

# MORE THAN HALF OF BRITS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS A HERMIT

Submitted by: Mercieca Ltd

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Anti-social Brits AVOID interacting with friends and acquaintances a staggering 284 times EVERY year – according to a new survey by confectionery brand Mentos.

New research has revealed the extent to which we have embraced our inner hermit, with the average Brit regularly crossing the road to avoid neighbours and friends - and frequently ignoring phone calls, texts and emails.

Pretending to lose signal mid-call and saying your battery is dying were among a list of excuses regularly wheeled out to avoid talking to someone.

The research also revealed three in ten of us have even resorted to hiding in the house when there is a knock at the door and 13 percent of us admit to sloping off at parties without saying goodbye.

And over a third (35 percent) of antisocial Brits opt for a quick 'smile, nod and keep walking' approach rather than stopping to pass the time of day with acquaintances.

The poll of 1,574 adults by Mentos found three quarters of adults admit to avoiding social interaction, with just over half (52 percent) describing themselves as a bit of a hermit.

The average Brit brazenly lies about not receiving texts, emails or instant messages twice a month. And typically ignores their landline or mobile ringing FIVE times a week.

Most blamed 'social overload' - the constant bombardment of texts, WhatsApp messages, Facebook updates and photographs - for their need to slip under the radar from time to time.

So much so, that four in ten are tempted to delete their social media accounts in a bid to get escape the constant interaction.

A spokesperson for Mentos said: "Because of social media we live in a world where most of us can be contacted very easily by anyone in the world at any time of day and it is easy to see how we may want down time.

"Many of us are guilty of ignoring a phone call every now and then, but there is a fine line between not bothering to chat and being rude if friends and neighbours spot us avoiding them.

"It takes no time at all to just say hello or call out good morning to a neighbour across the road – we should all make an extra effort to be friendly and sociable. Being too busy is a poor excuse, we want to encourage more people to make new connections."

Nearly two thirds (62 percent) of respondents said they prefer face to face conversations to communicating digitally – but 38 percent said they lack confidence and become shy when meeting new people.

Five in ten said they were scared of rejection when approaching new people and 45 percent said they hated

making small talk.

When it comes to breaking the ice with someone new – the most popular approach was to just say a simple hello, followed by a smile or to make eye contact. A more confident one in twenty go straight in with a firm handshake.

Despite Brits' reluctance to stop and chat, 57 percent of those polled said they had formed a surprising friendship after they broke the ice with someone.

A spokesperson for Mentos added: "It's great that friendships have forged after striking up spontaneous conversations with strangers – this highlights that it's worth making the effort to say hi.

"We launched this research to tie in to World Hello Day (21st November) where we are encouraging everyone to say hello to ten new people and connect with those around them. Offering a Mentos sweet can certainly help to break the ice – and our new share bags are great for bringing together a group."

Available in Mint Mix and Fruit Mix varieties, Mentos share bags offer something for everyone – perfect for sharing!

-ENDS-

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