



The Newsletter That Helps You Thrive as an Introvert—Your Way!

# i introvert insights

## Look for Introvert Oases Amidst the Activities of Your Daily Life

By Peter Vogt

Gill Orthodontics in Fargo, North Dakota seems like it was designed for introverts, by an introvert.

Which is probably true, considering who Dr. Jared Gill is.

Think young Mr. Rogers, but without the red sweater and blue deck shoes.

Dr. Gill is soft-spoken, cerebral, kind, and good-humored. And he clearly loves teeth, so much so that the dominant visual element in his office’s waiting area is a giant braces bracket hanging from the ceiling.

The introvert vibe at Gill Orthodontics is apparent the moment you walk in the door.

Yesterday, for example, as I arrived with my daughter Katie for her appointment, I offered up my customary “howdy” to the woman behind the front desk.

She responded not with a return “howdy” but instead with a silent hand gesture that we should take a seat in the waiting area next to the mega bracket.

Turns out she was on the phone.

But it wasn’t obvious at first because she was speaking on one of those beige (and thus hard to spot) headsets, which offer the added benefit to us lobby dwellers of never having to hear the phone ring while we’re on the premises.

But the real draw of Gill Orthodontics—speaking as someone who doesn’t have to get braces while I’m there, or have them tightened—is its mesmerizing ambience.

The big-screen TV on the wall isn’t blaring Jerry Springer reruns or breathless news-channel coverage. Instead, it pipes in music from an app called The Spa/Stingray Music as stunning photos of mountains, lakes, forests, and oceans stream by.

It’s like being at an Enya concert with Pink Floyd as the opening act (or vice versa), and more than once I have teetered on the edge of dozing off in that lobby.

Which got me to thinking yesterday (when it almost happened once again): If you’re anything like me as an introvert, you are probably drawn to similar places and environments.

May 2023

### INSIDE

Tips, Tricks, and Tools	2
It’s an Introvert’s Life	4
Practical Research	6
Reflective Reads	6
Introvert Inspirations	8

*Continued on page 7*

# TIPS, TRICKS, AND TOOLS

## MANAGING YOUR MINDSET

### Practice *Pyt* to Keep Life's Hassles in Proper Perspective

It's so easy—so **human**—to get overly hung up on life's daily hassles, especially the ones that are beyond your control.

Don't fall into the trap, says the Danish concept of *pyt* (pronounced "pid"), which essentially means "let it go," "oh, well," or "everything is OK," according to writer Susan McQuillan.

*Pyt* is more than a mere word, McQuillan stresses in her recent *Psychology Today* website article entitled "Practice *Pyt*: A Natural Way to Reduce Stress."

"[I]t is something of a philosophi-

cal approach to any unfortunate but ultimately unimportant event," McQuillan writes.

"[It's] about accepting that little things go wrong all the time, and [that] there's no benefit to getting worked up over them."

So, for example, the next time you're stuck in traffic or you're waiting for a meeting to start because someone's late, instead of letting (understandable) feelings of frustration or anger overtake you, try simply saying—aloud—"pyt," as a way of reminding yourself that this, too, shall pass.

"Using *pyt*," McQuillan stresses, "doesn't mean suppressing honest feelings of disappointment or irrita-



tion. It means not wasting any more time or energy on a disappointing or irritating situation than it's worth."

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Request a Daily "Solo Hour" When You're New on the Job

The first few days in a new job can be tough, especially if you're an introvert and you're pouring all kinds of extra energy into meeting your new colleagues, learning your new responsibilities, and more.

"[I]t can feel like an endless torrent of enforced social interaction, and while we might be able to adapt to our most friendly and approachable persona, it's draining," says freelance writer Zoe Lambourne.

What can you do to keep yourself replenished in the short term and healthy and happy in the long term?

Ask for a daily "solo hour," Lambourne suggests in her recent *Medium* website article entitled "Introvert Survival Tips for the First Week in a New Job."

"Speak with your manager to see if the induction schedule can allow you an interval during the day to write up notes, review everything you've learned, and identify any gaps in your understanding," Lambourne writes.

After all, she points out:

*"Training in a new role tends to be intense. You'll probably spend much of the day shadowing another person or having someone overseeing you while you learn the ropes. It's draining, as you don't have much time to take a breather while you're under pressure to keep up."*



## Tame Your Inner Critic with a Purposeful Dose of *Balance*

You'll probably never get rid of your *inner critic*—that aggravating voice in your head that's always yapping at you about your perceived shortcomings.

