

MANAGING PERSONALITIES AT CHRISTMAS FUNCTIONS

At Christmas gatherings – family or work – you often have to rub shoulders with people you don't get on with. How can you do it without getting stressed or having an argument?

The Over Concerned Person

- There's always someone who asks intrusive questions like "When are you getting married?" or "Are you still taking your medication?". This person is annoying but generally not malicious.
- Go to the event armed with some ready responses like "I'm working on it" or "Let's talk about that later". Alternatively, arrange for someone to start a conversation about something else as soon as the intrusive question is asked.

The Know It All

- The Know It All is an expert on any topic you bring up. They have also done anything you've done or are planning to do – and better than you can imagine! And they are keen to tell you about it!
- Don't ask advice of the Know It All unless you genuinely want to hear it and they are actually an expert on the subject. (The Know It All is also known for passing off inexpert advice as expert.)
- If you get trapped with the Know It All, try saying "Thanks for that," and making an escape.

The Arguer

- The arguer enjoys starting an argument. Often they will bring up things they know are controversial like a current event, religion or politics.
- Head this person off! When they start to argue, change the topic. If they won't stop, walk away.

The Drunk

- There are two types of drunks: the good humoured one and the belligerent one.
- To minimise the impact of drunks limit the amount of alcohol they can easily access. Maybe put it in another room so they can't readily fill up their glass as soon as it's empty.
- It may also be necessary to line someone up to escort belligerent drunks out – or leave yourself.

The Intruder

- The Intruder is someone you don't know well, or don't like, who asks inappropriate and deeply personal questions. An intruder who doesn't realise their questions are inappropriate can generally be stopped by being bluntly told "I don't care to discuss that".
- An intruder doing it for malicious purposes will usually keep badgering you after you have told them to stop. If you do reveal something they will respond by insulting or belittling you. Stop any engagement with this person by telling them it's none of their business and walk away.

The Groper

- The Groper is someone (usually male) who gives members of opposite gender an unwanted touch or kiss when greeting them or who sidles up to them during the event for an extra touch.
- The best way to handle them is not to allow them close and not to let them corner you. Stay in a group – there is safety in numbers! If they approach for a hug, offer to shake hands instead.
- If they do touch you unwantedly, call them out! Say loudly: "Don't do that. I don't like it."

The Insulter

- We've all been on the receiving end of the Insulter: they make an insulting comment or lewd suggestion and when you object saying: "Can't you take a joke".
- Call this person out. Tell them bluntly it isn't a joke – it's insulting and abusive. Then walk away.