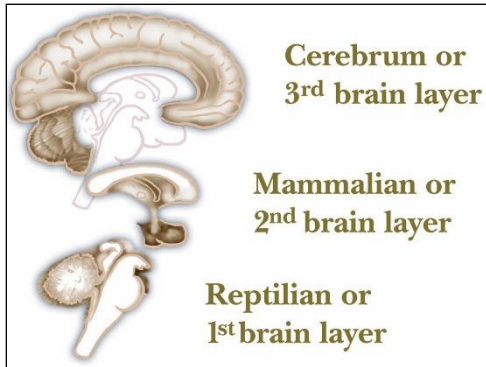


Extroversion-Ambiversion-Introversion Preference

Copyright ©2014 & 2020 Arlene R. Taylor, PhD www.arlenetaylor.org

The terms Extroversion, Ambiversion, and Introversion refer to the brain’s innate set-point of alertness and indicate the amount of stimulation in the environment that is optimum for a specific brain. Think of your set-point as the typical, stable level at which your brain and body function most energy-efficiently.



Located in the Reptilian or first brain layer, the Reticular Activating System (RAS) is believed to create this set-point, also referred to as the brain’s innate arousal or level of alertness. A brain’s position on the Extroversion-Ambiversion-Introversion (EAI) continuum may be equal to or even more primary than one’s brain bent.

Although society at one time tried to place human brains in one of two categories—extroverted or introverted—additional research has shown that to be too simplistic. Hans Eysenck’s research led him to believe that the brains of human beings can be distributed along a metaphorical EAI Continuum based on their innate set-point:

Extroverted Brains	Ambiverted Brains	Introverted Brains
--------------------	-------------------	--------------------

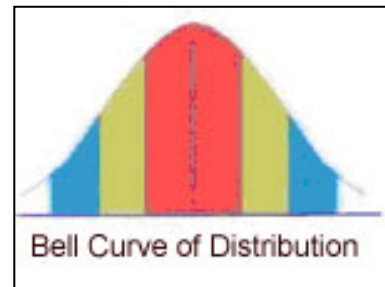
- Extroverted brains are less alert when fully awake. They function well in situations of high stimulation and high stress that would be difficult if not impossible for other brains to handle. Extroverted brains crave and seek environmental stimulation in order to feel alive and alert. Without it they may become bored, get into difficulty when seeking stimulation (e.g., unintended delinquency) or fall asleep.
- Ambiverted brains are estimated to fall in the middle of the continuum and are moderately alert when fully awake. They function best in environments with moderate or average levels of stimulation. They need a balance between moderate stimulation and recovery time.
- Introverted brains are highly alert when awake. They tend to seek lower than average levels of environmental stimulation in order to avoid becoming overwhelmed. Introverted brains may simply shut down when the stimulation levels become too high or are prolonged. The body may even become ill. After all, getting “sick” forces the brain to be in an environment that is protected from high levels of stimulation.

All these brain are needed in society and have a place to fill in a whole-brained world.

Some newer dictionaries list two spellings: *Extroversion* and *Extraversion*. Both terms refer to the same concept. Extroversion is the spelling used on this website.

My goal is to stimulate your thinking and observation, trigger increased awareness at an individual level, jumpstart your application of the information to everyday living, and provide options for behaviors that are more likely to result in positive outcomes. Although I have relied heavily on brain function research, a plethora of studies, and discussions with brain researchers and other experts, the summaries represent my own brain's understanding of the data.

Typically, conclusions from research projects and studies are presented in the form of generalizations. Because each human brain develops uniquely, there are always exceptions. Researched conclusions apply to about two-thirds of the population (e.g., the red portions on the drawing of the bell curve of distribution that represent the first standard deviation on either side of the mean). The other third of the population may match some of the generalizations less closely.



If some of your personal characteristics / behaviors don't match a specific generalization in the Practical Applications section, it doesn't invalidate the research. It does exemplify individual uniqueness, as no two brains are ever identical in structure, function, or perception, not even the brains of identical twins. Avoid discounting first-impression mismatches too quickly. Perhaps you have not had the opportunity of being exposed to specific types of activities, or built the requisite skills, or your personal past experiences have impacted you in unusual ways.