

Talkative

To be talkative is to be prone to talk, even to chatter, when there are listeners around. The term 'talkative' tends to be used pejoratively—'he sure is a big talker,' in reference to someone who can't keep his mouth shut—but that usage is not the only one. A person who is 'talkative' may simply be friendly, and happy to sustain the social fabric at the post office, gym, or grocery store.

Examples

1 A talkative gent

An elderly but ageless gentleman of my acquaintance, in this small midwestern town, is loudly talkative. Tom is seen everywhere, hanging out with the cops, chatting with the bank manager. He can listen when he must, , but he is inclined to dominate conversations, out of a naive conviction of his charms. Recently I met Tom in my doctor's clinic. I was there for a flu shot, but he was there to accompany a friend who had broken her leg. While talking with several patients in the waiting room he was asked how Mrs. R, in a neighboring town, was doing after her gallbladder operation. Tom was on top of the world explaining to the waiting clientele, in a high and dramatic voice, the ins and outs of Mrs. R's operation, the piece of hair that was left in her urinary tract, and got infected, the likelihood that she may be incontinent from now on.

2 Talking emptily

I am sometimes very talkative. At my best I am responsive and witty, but at other times I simply cover up my thoughts with talk. When I am uneasy—as when meeting a former lover or a new friend with whom I haven't yet much in common—I am likely to talk simple air, to discuss the weather or mutual friends, and to do so as though there were no referents to my language, as though it was about its own sound. When I talk emptily, I feel the gears of language-making grinding inside me, but no firm negotiation with the world. I pass on the TV meteorologist's prediction of a storm, but what I am really doing is saying, this is hard sledding talk, and what I have just said is filler and I know you know it, and I'd like you to help me get out of this unnecessary bind and put me where I do my real work.