

Natalie and Ken 21.01.02

54:32 mins

Nat1. WAV

Kerry I might actually ask you what your idea of a typical Aussie is? ... (1.5) [so either of you just go]

Ken: [so you're supposed to]

Kerry: for it .. just

Natalie: um .. well ... (1.5) um..

Ken: I think they have a .. very balanced life that's what I've .. noticed .. so .. um it's you know not only just work work work .. but also they love to have time out to do you know sports ... um you know any recreations or going to the movies things like that so I think that's what I've noticed I don't know about you

Natalie: Yeah .. um I guess when I think of the typical Aussie um ... I usually think of somebody who's not um .. who's pretty laid back and

Ken: Yeah

Natalie: although that's probably more how we and the nation characterise Aussies rather than our day-to-day kind of ..um experience with people? I think [we're]

Ken: [mm]

Nat: pretty laid back as people and .. and pretty friendly? I think Australians are fairly friendly

Ken: yeah that's what I've noticed and um ... (3.0) yeah they don't take things too seriously that's what I find and um ... (1.5) they have this very ... (1.0) um sort of .. what should I say ... (1.5) there's this they've got this typical humour which is quite different to I think other parts of the world .. yeah I don't know how you characterise it um... (1.0) it's sort of like .. they love knocking people and and sort of ..

Natalie yeah [yeah]

Ken: [I don't] know how you characterise that but they love knocking .. making fun of people you know being sarcastic things like that so ... yeah ... (1.0)

Kerry: so is that how you'd explain a typical Aussie to someone who had never met one?

Natalie: um no I'd

Kerry: @@

Nat: that's how I would probably say you know as a nation we've tried to characterise ourselves .. but in terms of actually .. you know what a typical Aussie is I'd probably really deny that there is any such thing I mean (it's)...

Ken: [true] [yeah]

Natalie: [it's] such an ec[lec]tic society and you walk down the street and you can now hear um .. and see that people are from such different backgrounds =

Ken: = yeah

Natalie: and most of us don't .. um aren't English by origin any longer [so]

Ken: [yeah]

Nat: ... um ... and I think that we're probably incredibly diverse um ... but in terms of how we like to see ourselves or our national identity then I'd say that the that those statements were probably how we kind of still characterise ourselves like beer ads and you know sort o[f na]tional

Ken: [yeah]

Nat: celebrations of things yeah

Ken: I think you're right day .. by day I .. you can't really .. I wouldn't classify um an Aussie as being such and such um 'cos you meet so many different people some plain rude um you know .. some are really nice so .. um i.. if someone was visiting the country came up to me and said what's a typical Aussie or .. you know it'd be very hard

Natalie: would you say you're a typical Aussie ?

Ken: um ... (1.5) I g.. I guess I am yeah yeah

Kerry: why?

Ken: ... (2.5) because ... I like to live a sort of like a very balanced life and sort of enjoy it and .. as well as working and you know

Natalie: yeah =

Ken: = at times you know there's times when if one wants to be serious and there's times when one.. one wants to take time out and sort of you know socialise with friends or you know go to the um the bar or pub and have a drink so ... (1.0) yeah ... (3.0) I think in general if .. or say what a typical Aussie is would be sort of like down to earth, laid-back and sort of like cool sort of @@

Natalie: yeah

Ken: yeah yeah

Kerry: so do you think other nations can be more easily characterised than Aussies then? Do you think like the typical Aussie doesn't exist because we are such a .. an eclectic mix .. do you think other nations have a more stereotypical .. sort of ... I suppose I'm just thinking of the French for example do you think there's more of a typical French person? And if so, what do you think it is?

