

## B2.5 Hypothetical Situations

### You can learn:

- How to describe real possibilities.
- How to talk about hypothetical situations.
- How to talk about hypothetical situations in the past.

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**Discuss your responses to these situations with your partner. Try to answer as fully as possible.**

What will you do if...

- 1.) it rains really heavily tomorrow disrupting traffic?
- 2.) you oversleep tomorrow and end up being late?
- 3.) you tread in some dog dirt in the street walking home?
- 4.) you hear some good news, for example about a friend getting engaged ?
- 5.) you see there are two great programmes on at the same time on T.V. tonight?
- 6.) somebody tells you, "You're the best!"?
- 7.) you get indigestion because you've overeaten?
- 8.) somebody telephones you at home trying to sell you something?
- 9.) you feel bored and restless this weekend?
- 10.) you can't get to sleep tonight (insomnia)?

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*If it rains tomorrow and the traffic is disrupted then I might get a taxi to work. It may mean that I'm late, but my boss will understand. If there are traffic jams, I may have to spend a lot of money, but I hate getting wet.*

*That could cost you a fortune! It might be better to walk in the rain and take an umbrella. I never take taxis because they are ...*

## B2.5 Hypothetical Situations

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**Now discuss these other situations, and your possible responses, with your partner.**

What would you do if...

- 1.) you were stuck in a traffic jam on the motorway?
- 2.) you were criticised by your boss in front of your colleagues?
- 3.) somebody pushed in front of you in a queue?
- 4.) somebody spat and swore at you in the street?
- 5.) you broke a valuable ornament when visiting a friend?
- 6.) you had to make a speech in front of a lot of people?
- 7.) you suddenly and dramatically put on a lot of weight?
- 8.) you were lost in an unfamiliar city?
- 9.) you forgot an important birthday?
- 10.) you desperately needed to borrow a lot of money?

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**In these situations you should tell your partner the words you would use: what you would say.**

What would you say if...

- 1.) you had been accused of stealing something?
- 2.) you were asked your views on sex before marriage?
- 3.) somebody came up to you in the street and asked for money?
- 4.) you were told you had been made redundant?
- 5.) you were told you were extremely good-looking?
- 6.) somebody spilt red wine on you at a party?
- 7.) something you had said made somebody start crying?
- 8.) you were asked your views on U.F.O.s?
- 9.) somebody played a practical joke on you?
- 10.) you wanted to ask for the day off work to go to a wedding?

## B2.5 Hypothetical Situations

**3**  **Now discuss these hypothetical situations in the past.**

What would you have done if...


- 1.) you had witnessed a child being hit on the bus this morning?
- 2.) you had left your wallet/handbag on the bus this morning?
- 3.) you had felt depressed when you woke up this morning?
- 4.) you had felt sick when you got home last night ?

How would your life have been different if you had been born a member of the opposite sex?

*If I had witnessed a child being hit, I would have said something. I feel very strongly that physically hitting children is always wrong. I couldn't just stand by and say nothing. It makes me feel very angry.*

*Oh, really? That's interesting because I feel very differently. I wouldn't have done anything at all. I was hit as a child and it didn't do me any harm at all. In fact, I think...*

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**4**  **What do you wish? Tell your partner: three things you wish you had done in your life before now; two things you wish you could do now; and one thing you wish you were doing right now.**

*I wish I had paid more attention in my science classes at school because I'm hopeless with new technology and...*

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**5**  **Now discuss each of these difficult decisions in the box with your partner.**

### Difficult Decisions

- 1.) If you were born again, would you prefer to be a man or a woman?
- 2.) If you had to choose, would you choose to lose your hearing or your sight?
- 3.) If you had to choose never to see your friends again, or to never see your family again, who would you choose never to see again?
- 4.) If you could have a short exciting life, or a long boring life, which would you choose?
- 5.) If you could be good-looking, but stupid, or very unattractive, but quite intelligent, which would you choose?

*Number 2 is a horrible question. But if I really had to choose, I suppose I would say I would rather lose my hearing. I think I could remember the songs I have heard. I can't imagine being blind. I admire blind people so much!*

*Music is so important to me, I would find it really difficult to decide. I know what you mean though. I also have great admiration for people who cope with any disability.*

**6**  **Imagine that you are the President of the 'New World Government'. What legislation would you enact? Write down ten new laws that you would compel everybody in the world to comply with to make the world a better place to live in.**

*Law 1: All animal testing must immediately stop. It is ...*

## B2.5 Hypothetical Situations

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*"Hypothetical questions get hypothetical answers."  
Joan Baez*