



The following is a transcript of a free podcast interview with on Resilience, Accepting Criticism and Being an Introvert with Clare Edwards.

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Hi, everyone. This is Joanna Penn from The Creative Penn, and today, I'm interviewing Clare Edwards.

Clare is the principal of [Change-works](#) and she specializes in inspiring potential in people. Clare is an expert on managing the change process, as well as encouraging personal development and resilience. She has so much to share with authors. So, welcome, Clare.

Clare Edwards: Thank you, Joanna.

Joanna Penn: It's good to have you on the show. So just to give people a bit of background, we met at National Speakers and you really helped me with my speaking. We were at the National conference together, and I told you that it was really hard for me to be there and with people all the time because I'm an introvert and people don't energize me. And, you know, I was thinking about that from my listeners and many people sort of feel the same way.

And I felt that you really gave me permission to be introverted and still be a professional speaker. So I'd like to explore that a little more today. **So maybe you can start by explaining the difference between introvert and extrovert personality types because, you know, being introvert doesn't mean just shy, does it?**

Clare Edwards: No, Joanna. You're absolutely right. And the terms, extroversion and introversion, they relate to our natural preferences to being energized. It comes from the origin with the psychologist, Carl Jung, and it's what he called the source of our psychic energy. But in simple terms, **it's how we prefer to recharge our batteries.**



So let's look at the root of these words. If we look at the Latin root of the word "version" comes from "vertere" – towards; and "extro", being the outer; and, of course, "intro" being the inner. **So, an "introvert" is energized towards their inner world—their world of concepts, ideas, plans, and dreams.** When it comes to being around people, their counterparts, extroverts, they're energized by their interactions with people, but it's the opposite for introverts.

So, yes, introverts can be around a lot of people, but they really need to retreat back into alone time to re-energize. And you may well find that, yes, a lot of shy people are introverts, but this doesn't mean that introverts are shy, if you know what I mean. I mean, you get an introvert talking on a topic close to home and they will talk until the cows come home.

Joanna Penn: Absolutely. That's interesting you said there about being energized towards the inner world because that to me says – well, I'm a writer, you know. That's what I should be, right? **That would be the natural state for authors. Would that be right?**

Clare Edwards: Yes. It would be right. However, where it can hinder us is as creative people in sharing our message. So that's where it can be a bit of a challenge in terms of living too much in our inner world and in our headspace. We could really benefit from understanding the world of the people of our opposite preference in terms of how do I really get my message out there. **Because once if I keep my message within the whole time, that's great. I might be creatively, literally, spiritually fulfilled, but it's not putting bread on the table.**

Joanna Penn: A good point. **We mentioned introversion and extraversion then, is it just the two poles? Is it a scale?**

Clare Edwards: That's a really, really good question. The thing when we're looking at personality type, Jo, is that we have every single element of personality within us and it will be to a different sliding scale. So, you know, you may have someone who is highly introverted who would then really, really struggle to interact with groups of people, and probably be extremely shy. Right over to the other end of the scale is someone who is highly extroverted, who you – speaks as they think, speaks very quickly, very fast with their hands, and unaware of a personal space.

And I think what we're aiming to do, and this was one of the fundamental concepts of Jung psychology, is as we grow older its called individuation. **If we can learn to really embrace the side that we're least comfortable with, then it brings us into a whole new world of interacting with more people and essentially becoming more successful and more rounded.**



Joanna Penn: Oh, I like that – embracing the least comfortable part.

Clare Edwards: Yes. Well, embracing your shadow side.

Joanna Penn: That is a good one. And actually, it's funny you say that. I've been doing this podcast for about a year. I still get nervous before I phone people because speaking to people on the phone was something I've always hated to do and I forced myself into it to do this podcast. And, you know, even though I know you personally, we've met, which is unlike most of the people I interview, I still get nervous. **So you're basically saying that's normal and it's good to embrace those experiences.**

Clare Edwards: It's absolutely normal and it's even more normal for people who are naturally introverted. (It will) become a challenge again for people misunderstanding one another. People who have a preference towards introversion prefer non-verbal communication, so they prefer to write. And they would also prefer to write in their communications. So, you know, thank goodness when email came about because it's an easier way for them to be able to express themselves as well.