Ken: ... (1.5) I .. I think that's true ...um not that I've spent a lot of time overseas but ... like when one was growing up .. you know .. it was ... (3.0) it was put into my mind that you know the French are quite sort of outspoken ... I'm gonna get in trouble here @ outspoken

Kerry: it's all right, I'll edit you out

Ken: @ arrogant .. um .. and very demanding you know .. if they wanted something they'll get that and ...yeah they no ..I've never .. as I've got older I've sort of um never thought that was the case and when I went over to to France um .. in general I

found that wasn't the case and in fact most of them were quite hospitable and approachable .. I can see where one ... (1.0) um says that you know the ... you know the French can be quite demanding and arrogant it's just .. I think it's um ... they .. the way they come across but you know they're not trying to be demean as such

Kerry: they're just misunderstood

Ken: misunderstood

Nat: @@@@ =

Ken: = but having said that I actually um .. at first when I arrived in Charles de Gaulle I took a .. a ... a train all the way down to Paris ... and I had my luggage and it was a pretty empty train and I sort of got on there put my bag next to my .. the seat next to me and .. I was .. had my headphones on I was reading away and ... and then we're stopping next stop and then I got this tap on my shoulder and er there was this French elderly French lady I think she was in sort of late um fifties and she sort of like babbled on in French and said um and sort of pointed "I want that seat next to you" when there were plenty of seats around me and I thought "oh no!" don't tell me this is the way French are ... but it's .. that was a very minor incident and um I think you get that ... to um to a certain extent here .. um you know with the with that cross um multicultural sort of society

Natalie: Yeah =

Ken: I even I've even confronted that sort of situation um here, but um it was quite interesting I sort of .. in one mind I sort of .. have this stereotypical image of the French .. and another one that was more open yeah

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: [but]

Nat: it's probably a massive stereotype but the French .. the young French people that I've met I've found that um ... they've had like a more traditional education? and so their sort of like approach to the world and knowledge and sort of way of interacting is probably more um ... (2.0) I can't really ... I don't know how quite to describe it but like I think we have a real anti-intellectualism? in this country? so we sort of you know .. like we sort of knock things and we're um you know we don't like to you know we don't generally chat about literature amongst you know young people whatever whereas like .. the French young people I've met when I've been travelling have been kind of like "you know how .. how can you have not read Camus?" or you know like they have that [sort of]

Ken: [yeah]

Nat: stronger sense of um ... like .. attachment to what we would consider to be high brow and um

Ken: both that yeah that is so true and and you know .. yeah very true 'cos um that's a very good point because ... yeah amongst my colleagues f.. friends whatever you want to call them in Melbourne wi.. within Australia even um ... I've found that the case you know it's like when it comes to talking to each.. or mingling or socialising or sort of it's more of a sort of ...um how can I put it ... um s.. s.. social sort of level if you like [you know]

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: talking about one one's day or f.. the f.. about the footy or about the cricket or

Natalie: yep

Ken: ..um it's not sort of .. intellectual as you put it

Natalie: yeah like social .. I think we have all these sort of social levellers and .. and maybe soccer is the same in France I don't know but certainly like football for example in this city is like

Ken: [it's mad]

Natalie: [a social] leveller so ..

Ken: yeah

Natalie: .you've got you know people from all rungs .. rungs and backgrounds and rungs of the sort of social spectrum engaging in this sport and I think that we kind of celebrate that .. that as a society we can engage in those activities? and we don't really celebrate things that are divisive? amongst whatever it .. you might wanna call class or whatever um ... (1.0) like it's always it's always fine to knock anything that's sort of intellectual?

Ken: yeah I th.. yeah I think that's where the French dare dares you know to go? it's sort of like .. like having a bit of a .. a a stoush er verbally? p'haps

Natalie: yeah

Ken: yeah =

Natalie: = yep

Ken: I think they -- they probably consider it healthy ..yeah

Natalie: yeah definitely

Ken: um ... but in terms of ... (1.0) classifying the ...a French ... (1.0) um ... (3.0) yeah probably just um ... (1.5) more forceful if you like um .. whereas if you go er er to some Asian cultures right .. um it's more um ...

Natalie ??[??]

