

# *Linda Embraces Her Introversion And Finds Her Ideal Job*

by Jill Richmond-Covey

When I met Linda she was 42 and her children, now eight and ten, no longer needed as much of her time and energy. Motherhood touched her deeply and gave her focus, confidence and purpose. Yet, she knew that if she continued with mothering as she had been, it would ultimately be limiting for both herself and her children. She knew her life was calling for change, for her to open to some additional purpose, but she was hanging back, uncertain of what new path to follow.

She had heard about The Highlands Ability Battery (THAB) and thought that an assessment of her abilities would give her some solid ground on which to stand as she explored her future options.

On The Highlands Ability Battery, Linda showed a very strong preference for introversion. She preferred spending time alone or with one or two people. She liked structure and purpose to her interactions; conversation for the sake of conversation was not important. And being in large groups for an extended period of time tired her. She needed time alone or with her closest friends to re-charge. While her prior work as a pre-school teacher delighted and challenged her intellectually and emotionally and was aligned with her values and interests, it exhausted her as a full-time job.

While she had known these things about herself to some extent, she had seen many of them as problems and limitations rather than as strengths in both her work and personal life.

Introversion, originally defined by Carl Jung, is an attitude toward life, where the person has a preference for comprehending any situation or subject through his inner understanding of outer facts. The extrovert, on the other hand prefers engaging with people, discussing the external facts. Some people have a strong preference toward one or the other and always derive more energy from their preferred approach.

Our cultural bias toward extroversion often leaves the introverted person thinking she has a problem. It is more accurate to think of the introvert and the extrovert contributing something equally important to the world.

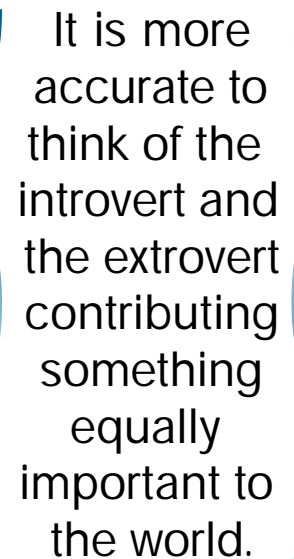
When we fully accept our particular degree of preference for introversion or extroversion, embrace the strengths this gives us, and plan our work and personal lives accordingly, we can go on to find ways to relate to the other side of the preference coin. The introvert can develop their social skills, the extrovert, their abilities to introspect.

I was to learn that Linda was interested in ideas of psychology and education. She wrote wonderful poems. Her introversion supported her intuitive, insightful, imaginative and perceptive qualities. Writing was an important means of communication and of finding clarity for her. Reading and then applying what she had read was her preferred way of learning. She enjoyed organizing materials and processes and cleaning closets. Linda is also a Generalist and feels most comfortable working with others and doing a variety of things.

For Linda, taking THAB was the impetus for several significant shifts in self-awareness that enabled her to find the useful aspects of her introversion and ways to work with it. This and understanding her entire ability profile, provided the foundation she needed to begin her vocational exploration.

With time, Linda found her ideal job. She is curriculum coordinator for a non-profit childcare center. This job gives her alone time to think and implement the theory and practice of early childhood education. She has structured interactions with the goal of facilitating the professional development of teaching staff. Time spent with children both observing and interacting is part of the job. Her insight into children and the setting is put to use. She works very closely with the program director. Writing is an important tool for communicating with co-workers. When she needs a break, she can organize supplies.

Linda courageously faced this life turning point and walked into her future knowing how to share her gifts with the community. It was a privilege to walk at her side!



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