Another key aspect of introversion, which really is the polar opposite of the extroverts, is that introverts prefer to reflect first before they speak. So, doing something like this podcast is very much out of your comfort zone because you're having to speed up your thinking process in this whole question and answer interaction. Now, you've probably already guessed from our interaction so far that I'm highly extroverted. You know, I quite often put my size 16 foot in my size 18 mouth! And I think, of course, also that an element of you wanting to do the best for your listeners.

Joanna Penn: Now, see, this is great. And, you know, just for people who are listening, this is why I wanted Clare on the show. She makes me feel so much better! And I think it also encourages other people who are listening, who are also introvert types like me and try and do all this stuff but it does feel a bit unnatural.

So I guess given that other people are on the same scale as me, **what tips can you give me and those other people for being more successful with sort of the marketing, speaking and other activities that might be more naturally suited to extroverts?**

Clare Edwards: Actually, before I answer your point on marketing, I'd like to share with you that when it comes to speaking and performing, it's a bit of a myth that speakers and performers are extroverted. And when you think about this, it does make sense, because introverts being energized by their inner world of ideas and concepts. When you couple that with intuition, they'll just probably happily stay in their own world, but as I said earlier, would probably starve.

And you know, **introverts I believe succeed as speakers because they are so passionate and authentic about their message.** And they choose their words carefully



and will go out of their comfort zone to do so. Actually, there's a great interview with author, [Malcolm Gladwell, that was done by the Guardian Newspaper](#) where he really validates this message and says that, you know, "**Speaking is not necessarily an act of extroversion. It is a medium to share your message effectively and reach a large audience.**"

In fact, do you know, Jo, it's easier for an introvert to be alone on stage and speak to a thousand people than it is for them to be amongst, say, a group of a hundred networkers, busy networkers because they can use the space and the distance on the stage to create their personal energy boundary. So it's important for them to remember that they just need to hang on a little longer. If you're doing speaking, you know, just remember that you need to engage with the people afterwards who want to meet with you and not disappear up into the nearest wine bar incognito.

Joanna Penn: That's really a good point. And I must say that was my problem at the conference. It was the intense sort of networking. It just drained me and you run out of things to say to people. So sharing again with people listening, you know, that's quite a normal way to feel. I like that Malcolm Gladwell video too, because he's a really shy man and yet he speaks all over the world to huge audiences. So, I found that useful as well. **So, please go on and talk to us about some tips.**

Clare Edwards: The first piece of advice that I would invite your listeners to take onboard is **be yourself and look at your strengths**. Don't try and turn yourself into an extrovert and soldier on because you'll probably end up giving up marketing altogether. So start with something that's in your comfort zone and build on it. So, for example, if you're good at one-on-one conversations – and what we're doing now, podcasting, you know, go and do lots of them. Go and do lots of your one-on-one conversations until you feel comfortable to move up to something like small groups.

This has just come in to my head. It might be a little bit left to the center but, you know, **you might want to reflect on your own values and opinions around the concept of marketing and selling** because I think often we get in our own way. We're very proud of what we've created and we have this stigma around selling that it's something that could be cheap and dirty. But, I'd like to invite you to consider coming from the perspective of being in the spirit to serve. Because if you are totally convinced about how your work and help other people, then they deserve the chance to hear it.

The other tip I might give you, and this is an example of how I work together really well with someone who's highly introverted. If you are highly introverted and you can afford it or you've got a really good friend, get an extroverted sidekick, someone who loves networking, someone who would love to be your voice. So, for example, Michael White, who's the creator of the personality profiling system I use is highly introverted. So he basically uses me as his ambassador as I fly the flag and turn up to all the marketing events.



Now, I'm not sure how well that would work in your field. However, it's certainly a concept to explore. **The Internet has opened up a huge opportunity for introverted authors to access large audiences.** And naturally what you're doing, you know, your passion can really, really help them. It isn't necessarily now about physically going out to everybody. You can still stay comfortable in your introversion and access globally, of course.

Joanna Penn: And that's really funny when you say that because I still feel surprised about the emails I get from people and I get quite a lot of emails now from people who read my blog. And I sometimes just go, "Oh, my goodness, people are actually reading my blog and, you know, watching my videos and stuff." And it's always like you're surprised because you do feel like you are kind of on your own, even when I do my videos on my own and things like that. So it's definitely very well suited to a sort of personality like sitting home alone.

Clare Edwards: It is, but remember to get that balance and get yourself out there as well.