Ken: [sa]ving face if you like

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: [like] it's all part of their culture

Natalie: [definitely]

Ken: [it's their] um .. culture religion is so much intertwined to their society and everything that they do can be related back to to that and um you know I've I've sort of discovered that in the last you know few years? there's um ... that saving face and ... (3.0) you know happens during work even .. you know if you're so.. if you're if working with an A.. A.. Asian culture glob.. you know in a global situation then you know ... (1.5) I've come across situations where you ask them to agree upon something and they say 'yea' but that doesn't necessarily mean that they're .. um all for it if you like?

Natalie: yeah

Ken: it's ju.. all about saving face they don't want to come across as being um disruptive? if you like or um ..

Natalie: confronta[tional]

Ken: [confron]tational [ex]actly

Natalie: [yeah] yeah definitely I mean even travelling in those countries you know you.. you sort of find that you'll say Can I do this and they will always say yes but [in]

Ken: [yes]

Natalie: fact half the time they're just ..

Ken: [yes]

Natalie: [say]ing yes [that]

Ken: [just]

Natalie: er yeah because they don't want to [deny you]

Ken: [disappoint]

Natalie: something or disappoint you but yeah so you're cons.. you don't know where you're at? Like ..

Ken: exactly

Natalie: but [it's]

Ken: [yeah]

Nat: yeah it's over-polite like well I guess we've .. it's a .. yeah it's a politeness that we we don't have but in saying that on a spectrum the French are [??] [@@]

Ken: [p'raps] .. [p'raps]
on the other side I.. I don't know how to @@

Nat: [yeah]

Ken: [but] yeah that's .. so yeah definitely other (1.0) areas around the world you know dif.. there's distinctive ... cultures or characteristics amongst the the people who live in those regions

Natalie: yeah

Ken: um yeah so ... but it's just yeah ... (2.0) yeah I don't know about the pommies though

Kerry: yeah don't know let's not go there

Ken: @@@@

Kerry: @@ I'm not supposed to be talking so that lets me off the hook. When you're away from Australia what do you miss most about it? (4.0)

Ken: (intake) I think the um ... the thing that I always miss about Australia is just the ... the relaxed atmosphere if you like sort of like re.. going back to the .. what I said before the very low key relax laid back if you like and .. um there's there's no there's not the hustle and bustle if you like compared to countries like um .. um like Paris oh sorry France, Malaysia even Hong Kong probably Hong Kong's the worst amongst er everything is go go go and .. and it's so f... everyone's so focused in what they want to do and they're not um ... (1.5) they don't take time out but they're not concerned

about what's around them or immediately around them they just want to get to their target and ... yeah whereas that's what I like about Australia everyone's so um ... s.. um polite if you like and ... just the openness and and the greenness amongst that ... throughout the um country if you like

Natalie: yeah .. I think that's a really hard thing for me to .. um answer because I've pretty much really only travelled through developing countries? so um like the things that I've.. I mean Asia so .. the things I miss you know when you are in India or Cambodia it's like

Ken: the [food]

Nat: [a sho]wer

Nat/Ken: @@@@

Nat: and um ... yeah probably things that are very distinct about like the first n.. worlds and um the developing world ... um (1.0) [whereas you know]

Ken: [like .. yeah] travelling throughout Malaysia I just can't @ I know it sounds um ... pretty foul I just can't get over the .. how bad the toilets in general are over there

Natalie: yeah

Ken: and so even just

Nat: mm

Ken: ..um.. ah going to to a clean toilet's just w.. you just crave [???

Natalie: [a luxury] [@@]

Ken: [a luxury]
@@

Natalie: yeah not having ... you know

Ken: yeah .. [so...um]

Nat: [being] ill @@@@

Ken: @@ yeah [so]

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: um

Kerry: What don't you like about Australia? (3.5)

Natalie: oh I think =

Kerry: = if anything?

Natalie: well I mean it's incredibly isolated I think so .. even though we have our like all different cultures here .. um .. you just get this sense that we are just so far away from the rest of the world and you can really see why people that live in Europe and go .. to another country on the weekend or for you know =

Ken: = ye[ah]

Natalie: [for] a week or whatever
we're just ...

