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to The Next Level!*



*Human behaviour 2 English mega-class! 30  
minutes of new vocabulary!*

**Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Georgina. And I'm Neil. Neil,**

**this may sound a bit personal, but have you ever taken your clothes off? Err, well, yes. Every**

**day when I have a shower. Of course. I mean in public – have you ever been naked in public?**

**No! Stripping off – or getting naked - publicly, is not my idea of fun. Who would enjoy doing**

**that? Well, naturists would. That's what we call people who think not wearing clothes**

**outdoors is a healthy way to live, and it makes them feel good. We might also call them nudists,**

**because they are nude. Right, so naturists feel being naked is natural – it's not about them being**

**interested in nature?! Not necessarily, but we are going to discuss why being naked in nature might**

**be good for us. But how about a question first, Neil? The act of swimming naked is informally**

**called skinny dipping. The world's largest skinny dip took place in Ireland in 2018 - but do you**

**know how many naked swimmers went into the sea? Was it approximately... a) 250 people,**

b) 2,500 people, or c) 25,000 people? I'd have to guess and say that only 250 people would be

brave enough to run into the cold sea, naked!

Well, as always, I'll reveal the answer later.

So, the idea of getting naked might fill you with dread - it might seem embarrassing - but some

people do sunbathe naked on the beach or in their garden or they go to naturist holiday parks. But

naked rambling – walking naked in the countryside – might be taking it one step further. However,

it's something Donna Price, a volunteer at British Naturism, is keen to advocate – or publicly

support. Here she is, speaking on BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour programme, explaining why... We enjoy

the feeling of being at one with nature. If you haven't actually tried being naked in nature, and

naked outdoors, when you can feel the skin, the warmth air all over your skin, it's such a lovely

feeling. There is a great feeling of liberation and freedom once you actually try naturism - and

I would never advocate for someone to actually go out for a naked walk as the first thing they ever

did - I just would not do that! You've got to be comfortable in your own skin, so you do it at home, at ...

you know, in your own garden maybe if you can - get comfortable with yourself, actually start to

feel that being naked feels normal, which, I mean, to me, it does. So, for Donna, naked rambling means she

has a connection with nature, she feels part of it and it makes her feel good – that's the feeling of

being at one with nature. Hmm, but couldn't you do that with your clothes on? Well, she also mentions

there's a feeling of freedom and liberation – that's being freed from something – here,

it's freed from your clothes. Donna also told the Woman's Hour programme that going for a naked walk

shouldn't be the first thing you attempt to do. You need to feel relaxed and confident with your

actions first – or what we sometimes say is 'comfortable in your own skin'.

Yes, she says we need to get to feel that nakedness is normal. I suppose we were all

born naked and it's not something to be ashamed of. And, in the UK at least, it's generally not

against the law to be naked in public. Hmm, I'm still not convinced, but according to Donna Price,

this freedom of expression is quite well received when she's out walking. Here she is speaking on

the BBC's Woman's Hour programme again... A majority of the responses that you actually encounter, if

you do encounter the public, the general public, are actually very encouraging. They're not shock,

horror majority of the time, I can guarantee that. A lot of people say just 'good morning'

and carry on, some of them actually say 'gosh, you're braver than I am' if it's a bit chilly.

A lot of them just say, 'I really wish I could do that' and usually we just say 'you can!'. So,

the people Donna encounters – or meets – seem to support what she's doing. She says it's not

shock, horror – this is usually said as an informal way of actually saying something

is not surprising, not shocking!

Well, shock, horror, Neil, I won't be taking my clothes off

anytime soon – it's too cold anyway and I don't want to be bitten by all those bugs you get in the

countryside. But it's good to hear that people are open-minded to the idea. Yes, good luck to anyone

who wants to give it a try and well done to those brave people who took part in the world's biggest

skinny dip – a mass naked swim. Earlier, Georgina, you asked me how many people took part in the

event in Ireland in 2018. I did, and you said? I said about 250 people went for a dip. Was I right?