But you can at least neutralize it, says Australian career coach and mindfulness expert Kate James, by harnessing the concept of **balance**.

After all, James writes in her recent blog post entitled “5 Ways to Quieten Your Inner Critic,” the voice gets its power from being so utterly **unbalanced** when it's talking to you that you can't keep up.

“[I]t's generally ready to remind you of your failings, but it's just

as ready to dismiss your achievements,” James points out.

When your inner critic dominates your thoughts, James says—as it is wont to do—you become fearful and overly cautious, and you constantly feel like you're falling short. That's because your brain is hearing only one side—the worst side—of the given story at hand.

So it's crucial for you to “pause and take a few breaths and make a conscious choice to connect with the part of yourself you might call your ‘wise’ or ‘true’ self,” James says.

“From this place, it's likely you'll find that you can gently challenge the internal judgment and replace it with a more balanced and grounded perspective.”

How do you do that, practically speaking?

The trick, says James, is to identify the key elements of your inner critic's repertoire—the messages it routinely relies on to get on your nerves and into your head—so that you can then develop ways to actively reframe those messages.

“If your critic's message is, for example, ‘I'm not confident in group settings,’ you might instead say to yourself: ‘My preference is to catch up one on one,’” James says.

“The key is to begin to accept your difference without adding judgment.”

It's hard work, James stresses, but it will help you “make life choices that are genuinely energizing.”

## MAINTAINING YOUR FOCUS

### To Protect Your Blocks of Focus Time, “Frame” Them

Sometimes (often?), even when you intentionally set aside, say, two hours for the kind of uninterrupted, focused work you thrive on as an introvert, you end up being interrupted anyway.

Maybe you even interrupt **yourself** in these situations as you dwell on worries or upcoming decisions you need to make.

Sound familiar?

If so, California business coach and mentor Nahid Casazza has a solution for you: a technique she calls *framing* your focus time.

“[It's] exactly what it sounds like,” Casazza writes in her recent blog post entitled “Framing Focus Time.”

“It's creating a block of time on either side of your focus time to ‘frame’ it.”

Suppose, for example, that you're a manager and you want to focus deeply on your administrative work, with your door closed, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day.

Devote 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. to reaching out to the members of your team to see what they need, Casazza says.

“This process of proactively reaching out to people and setting a clear expectation of when they will next hear from you works not only with direct reports, but also with customers, families, teammates, and anyone you think might interrupt you while you are trying to focus,” Casazza stresses.



# IT'S AN INTROVERT'S LIFE

## When You Need to Be in “The Zone,” the Phone’s Got to Go

By Peter Vogt

I was working late in the afternoon, writing a short article about (of all things) maintaining your focus **while** you’re working, when I heard a soft knock on the door of my downstairs home office.

It was my lovely wife, Adrienne. My first thought, unfortunately, was: *“She should know better. She knows I’m writing, and she knows it’s hard for me to get my focus back once I’ve been interrupted.”*

But she had her reasons.

Make that reason, singular.

“Katie [our 15-year-old daughter] is texting you,” Adrienne whispered as she poked her head in the door.

I didn’t know Katie was texting me because, as I always do when I’m trying to focus, I had intentionally left my phone upstairs—out of sight, out of mind, out of earshot, and, crucially, out of attention range.

*“Why the hell is Katie texting me?”* I thought to myself, and *“why does it matter **right now**, so much so that Adrienne would interrupt me when she knows full well she’ll be, well, interrupting me when I’m in the middle of something important?!”*

I glanced at the clock in the corner of my computer screen. It read 5:19 p.m.

Then a shot of adrenaline ran through me—milliseconds after I (finally) remembered that I was supposed to have picked Katie up from her friend Mya’s house at 5.

I hustled upstairs and grabbed my

phone off the top of the living room couch. Here’s what Katie had texted:

Dad????  
Where are ya  
????????????

(Yes, that’s 12 question marks.)  
My response:

Oopy daisy  
Heading over  
I was writing

Katie’s reaction:

Ah

Now, you may notice a certain nonchalance in Katie’s response, a certain “nothing I haven’t seen before” routine.

