



---

**ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities**

---

**GLOSSARY**

**personality** – a person’s characteristics that affect what one does and how one acts or behaves

\* Would you prefer to marry someone who is beautiful or who has a good personality?

**closest in age** – with the smallest difference in ages; with the fewest years between two people

\* In the Nguyen family, Harold (age 7) and Maude (age 6) are the closest in age because the other children are 2, 14, and 20 years old.

**moody** – changing moods or emotions very quickly, and often angry or sad for no reason

\* I’m sorry I yelled at you yesterday for no reason. I was just feeling very moody.

**timid** – shy; quiet; not outgoing

\* Do you think Paul is too timid to ask Belinda to go to the movies with him?

**talkative** – always talking; liking to talk a lot

\* I don’t like going to the movies with talkative people because then I can’t hear the movie!

**cheerful** – happy; positive; in a good mood

\* Ana Lucia is always so cheerful! I don’t think I’ve ever seen her feeling sad or down.

**a year apart** – separated in age by one year; one year older/younger than each other

\* Boris and Dani are only a year apart: he was born in 1968 and she was born in 1969.

**bad-tempered** – in a bad mood; negative; angry

\* Claudia’s ex-boyfriend is really bad-tempered and he’s always getting into fights.

**angel** – a very good person; a kind, thoughtful person who is liked by everyone; a person who behaves in an ideal way

\* Sheryl is such an angel! She brought me dinner every night when I was sick last week.



---

## ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities

---

**patient** – able to wait for something without getting angry or frustrated and without seeming to be in a hurry

\* The teacher was very patient and explained the problem to me for more than 20 minutes until I understood it.

**generous** – willing to share; willing to give things to other people without expecting anything in return

\* Mateo is very generous. Last year he gave more than \$5,000 to help the poor.

**to look up to (someone)** – to admire or respect someone; to think that someone is very good

\* Who did you look up to more when you were a child, your mother or your father?

**even-keeled** – even-tempered; not changing moods very often; not easy to make angry; calm

\* Rodrigo is so even-keeled that he didn’t even get very angry when Shawna accidentally hit his car.

**selfish** – not liking to share things with others; wanting to have everything for oneself; caring only about oneself

\* Young children sometimes don’t like to share, so their parents have to teach them to be less selfish.

**stubborn** – not wanting to change one’s mind or opinion; determined to continue to do something or think about something the same way

\* Hugo won’t ask for directions because he is too stubborn to admit that he’s lost.

**to put up with (someone)** – to tolerate someone; to accept someone’s negative behavior without complaining

\* How do you put up with Nancy smoking in your office every day?

**to exaggerate** – to make something bigger or more important than it really is

\* Is your brother really seven feet tall or were you exaggerating?

**to grow out of (something)** - to stop doing something as one gets older

\* Tara didn’t grow out of playing with dolls until she was 15 years old!



---

## ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities

---

### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Joann look up to her sister?
    - a) Because her sister was taller.
    - b) Because her sister was one year apart.
    - c) Because her sister was a good person.
  
  2. Which words describe Sergey’s personality?
    - a) Shy and quiet.
    - b) Happy and friendly.
    - c) Stubborn and talkative.
- 

### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **patient**

The word “patient,” in this podcast, means to be able to wait for something without getting angry or frustrated and without seeming to be in a hurry: “Please be patient and wait for me. I’ll come to meet you as soon as I can.” Or, “You need to be patient to catch a fish because sometimes it takes a long time.” The opposite of “patient” is “impatient”: “Don’t be so impatient! I’m sure that she’ll call you soon.” A “patient” is also a person who is receiving medical treatment: “How many patients stay at this hospital on a normal day?” Finally, a “patient” may be someone who visits a particular doctor: “Most of Dr. Bronson’s patients are women in their 50s.” Or, “I’m a patient of Dr. Bronson’s and I’d like to make an appointment to see her.”

#### **to look up to**

In this podcast, the phrase “to look up to (someone)” means to admire or respect someone, or to think that someone is very good: “Many people look up to Mother Teresa for her work with poor people in India.” “To look up (something)” means to search for a piece of information in a book or online: “Can you please get the phone book and look up the phone number for that Mexican restaurant on Washington Boulevard?” “To look (somebody) up” means to visit someone whom one hasn’t seen in a long time: “Next time I go to Omaha, I want to look up my old college roommate.” Or, “When you’re in town, be sure to look me up.” Finally, the phrase “to look up” can also mean to improve or to get better: “James finally got a job and has enough money to pay the bills, so things are really looking up for him.”



