



***Discovering God's gifts, purpose, and plan
that are uniquely YOU.***

Missional Living for Introverts

In the classes and workshops that I teach on missional living, participants who have introverted / reserved personality-types often ask me, *"Do you have any practical examples of what missional living / neighborhood ministry looks like for introverts?"* Below are a few examples of what missional living looks like for several of my introverted / reserved personality-type friends who work with me on staff at Perimeter Church. I think you'll find this to be encouraging!

A Few Interesting Observations

While there certainly are differences in how introverts and extroverts relate to people, there are also differences between "task-oriented" and "people-oriented" personalities that are as significant as the introvert / extrovert differences. For example, when it comes to "door to door" evangelism, the divide between comfort and discomfort is more between task-oriented and people-oriented personalities rather than introvert vs. extrovert personalities. I've discovered that there are plenty of extroverts who dislike the thought of going door to door as much (if not more) than introverts. The task-oriented introvert may fear talking to people they don't know, but the people-oriented extrovert fears being rejected. Different fears. Same dislike.

Task-oriented personalities have an easier time being more direct in their conversations and questions.

Task-oriented personalities often feel quite comfortable asking questions that people-oriented personalities are hesitant to ask. People-oriented personalities are very sensitive to how they make other people feel and don't dare risk putting someone on the spot. They would rather err on building rapport, relationship, and trust than to risk being perceived as challenging a thought or belief or trying to advance an agenda.

The DISC personality assessment identifies 4 primary personality-types, each consisting of:

- D – extroverted / task-oriented
- I – extroverted / people-oriented
- S – introverted / people-oriented
- C – introverted / task-oriented

Missional living looks differently, not just for 2 different personality-types of introvert and extrovert, but for 4 personality-types. For details, see the chart that follows on the next page. As you read the personality descriptions, think about how each personality translates into missional living and personal relationships. There really is no "one size fits all" when it comes to missional living.

Which personality-type are you? How has this information helped and encouraged you?

Missional Living Personality-Types

<p style="text-align: center;">Extroverted / Task-Oriented (D – Driver / Dominant)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confident and comfortable in the driver’s seat (i.e. in leadership roles) ▪ <u>Characteristics</u>: Dominant, Direct, Demanding, Decisive, Confident, Problem-Solver, Risk Taker, Self-Starter ▪ <u>Value to Team</u>: Bottom Lone Organizer, High Value on Time, Innovative, Challenges the Status Quo ▪ <u>Greatest Fear</u>: Being taken advantage of ▪ <u>Leadership Style</u>: Take control and be in charge. Does not like people telling them what to do. Likes to delegate tasks to others. Direct and demanding (i.e. no nonsense). 	<p style="text-align: center;">Extroverted / People-Oriented (I – Inspiring / Influencing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loves people and loves to have fun; people love to be around you; ▪ <u>Characteristics</u>: Impressive, Enthusiastic, Trusting, Optimistic, Persuasive, Impulsive, Talkative, Things out loud, Emotional. ▪ <u>Value to Team</u>: Creative problem-solver; great encourager; motivates others to achieve; positive sense of humor; negotiates conflicts; peace maker. ▪ <u>Greatest Fear</u>: Rejection ▪ <u>Leadership Style</u>: Inspiring and enthusiastic; naturally great presenter; talkative; loves a crowd; very positive.
<p style="text-align: center;">Introverted / Task-Oriented (C – Careful / Cautious)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the smartest people in the room; life-long learners ▪ <u>Characteristics</u>: Competent, cautious, calculating, conscientious, accurate, analytical, precise, systematic, fact-finder, contemplative. ▪ <u>Value to Team</u>: Reality anchor, conscientious, thorough in all activities, defines situation; gathers, criticizes, and tests information. ▪ <u>Motivation</u>: Quality and Correctness ▪ <u>Leadership Style</u>: Competent, goes by the book and does everything according to policy; thorough and detail-oriented; very informative; serious about doing the job exactly right; provides lots of information, facts, and focuses on the problem and pitfalls. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Introverted / People-Oriented (S – Stable / Steady)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the kindest people in the room; love to serve others; loyal friends, deep and long-lasting relationships ▪ <u>Characteristics</u>: Steady, faithful, good listener, team player, predictable, understanding, friendly, shy, security-oriented, servant, submissive, never gives up on relationships. ▪ <u>Value to Team</u>: reliable, dependable, loyal team worker, good listener, patient and empathetic. ▪ <u>Motivation</u>: Stability and Support ▪ <u>Greatest Fear</u>: Loss of Security ▪ <u>Leadership Style</u>: sweet, steady and stable, not demanding, friendly and loyal, passive and laid back, can miss opportunities due to caution, dislikes change, reliable, relaxed, reserved

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Missional Living Experiences

Debra's Story

For me it was figuring out how to leverage my strengths without too many people involved.

