

“If you haven’t anything nice to say, come sit by me.”

Alice Roosevelt Longworth (1884-1980),
icon and Theodore Roosevelt’s daughter

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PET PEEVES

SHARING COMPLAINTS

Sometimes things annoy us, and that’s okay. Share your complaints and pet peeves with your partner. Laughing and sighing can help.

1. What annoys you? Do you have any pet peeves?
2. Do you prefer sales pitches in person, by phone, or on TV? Why?
3. How can salespeople be annoying? Can you give some examples?
4. Have you ever had email problems? Have you received spam in your mailbox?
5. How would you describe your learning curve with new appliances? Is there any technology that bothers you?
6. When was the last time somebody offended you? What happened?
7. What is some common behavior that you often find offensive? Why?
8. What are some things that you find impolite? Give examples.
9. What is litter? Have you seen any litterbugs? Where does litter bother you most?
10. What are some bad cell phone manners or habits?
11. When, or where, do you most often see people stressed?
12. What behavior might be considered irritating in a neighbor? Have you ever had a noisy neighbor? Can you give an example of a difficult neighbor?
13. Is there a difference between assertive and aggressive? How do aggressive people make you feel? How do you tend to respond?
14. Can you describe an encounter with an aggressive driver? What is “road rage?”
15. What behavior would be strange for a man, but normal for a woman?
16. What behavior might seem odd for a woman, but normal for a man?
17. Is there a double standard for men and women? How? Is this fair?

VOCABULARY

Please circle the words that you know. Use them to write three questions.

- annoy
- pet
- peeve
- bother.....
- polite
- impolite.....
- offended.....
- courtesy.....
- litter.....
- litterbug.....
- obnoxious.....
- toxic.....
- profanity.....

PROVERBS

Read the common sayings and proverbs below. Can you add two more?

- Recite 'patience' three times and it will spare you a murder.—Korean
- This is done and I'm to blame
- Therefore, know that I'm in shame.—Persian
- Control yourself: remember anger
- is only one letter short of danger.—School poster
- Love makes a good eye squint.—English
- The reputation of a thousand years may be
- determined by the conduct of one hour.—Japanese

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. What table manners or eating styles make you frown or annoy you?
2. When, if ever, does snoring, sneezing, or coughing bother you?
3. Where do you find adults generally act their worst? Why?
4. How does a polite child act? How does a rude child behave?
5. Where do people learn good manners? What are good manners?
6. What do you dislike about living here?
7. Can you describe a polite boss? A very difficult boss?
8. How have co-workers annoyed you? What did they do?
How did you handle difficult co-workers?
9. How have you handled working with rude customers? Are you able
to keep your cool?
10. Does foul language, or profanity, upset you? When?
11. What obnoxious ads have you had a strong negative reaction to?

REMEMBER...

Be yourself

Be honest

Make good mistakes

"I've had a wonderful evening—but this wasn't it."

Groucho Marx (1895-1977), wit

12. Have you ever walked out of a movie? Were you bored or offended? Why?
13. Are there personality traits that you find extremely disagreeable?
14. How can someone really make you "blow your lid" or explode? What brings out the worst in you? A family relative? A good friend?
15. What is something that once annoyed you that you have, over time, come to tolerate?
16. Have you seen any changes in what are considered good manners in your life? What?
17. Do you have any advice for dealing with difficult, moody, or "toxic" people?

QUOTATIONS

Read aloud all the quotations. Pick your favorites and discuss.

1. "If you empty a cup of wine in one gulp, you are a drunkard."
—Talmud
2. "The test of good manners is to be patient with bad ones."
—Solomon ibn Gabriol (1021-1051) Hebrew poet
3. "Good manners are made up of petty sacrifices."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), writer
4. "Be polite; write diplomatically; even in a declaration of war one observes the rules of politeness."
—Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898), German Chancellor
5. "Never treat a guest like a member of the family—treat him with courtesy."—Evan Esar (1899-1935), American humorist
6. "My dad was the town drunk. Usually that's not so bad, but New York City?"—Henry Youngman, comedian
7. "Isn't it monstrous the way people go about saying things behind other people's backs that are absolutely and entirely true?"
—Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), playwright
8. "In the first place, God made idiots; this was for practice. Then he made school boards."—Mark Twain (1835-1910), humorist
9. "The best way to be successful in Hollywood is to be as obnoxious as the next guy."—Sylvester Stallone (1946-), actor and director
10. "Being a star has made it possible for me to get insulted in places where the average Negro could never hope to get insulted."
—Sammy Davis, Jr (1925-1990), American entertainer
11. "Before the first World War, women were arrested for smoking cigarettes in public, for using profanity, for appearing on beaches without stockings, for driving automobiles without a man beside them, for wearing outlandish attire (for example, shorts)."
—Geoffrey Perrett (1940-), American historian
12. "When you're down and out, something always turns up—usually the noses of your friends."
—Orson Welles (1915-1985), actor and director
13. "Earthquakes bring out the worst in some guys."
—George Kennedy in *Earthquake*



ON YOUR OWN

Give a one-minute presentation to the class on your biggest pet peeve.