

How Introversion and Introspection Differ

Introspection is often confused with introversion, and many who report that they are introverts are, in fact, simply going through a period of life where introspection is now important and is currently serving their needs well. This often occurs when we begin searching for new direction or new meaning in our lives, or when we are actively seeking spiritual growth or awareness.

Commanders, because of their serious nature and aversion to purely social situations (such as parties) often assume they are introverts, when in fact they are not. Their tendency to introspect in order to examine their assumptions and to lay out plans for reaching goals, also can lead them to assume they are introverted.

To avoid false outcomes on the *CORE Multidimensional Awareness Profile*, it is important to make this distinction to your clients, but be sure to do so in a way that will not influence their answers on the profile. It is best to make the distinction *after* the profile has been taken and then only if you suspect the client answered the introversion/extroversion portion of the profile incorrectly.

Introversion is a *consistent* need to avoid too much activity or interaction with people. Introverts rarely (if ever) have moments in their lives when they *need* to be around lots of people or *need* frequent periods of activity. They may long for the company of one or two close friends or family members or they may feel a need to take action for a specific purpose, but they do not long to mix and mingle with people in general as do extroverted Entertainers and they do not need to have the majority of their lives oriented around action and results as do extroverted Commanders.

Where activity and interaction stimulates and energizes extroverts, it takes very little activity or interaction with others to drain the energy of an introvert. When this occurs, introverts need to get away to themselves to renew their energy reserves.

Introversion is a constant state of being. And, while the intensity of the introverted attitude may vary, depending on how safe or familiar the environment and its occupants feel, and on the degree of introversion the individual possesses, introversion does not come and go.

Introspection is a *temporary* and purposeful withdrawing in order to look within oneself, to reflect and to inspect thoughts, feelings and beliefs. Introspection can be a long or short term occurrence, but it is usually preceded by a conscious need for self-examination. Introversion, being a constant, is not preceded by such a need.

Introverts, on the whole, tend to be more introspective than extroverts, but extroverts can go through long periods of introspection when they are soul searching or making important changes in their lives. Once the sought after change or discovery has been made, extroverts are once again ready to go into action and/or to interact with others.

Introverts could happily introspect for long periods of time, while extroverts rarely last more than a few days at a stretch. Even in periods of deep introspection, extroverts tend to need ~~A~~activity breaks to keep their energy levels up.

In a nutshell:

Introspection is temporary. It *is* a position taken for a specific purpose (usually self-reflection). It does *not* affect the overall approach to life, new situations and new people.

Introversion is permanent. It is *not* a position taken for a specific purpose. It is an overall cautious approach to life, new situations and new people.

Extroversion, while permanent, tends to appear less constant than does introversion. Periods of contemplation, internal or external change, fear of certain situations or certain types of people, and insecurity in certain areas of life can lead an individual to assume the appearance of introversion. This behavior is, in fact, a reflection of introspection not introversion.