- Have people over for dinner, dessert, etc. but limit the number of people. I prefer just one couple, but with some mental prep can gather with a max of 8.
- Serve on a Board as the Secretary – I am just the note taker, email sender, task list maker. My role although important, does not require me to stand in front of lots of people and talk – that is the President's job!
- I get put myself in places of service with a group so that I can quietly connect to a few people. So not a Business Networking group, but the Community Garden group.
- I am able to connect through my daughter to a few moms, at my pace, so that I am not relationally overwhelmed. Again small and deep.
- I am a regular at many places in my community so that I can get to know people one on one.

Cheryl's Story

I am the last person to ask about this since I am not home much and when I am home, my kids need me or I am too exhausted to adventure out, but we have adventured out in the past a lot more than what we are doing now. In thinking of this I tell myself – think big, start small, go deep. List out different ways that might work to be missional. Start with something small, like having people over for dessert one night. Develop those relationship. I think the more difficult thing is being a SHY introvert – which is what I am. To overcome my shyness, I tell myself have 20 seconds of courage (from the movie "We bought a Zoo") and to be strong and courageous (from the Bible). 😊 Most importantly, I have also noticed that when I pray for people and opportunities, God moves and it is exciting!

Things we have done in the past:

- Baked bread, put our contact name on it, and delivered on Halloween night (since most people are home then and we could introduce ourselves)
- Talk to people when you are in the driveway/mailbox
- Had people over for dessert/dinner
- Had kids over – play, bake goodies
- Host a cul-de-sac fall festival (every family brings an outside game for others to play – like ring toss or throw a football through a hula-hoop – have some music playing)

Erin's Story

My primary strategy is to connect myself with extroverted people. I let them gather the crowd and then I put the plans together. 😊 My husband and I love to have 1-2 couples over at a time. I can't do anything more than that. It exhausts me! I don't have any trouble initiating conversations with people I don't know, because I'm not so much affected by what they might think of me. That's not my fear. 😊

Brandon's Story

I recently attended the National Church IT Conference and I lead a spiritual breakout session where the topic of discussion came up around sharing your faith as an introvert. I shared our "Greet – Befriend – Invite" initiative and they loved it! Any introvert can GBI especially when you think about it in the context of just greet this time, then befriend over time, then invite over time. Broken up like that makes it sound very easy and pressure free. Also, God's doing the work, not you. Just be.

My car broke down so I had to Uber to and from airport. On the way, I was praying for an opportunity to talk to Uber driver about my faith and she was mentioning somethings she heard and loved about Perimeter (since that's where she picked me up from). Then she asked how I came on staff. I started to tell her my nickel and dime story about my career and then something came to mind about needing to tell her how I found out about Perimeter as a foundational piece of the puzzle. I think shared how I came to faith and then coasted right into my career and it flowed really well. I didn't make her respond with something like, what do you think about Jesus, or what is your perspective on religion. That's the point that introverts start to break down. I'm going to have to have a response to their response, which I'm uncertain of what that will be, and then I'll need a response to the next statement and then the next, etc. That's when our energy level starts to go down fast and we want to get out of the conversation. Just have the conversation with no expectations.

I think the quote Bob Cargo used a couple of weeks ago from a book he was reading really resonates with introverts. It was something like don't feel like you have to sneak the gospel into every conversation you have. I think the key is to encourage introverts to just be yourself and not feel like you have to become extroverted to be successful at sharing the gospel. Anyway, hope that helps!

Brad's Story

From our experiences over the years, it has been helpful to be involved in neighborhood things like swim team for the kids or ALTA tennis. This was a great way to meet neighbors and build relationships. Plus, it's great to be married to an extrovert. That is always helpful for an introvert. Overall, I would say this is a tough area for me and I wish I had better examples.

Eleanor's Story

I am not a true introvert, but I am a 50 on the scale of 0 to 100. Being with a lot of people can wear me out so I can be very happy being a homebody. I have 2 suggestions that may be helpful:

1. Team up with an extrovert.

Ed and I both have hospitality in our top three spiritual gifts, but Ed is off the chart extroverted.

Working as a team, he constantly takes me out of my comfort zone. Saturday night we just had a block party dinner on our front driveway. It was very well received.

2. Find something you do enjoy doing.

I love small dinner parties. Three couples is a perfect arrangement at a dinner table for conversation.

Four couples, and the talk can split between two groups. Inviting two couples on the street

into our home is very doable for me. We do pot lucks so I usually ask for a side and salad, while I prepare the entrée and dessert. Something about a small party feels very manageable and less stressful. Keeping it relaxed makes it more fun for me too. When it becomes fun for me, I am much more likely to do it more often.

I am also in a neighborhood book club because, you guessed it, I love reading! I only have to host once a year and bring dessert once a year, so once again, a lot of fun, but not a lot of work.