



LNP 173

How the Introvert Shines: Tips About the Quiet People

This is Pat Iyer with *Iyer's Insights*, one of the two weekly shows that make up Legal Nurse Podcast.

The last job I had was in 1986. My boss was the Vice President of Nursing. Not knowing I was one of the introverts, she would observe me quietly sitting in staff meetings with the upper management of the nursing department. After a while she said, "You know Pat, you don't talk enough. You just sit there and listen, and watch. I'm really uncomfortable with you just sitting there quietly."

I thought, "What is this woman's problem? This is me."

Are you an introvert?

Does this describe you? An introvert processes information differently than does an extrovert. Introverts are

- Reserved
- Quiet and solitary
- Detailed oriented – which makes us good LNCs!
- Thoughtful and need to mull things over
- Think before speaking
- Rarely interrupt when other talk
- Are good listeners
- Don't like to wing it

Part of the world doesn't understand the quieter introspective person. A recent study shows that introverts constitute half of the American population. Yet introverts are very misunderstood unless they have developed the ability to communicate with colleagues, co-workers and help them to understand what introverts need in order to function well at the workplace.

What I could have told my boss was, "Hey, I really am like everyone else. I just need to process information differently." Quietness can make people uncomfortable as I realized with my Vice President of Nursing who was reacting to my personality.

How else are introverts different?

In addition to processing information differently, an introvert expends energy differently. Does this describe you?

- You recharge in solitude.
- A busy environment with hectic activity takes a physical and mental toll.
- Overstimulating environments overwhelm you.

An introvert's energy is like a pitcher of water. Every morning we wake up and the pitcher is full. With every subsequent interaction, a little bit of that water from the pitcher gets emptied.

If we introverts don't have quiet time or introspection time to refill that pitcher, we're going to be cranky. If you have a job that might be outwardly facing in where you're dealing with people on the phone or perhaps discussing a case, it's a good idea to build in some time where maybe you take five minutes. Put down the phone, go outside and breathe the air. Go for a quick walk and come back in. We absolutely must recharge.

Besides the communication aspect, which I mentioned, we also tend to process first and then speak. That might be something that others need to learn about us so that they know what we need to function.

How introverts adapt to an extroverted world

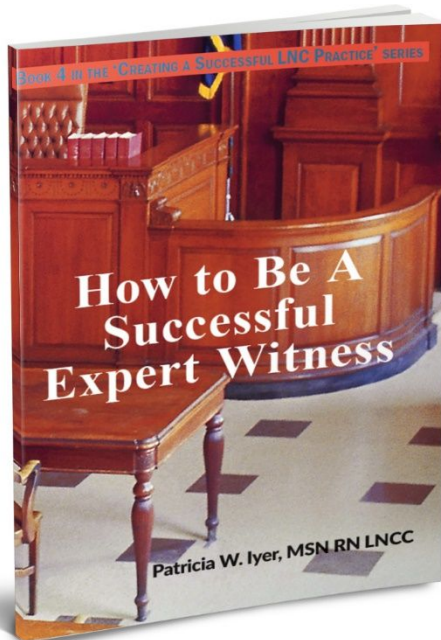
Just as extroverts need to understand introverts, there is also a need for introverts to modify their behavior. If you are an introvert, you might have

- Suppressed your quiet nature to survive in a louder, extroverted world
- Been pressured as a child to make friends
- Been forced to pretend to be more outgoing than you are

The result could leave you feeling drained and exhausted. I realize now I should have pushed myself more to make contributions in staff meetings, which would have reassured my boss that I was taking in and also giving back.

Introverted expert witnesses can be stars in the courtroom. If you listened to LNP 172, you heard Marion Finklestein talk with my cohost, Kelly Campbell about expert witness testimony.

It is possible to be a successful introverted expert witness. I did it for 25 years. Introverts typically do not like to be caught off-guard. And being an expert witness is all about being prepared, whether you are extroverted or introverted.



There is a lot at stake in medical malpractice cases. You want to do your best. I put together a book specifically for LNCs who are expert witnesses or considering taking on this rewarding role. It is called *How to be a Successful Expert Witness*.

Use this book to read through, refer to, and consult to gain a greater understanding of the role of the expert witness. I urge you to approach being an expert on a case as a tremendous opportunity and a huge responsibility. Engage in your work with professionalism and commitment. The attorney and his client are counting on you.

This book draws on my experiences both as an expert witness and one who has trained hundreds of experts – nurses, physicians, and a variety of healthcare professionals. Order your copy at <http://LNC.tips/expertwitness> and use the code listened to get a 25% discount on this book.

Now let's return to the show.

Preparation, Preparation, Preparation

If we know we need to testify, you can find us days before or the night before prepping so that we can anticipate every question or every point that we need to make so that it comes out solidly and fluently. Very often if an introvert is asked a question “out of the blue” we might look startled. Body language can even constrict because it may be something that we had not anticipated.

We're formulating an answer. We want to do our best. We can be a little bit of perfectionist, so that can be a situation where we're not comfortable. We really like to know in advance what's going to happen so that we shine and that we're at our best. Also, we don't want to let anyone else down, so we may carry a tremendous sense of personal responsibility when it comes to performing on the job and communicating effectively.

Introverted Expert Witnesses on the Stand

For an introvert to be cross-examined on a witness stand or in a deposition conference room is a real challenge. We have the unsettling feeling of wanting to be sure that we're doing a great job for our client. We don't always have the fluidity of speech that an extrovert might have who might take off with an answer and just keep talking.

The introvert has to introspect, think about and process that question knowing that the person who's asking the question is an attorney who already knows where he wants that expert to go. The whole pathway of questioning is often planned in advance.

All eyes are on us while we think of the answer – too long, and it makes us look like we are unsure or trying to avoid the question.

I can attest to the fact that it is possible to master this role as an introvert with a lot of preparation. We do not want to be caught off-guard, look foolish, or have to say, "I don't know the answer to that question". That certainly influences how people perform in the legal arena when they're introverts and extroverts.

Introverts typically do not interrupt. Extroverts may be more fluid in their speech, but it doesn't mean that they're going to say it the same way twice. You may find inconsistencies in what they say because they were on their feet just talking from the top of their head. And they run the real risk of volunteering too much information.

Introverted expert witness must have a lot more consistency and detail because we are detail oriented (true of all successful LNCs). We are concerned about the

product. We are concerned about consistency, the research and making sure that we do not look foolish. We want to really appear prepared, capable and confident.

Introverted expert witnesses, like all experts, have to convince a jury about their opinions and influence them to their point of view. They need to make a strong case, so that they can support the attorney. That takes confidence. It takes behaving in a consistent manner.

Introverted expert witnesses who are really good at what they do need to be rock solid in their presentation. Their preparation is going to help them to do that. Introverted experts work

- on their personal development,
- to be able to have that fortitude to really state their case,
- to not fall apart when they are cross-examined,
- to really be solid in what they know, and
- to be able to state their case with conviction.

Be sure to get a copy of *How to be a Successful Expert Witness* – perfect for any LNC who is an expert or who is thinking of becoming one. Use the link <http://LNC.tips/expertwitness> and use the code listened to get a 25% discount.

I've got a phenomenal resource for you just waiting on LegalNurseBusiness.com. My online training and books are designed to help LNCs discover ways to strengthen their skills and businesses. Check them out at legalnursebusiness.com.

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build a sturdy foundation for your LNC practice. Get all the details at LNCAcademy.com.