

Complainer

A complainer is a person who is chronically dissatisfied with the way things are going, and with the way he is being treated by life, society, and his fellow human beings. A complainer may or may not be justified in his attitude, but that's not the point; he will complain equally whether he is or is not justified. Since his position is chronic, he takes a perverse pleasure in meeting the expectation that he will whine.

Examples

1 Bill is a middle aged guy whose life ambition is to coach track and field, but whom life and chance have sidetracked, so that his career has taken him into the grocery, rather than into the sports coaching, field; with the result that he is essentially dissatisfied with his life. When we walk and talk he complains about the onset of cold weather, the problems he is having with his power mower, the lack of respect he gets at his job site. Bill brings no pressure on a fellow walker, to do more than grunt commiseration. The co-walker may even turn the gloom to his advantage, basking in a sense of how lucky he is; but this twist may simply herald a pyrrhic victory; you conclude the walk feeling that you are but a temporary master of the fragile kingdom of well being.

2 I have a family member who fits a classic mood-swing profile. When low he finds everything going against him. It may be balmy today, but heavy winds are predicted; his new car, which was nearly totaled the other evening, will probably not be fully insurance-covered; his beloved Brussels griffon has arthritis in her hind legs and who know she may have to be put to sleep. The co locutor, finding that assuaging responses only reinforce the family member's gloom, either subsides into an indifferent reaffirmation of the foulness of things, or takes arms against the simplicity of gloom, and declares that the problem is probably in his interlocutor's mind. To which the interlocutor will perhaps reply that indeed his mind is his worst enemy, against which common sense, his very means of self-analysis, can do nothing to help him.