No, Neil. According to Guinness World Records, 2,505 women took part in the largest charity

skinny dip in Wicklow in Ireland. Well, well

done to them, and skinny dipping was one of the

items of vocabulary we discussed today. This is an informal way of describing the act of swimming

naked. We've also been discussing naturists - people who think not wearing clothes outdoors

is a healthy way to live, and it makes them feel good. The act of doing this is called

'naturism'. And when you advocate something, like naturism for example, you publicly support it.

'Being at one with nature' means having a connection with the natural world that makes you feel good.

And 'liberation' means being freed from something. And when we say 'shock, horror!', we actually mean

the opposite and mean something in not shocking or surprising – we're being sarcastic, I guess.

It's not like you to be sarcastic, Neil!  
But shock, horror – we're out of time now.

We only get 6 minutes and that's the naked truth! Thanks for listening and goodbye. Goodbye.

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil. And I'm Sam.

When Neil and I record 6 Minute English face-to-face in the BBC Learning English

studio, which, I am happy to say, we are doing right now, we look at each other as we speak.

We smile and use hand gestures and facial expressions in a type of communication called 'body language'. But during the Covid pandemic, everyday meetings with work colleagues, teachers and friends, and 6 Minute English recordings - all moved online. Video meetings using software like Zoom and Skype became the normal way to communicate with family and friends.

And whatever happens with Covid in the future, it seems they're here to stay. In this programme, we'll be asking: how has body language changed in the world of online video meetings? We'll meet the person who wrote the rulebook for clear communication in the digital age - Erica Dhawan, author of a new book, 'Digital Body Language'. But before that, I have a question for you, Sam, and it's about Erica Dhawan. She may be a communications expert now, but growing up in Pennsylvania she was a shy and quiet schoolgirl. So how did Erica beat her shyness and become the confident communicator she is today? Did she: a) attend public speaking classes?, b) copy the body language of the cool kids at school? or, c) raised her hand to answer the teacher's questions, even if she didn't know the answer? I'll guess 'c' - she raised her hand

to answer the teacher's questions. OK, Sam. We'll reveal the correct answer later in the programme.

In face-to-face meetings, we immediately see someone's reaction to what we've said through eye

contact, where two people look into each other's eyes as they talk. Unfortunately, using a web

camera to make eye contact is almost impossible in online meetings and this often creates a kind of

'distancing' effect. Erica Dhawan makes several suggestions to help with this. See if you can

hear the final suggestion she makes to Michael Rosen as part of BBC Radio 4's Word of Mouth.

And last but not least, slow down. Remember when it was completely normal to have a one-minute

pause in a room with one another because we knew when we're thinking and brainstorming.

If we don't hear someone speak on video, we ask them if they're on mute. Practise what I

call the five-second rule - wait five seconds before speaking to make sure that individuals

have time to process the ideas, especially if there may be technology or accessibility issues.

Did you hear Erica's last piece of advice, Neil? Yes, she recommends slowing down, something we do

naturally face-to-face when we're thinking or



**brainstorming - that's discussing suggestions**

**with a group of people to come up with new ideas  
or to solve problems. Slowing down gives us time**

**to process new information - to understand it  
by thinking carefully and reflecting on it.**

**Erica compares online body language to learning  
a new language - it takes practice, especially**

**when it comes to smiling and laughing, something  
Michael Rosen finds hard to do in video meetings.**

**Listen to him discussing this problem  
with Erica Dhawan for BBC Radio 4's,**

**Word of Mouth. Do you think it's killing off  
people laughing and smiling in the way we do when**

**we're altogether in the live situation? I would  
say that it is much less likely that we laugh and**

**smile on camera for a few reasons. Number one,  
laughing is often done in unison where we can**

**quickly pick up the energy of someone smiling or  
laughing and feed off of that and laugh ourselves.**

**When it comes to screen delays, the fact that  
it's not natural to see our own camera - being**

**distracted by that - we are much less likely to  
laugh and smile. One of the ways we can overcome**

**this is by creating intentional moments in  
our meetings for the water cooler effect.**

Erica points out that laughing often happens in unison - together and at the same time.

