



Meeting Report for 27 October 2014

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10 November 2014 at 12:03

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Bloomsbury Speakers

"Learning, Orating & Laughing – LOL!"

Meeting Report for 27 October 2014



Written by Svetlana

Introduction

October's second meeting was held in an unusual venue with a very appropriate name of "**Bloomsbury Lounge**" at The Perseverance pub, Lamb's Conduit Street, which was decorated and had lighting to match a Halloween Party! Acting President **Stella** opened the meeting with some TLC, distributing candies to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of Bloomsbury Speakers and a brief history of its creation. So cool!

After the Introduction, **Stella** handed proceedings to **Janet**, a winner of many Toastmasters contests, assisted by her smart and charming daughter **Ayla**, a seasoned guest of Bloomsbury Speakers. Janet introduced the theme of the day – our experience of "the silent treatment" at work or in our private lives. Janet also introduced the functionaries of the day: **Svetlana** the Timekeeper, **Michelle** (who had only very short and light-hearted "silent treatment" from her friend with reasons forgiven and forgotten) the Sergeant At Arms, and **Rory** the Grammarian (with the word of the day "frugal") who helped Janet in that most Halloween-coloured Toastmasters evening!

There were four prepared speeches on the agenda. The first speaker **Joe's** advanced speech "**Juggling Priorities**" delivered an important message for all of us: if you want to stand out, connect with what is important, learn and take risks – and enjoy the process. Joe referred to his experience of work in the corporate world and tapping into his talent to change career direction and become a tennis coach. He illustrated his message about juggling priorities with a prop – masterfully juggling several tennis balls!

Jon delivered his speech No. 2 "**Is the World a Dangerous Place?**" starting off with statistics of casualties happening around the world, which give us an impression of a very dangerous world out there. Jon being a passionate world traveller himself convinced and encouraged us to reach out and listen to people's experiences on the ground and get an unbiased and true coverage by doing our own investigation of the situations in such countries as Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other places. People enjoy their normal lives and feel happy in all of these countries and the world is full of good energy. The world is a good place, and the real danger is an ill-informed pre-judgement.

Peter L (who experienced some "silent treatment" from his cat but managed to make up) delivered his speech No. 3 entitled "**Dog Dinners**" about culture clashes such as the dilemma of putting up with eating dog meat or fighting a cause of banning such habits, which he described as contention between progressive and traditional habits in some of the Asian countries. Peter gave examples of positive changes, which show that the status of dogs as social animals is being established and dog meat gradually being removed from traditional menus.

Egor (who doesn't mind it at all and would love to receive "silent treatment" from everybody) gave his speech No. 4 "**The Idol of Science**" in which he reflected upon a popular attitude towards science. Science as a source of absolute truth is challenged nowadays because there are plenty of contradicting and equally credible scientific studies on almost every aspect of life and even on any opinion or point of view on anything, which in itself has overthrown the idol of science.

We had warm guest introductions from **Michelle** and valuable thoughtful evaluations provided by **Henry, Michelle, Ahmed, and Swarajit**.

Table Topics

Table topics session conducted by **Tracey** dwelt upon the theme of friendship and all participants demonstrated an impressive ability to think on their feet and speak off the cuff with witty and thoughtful answers!

The question “How to make up with a friend?” went to **Emma**. Her time-proof recipe was flowers, drinks and a quality time together.

“Are you still in touch with friends from school and college?” – was addressed to **Sebastian**. Yes, he was!

“What is your definition of a friend?” – went to **Rory**, who shared a personal story about how he went out of his way to make up with a friend, spending a lot of money and putting himself at risk to bring her back, but it didn’t help!

“Do you prefer to have lots of friends or just a few intimate friends?” – was answered by **Robert**. Surely, he prefers to have only a few close friends, but for that he has to know a great number of people to be able to filter and choose his best friends!

The question “Do you think that friends should complement each other?” was tackled by **Alefiyah**. According to Alefiyah, it is best to preserve integrity and be true to ourselves in a friendship.

The question of “What are the best places to make friends?” was enlightened by **Ayla**, who said it could happen anywhere and gave a personal story of her best friendship, which started in a girls’ toilet!

Bronia then provided a thorough evaluation of all the Table Topics speakers’ performances with commendations and quite a few pieces of advice for improvement.

Grammarian **Rory**’s report was followed by a general evaluation from **Gill Ornstein** from [HOD Toastmasters](#) in Harrow. Gill, as well as providing valuable recommendations and highly positive comments, advised the evaluators to add personal goals to the introductions of speakers and shared a tip on how to improve vocal variety by making little pauses and explained how exactly it helps.

Awards

- Best prepared speech award was shared between **Jon** and **Peter L**.
- Best evaluator award was shared between **Ahmed** and **Henry**.
- Best impromptu speech award went to **Ayla**.

Special President’s award went to Immediate Past President **Swarajit** who, along with

Michelle, did an outstanding job of preparing the Bloomsbury Lounge for the meeting and who'd had his birthday the day before!

Next meeting

Our next regular meeting will be held on **Monday, 10th November** upstairs at The Clerk & Well pub, 156 Clerkenwell Road, EC1R 5DU as usual. Doors open at 6:30pm.

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