

LIFE IN **BALANCE**

Your guide to healthy living.

Understanding Introverts

Where do we get our energy? For introverts, recharging tends to be done while spending some time alone. For those with extroverted tendencies, energy is gained from other people and activity. With that said, there is a spectrum where people tend to land that consists of some introverted and some extroverted tendencies.

Society, however, tends to favor extroverts. Consider the manager who says, “Why are you so quiet in meetings?” Or the spouse who says, “Why don’t you talk to me about your day?” It can be especially hard in business and educational institutions where there is an unspoken preference to reward extroverts over introverts. Therefore, introverts frequently get marginalized and misunderstood.

“It really doesn’t matter how many times you tell an introverted person to become more extroverted—it will not happen,” said Beverly D. Flaxington, an instructor at Suffolk University in Boston. “It’s that introverts simply can’t change. Extroverts and introverts are essentially two different species. The difference between the two lies on a deeper genetic level, and manifests itself in early childhood through different neurological responses to external stimuli.”

Here are just a few tips for those with more extroverted tendencies to understand introverts:

- 1. Refrain from labels.** Labeling an introverted person as anti-social or disengaged is not helpful. Introverts don’t necessarily dislike other people; they just prefer smaller crowds, familiar faces and shorter interaction times.
- 2. Don’t take it personally.** Introverts don’t need to talk about everything, and they may not understand that others need to verbalize constantly. Just because they don’t keep up with the verbalizing does not mean they don’t care or they are not interested.
- 3. Listen.** If you think that introverts don’t like to talk or don’t have strong opinions, you couldn’t be more wrong. When it comes to the topics that interest them, introverts can be very talkative and passionate.
- 4. Be considerate.** The energy of introverts is literally being sucked out of them when there is constant engagement and discussion. So, if your introverted friend or colleague is reluctant to go out or join the group activities, don’t push them; they may need their downtime.
- 5. Don’t try to fix what is not broken.** We don’t expect extroverts to be more introverted, so we should stop trying to convince introverts to be more extroverted.

There is a lot of information explaining introverts and extroverts in books, seminars, videos and on the internet. But, you can also stop in and visit with your Employee Assistance Services.

– Excerpts from www.psychologytoday.com





March is Youth Art Month

Youth Art Month was founded by the Crayon, Water Color & Craft Institute, Inc., in cooperation with the National Art Education Association, in 1961 and was initially called Children's Art Month. Its goal was to "emphasize the value of participating in art for all children."

Art is good for children's mental health. Whether you make a simple drawing or collage, look at art or talk about it, creativity and the arts can help you:

- Express thoughts and emotions that can be hard to put into words.
- Lower stress and anxiety.
- Relax and feel calmer and happier.
- Connect with yourself on a deep level, no matter what you are going through.
- Find meaning in life experiences.
- Cope with grief and loss.
- Form new connections with others.
- Shift your focus away from pain or stressful thoughts to activities that are soothing, enjoyable and fun.
- Create something unique that gives you a sense of pleasure and accomplishment.

Source: The Power of the Creative Arts in Health and Healing, US News & World Report (Sept. 29, 2015)



Is Technology Causing You Anxiety?

If you noticed that you have been dealing with anxiety too much lately, use of technology could be one of the possible reasons.

① Technology makes us vulnerable to the big things.

The root of anxiety is uncertainty. We wonder: What will happen? What if all of this goes badly? What if they hate me? What if they think I am stupid? etc. Technology takes away this feeling of uncertainty when we are using it because we feel like we are in control of our world, and how everyone sees us. In reality, life continues to be uncertain and we are not prepared to deal with it.

② Technology allows us to avoid people.

Apps and features decrease our contact with other human beings, and somehow, we like it. We may end up lacking experience and predict the worst-case scenarios if we were to ask questions or discuss ideas directly with another person. We sometimes blame our avoidance of people, and uncomfortable feelings on being introverted or shy. It is natural to try to avoid awkwardness, boredom, self-consciousness, and anxiety. The drawback is that we can't learn how to deal with discomfort if we don't experience it.

③ Technology gave us another way to communicate.

When you communicate using text messages or social media, you have enough time to think about what you are going to say, compose it, edit it, and change it whenever you want. Face-to-face communication or even a phone call happens in real time with all of its "reality". Once we get used to this convenient way to communicate, we find it extremely hard to talk to someone face to face; which results in our feeling anxious, shaky, and very uncertain.

