

Tips on Tac

Written by L.A. Plume
Tuesday, 13 April 2010 12:48



Dear L. A. Plume,

Recently while at one of my town's nicer nightspots, my boyfriend and I were casually introduced to an engaged, middle-aged couple by a mutual friend. Not knowing these people, and being in a crowded public environment, I kept the conversation light and impersonal. Imagine my surprise when the female half of this couple 'cornered' my boyfriend and me and started spilling the beans on all the skeletons in her fiancé's closet! Lurid stories regarding his ex girlfriend, police trouble, money problems, etc. Try as I might, I simply could not divert her back to safer topics, and I couldn't wait to get out of there! What do you suggest for the "TMI" encounter??"

Dear TMI,

Oh how I love cocktail conversations; they are the cornerstone of good juicy information and gossip! It does seem difficult to divert someone who is determined to tell tales. Next time, ask her to spell their names for you, say that you write a gossip column or bar blog, and can't wait to get home to your computer.

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L.A. Plume

Dear LP,

I don't know if this is suitable for your column, but increasingly I find myself on the receiving end of numerous long-winded "ADORABLE grandchildren" stories. I like the cute quip as much as the next gal, but perhaps because I have no grandchildren myself, the charm escapes me most of the time. In addition, I am often told how much I WILL enjoy grandchildren when and if I am ever so blessed. How can I change the subject tactfully and head off the lengthy anecdotes??

Cyndi

Dear Cyndi,

Other people's grandchildren are like other people's pets – often adorable only to them. Good manners would dictate that you be gracious; and grateful that they aren't recounting the details of their medical infirmities instead. There really is no way to change the subject without it being obvious. Travel, however, is usually a safe, engaging, and often interesting subject. Tell them you're planning a trip, without grandchildren, and ask if they have any suggestions. If they start to tell you about Disney World, excuse yourself and go to the ladies room, or leave by the back door.

L. A. Plume

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Dear Ms. Plume,

I'm a widow, in my middle-plus age years and have been introduced to a few eligible older gentlemen lately. I'm rather new to the dating scene at this stage of life and find it generally awkward. However, my main complaint, and I must admit, source of amusement, is that these men dye their gray hair – themselves. It always seems to be some shade of orange-red worthy of old time Barnum and Bailey clowns, or some strange color that resembles pluff mud. Can I tactfully tell them that natural is better? It doesn't make them look younger – only ridiculous.

Go Gray

Dear G.G.,

I know just what you mean! I knew a man who touched up only his roots and the result was that his hair looked like a section of the color wheel with about six various shades of red as it grew out and faded. My ex had beautiful white hair when I married him in his forties. After the divorce, he wanted to look younger, but only succeeded in looking like he had gotten his head stuck in mud at the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay. Perhaps you could comment on other men's gray hair, saying how distinguished you think it looks.

L. A. Plume