

## Negative Personality Traits



### Warm up:

- What personality traits annoy you the most?
- Do you get more annoyed by rude or lazy people? Why?
- Are you someone who gets grumpy sometimes? Do you know anyone else who does?
- Would you prefer a friend who is rude but honest, or a friend who is polite but dishonest?



### 1. Read the sentences below and match them to the traits in the box.

stubborn	arrogant	pretentious	bossy
greedy	spoiled	dull	condescending

- "Ok stop talking right now and just do as I say, I don't have time for this!"
- "I mean, obviously I'm going to be the best athlete at my university, I'm kind of an athletic freak of nature. They don't call me 'The Beast' for nothing."
- "My father bought me a BMW for my birthday, but he bought me the wrong one! I specifically asked for a BMW 7 series, and he got me a 3 series. It doesn't even have heated seats!"
- "My company is doing great at the moment, but if I fire 10 more people before Christmas, I'll be able to afford a helicopter by April!"
- "Ok sweetie, you did your best but why don't you let the people who know what they're doing take over now?"
- "My main hobby is making Excel spreadsheets that rank different seasons of all the television shows I watch. Would you like to see them? I made them into a 3-hour presentation."
- "I don't care if it's faster to upload it to the cloud than sending it as an email, that's the way I've always done it, and I'm not about to change now."
- "I don't really 'make coffee' in the traditional sense. I engage in an authentic and spiritual procedure to extract the coffee bean's true inner flavour."



### Which of the above sentences would bother you the most if you heard someone say it?

The fine line between good and bad

Sometimes there is a very fine line between good and bad personality traits. For example, when exactly does confidence become arrogance? When discussing this, we often use language that makes it clear that our opinions are just impressions.

Eg. "He seems a little bit arrogant to me."

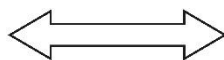
"She comes across as stubborn, but I think she's just very determined."

"I get the impression that he's quite paranoid, he doesn't trust anyone."



2. Read the statements with a partner and decide together if they sound more like the negative or positive trait shown above the statements.

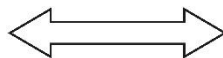
Condescending / Arrogant



Confident

*Bruno:* "I've been driving for about 15 years longer than you have, so I'm almost certainly a better driver, which means I should be the one to drive. If you want you can drive on the highway, but for the more difficult sections it should be me in the driver's seat."

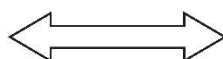
Stingy



Frugal

*Claudia:* "In winter I always wait as long as I can to turn on the heating. Sometimes I will wear two or three layers in my apartment rather than turn on the heating. I can afford to pay for the heating, but I just don't see the point in wasting money."

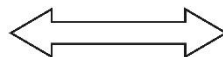
Paranoid



Cautious / Sensible

*Greg:* "I have a lot of usernames and passwords that I need to keep track of, far too many for me to remember. I know I could get a password manager, but what happens if the password manager gets hacked? That's why I keep all my passwords on a piece of paper which I hide behind my desk."

Bossy



Decisive

*Ollie:* "Alright, everyone, I know I'm not the captain but we're changing the plan. From now on, I want the wingers running straight back every time we lose the ball. No more long shots. Pass first and wait for the right opening. Just stick to the roles I've given you and follow my instructions. If we all do exactly what I say, we'll win this."

Stubborn



Determined

*Lana:* "I don't care if everyone thinks she can do it better just because she's a professional artist. Give me a few days and I will show you that I can draw just as well if not better than her. I'll stay up all night if that's what it takes."



### 3. Read the article and answer the questions below.

Pretty much everyone has experienced rudeness at some point. A stranger cuts us off in traffic, a coworker makes a sarcastic comment, or a friend cancels plans without apologizing. These small moments may seem unimportant, but they can leave us feeling hurt or angry for hours. But it's difficult to know how forgiving or empathetic we should be towards those who are rude to us.

Many people take the approach that showing empathy and patience is more helpful than reacting with anger. However, being too empathetic can mean that rude people get their way, and in the end you can end up actually encouraging their behaviour. Others feel that rude people need to be dealt with harshly, making sure they pay for their bad behaviour. The downside to this is, you often end up getting sucked into conflicts that will leave you feeling much angrier than if you had just walked away. The key is finding a healthy balance.

Rudeness is not always a sign of a bad personality. Often, it is a reaction to stress, pressure, or personal problems. Someone who is tired or worried might snap at others without meaning to. In these cases, their behaviour reflects their situation, not their true feelings about others.

Some people are rude because they feel insecure. They may worry that others are smarter, more successful, or more confident than they are. To protect themselves, they act cold, bossy, or condescending. By putting others down, they try to feel stronger.


For example, a student who feels unprepared might laugh at others' answers, or an employee might blame colleagues for small mistakes. Their behaviour is unpleasant, but it often comes from fear rather than cruelty.

However, not all rude behaviour is so forgivable. Some people are intentionally rude because they want power or control. They may use insults, guilt, or embarrassment to influence others. This is manipulation.

Unlike insecure people, manipulative individuals often understand exactly what they are doing. They might interrupt you constantly, criticize you in public, or make you feel responsible for their problems.

Here, empathy alone is not enough. If we always try to "be nice," we may allow them to continue their behaviour. In these cases, setting clear boundaries is essential. Saying no, limiting contact, or calmly confronting the behaviour can protect us from emotional harm.

- a) What is the downside of being too understanding to rude people?
- b) According to the article, what 3 issues can cause rudeness? Which of these 3 do you think is the worst?
- c) Do you think being insecure is an acceptable reason for being rude?
- d) Do you agree with the article? How do you normally deal with people who are rude to you?

 **4. Ellen and Toby are housemates. Listen to their conversations, answer the questions, and describe their behaviour using some of the vocabulary from the previous exercises.**

### Conversation 1

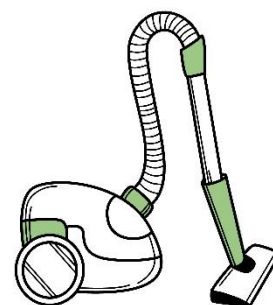
- Why doesn't Toby want to see *Captain Universe*?
- What is *Colours of Sadness* about?
- How does Toby feel about dubbed movies?

Toby seems .....

Ellen sounds ...

### Conversation 2

- How did Ellen know the plates weren't Jenna's?
- What are two reasons Toby doesn't like the list of chores he's been given?
- What is Toby's complaint about Ellen and Jenna's cleanliness?



I get the impression Ellen is ...

Toby comes across as .....

### Conversation 3

- How much does Toby think he should pay for the electricity bill, and what is his reasoning for this?
- Why does Ellen think that Toby uses more electricity?
- What did Toby buy last week, and why does this make Ellen angry?

Ellen sounds ...

Toby seems ...



5. Ask and answer the questions below with a partner.

- Do you think people are ruder today than they were in the past?
- Have you ever stopped being friends with someone because of their personality? What happened?
- What is a negative personality trait you think you have?
- If someone is rude to you, are you good at just 'letting it go'?
- Would you rather live with someone who is dull or someone who is pretentious?
- Are there any negative traits that you think a lot of people from your country have?
- Have you ever had a really negative impression of someone and then later realised you were wrong? What happened?