Ken: stuck here

Natalie: it's a long way and um ... (3.5) yeah and I guess too like I am sort of personally embarrassed by the racism in this country which I don't think is necessarily .. doesn't exist everywhere else but I think that our sort of form of you know I'm embarrassed that as a nation we can't um recognise the rights for indigenous people
[whereas a lot of]

Ken: [ye:::ah true]

Nat: other countries have been able to do that better

Ken: that's true to a certain extent .. I've .. I've actually found that that in fact we're not as ... (2.0) racially divisive or whatever you want to call it or racist in other parts of the world in fact I think um .. most @ I'm in trouble here ... for generalising but most ... Asian .. um countries ... (1.0) are quite racist

Natalie: yeah

Ken: they have racist um ... (3.0) upbringing if you like .. and even politically it's it's quite that way ... um .. I c.. I can name a few in terms of like this ... um ... (1.5) the stuff that's happening in Indonesia

Natalie: yeah [exactly]

Ken: [and even] Malaysia with ..

Natalie: yep =

Ken: = some of the politicians and ..

Natalie: yeah East Timor is t.. yeah .. yeah that's [true]

Ken: [so I] I think overall we're th.. I don't think that we are that racist and that's the great thing about it ... the country's so welcoming of um different races .. race yeah

Natalie: yep

Kerry: apart from the ones they sent to Nauru

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: [sorry]?

Kerry: apart from the ones they sent to Nauru.

Natalie: yeah @@ .. the fact that you can win an election on that is pretty disappointing

Kerry: yeah that was my next question actually do you think Australia is really a multicultural country because that's what they always sort of advertise themselves as do you think it .. it is

Natalie: mm statistically I think yes like we are in truth but um in terms of ... well I think .. it's probably really hard to tell like .. to some extent I'd say that there's probably ... (2.0) like I grew up in the country and I'd say the country is i.. is not multicultural and is incredibly sort of intolerant or pockets of it are incredibly intolerant and yet like inner city Melbourne for example or you know you walk down Sydney Road for example and you can .. you could be anywhere um

Ken: yep

Natalie: so and there is .. there is great tolerance in s.. in .. parts of the community but um other parts not and .. I think you know the fact that we happen to have had an election which one of the most significant issues was 'what do we do ... with asylum seekers' was um ... (1.5) was incredible or that we had an election you know three years ago which was 'how do we respond to the claims of Aboriginal people in this culture'

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so those issues are obviously really big issues for us as a society and we're just grappling with them? whereas for example New Zealand I think you know has ... probably had it laid down a bit better from the outset that they got better mechanisms for dealing with that ... um .. but yeah .. so yes we are multicultural and .. and .. it's .. and no we're not always tolerant yeah so ..

Ken: yeah I would have to agree .. um ..

Kerry: Do you think it works like do you think all these different cultures really get on with each other? (1.0) Or do you think that deep down we are all still racist? well just to a certain degree because we always believe our culture's better?

Ken: ... It's getting better .. I still think deep down ... we are t.. to a certain extent ... racist you know ... (1.0) um unfortunately you know sort of it's been brought through the generations if you like and even to our generation I think there's a certain extent of .. racism amongst us

Kerry: Yeah

Ken: Um I ... (1.5) I think it will take a few more generations um ...

Natalie: (2.0) Yeah

Ken: But having said that you know that ... um ... (1.0) there's so many cultures out there and we just mingle .. even on a social level you know work .. after work and you know ... we sort of get along well and we ... tend to we tend to forget about that we .. you know .. most of us fr.. are from different um backgrounds ... um ... (2.0) BUT there are situations when you actual.. when you joke around with people the there's .. that sort of element of racism does get out .. but it's more on a sort of a .. um light hearted sort of ... want to poke fun sort of level which is which typifies us you know an Australian ... THEY DON'T mean it you know ... er if if you do c.. c.. come back one comes back as being offended then quite often the case they will they'll say 'oh sorry I didn't mean um be like that' yeah

Natalie: Yeah...so do you think that you've experienced racism in Australia?

Ken: No I don't ... (1.5) No I ..