Joanna Penn: Oh, absolutely, and I would say that to everybody. I want to come back to that concept of embracing the least comfortable. I wanted to get out there and do public speaking and do the podcast and things to actually push myself out of just being on my own. So it's been brilliant and I loved it. So I definitely encourage other people to do it, too.

Clare Edwards: I was just thinking, when all the authors are rich and famous, then by having practiced this along the way it's going to be so much easier once you get that fame and glory.

Joanna Penn: Absolutely. And what was interesting recently is at the [Guardian Hay Festival in England, Roddy Doyle](#), who's a huge author really and a lot of people who had never read his books heard him speak. And he was such a brilliant speaker that they all went and bought his books and he got a lot of press about how great his speaking was as an author. **So you really stand out because most authors are actually terrible speakers.** So that's another reason I'm doing it, obviously.

Right. So moving away from the introversion, you also help people with resilience and what you call **bounce-backability** which is a brilliant phrase.

Writers and authors spend a lot of time being rejected by publishers, agents. And then even if they make it, you know, like Stephanie Meyer, people just bash them all the time about something. So, obviously, we're all sensitive to criticism. **So how can we protect our self-esteem and how can we encourage resilience as authors?**



Clare Edwards: Oh, what a great question and a topic close to my heart. Let's see if we can get into the head of the critics a little bit. So going back to personality preference again, when it comes to decision and evaluating information, there are two distinct leaning preferences. The first preference is towards being objective and rational and it's unfortunately termed 'thinking'.

So, people with the 'thinking' preference, they're comfortable with critical feedback because they can depersonalized it and use it as an opportunity for improvement.

Now, thinkers typically check in with their head first and their heart second. They'll get straight to the point and they don't beat around the bush. But many authors I suspect, Jo, would lean towards the opposite preference, which is when you're making decisions and evaluations subjectively and based on your personal values. And again it's unfortunately termed 'feeling'.

So, on the one hand we have thinking, which is objective and rational. And then we have feeling which is subjective and values driven. So **people with the feeling preference can really struggle with critics** because it brushes up against their values and hence, hurting them right at the core in that identity level because feelers will check in with their heart first and their head second. They'll also find out they'll be much more diplomatic and tactful in their use of language.

Well, think about the role of the critic, Jo. Where do you think their preference might lie, thinking or feeling?

Joanna Penn: Thinking.

Clare Edwards: Absolutely – their leaning towards the rational. So they're less skilled at being diplomatic. So rule number one is really if you can **aim to depersonalize that feedback and step into the role of the critic** who really, it's not in their sphere of conception and understanding as to how might this feedback impact the emotions of the writer. It's not in their scope of understanding, to be honest with you.

And if I may jump straight on to the second point as well - the core element of being able to bounce back and that's about learning the art of persistence, okay? **Developing an attitude of persistence and being able to reframe the particular situation at hand.**

And listen to this, it make sense. If you think about this statistically, every rejection that you get as an author, every 'no' that you get will take you one step closer to 'yes' because if on average, you're going to be rejected 50% of the time, every time somebody tells you exactly where to go, that's great because you're getting closer to your yes.

One of the characteristics of emotionally resilient or optimistic people is around that persistence. Now, this is not to be confused with blind optimism. And I really hope that authors are the same as any of us who received critical feedback and would be able to see



it as an opportunity to refine or improve their work. And when I'm feeling a little battle torn and, you know, achieving my goal's starting to feel like swimming through a bog and one of the things that really picks me up is I look to my role models of persistence.

And, you know, I don't know. Where would we be today if Thomas Edison hasn't tried over 9,000 times in his quest to give us a light bulb? And you think in the literary world, you know, regardless of what your opinion of equality of work, we wouldn't have the likes of John Grisham's, *A Time To Kill*; we wouldn't have Alex Haley's, *Roots* or we wouldn't have Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*—if they've given up after their first few rejections. So, you know, in summary, Jo, **if we can learn the art of depersonalization and increase our persistence, it might give us a different perspective.**

Joanna Penn: Nicely said and very hard to do.

Clare Edwards: Absolutely. But, you know, you move mountains by moving small stones.