Yes, if someone starts laughing it makes me laugh too. She also thinks it's important

to make time for employees to chat informally about things unrelated to work - their weekend

plans or last night's TV show. And she uses the expression, 'the water cooler effect' which comes

from the United States where office workers sometimes meet at the water fountain to chat.

So, the water cooler effect refers to informal conversations that people have in their office or

workplace, maybe in the lift, the office kitchen or, if there is one, by an actual water cooler.

Erica Dhawan seems very comfortable communicating online, but she's had lots of time to practice

since her schooldays. Ah yes, Neil, in your quiz question you asked how Erica conquered her

shyness at school. I guessed that she raised her hand to answer the teacher's questions.

It was a good guess, Sam, but the correct answer is b - she copied the

body language of her cool teenage classmates, so probably lots of rolled eyes and slouching!

OK, let's recap the vocabulary from this programme about online body language - non-verbal ways of

communicating using the body. Eye contact is when two people look at each other's eyes at

the same time. Brainstorming involves a group discussion to generate new ideas or solutions.

When we process information, we think about it carefully in order to understand it. 'In unison'

means happening together and at the same time. And finally, 'the water cooler effect' is an American

expression to describe informal conversations between people at work. Neil is looking at his

watch, which is body language that tells me our six minutes are up! Goodbye for now! Goodbye!

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Sam. And I'm Neil. Sleep - we all

need it - some more than others. I can usually get by with around seven hours a night but I do like

to have a nap - a short sleep - in the afternoon, when I'm not working of course. How about you,

Neil? I'm always tired and as soon as my head hits the pillow, I'm out like a light - meaning I go

to sleep very quickly. Well, Neil, you might not survive in South Korea then. Apparently,

it's one of the most stressed and tired nations on earth - a place where people work and study longer

hours and get less sleep than anywhere else. We'll

find out more later and teach some sleep-related

vocabulary. But before we do, you need to give me a question to keep me awake and alert!

Of course I do, and here it is. In the 1960s, American man, Randy Gardner, set the world record

for staying awake for the longest period. Do you know what that time was? Was it: a) 64 hours, b)

164 hours, or c) 264 hours? All sound impossible but I'll guess a) 64 hours - that's nearly 3

days! I'll give you the answer later in the programme - assuming you don't doze off!

But let's talk more about sleep now. As I mentioned, we all need it to help our mind

and body rest and relax. And going without sleep - or sleeplessness - is bad for our health.

Many things can stop us sleeping and some of them are pressure, anxiety and stress caused by your

job. And in South Korea research has shown it's become increasingly difficult to switch off - stop

thinking about work and relax. South Koreans sleep fewer hours and have higher rates of depression

and suicide than almost anywhere else. Se-Woong Koo has been reporting on this for the BBC World

Service Documentary podcast. He met one worker who explained why she never got time to relax.

**Separating work and rest time has been a recurring issue for Ji-an - in her last job her office hours**

**were long. Like most Korean firms, her employer didn't think about any boundaries. They encroached**

**on almost all her time. They told me 'you need to be contactable 24/7' - there will always be**

**someone from work reaching out to me, like needing to get something done right now.**

**Even just thinking about it, I get really agitated. So, that stressed out worker got**

**agitated just thinking about the situation - she got worried or upset. That's because office hours**

**in South Korea are long and some employers expect their workers to be contactable all the time. Yes,**

**there are no boundaries - so no limits or rules about when employers can contact their employees.**

**Therefore, as this employee said, work encroached - it gradually took over - her leisure time.**

**Stress like this can lead to insomnia - a condition where you are unable to sleep.**

**The BBC Discovery podcast goes on to explain that offering a cure for this sleeplessness**

**has become big business. There are sleep clinics where doctors assess people overnight, and sleep**

**cafes that offer places to nap in the middle of the working day. One other issue in South Korea**

that's affecting sleep is the 'bali bali' culture, meaning 'quickly, quickly' or 'hurry, hurry'.