Natalie: No?

Ken: no ... um ... (5.0) yeah no I .. I .. I think yeah all in all Australians are pretty good in terms of ... [you know]

Natalie: [mm] interesting um .. the one of the women I worked with work with at the moment is um Aboriginal and she act.. she looks quite um Arab? and so it's interesting like um she was saying when the there was the height of the One

Nation sort of um force in Australia .. um she had partners of her family who didn't live in Melbourne necessarily but lived up in Queensland North Queensland .. um were actually kind of quite afraid to be out because there was just like a collapse of .. the way she described it it was like a collapse of um .. sort of .. social um ... (1.0) appropriateness about how you might .. you know like suddenly it was OK to to um do things that you weren't ... wasn't OK a while ago she said for example like members of her family were spat at during the st.. on the street or this [really]

Ken: [mm]

Natalie: bizarre thing and I'm sure that this happens like ... has has h.. happened to people all over the world in different kind of situations but she was saying now it's really interesting because she actually @ looks Arab that there's this um a kind of acceptance that um Arab people are s.. are sort of the um ... um terrorists or something like there's some segments of the community (*note on how many sort ofs and you knows get missed during the initial transcription*) that have a kind of ... definite view about that at the moment and so she feels actually now that [people]

Ken: [yeah]

Natalie: look at her with some .. and I just thought well and it's interesting now that you .. I go into a shop with her and I don't notice but you know people will follow her around in the shop to make sure she's not stealing something or you know st.. bizarre stuff like that and I just think God like part of the privilege of like being white for example is the privilege of not even noticing? when somebody is being treated in a certain way? and I mean I'm sure in France it's the same with the Algerian Algerians and the .. yeah it's just .. it's not an .. Australian thing but it is ... so I think things work in that they get they're getting better but I think that there's waves as well and depends on .. like if there's a overt threat ... whether or not that threat is um exists in reality or whether we construct it as a society like One Nation was able to construct you know the notion of a threat or you know the government was able to do that with the um asylum seekers and S11 kind of and September 11 occurring simultaneously gives this sort of sense of like a threat you know we have a bit of a moral panic and I and I think that multiculturalism is often respon[sive]

Ken: [yep]

Natalie: to moral panics which you know [may]

Ken: [yeah]

Natalie: or may not exist um ...

Ken: So that s.. that situation occurred even just around here?

Natalie: Um yeah yeah she works here and like we'll just go down to like down to Daimaru or whatever and I remember us going into some you know a store and this woman following her around you know [?]

Ken: [it's] bizarre

Natalie: Yeah but I guess that's ... like ... you know [?]

Ken: [cu]rrent times

Natalie: yeah and she's not an overly .. like she's not an angry person and she's not an overly you know like kind of politically motivated person but she's just that's her sort of experience so ... kind of ..

Ken: did you =

Natalie: = yeah =

Ken: = did you notice it or she was just telling you?

Natalie: well I noticed that the woman was following Me and I thought like [you know ???]

Ken: [oh
okay and she] was saying “oh it’s because of me”

Natalie: yeah yeah

Ken: yeah =

Natalie: = yeah [so]

Ken: [oh] okay

Natalie: Yeah but I mean ... (1.0) that’s fine it’s interesting ... (1.0) yeah

Ken: No I’ve ...(2.5) to be honest I’ve .. haven’t noticed anything that’s sort.. er on a sort of a a daily or weekly basis just just that you know [yeah]

Natalie: [yeah] well that’s =

Ken: = racist

Natalie: good @

Ken: Um ..

Natalie: a good thing

Ken: Yeah ... (1.0) I can understand there being elements extreme extremist sort of elements out there ...

Natalie: mm

Ken: ... they’ve got nothing to do but just destroy you know this society that’s been established that’s you know ... (1.0) um you know been enriched in different cultures but there’s always people out there who’ve ... [got this]

Natalie: [Yeah]

Ken: er vendetta to you know destroy everything that we’ve set up

Natalie: yeah

Kerry: mm I think like I said before as well if you go out to the country it’d be ...

