert.

Pressures can arise that require a deep foundation. When pressure is brought to bear on us we need our introvert to be the bedrock that cannot collapse. If it is immature and underdeveloped the whole emotional structure can come crashing down.