



Quiet Pathways

Resource list: Parents of introverted teens

Definition of Introversion:

- Need time away from others to recharge
- Works better on own
- More private
- More independent
- Hard to manage making mistakes
- Largely misunderstood
- Teens often feel embarrassed about their quietness

Highly sensitive

- Feel emotions deeply
- Feel the emotions of others deeply
- Feelings get hurt easy
- Sensitive to how they are talked to
- Males- don't fit the mold for a typical male so might develop a strong dislike for themselves

Friendships

- Normal to have one or two friends and often are not in a group
 - Normal to want time on own after school/weekends
 - Concerning: no friends/friendships come and go
- Most common issue: don't feel good about who they are

Anxiety

- Most introverted people have some anxiety

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- Anxiety can be healthy- helps us make careful decisions
- Concerning: stops us from engaging in activities
- Sets up a pattern of avoidance; plan life around anxiety
- Goal is to manage anxiety- not avoid anxiety

School

- Often hardest years; junior high and high school
- Time to be more social
- Can feel awkward and overwhelmed by the noise and chaos
- Feel like they don't fit in
- Can feel invisible at school
- Concerning; school refusal, avoidance, sick days

Independent and private

- Introverts like to do things on our own and like to keep some thoughts to ourselves
- Independent; concerning when they don't ask for help at school or at home
- Private; concerning when no one really knows what is happening for them (parents feel disconnected)

Tips for parents

Tip #1: Learn about introversion/HSP

- Books
- Facebook groups
- Articles
- Kids need to be welcomed for who they are; this is where parents can make a significant difference

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Tip #2 Listen to whatever they will share

- Latest thing that happened in a video game
- Why they love a certain character in a book
- These kids won't share the hard stuff first

Tip #3 No advice giving

- These kids are sensitive to making mistakes
- Advice giving can feel like criticize and will likely shut them down
- Ask questions with curiosity
- Share your thought, followed by "What do you think?"

Tip #4: Look for emerging patterns of avoidance

- Avoiding feelings
- Avoiding anxiety
- Avoiding school
- Avoiding asking for help
- Avoiding sharing
- Make a plan to start this conversation- share your observations

How I help

- Workshops on topics related to introversion
- Counselling for introverted teens (including art therapy)
- Consulting with parents to help them with their introverted teens
- Counselling for introverted adults

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Recommended Books:

Introvert Power; Why your inner life is your hidden strength. Laurie Helgoe, PhD

The Introvert Advantage; how to thrive in an extrovert world, Marti Olsen Laney, Psy.D. (great chapter on the difference in brain structure of introverts- helps to make sense of why it takes introverts longer to respond in conversations)

The Highly Sensitive Child, Elaine Aron, Ph.D.
The Highly Sensitive Person, Elaine Aron, Ph.D.

Quiet; the power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking, Susan Cain (lots of great research on introversion- shows how introversion is not something to fix but to embrace)

Quiet Power; the secret strengths of introversion, Susan Cain (a guide for quiet kids and teens)

Hold on to your kids; why parents need to matter more than peers, Dr. Gordon Neufeld, PhD, Gabor Mate, MD (not on introversion, it is a fantastic book on parenting that I highly recommend)

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