---

**ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities**

---

**CULTURE NOTE**

People have many different “types” (kinds) of personalities. In the United States, many people try to “label” (give names to) different types of personalities. Two of the most common labels are “Type A” and “Type B” personalities.

A person with a “Type A” personality is usually anxious, “impatient” (not willing to wait for things), very organized, and focused on getting things done quickly. People with Type A personalities want things to be done perfectly. In contrast, a person with a “Type B” personality is more “laidback” (relaxed), patient, friendly, and does not worry about time and perfection as much.

Other general personality types include “optimist” and “pessimist”. An “optimist” is someone who is very positive and usually thinks that something good will happen. A “pessimist” is someone who is very negative and usually thinks that something bad will happen.

There are many personality tests that use more formal and technical labels for personality types. The “Myers-Briggs Type Indicator” is one of the most well known personality tests. People answer 93 questions and the test decides what type of personality they have and gives them a four-letter personality type.

Sometimes companies ask their employees to take the Myers-Briggs and other personality tests to learn more about their personality types. Some people think that this is a good idea because it helps people learn to pay attention to how they “interact” (work and communicate) with people who have different personality types. Other people think that personality testing is bad, because it makes people think that they should be acting in a certain way.

---

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – a



---

## ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities

---

### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 261: Describing People’s Personalities.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 261. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Remember to visit our website at [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com) to download the Learning Guide for this episode. You can also take a look at some of the new features we have on our website, including our ESL Podcast Store.

This episode is called “Describing People’s Personalities.” It’s going to be a dialogue between two people talking about the personality of their children, as well as themselves. Let’s get started.

[start of story]

Joann: Oh, are those pictures of your kids?

Artem: Yes. These are my three daughters and these are my two sons.

Joann: Your sons look so alike. Are they similar in personality, too?

Artem: It’s funny you ask that. My wife and I are always saying how different they are from one another, even though they’re the closest in age. Sergey, the younger one, is moody and a little timid, while his older brother, Dennis, is talkative and cheerful all the time.

Joann: That’s really interesting. You know, I have an older sister and we’re only a year apart, but we have very different personalities, too. When I was little, I was bad-tempered and I always fought with my brothers and sisters, while my sister was a little angel. She was always patient and generous. I really looked up to her.

Artem: It’s hard for me to believe that you were ever bad-tempered. You’re so even-keeled now. Me, on the other hand, I was a selfish and stubborn kid. I’m surprised that my parents put up with me.

Joann: I’m sure you’re exaggerating. All kids are a little selfish and stubborn, I think. Good thing most of us grow out of it as we get older.



---

## ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities

---

Artem: Well, that may be true, but according to my wife and kids, I’m still the most stubborn person in the world. They may be right.

[end of story]

We heard the dialogue between Joann and Artem. Joann begins by asking Artem if those are pictures of his children - “of his kids.” Artem says, “Yes. These are my three daughters and these are my two sons.”

Joann comments, or notes, that Artem's sons look alike that, meaning they have the same physical look. She says, “Your sons look so alike” - very much alike. “Are they similar in personality, too?” The word “personality” (personality) refers to a person's - a man or a woman's characteristics that affect what they do and how they act or behave. So, personality is a broad, general word to describe all sorts of things about how you behave; how you act; how you think.

Artem says, after Joann asks him the question about his son's personalities, “It’s funny you ask that.” He means it's interesting that you are asking me that. We use the word “funny” to mean ha-ha-ha funny, but also, in the expression “it’s funny,” we mean it's weird, or interesting, or different. Here, I think, he mean simply it's interesting.

He says, “My wife and I are always saying how different they are from one another,” the two sons, that is, “even though they’re the closest in age.” The expression “closest (closest) in age” means they have the smallest difference between them in terms of their ages; the fewest years between two people. So, someone who is 25, 30 and 50 - you have three people - the persons who are ages 25 and 30 are the closest in age.

Artem goes on to say that “Sergey, the younger one, is moody and a little timid.” “To be moody” (moody) means you change your emotions or your moods - the way you act and feel - very quickly, often becoming angry or sad for no reason. Someone who is moody is somebody who often is negative or sad; changes their emotions very quickly. Usually it's a bad thing when you say someone is moody.

“To be timid” (timid) means to be shy or quiet. The opposite of “timid” would be “outgoing” (outgoing - one word). “To be outgoing” is the opposite of “timid,” which is shy - quiet. I am timid, for example.

“Dennis is talkative and cheerful,” the other brother; the older brother, “Dennis is talkative and cheerful.” “To be talkative” (talkative) means you're always talking;



---

## ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities

---

you like to talk a lot. “To be cheerful” (cheerful) means to be happy; to be positive; we might say, “to be in a good mood.” That’s cheerful.