People are constantly in a rush. Doctor Lee spoke to the World Service's Discovery podcast

about the effects of this and how even trying to take medication to help sleep,

has its problems. People take like, ten or twenty pills per one night, and because they

cannot fall asleep even with the medication, they drink alcohol on top of that, and they experience

side-effects of the medication. People can sleepwalk, and go to the refrigerator,

eat a lot of things unconsciously - uncooked food, and they don't remember the next day. There

were cases of car accidents in the centre of Seoul which has been sleepwalking patients.

So, some people are taking lots of pills to help them sleep but they're not working so

they're drinking alcohol as well. This leads to side-effects - unpleasant and unexpected

results from the medication. It seems, one of these side-effects is sleepwalking - moving

around and doing things while still asleep.

Well, if sleeping pills aren't working,

there's always meditation - or working less.

**At least South Koreans are getting some sleep,**

**unlike Randy Gardner who I asked you  
about earlier. Yes, he holds the record**

**for staying awake the longest. And I thought  
he stayed awake for 64 hours. Was I right?**

**No, Neil. Not long enough. Randy Gardner stayed  
awake for an incredible 264.4 hours - that's 11**

**days and 25 minutes - in January 1964. That's  
one record I really don't want to beat. Well,**

**before you nod off Neil, let's recap some  
of the vocabulary we've been discussing,**

**including 'go out like a light', which means  
you go to sleep very quickly. When you switch**

**off you stop concentrating on one thing  
and start thinking about something else.**

**A lack of sleep or rest can make you 'agitated'  
- you get worried or upset. 'Encroach' means**

**gradually take over. When you take medication and  
it gives you an unpleasant and unexpected results,**

**we call these side-effects. And sleepwalking  
describes moving around and doing things while**

**still asleep. That's our six minutes up. Goodbye  
and sweet dreams! Goodbye!**

**Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English, I'm Neil. And joining me it's Rob. Hello!**

**Now Rob, would you say you're someone who is quite organised? I'd like to think so. What's the best**

way

to organise everything? You need a 'to-do' list - a list of all the jobs you need to do that you can work your

way through. That's a good idea and something we can include in today's discussion about

life admin. Admin is short for administration - that describes the activities and tasks you

have to do to make a business or organisation run smoothly - but life admin is administration

you have to do to make your day-to-day life run smoothly - like doing housework, or paying a

bill. And the first thing on my 'to-do' list is to ask you and the listeners, a question.

Yes, you wouldn't want to forget that. So, the website Hotels.com commissioned some research

about how much time young adults - that's millennials - spend doing life admin. Do you

know what proportion of their free time they spend doing life admin tasks? Is it... a) a quarter of a

day, b) a third of a day, c) half a day? Based on my personal experience, I would say about a

quarter of a day. Well, we'll see if you're the same as other people at the end of the programme.

But as we all know, life admin is necessary but it can be a bit of a chore - a boring,



ordinary task you do regularly. Experts have studied the subject and looked at how we do it

and how we can make it less boring. One of them is Elizabeth Emens, Professor of Law at Columbia

University and author of *The Art of Life Admin*. She's been speaking to the BBC Radio 4 programme,