That’s because it’s nothing she hasn’t seen before: Earlier this year, when school was still on, the same thing happened, and I was late picking her up after classes let out.

“My father forgot me,” she liked to remind everyone after that. (And now she has even more evidence to back up that claim.)

I prefer to think of it not as forgetting to pick up my adorable, forgiving child (*he said in a lame attempt to redeem himself*), but instead as doing a superb job of setting up the conditions we introverts need to get into, and stay in, The Zone—that magical place of deep concentration where we do our best work.

And you know what the key—the



one key—is to getting into and staying in The Zone?

That damn phone—as in making sure it’s nowhere near you.

Yes, there are other things you need to do as well, and I do. I close all other programs on my computer except the one I’m working with. I clean up my space before I get going. I shut my door.

But nothing, nothing, is more critical than making the phone scarce.

“Why not just turn the ringer off? Why not just turn notifications off?” you might ask, fairly.

It’s a good idea in theory.

But in reality, the phone still wins anyway. It buzzes while it’s sitting on your desk, interrupting you. It vibrates when it’s in your pocket, interrupting you. It’s made—designed, after all—to interrupt you.

So the next time you really need to get something done, in The Zone, I urge you: Forget about your phone for a while, intentionally.

Just don’t forget about your kid, or anyone else, in the process.

Er ... oopy daisy.

Gotta go!

No more defending your introverted ways.  
No more pretending to be the extravert you're not.

*It's line-in-the-sand time.*

It's time to ...

# BE YOU!

Online Course



BE THE INTROVERT YOU ARE!

The Introvert's Way to a Healthy, Happy Life

Run your own life, your own way. Starting now. Learn more and enroll at:

**[course.introvertinsights.com](https://course.introvertinsights.com)**

P.S. — Thank you for being an *Introvert Insights* subscriber! With my gratitude, please take \$100 off the course tuition by using the following exclusive code with the “Have a coupon?” link on the ordering page:

**SAND**

*This subscribers-only offer expires June 30, 2023.*

# PRACTICAL RESEARCH

## Introverts Who Are Depressed Have Their Own People Needs

If you're an introvert and you're going through depression, you'll want to handle your interactions with other people a little differently than extraverts might in the same situation, suggests a recent study in *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*.

The study examined the *theory of leisure coping*, which says that leisure activities can help you when you're depressed by diverting your attention away from negative events, elevating your mood, and boosting companionship opportunities with others—all of which, according to the theory, help you feel better.

The study's authors, however, suspected that the "boosting companionship" part of the theory might

actually result in "greater distress" for introverts, since they "are more easily overwhelmed by social stimuli compared to extraverts."

That's essentially what the researchers found in the study, which involved 155 adults with depression who completed a leisure coping strategies assessment as well as a brief personality questionnaire.

Whereas companionship with others was "moderately associated" with a reduction in depressive symptoms for the extraverts in the study, "there was nearly no association between companionship and depressive symptoms among introverts," the researchers note.

"Overall," the researchers conclude, "the results suggest that leisure companionship may be a more effective coping strategy for

extraverts, but an ineffective coping strategy for introverts."

That said, however, the researchers stress that leisure companionship is not at all "completely pointless" for introverts who are going through depression.

"Although degrees might differ, the need to belong is known as a universal need for humans," the researchers note.

"Thus, it should not be assumed that all introverts do not need companionship; however, they may gain benefit from focusing on just a few relationships and not see 'socializing in leisure' to be beneficial."

**Source:** "The Role of Extraversion in the Effectiveness of Leisure Coping on Depressive Symptoms," *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 57(1) (March 2, 2023), pp. 1-12.

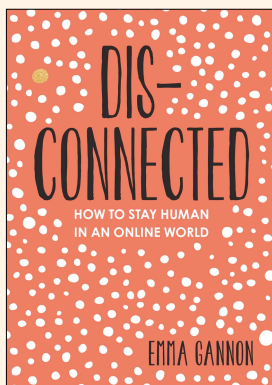
# REFLECTIVE READS

## *Dis-Connected: A Call to Truly Think About Your Online Life*

The phrase "thought-provoking" is probably the No. 1 descriptor used in book reviews, so much so that it has become a cliché.

But in the case of Emma Gannon's book *Dis-Connected: How to Stay Human in an Online World*, the author really is trying to provoke thought—literally.