④ Social media is a public judgment

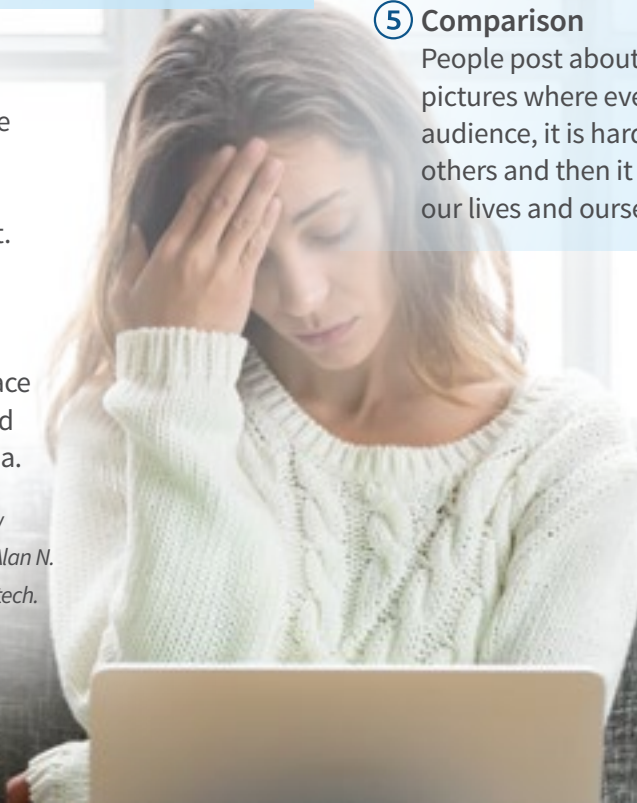
The "followers," "likes" and comments are all measured for everyone to see. Any public adoration or shaming happens in front of the whole world. Many young people suffer from social anxiety, which includes the fear of being judged as deficient, and social media is pushing that button. The difference between who we project and who we really are, leads to anxiety.

⑤ Comparison

People post about their vacations and family pictures where everyone is smiling. As an audience, it is hard to not compare our lives with others and then it is difficult to be satisfied with our lives and ourselves.

Technology is helpful and entertaining; however, we lose our skills of how to cope with inconvenience, uncertainty, and boredom, and be content. You don't have to toss your smartphone and ignore technology completely, but make some time for face-to-face conversations with people and limit your time on social media.

– This article is a blog post "This is How Technology Is Causing Us Anxiety" by Alan N. Gleason that was published on eyesintech.com on December 29, 2018.



Why Do Your Joints Hurt in the Winter?

You probably have a friend or relative who claims they can sense changes in the weather depending on the aches and pains in their joints. But, in many cases, that isn't as far-fetched as it may seem.

In just the past 4-5 years, two particular studies have weighed in on the question of whether weather has an impact on arthritis symptoms. And both found that yes, indeed, weather matters. Here are three theories that explore the possible reasons joint pain increases when the temperature drops, and what you can do to prevent the ache:

Barometric Pressure

As storms roll in and out, there are big changes in barometric pressure, which is the pressure exerted by our atmosphere. As barometric pressure decreases for an incoming storm, tissue expands, which puts pressure on nerves and pain receptors. The added pressure created by that change in the atmosphere may make symptoms of arthritis and other common joint issues more noticeable. Although nothing can counteract the pressure in the atmosphere, wearing unrestrictive layers while outdoors will keep you comfortable and warm, which may decrease the impact of weather-related pain.

Decreased Blood Flow

Our bodies are programmed to protect our vital organs by any means necessary. For example, when it's cold out, our body responds by using various reflexes that increase heart rate to provide some heat (shivering). Much of the heat created is redirected to our organs through increased blood flow to provide a protective barrier. However, this means our muscles and tissues in our extremities will receive less circulation, and might begin to contract or tighten. As a result, our joints won't move as freely, and we might experience pain trying to force them. To prevent this involuntary change in circulation, you should be sure to dress warm and protect all your extremities. Staying active also helps.

Tight Muscles

We tend to lose track of our exercise plan and move less during the colder months, which might be a cause for cold-weather joint pain. Our muscles provide support for the joints, and if those muscles become tired and stiff from lack of use during the cold and snowy months, it alters the mechanics of the joint and you lose some of that protection and notice more friction. Stretching regularly and staying active will help keep those muscles limber and provide optimal mechanics and protection for your joints.

Sources: health.harvard.edu, geisinger.org

BH-086

Confidential Helpline

800.236.4457

Counselors available 24/7



Oakview Professional Building
3000 Westhill Dr – Suite #100, Wausau, WI 54401

Aspirus Stevens Point Outpatient Therapies
2957 Church St, Stevens Point, WI 54481

Aspirus West Medical Office Building
410 Dewey Street (2nd Floor), Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

Curran Professional Park Building
315 S Oneida Ave, Rhinelander, WI 54501

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