

**[1] Before We Start...**

If a friend starts badmouthing someone who doesn't deserve it, do you:

- A. go along with it feeling a little bad
- B. try to change the subject
- C. make it clear that you'd rather not hear it
- D. listen, then say something that negates it

**[2] Definitions:**

complain

something or another

reinforce

unfavorable

perpetuates

empowers

game plan

come up with

constructive alternative

act upon

merely

deal with (dealt with)

defensive (defensiveness)

substitute

compromise

complain just to complain ( ~~~ just to ~~~ )

perceive

genuine

make a positive difference

demeanor

negatively charged

transform

beneficial-to-all

**[3] Watch the presentation****[4] Read the text**

## Complaining

Most of us complain about something or another. How do you feel when you complain? When we complain about some negativity around us, we reinforce our connection with that negativity. By complaining, we focus our energy onto that unfavorable "thing" and that perpetuates and empowers whatever it is that you're complaining about. We shouldn't give power and strength to such things.

A much better game plan is to come up with a constructive alternative, then to act upon it. Don't merely reinforce the problem or focus on what is wrong with the world, instead, see it as an opportunity to change the situation and make it better!

Complaints are negative, and negative things are often dealt with defensiveness. A constructive, positive substitute, on the other hand, will more likely be dealt with cooperation, compromise and even appreciation.

So the next time you want to complain about something, take a moment to stop and ask your deepest self if that is what you truly want. Do you want to complain just to complain? Or, do you want to be in a better situation, one that will improve what you perceive to be the negative "thing"?

Inside each complaint is the seed to make the situation better, and there is a genuine desire to improve the situation or to solve the problem, but in most cases, just complaining is not enough. Let's skip the complaining and instead focus that energy on trying to make a positive difference.

Complaining can sometimes make the bad situation worse, especially if your words, demeanor, and actions are negatively charged. Instead, select to transform the situation with your supportive, encouraging, beneficial-to-all positive thoughts, words, ideas and actions.

**Think about:** Instead of complaining, how can I improve the situation, become a better person for it, and contribute to the goodness of the world?

**[5] Circle the correct word:**

- Instead of complaining, we should try to think of ways to make the situation [ *better / worse* ].
- The receiver of the complaint sometimes gets [ *defensive / satisfied* ].
- Constructive dialog [ *helps / doesn't* ] *help* the world become a better place.
- Perhaps chronic complainers focus on life not being fair, or they are jealous of others, or they just [ *do / do not* ] have empathy.
- A helpful and loving approach to things you wish to change is often [ *less / more* ] effective.

**[6] Listen and fill in the blanks:**

Instead of \_\_\_\_\_ negative energy by complaining in a nasty way, we \_\_\_\_\_ come up with a better \_\_\_\_\_. We should think of a way to focus our energy towards a good \_\_\_\_\_ (a constructive, positive substitute) rather than just \_\_\_\_\_ our anger with words and actions. Let's strive to \_\_\_\_\_ the situation with beneficial-to-all positive thoughts, words, ideas, and \_\_\_\_\_.

**[7] Task: movie clip**

The clip is from the humorous but heart-warming movie entitled "Trains, Planes and Automobiles". The man is at a rental car counter. He is angry because he went to pick up his car (it was very very far) but his rental car was not there.

Student Task: You are a movie script writer. Rewrite this very negative complaint scene into a more polite and positive one.

**TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT**

**In pairs or in a small group, answer or do the following:**

1. For the 3 words below, write meanings in English + write an original sentence that includes that word. Make good sentences!

whine

moan

blame

2. What do you sometimes complain about?

3. Think of a situation where people are complaining about something. They are negatively charged and their words and demeanor are damaging. Describe the situation, then offer a constructive alternative (in other words, a positive substitute or positive difference). Your constructive alternative should strive to transform the situation into a positive one.

4. Some people complain to complain. In your opinion, what is the best way to handle such people?

5. What's wrong with complaining?

**STUDENT NAMES & CLASS NUMBERS:**