Woman's Hour, and described what she thought life admin is. Life admin is the

office work of life, it's the invisible layer of work that is the kind of thing that managers

and secretaries, aka admins, do for pay in the office but that everyone does in their

own lives for free. She calls life admin the invisible layer of work - so it's work, tasks

or chores we carry out that people don't notice we're doing - or don't realise we have to do them

it's extra work in our life. And we don't get paid for it - unless we're at work when it is the role

of someone to do it - such as secretaries or aka admins - aka is short for 'also known as' - so

secretaries might also be known as admins - that is short for people who do administration. Right,

so we know life admin is boring and we don't get paid for it - and also, trying to renew your house

insurance or trying to query a bill with a utility company can be frustrating and feels like a waste

of time. A utility company by the way, is one that supplies something such as electricity,

gas, or water to the public. My problem is I never get round to doing my life admin - there

are better things to do - so you could say I procrastinate - I delay doing things until later,

probably because I don't want to do them. You are what Elizabeth classifies

as an 'admin avoider'. So this is where my to-do list comes in handy, Neil. You have a written

record of tasks that can be quite satisfying to cross off as you do them. This is something

Elizabeth Emen has found to work, at least for some people. Let's hear from her again. What

type of people did she find get most satisfaction from completing a to-do list?

If you've ever made a list and put things on it you've already done, just to cross them out,

then you know the kind of 'done it' pleasure that goes with that. But actually I interviewed people,

especially the super-doers that I interviewed, actually can find real pleasure in the actual

doing of it - and, so, trying to understand how we can get to that when we have to do it - how we can

make it so that there is some meaning in it and

some texture and there're ways of doing it that please us. So, she was describing the super-doers - these are the people who love admin and would spend an evening putting their book collection into alphabetical order! Elizabeth mentioned that we should learn from the super-doers and get some 'done it' pleasure in doing our life admin.

We need to find a meaning for doing it - in other words, what it represents - so we can see the benefit of completing our to-do list. How we find pleasure from doing life admin is different

for different people - so personally, I think I'll stick with being an 'admin avoider' - but that might explain why I just got charged extra for not paying my credit card bill on time!

Well, please don't avoid giving us the answer to the quiz question you asked us earlier.

Yes. Earlier I asked, researchers, commissioned by Hotels.com, polled 2,000 young professionals about their lives. How much of their free time do they spend doing life admin? Is it... a) quarter of a day, b) a third of a day, c) half a day? And I said a) a quarter of a day. Yes, they spend a quarter of their days carrying out tasks like doctor's appointments,

waiting in for packages to be delivered and doing household chores. Boring! Unlike this programme

Neil, which is not a chore - one of the words we discussed today. Yes, our vocabulary today

included chore - a boring, ordinary task you do regularly. We also mentioned admin, short for

administration - the activities and tasks you have to do make a business, organisation or just your

life, run smoothly. We heard aka - meaning 'also known as' - so for example, Rob aka The master of

6 Minute English! Thanks very much, Neil. Next we heard utility company. That's a company that

supplies something such as electricity, gas, or water to the public. And we also heard how Neil

likes to procrastinate - that's delay doing things until later, probably because he doesn't want to

do them. Finally, we mentioned super-doers - an informal term to describe people who get

satisfaction out of doing life admin and do lots of it. Like me. Well, it's time to go now but

there's plenty more to discover on our website at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com). Goodbye for now. Bye bye.

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Neil. And I'm Rob. Do you enjoy your

own company, Rob? Do you like being alone? Or do you prefer spending time with friends?

**Well, recently I haven't seen my friends much because of coronavirus - in fact, I've hardly**

**seen anyone this past year! It sounds like Rob has become a bit of a hermit - someone who lives alone**

**and apart from society. Yes, I've been forced to spend time alone - but it wouldn't be my choice.**

**I'd much rather be socialising and visiting friends. If, like Rob, the idea of being**

**alone does not appeal to you, it might be hard to understand why anyone would choose to be a hermit.**

**But some people do - and in this programme we'll be hearing some of the reasons why.**

**Throughout history and across all cultures, there have been people who choose to leave behind the**

**life and people they know to live in isolation and silence. People like Christopher Wright - an**

**American man who lived in complete isolation in the forests of Maine for nearly 30 years!**

**When hikers discovered his tent all they found was an alarm clock. So, my quiz question is this:**

**why did Christopher Wright, the hermit of the Maine woods, need an alarm clock? Was it:**

**a) to remind him when to hide his tent?, b) to frighten away wild animals?, or c) to wake him up**

**at the coldest part of the night so he didn't**

freeze to death? Well, if he wanted to be alone

so much, I guess he needed to be invisible, so  
I'll say a) to remind him to hide his tent.