Natalie: [??????]

Kerry: [very] different [??]

Natalie: [Yeah]

Ken: mm

Kerry: a couple of hundred kilometres outside the city

Natalie: Even the outer suburbs of Melbourne I think probably ...

Kerry: Yeah

Natalie: ... quite ... yeah

Ken: Yeah y... (1.5) yeah t.. when they had the ... um ... (2.5) September 11 um issue there were so.. pockets of of societies you know around Melbourne that were really affected .. you know

Natalie: yep

Ken: ...but fortunately the area that I'm living in or that I work in or spend most of my time in I've .. I just haven't noticed .. the only like times I've noticed is really ... on TV

Natalie: yeah [right]

Ken: [and] in the media .. in the paper

Natalie: Yep ...(1.0) yeah

Ken: ... (4.0) and er ... (1.5) and I have I don't think they've identified those people that were causing havoc you know tearing up mosques and ...

Natalie: Yeah

Ken: graffitiing places there ... so ...(1.0) um ... (1.5) yeah ... (4.0) um

Kerry: [All right ??? change the subject]

Ken: [Yeah but yeah]

Kerry: go on

Ken: no that's alright.

Kerry: I was going to say well they're all bad people .. what is a good person?

Nat: er

Kerry: Who would you consider a good person?

Ken: ... (1.5) A good person?

Kerry: yeah what qualities do you think ... make up a good person?

Ken: Specifically to Australia or in general?

Kerry: oh in general

Ken: a good person ...

Kerry: (2.0) I used to ask this question at the beginning of the interview and so there would just be silence for about five minutes so I worked out that you have to ask it later (laughter) when people are a bit more used to [talking to each other]

Ken: [yeah yeah]

Kerry: it would just stun them

Ken: ... (2.0) I think that a good person ... (5.0) has time for people ... that's what I've noticed ...(1.0) I really click with someone that um if they've got time for people? I can be there just chatting away or ... um you know (*reduced*) finding out a lot more about them

Natalie: [Yeah]

Ken: [um] that's my first thing the first thing that comes to my mind ... um ...(3.0) ??? yeah

Natalie: ... (2.0) yeah [I was going to say]

Ken: [it's very hard]

Natalie: a good person is somebody who's able to ... um suspend their own interests or ... or ... um to see when somebody else's interests need to come ... above theirs so um ... that doesn't necessarily mean always but you know there's gonna be times when ... that is the case or that needs to occur in order to not cause harm to other people or to assist somebody that needs help so I guess I've probably got some sort of biblical good Samaritan version

Ken: @@@

Natalie: @ of a good person

Kerry: Mother Teresa

Natalie: yeah @@ yeah ...um ... (1.0) but it's not necessarily .. it .. it certainly wouldn't be c.. er caught up in any in any kind of formal religious doctrine like ... um ... but just a humane person I would say ... um ... (2.0) yeah

Ken: Um ...

Kerry: ... (5.0) if you had to write down five qualities what would you write down?

Natalie: ... (5.0) Compassionate? ...er tolerant ... (2.0) um ... (5.0)

Ken: would that be respectful? or um ...

Natalie: (1.0) Yeah

Ken: yeah? come under that?

Natalie: yeah respectful .. um ... (7.5) accepting? Probably

Kerry: okay

Ken: That's the same as um ... tolerant isn't it? or not

Kerry: She's just trying to get to five! (Laughter) So how many different ways [can you say it]

Ken: [Come on]

Natalie: Um dunno probably =

Ken: = You're going well there

Natalie: like ???? um ... like light-hearted as well like there're all kind of very deep the other things I've just said but somebody who's ... (1.0) you know can .. can create

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a bit of fun or whatever ...um ... (2.5) I think that's about it (Laughter) What about you?

Ken: I think you've answered most of ... um ... what I would have picked up um

Kerry: That's an even quicker way to get to five!

Natalie: Yeah.

Kerry: [????????????????]

