

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

Know Your English - April 25, 2016

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“Did you tell your professor why you couldn’t submit your assignment?”

“I did. But needless to say that he didn’t believe me. He thinks...”

“Do you know what ‘needless to say’ means? When do you...”

“Doesn’t it mean ‘of course’? You normally use it at the beginning of a sentence to indicate that what you’re about to say is fairly obvious.”

“That’s right! So, would you say ‘Of course that he didn’t believe me is...’

“No! I would say, ‘Of course he didn’t believe me.’”

“Similarly, you don’t use a ‘that’ clause after ‘needless to say’. Here’s an example. Needless to say, the coach was very upset with his players.”

“Needless to say, I’m delighted we’ll be spending the summer in Kodaikanal.”

“If you’re there in the last week of May, you may run into my cousin Roshini.”

“Really? She’s a remarkable woman. Being the CEO of a company, she has to do a lot of travelling. Yet she manages to spend a lot of time with her young children.”

“What makes you think that she has time for her kids?”

“From the photographs she keeps posting on Facebook. She seems to...”

“Don’t be fooled by those photographs. Roshni is a Facebook mommy.”

“Facebook mommy? What’s that?”

“She is someone who in real life is a terrible mother. A ‘Facebook mommy’ is someone who doesn’t take good care of her children. In fact, she has very little time for them. The little time that she spends with them, she takes a lot of pictures and posts them on her Facebook account.”

“So when you see the photos of her with the kids, you think what a great mom she is!”

“Exactly! There are quite a few people I know who are very good Facebook mommies.”

“What about Facebook daddies? Does the expression exist?”

“Yes, it does. Luckily for Roshni, her husband, Jeevan is not a Facebook daddy.”

“But I’m told that Jeevan’s brother is. Do you think you’ll be a Facebook dad?”

“Only time will tell. So, when are you leaving for Kodaikanal?”

“Early May. I hope I run into Roshni there. I have such high regards for her. She...”

“You don’t have ‘high regards’ for someone. You usually have a ‘high regard’ for them. I would like to meet Roshni because I hold her in high regard.”

“How about this example? The students hold the professor in high regard.”

“Sounds good. Politicians, on the other hand, are held in low regard in many countries.”

“That’s true. If I wish to complete the assignment by tomorrow, I’d better take leave of you. I have to... By the way, is it okay to say, ‘take leave of someone?’”

“The expression is frequently heard in India. But most native speakers would find it pretty formal and...”

“So what would native speakers say in informal contexts such as this one?”

“In informal contexts, they are likely to say, ‘I think I’d better be going’ or ‘I’d better make a move.’”

“In that case, I’d better be going. I’ve an assignment to complete by tomorrow morning.”

Setting a good example for your children takes all the fun out of middle age. – William Feather

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