

John Niland

# Getting away from it all



Don't get me wrong: I love my work. But I'm also a closet-introvert, which means that there comes a (frequent) point when I get **swamped** by all the interaction: the emails, the conversations, the Whatsapps, the Skypes, the social media. And then I need to get away from it all.

The photo above was taken in Bryce Canyon, when I visited last month totally out-of-season: in other words with **nobody** else around. Heaven. Sometimes I wished I lived in a state such as Utah or Nevada, where space is abundant. In reality, I live in Belgium: one of the most densely populated countries in Europe. Maybe that's why I increasingly crave **space**.

Most people think I'm an extremely social extrovert. I'm not; I just learned early in life to behave like one. Exactly as Susan Cain describes in her TED talk "The Power of Introverts"... just without the summer camp experience.

The world belongs to extroverts. Social media has empowered them even more. Their chatter follows us home via the smart phone, the iPad and the desktop. It's hardly surprising that we have

to disconnect completely in order to shut them up.

I used to disconnect at least once every week. Now I find I need a little space every day. I cannot just wait for my next Bryce Canyon experience. Without a little oasis of sanity on a regular basis, I think I would go insane.

The "disconnect" doesn't have to be a long one. On some days, it's just 15 minutes. Perhaps a walk around the block at lunchtime, or a quiet trip up an old used staircase. Whatever it is, what matters is that I energise myself frequently by getting away from it all.

It appears I am not alone. The more I work with introverts, the more I appreciate how these little oases of sanity are essential for energy and creativity.

My emotional and mental energy plummets if I don't take these frequent breaks. Getting away from it all is not just a luxury; it's an essential re-fuelling stop on the highway of professional life.

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## About the Author

John Niland is best-known as a conference speaker on doing higher value work and creating

more opportunity via better conversations. His passion is energising people: boosting growth through higher energy levels, that in turn leads to better dialogue and business growth.

Since 2000, John has been coaching others to achieve success, with a particular passion for supporting professionals "who wish to contribute rather than just to win, and hence do higher value work via better conversations with clients and colleagues".

In parallel, John is one of the co-founders of the European Forum of Independent Professionals, following twelve years of coaching >550 professionals to create more value in their work. Author of *The Courage to Ask* (together with Kate Daly), *Hidden Value* and *100 Tips to Find Time*.

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