OK, Rob, we'll find out the answer later.  
Christopher Wright may be an extreme example

of someone seeking solitude, but there are  
many other motivations for becoming a hermit.

Some people are looking for peace and silence,  
and for others it's about being closer to God,

focusing on what's inside and finding a sense of  
joy. Meng Hu is a former librarian who now runs a

website all about hermits. He says that in ancient  
times, many Chinese hermits seeking solitude were

followers of the philosopher, Confucius. Here's  
Meng Hu talking about Confucius to BBC World

Service programme, The Why Factor: His dictum  
was something like, 'When the Emperor is good,

serve. When the Emperor is evil, recluse'. And  
so over a thousand years at least there were

a lot of recluses, there were a lot of educated men who  
simply couldn't tolerate any more evil - they

simply dropped out and they would migrate to small  
villages, to farms. Meng Hu mentions Confucius's

dictum. A dictum is a short statement or saying  
which expresses some wise advice or a general

truth about life. Confucius's dictum advised that when the Emperor was evil, people should become

recluses - people, like hermits, who live alone and avoid contact with others. In the interview,

Meng Hu uses 'recluse' as a verb - to recluse - but this is very uncommon. A more modern way

of saying this is, to drop out - to reject the normal ways society works and live outside the

system. A bit like the hippies in the 1960s, you mean? Right. Although most hippies weren't looking

for isolation, they did have something in common with hermits - the desire to challenge society's

rules and conventions. Someone who combines the hippie and the hermit is Catholic writer,

Sara Maitland. Part of a long tradition of Christian hermits, Sara spent forty days and

nights alone on the Isle of Skye, seeking God in the silence of the remote Scottish island.

For her, the magic of silence is something to be embraced and taught to children. Here she explains

more to BBC World Service's, The Why Factor. Most people first encounter silence in bereavement,

in relationship breakdown and in death and that seems to be about the worst place to start.

People say, 'But what should we do?' Never, ever use 'Go to your room on your own' as a punishment.

You use it as a reward - 'Darling, you've been so good all day, you've been so helpful, why don't

you go to your room for half an hour now and be on your own?' A treat! A reward! Sara says that most

people experience silence after a bereavement - the death of a relative or close friend. She

also thinks that parents should never tell their children, 'Go to your room!' as a punishment.

Instead, being alone should be a treat - a reward or gift of something special and enjoyable.

That way, children learn that being alone can actually be enjoyable. I'm still wondering about

that American, Christopher Wright - I suppose living alone in the woods was a treat for him...

I suppose so - but why did he need an alarm clock?

Ah yes, your quiz question, Neil. I thought maybe

it was to remind him to hide his tent. Was I right? Well incredibly, Rob, the answer was c)

to wake him up at the coldest part of the night so he didn't freeze to death! That's someone who

really wants to be left alone! A 'hermit' in other words, or a 'recluse' - two ways of describing

people who live alone and avoid others. OK, let's recap the rest of the vocabulary, starting

with 'dictum' - a short saying often giving wise



advice or expressing a general truth about life.

People who 'drop out' reject the normal rules of society and live outside the system. Many people

experience solitude after a bereavement - the death of a close friend or relative. And finally

'a treat' is reward or gift of something special and enjoyable. That's all for now, but whether you're

listening alone or with others, we hope you'll join us again soon, here at 6 Minute English.

Don't forget - you'll find us on our website or you can download our free app, so you won't miss

any of our programmes. And we are on all the main social media sites. Bye bye! Bye for now!

