

## **Cooperative**

*To be co-operative is to work willingly with others. A co-operative person is welcome in the work force, for he or she makes the work effort easier and more productive for the company or university or team. A NASA space mission requires a vast co-operative effort embracing the interactive work of engineers, astronauts, mechanics, and communications experts. Active co-operation, from all these people, assures the space launch. Inattention, or 'personal issues,' can result in the kind of disaster that hit the Germanwings plane over the Alps in April of 2015.*

### *Examples*

#### **1 Singing along with the mass**

I co-operate with my local parish church in singing hymns during mass. The hymns we sing at mass are carefully chosen by the liturgical committee and it is expected that we will sing them at the appropriate moments—four different times—in the course of the mass. I use the word 'co-operate' because I do not like the parishioners singing along with the mass. I like the mass to be accompanied either with trained singers or by no music at all—for in fact the mass is historically unaccompanied. However I co-operate with my church in singing (as best I can) because I begin to see that my judgment, about social formations, is often tinged by the spoiled idiosyncrasy I still retain from my childhood. In circumstances like mass singing, where I can comply without any risk of selling out, it is sensible for me to thwart the bad boy complex.

#### **2 Limits of Cooperation**

I co-operate with my community's regulations for town maintenance. I do not go so far as to attend meetings of the city council, or write to the local newspaper on current town issues, but I do rake my leaves, keep my grass cut, and shovel my snow. In other words I co-operate with the basic housekeeping a town requires, but not with the (never demanded, often suggested) more nearly optional expectations of a resident. Where do I draw the line between necessary and optional co-operation? Is not the essence of co-operation to join in the administration or planning center of the community you live in? Or is your co-operation sufficient if you simply 'do your duty'? Should I be expected—sometimes I do this, sometimes not—to vote in local elections?