Joanna Penn: Absolutely. Now, I want to come back on that depersonalizing criticism. As you were saying that, I was thinking, I do this in my day job as well. I emotionalize any form of feedback, calling it feedback or criticism? And it's interesting. My husband actually is a scientist in that very critical tradition and he takes it very, very well. And what you're basically saying is that's a different mindset. **But how can I learn to be more like that? Do I have to literally stop every time anyone says anything and before opening my mouth to defend myself?**

Clare Edwards: Ooh, that's are really, really important point because the key is in the time that you take between what you receive as feedback and the response that you give yourself either whether it's externally or internally. And it's about having a choice. When you receive critical feedback, you do have a choice as to how you react or you respond.

And often, I don't know if you've heard of [Victor Frankl](#).

Joanna Penn: Yes. Yes.

Clare Edwards: Who wrote the book *Man's Search For Meaning*, Viktor Frankl was the an Austrian psychologist who survived the Nazi concentration camps. And he said, *"Between stimulus and response there is this space, in that space is our power to choose our response and in our response lies our growth and our freedom."*

So it's thinking about, firstly, where is that other person coming from, because when we're receiving the message we're receiving it, you know, in according to our values and our beliefs and our identity, but think of where is that messenger coming from. What is



their intent? Really is their intent to hurt you and to belittle you? I don't think so. I see their role as the critical analyst.

The critical analyst seeks continual improvement both in themselves and others. So they see that they're doing you a great honor and a great service. Believe you me, if they didn't think you were worth it, they wouldn't bother at all. So in their world, critical feedback is something that they would really welcome. So if they could learn to maybe personalize a little bit more and we can learn to depersonalize a little bit more.

Chat to your husband about this and understand his thinking process when he's getting and receiving feedback. It really is a difference in preference. And sometimes I think those of us who are so values-driven, that can sometimes get in our own way. And maybe when we look towards our values, what if I were able to accept and learn to take this feedback as an opportunity for improvement? Have a go. What do you have to lose?

Joanna Penn: It's really good advice. With [my first fiction novel](#) I'm about to start revising my first draft and then I will be taking it to an editor, so this is quite close to my heart at the moment. It's sort of, here's my book and I'm going to pay somebody to be critical of my book. And that is about improving it and making it a better book. **I think what you're saying is it basically there's no need to be defensive. It's not about somebody attacking you. It's more about improvement.**

Clare Edwards: Absolutely. And, you know, if you think about this, maybe it's important to revisit the big why of what you're doing because, ask yourself the question, "Would I prefer to have my new script intact, verbatim and reach no one or am I prepared to expand my perspectives slightly and take this feedback on board and reach my goal of getting published?"

Now, this is not about compromise, Jo, because values, they're beliefs that we hold in, beliefs of thoughts that we repeatedly held and thought until they become real for us. They're not the ultimate truth or reality. So sometimes it serves us to reflect and question to what extent this is serving us.

And I understand where you're coming from because I have the same preference for this feeling as well. And as I'm going through life, I'm learning to become more objective and more rational and I can actually see some benefit in it. It is a hard journey though, I agree. We're human. We're human. It's our baby.

Joanna Penn: Right, well, the other thing that I really like about your website and your speaking and everything is that you have this really wonderfully positive view on life and helping people achieve their goals and their happiness.



And the successful mindset is obviously very important to that. **So I wondered if you could share some tips about mindset as this is really critical for authors and writers who can get bogged down in detail and years of writing. We forget the bigger picture. So maybe you could just share a bit on successful mindset?**

Clare Edwards: It's interesting that you say bigger picture, Jo, because I think one of the most empowering questions that we can ask of ourselves is what **is the legacy that I want to leave? What will be my unique footprint after I've moved on from here?** And I'm thinking really understanding that, knowing it, we can use it to keep us motivated and to get us back on track. And also to take the ego out of what we do because, whether we accept it or not I think there's an awful lot of ego-driven in what we do.

I think also this is like I was saying about ideas about marketing and selling. I think we can live in the spirit to serve and to be grateful. Now, before I go to sleep every night, without fail, I go through my day and I list all the things that I've been grateful for even the crap because I know there's a lesson in there somewhere and I think it really helps us to get perspective.

And also one of the things – and this comes from the essence of a positive psychology as well because psychology has been long focused on pathology, on disease and what goes wrong. And thankfully now, we have a positive psychology movement that focuses on what we do right. **Look at where you are successful and get some balance in this.**

Now, let me give you an example. You may be absolutely broke, but do you have your health? You know, they say the first wealth is health. Do you have a supportive family or a social network? Do you have a spiritual connection? If we can focus on what we're blessed with and appreciate it then I truly, honestly believe the rest will come.