Gannon wants us to step back and think, intentionally, about how our use of the Internet these days (especially social media) is affecting our real-life connections and relationships with other people.



Gannon cites her own introversion as part of what drove the curiosity and concern that compelled her to write the book.

Even though she's had many followers over the years on social media platforms, she writes that "[t]he

connections I made felt extremely shallow over time because so many people were liking or commenting or leaving me a fire emoji, but I was lacking the deeper connection."

*Dis-Connected*, Gannon stresses, is not a "digital detox" book; she's not telling us to go offline entirely.

The name of Gannon's popular podcast—*Ctrl Alt Delete*—is a better way of framing the book's intent.

In the world of PC computers, you press the *Ctrl*, *Alt*, and *Delete* keys at the same time to clear the computer's "brain" and start anew.

It's time to do the same, Gannon advises, with our approach to our online activities.

Continued from page 1

You may even seek them out, though probably subconsciously.

Why not seek them out **consciously** instead?

You can—and without making a big deal out of it—by simply incorporating that mindset into your everyday life wherever and whenever possible.

## Oh, the Places You Can Go

Think about all the typical things you do in your everyday life.

You go grocery shopping. You eat out. You get the occasional haircut. You go to the movies. And on and on and on.

Why not be more purposeful about the places and environments where you do these things—these things you're already doing anyway, and that you will continue to do throughout your life?

When my wife Adrienne and I

and our family lived in suburban Minneapolis, for example, we sometimes chose to shop at grocery stores like Lunds & Byerlys or Kowalski's Markets for one seemingly ridiculous reason: The floors were carpeted there, and thus the shopping experience was far less noisy than it otherwise would have been.

And thus our reason for choosing those stores wasn't as ridiculous (to us, at least) as it might sound to others.

I use a similar strategy here in my new, adopted hometown of Moorhead, Minnesota whenever I need to go to the post office.

Instead of going to the bigger and relatively more impersonal Moorhead branch, I go to the tiny one in the nextdoor town of Dilworth, where I can generally walk right up to the counter—and where, over the years, I've gotten to know a couple of the workers on a first-name basis.

Bonus!

## Consider the *When*, Too

Keep in mind, too, that sometimes it's not so much **where** you go but **when** you go there.

I can tell you from firsthand experience, for example, that it is possible to have a calm, quiet experience at a normally nutty place like Costco.

How? By going there at 7:30 p.m. on a cold Tuesday night in January, when, aside from a few stragglers, the only other people in the store are staff members who are cleaning up as they prepare to close the place.

You won't always be able to be in the right place at the right time, of course.

But as you go about the routine activities that make up your days, you can give yourself what you need as an introvert more often—and more easily—than you might think.

Just pick your places, and your times, with your introverted temperament in mind.





1036 38th Street South  
Moorhead, MN 56560 USA

### Get *Introvert Insights* Each Month—Free!

If you'd like to receive, via email,  
your own link to the PDF of *Introvert  
Insights* each month, sign up at:

[IntrovertInsights.com/  
Introvert-Insights-Newsletter](http://IntrovertInsights.com/Introvert-Insights-Newsletter)

We'll use the information you supply  
only for *Introvert Insights* purposes.  
We will never share it. Thanks!



Editor and Publisher:  
Peter Vogt, M.S.  
[peter@introvertinsights.com](mailto:peter@introvertinsights.com)



*Introvert Insights* is published monthly  
by Introvert Insights, LLC, 1036 38th  
Street South, Moorhead, MN 56560.

[IntrovertInsights.com](http://IntrovertInsights.com)

Copyright © 2023,  
Introvert Insights, LLC.  
All rights reserved.

## INTROVERT INSPIRATIONS

“[A]n individual who may be considered introverted could simply be someone who enjoys the comfort of their space for a whole host of reasons. If it is not negatively impacting them in a significant way, then who am I to say they should change that?”

~ Lauren Theresa

“Solitude is not a state to fear but an experience to seek—an opportunity to connect with our deepest self and draw strength from within.”

~ Holly Burns

“Alone time encourages self-development, self-acceptance, and self-empowerment, enabling us to become the best versions of ourselves.”

~ Sumedha Tripathi

“We [introverts] have to first of all understand how we show up. Then you can tailor your environment to fit. That’s what helps us thrive.”

~ Jevonya Allen