Joann says that it’s very interesting, what Artem has told her. She says that she has “an older sister and we’re only a year apart,” meaning she’s one year older than I am, or I’m one year older than she is. I have a brother who is one year apart from me; he’s one year older than me.

Joann says she and her sister have different personalities. She says that when she “was little” she was “bad-tempered.” “To be bad (bad) -tempered (tempered)” means to be very negative; to be angry; to be mad; to be in a bad mood. The word “temper” (temper) refers sometimes to how easily you get angry or mad. You could say about someone, “He has a bad temper.” You can be “good-tempered,” with an “ed” at the end, or “bad-tempered,” however. “To be bad-tempered” would be someone who gets mad easily; “to be good-tempered” would be someone who’s normally happy.

Joann says that her sister, when they were younger, “was a little angel” (angel). Here, angel means a very good person; a kind, thoughtful person who everyone likes. She’s somebody who is very nice. Joann says that her sister “was always patient and generous.” “To be patient” (patient) means to be able to wait for something without getting angry or frustrated. “To be patient” means not to get excited if something is taking a long time. “Generous” (generous) means you are willing to share with other people. You’re willing to give things to other people, and not expect they will give you something back.

Joann says she “really looked up to” her sister. “To look up to someone” means to admire someone; to respect someone; to think that someone is very good. The expression “to look up to” has a couple of different meanings; take a look at the Learning Guide for this episode for some additional explanations of that expression and the word “patient,” which also has several different meanings in English.

Artem says, “It’s hard for me to believe that you were ever bad-tempered. You’re so even-keeled now.” “To be even (even) -keeled (keeled)” means to be even-tempered; not to change your moods quickly, so it’s the opposite of bad-tempered, in a way. It’s somebody who doesn’t come easily angry; who doesn’t become mad very easily. That is an “even-keeled” person.

Artem says, “Me, on the other hand,” notice how he says “me” instead of “I,” grammatically, the correct form would be “I,” but in normal conversation people often say, in this case, “me.” “Me, on the other hand, I was selfish and stubborn.”



---

## ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities

---

“To be selfish” (selfish) means to not want to share with others. It's the opposite of generous; wanting to have everything for yourself. “To be stubborn” (stubborn) means that you don't want to change your mind or your opinion - your idea about something; you continue to think in the same way. My wife says I am stubborn; once I make a decision or decide on something, I don't change my mind and I don't listen to other reasons why I am wrong. I'm very stubborn; I think it's because I am never wrong, but my wife disagrees!

Artem says, “I’m surprised that my parents put up with me.” “To put up with someone” means to tolerate someone; to accept someone's negative behavior without complaining, or to accept a bad situation without complaining or getting angry. That's “to put up with something,” usually a difficult person or a difficult situation.

Joann says to Artem, “I’m sure you’re exaggerating.” “To exaggerate” (exaggerate) means to make something bigger or more important than it really is; to talk about something and make it sound more important than it is or greater than it is.

Joann says, “All kids are a little selfish and stubborn. Good thing most of us grow out of it as we get older.” “Good thing” here means it is a good thing that most of us grow out of it. “To grow out of something” means to stop doing something as one gets older. Some children like to play with video games, and as they get older, they “grow out of it” - they mature and they stop playing the same games. Or maybe, just different games!

Now let's listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

Joann: Oh, are those pictures of your kids?

Artem: Yes. These are my three daughters and these are my two sons.

Joann: Your sons look so alike. Are they similar in personality, too?

Artem: It's funny you ask that. My wife and I are always saying how different they are from one another, even though they're the closest in age. Sergey, the younger one, is moody and a little timid, while his older brother, Dennis, is talkative and cheerful all the time.





---

**ESL Podcast 261 – Describing People’s Personalities**

---

Joann: That’s really interesting. You know, I have an older sister and we’re only a year apart, but we have very different personalities, too. When I was little, I was bad-tempered and I always fought with my brothers and sisters, while my sister was a little angel. She was always patient and generous. I really looked up to her.

Artem: It’s hard for me to believe that you were ever bad-tempered. You’re so even-keeled now. Me, on the other hand, I was a selfish and stubborn kid. I’m surprised that my parents put up with me.

Joann: I’m sure you’re exaggerating. All kids are a little selfish and stubborn, I think. Good thing most of us grow out of it as we get older.

Artem: Well, that may be true, but according to my wife and kids, I’m still the most stubborn person in the world. They may be right.

[end of story]

The script for this podcast was written by Dr. Lucy Tse.

That's all we have time for. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

English as a Second Language Podcast is written and produced by Dr. Lucy Tse, hosted by Dr. Jeff McQuillan. This podcast is copyright 2007.