I think we get bogged down and I think we are victims of sometimes of our nurturing and society and the media that we get bogged down with looking at that which is our weakness or our downfall and get lost and forget to focus on that which we already have and are blessed with.

And you know, it can really give you perspective. So if you're feeling sorry for yourself go out there and speak to a homeless person. Go out there and do some voluntary work and get that perspective. I'm sorry. I'm getting on the soapbox now.

Joanna Penn: No. I think that's really important. And perspective can sometimes be hard. I mean, for authors specifically we looking at finishing the novel and getting published. These are the things that all of us want.

And yet, you know, I've been really tired lately, in the middle of the year and everything. It's winter here in Australia. And, I went to a bookshop because that always generally



cheers me up. And then I'm standing there in the bookshop looking around going, "Oh my God, all of these other people are successful authors. How can I ever reach this stage?" So what is normally very positive for me turned into this kind of self-pitying event.

Clare Edwards: Wonderful. Okay. So what you're doing, Jo, is **you're projecting yourself into the future. And I think if you can just stay as present as you can**, you know, with what Eckhart Tolle calls The Power of Now. It's one step at a time. So you're standing there in the bookshop, you're looking around at what everybody else has succeeded in and what you haven't succeeded in. And you need to say what would be the one thing that I can do when I get home or I can pick my phone out of my bag, what's the one thing that I can do that might take me just one step closer to where they are.

And I think, and you're doing that in the works that you're doing. You're interviewing successful authors. They say, you know, "**In order to be successful, surround yourself with successful people.**" And I know it's just not as simple as that, however there is no magic pill. **We can't wake up the next morning and be successful authors.** You see successful performers, successful authors and you know that they've done the hard yards, and some of them have had lucky breaks and some of them haven't.

But remember, **the gift is in the challenge, would we really want to be instant overnight successes without the lessons that we're learning in the journey on the way?** So don't focus on the destination. Focus on the journey. Stay as present as you can and just think what is the one step I can take today to get me closer.

Joanna Penn: Oh, that's marvelous. Thank you for that. I also find sometimes just going to bed helps! Everything's always better the next morning. Now, that's all been really, really helpful.

And, you know, that was quite a personal call for me, actually. I don't normally share as much as I've shared in that. So I hope people who are listening have learned a lot from that and from Clare. So we need to finish **but perhaps you can just tell people a bit more about your business and what you do and also where people can find you.**

Clare Edwards: Oh, thank you, Jo. Yes. My business is called Change-works. So you can tell I'm positive, I mean, just look at the name of my business, [Change-works](#), doesn't it? I work with businesses here in Australia and, of course, you can tell from my accent I'm from the U.K., so I've done a lot of corporate work in the U.K.

I work with people to help them understand and embrace difference in personality types. I work with businesses. I'm helping them to develop a culture whereby they can attract and retain the talent of people that they've got so, you know, making work a great place to be.



And sometimes I run out there in the trees and up on the high ropes courses and I do team building activities as well. So I've got quite a broad range of services. My passion however, Jo, the thing that really gets me out of bed in the morning, is around helping people to be able to bounce back from adversity. I think we have an innate human right to be happy.

So how you can find me? My website is change-works.com.au and on Twitter I'm [@changeworks](https://twitter.com/changeworks), without a hyphen.

Joanna Penn: Fantastic. Well, thanks ever so much for your time, Clare. That was brilliant.

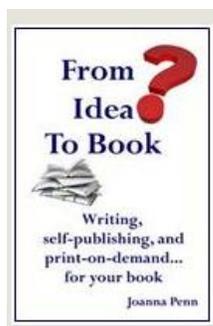
Clare Edwards: I thoroughly enjoyed it, Jo. Thank you. And, you know, good luck to all of the authors out there. Believe in what you do. Please, don't give up because otherwise you're doing this a disservice and we want to hear your wonderful creation.

Joanna Penn: Thanks for listening today. I hope you found it helpful. You can get more information on writing, publishing options, sales and promotion for your book at www.TheCreativePenn.com. And you can also get your free "[How to Be an Author](#)" [workbook here](#)



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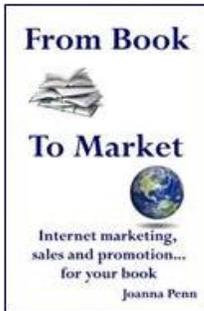
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