

Why People Like You More Than You Think | How to Live a Good Life, Part 2

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

15 learning entries

Study task: Listen again and notice the expressions you studied.

1

the liking gap

DEF

The tendency to underestimate how much another person liked you after a conversation.

This is a psychology term, not a physical gap. It describes a bias in our judgement: other people often evaluate an interaction more positively than we imagine.

The liking gap made Julia believe the barbecue had gone badly.

Remembering the liking gap can stop you overanalysing a new conversation.

2

to come across as

DEF

To give other people a particular impression, even if that is not how you feel inside.

Use come across as + adjective or noun: come across as friendly, confident or a good listener. It focuses on the impression received by others.

You may feel nervous but come across as warm and interested.

His short reply came across as rude, although he was only tired.

3

an awkward pause

DEF

A silence in a conversation that feels uncomfortable or socially uncertain.

Awkward describes social discomfort rather than physical difficulty. A pause may feel much longer to the speaker than it does to the listener.

Julia remembered every awkward pause after the barbecue.

An awkward pause does not mean the conversation has failed.

4

a joke does not land

DEF

A joke fails to produce the laugh or positive reaction that the speaker expected.

Land is informal and metaphorical here. It can describe jokes, comments or messages that do not have their intended effect.

Julia worried about every joke that did not land.

The comment did not land because the audience missed the reference.



5

to replay something in your head

DEF

To think repeatedly about a past event as if you were watching or hearing it again.

This is often used for overthinking conversations, mistakes or emotional moments. Replay highlights repetition, not simply remembering once.

Many learners replay an English conversation in their head afterwards.

I kept replaying the interview in my head all evening.

6

to be just being polite

DEF

To behave pleasantly only because social convention requires it, rather than from genuine interest.

The continuous form being polite refers to behaviour in that moment. Just can express the speaker's doubt that the friendliness is sincere.

Lena assumed her colleagues were just being polite.

He was not just being polite; he genuinely wanted us to visit again.

7

alone, isolated and lonely

DEF

Alone means no one is physically with you; isolated means having very little social contact; lonely describes the painful feeling that a needed connection is missing.

Alone can be neutral or positive and isolated can be measured objectively. Lonely is subjective: a person can feel lonely in a crowded room.

Lena was rarely alone or isolated, but she often felt lonely.

I enjoy being alone sometimes, but I do not want to feel isolated.

8

to go past something

DEF

To move beyond a limit, stage or superficial level instead of stopping there.

Go past can be physical, but it is metaphorical in the episode: Lena believes she cannot move beyond the automatic exchange 'Good, you?'.

Lena was afraid to go past 'Good, you?' with her colleagues.

The discussion went past small talk and became more personal.

9

to carry a risk

DEF

To involve or be associated with a particular possibility of harm or an unwanted outcome.

This collocation is common in careful health and research language. Carry a risk describes association; it does not by itself prove what will happen to an individual.

Lacking social connection can carry a serious risk to health.

Every investment carries some risk, even when it appears safe.



10

to start or strike up a conversation

DEF

To begin talking with someone, especially a person you do not know well.

Start a conversation is neutral. Strike up a conversation is a natural, slightly more vivid phrasal expression, often used for an unplanned friendly exchange with a stranger.

Every commuter who tried to start a conversation found someone willing to talk.

She struck up a conversation with the person beside her on the train.

11

a third place

DEF

A familiar social setting that is separate from home and work, such as a café, library, gym or park.

The sociological term does not mean the place that finished third. It refers to an informal shared space where repeated visits can create community and belonging.

Lena needed a third place where familiar faces could become real connections.

The local library became my third place after I moved to the city.

12

a regular / the usual

DEF

A regular is someone who visits the same place often; the usual is the drink, meal or service that person normally chooses.

Regular can be a noun for the customer or an adjective for repeated activity. When staff ask The usual?, it signals recognition and familiarity.

After a month at the café, Lena became a regular and the barista knew her usual.

The pub has several regulars who meet there every Friday.

13

to bump into someone

DEF

To meet someone unexpectedly or by chance.

This informal phrasal verb normally describes an unplanned social meeting. It does not usually mean a physical collision in this context.

You are more likely to bump into people when you visit the same place regularly.

I bumped into an old colleague at the supermarket yesterday.

14

an opener

DEF

A remark, question or detail that makes it easier to begin a conversation.

Opener is informal and comes from open: it opens the social door. In the episode, an accent becomes an opener because it naturally invites the question Where are you from?.

Your accent can be an opener rather than a problem.

A comment about the weather is a simple opener at a bus stop.



15

to give someone the chance to

DEF

To create an opportunity for someone to do or demonstrate something.

The pattern is give + person + the chance to + verb. It often suggests that the opportunity does not exist unless you make a small first move.

People like you more than you think; give them the chance to show it.

Give your new colleague the chance to explain her idea.