Natalie: [it's a strange ques]tion really I gue[ss]

Kerry: [it is]

Natalie: because um

Kerry: it is

Natalie: ... (3.0) because...

Ken: [One of the joys of French]

Natalie: [I don't think many] people are that bad you know @@ so it's just degrees of whether or not ... (1.5) um ... (4.0)

Kerry: It's interesting that neither of you said honest

Natalie: ... (1.5) Yeah

Ken: ... (3.0) [Yeah]

Kerry: [It can't be] sort of a quality that you would consider essential in someone?

Ken: Yeah

Kerry: ... (1.5) or in a relationship with someone? like colleagues or friends or whatever

Natalie: Yeah =

Ken: =Yeah

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: [definitely]

Natalie: Yep

Ken: ... (2.0) I always use the word 'cool' that sort of encapsulates everything @@

Kerry: cool!

Ken: cool yeah it's it's a horrible thing but yeah ... when you know when you say someone's cool sort of they have these qualities about them that you know you can see and you trust 'em yeah ... mm ...

Kerry: ... (6.0) Do you think it is more important to be honest than to be polite?

Natalie: ... it depends ... (1.5) entirely contextual...no

Kerry: Give me an example =

Natalie: = um ... (4.0) well I think whilst honesty is ... um it's important to not be dishonest .. sometimes um .. being polite is more important than being ..

Ken: Oh [defin]itely

Natalie: [honest]

Ken: I think um ... (1.5) a:h ... (3.5) on a social level probably it's more important than at wo.. if it's like work there's ways of sort of like .. if you disagree with something .. a.. there's ways of.. what I've found in ... (1.0) working here ... of getting around um ... (2.0) the fact that you disagree with something or y.. y.. you

might hate the way that one person's approaching it you know the there's there's a .. a polite way of going about telling them that 'that's crap' or it's um ...

Natalie: yeah like [there's a ??????]

Ken: [there's a way] a better way of doing it ... so it's more sort of a .. a roundabout way that um .. and it's quite um ... (1.0) evident in .. or I've found it at work and the things that you sort of pick up in a way 'cos the only way to ge.. to work together ... (1.0) particularly at a professional level is to be able to um ... (2.0)

Natalie: ma[ybe ?????]

Ken: [be smooth] if you like

Natalie: Ye[ah]

Ken: [ye]ah smooth or ... um ... (3.5) because ... (5.0) I.. I work at BP and it's a .. a global organisation and I come across ... different cultures ... um sorry ... I interact with people ... um outside of Australia and a classic case is ... (1.0) um ... Malaysia

Natalie: uhuh

Ken: ... um ... I'm actually going to contradict myself here .. I just said that um they're .. they're about saving face ... (3.5) but actually to a certain extent within their communities um ... (1.5) um ... at .. I suppose at at .. if .. if um .. it's a very hierarchical society so one respects the one above them ... and so .. so you .. you save face so more .. more than when you're interacting with people at your own level with people below you ... um you tend to be a bit more forceful and um ... sort of ... you don't use tact if you like sort of more ...

Natalie: [dogmatic]

Ken: [yeah if you] yeah this is crap' 'this is crap' ... um ... (2.0) so ... (2.0) they don't beat around the bush so to speak .. I don't know whether that's because ... (3.5) it's a .. cultural thing or er ... (2.5)

Natalie: mm

Ken: it .. maybe the English language allows us to b@eat around the bush but um ... (1.0) um ... (1.0) yeah ... (3.0) um ...

Kerry: Just that you used the word dogmatic then

Natalie: mm

Kerry: What does that mean for you 'dogmatic'?

Natalie: ... (3.5) um ... [oh god]

Ken: [@@@]

Natalie: you ask me to define something I mean you can look up a dictionary .. um ... (1.5) I s'pose it means like a lack of ... oh it.. yeah a con.. conviction like expressing a con.. something with considerable conviction without um ... (2.0) ?? having much diplomacy about that and um ... (3.5) and without really kind of um questioning ... (2.0) the legitimacy of it so it's just a commitment to ... um ... (2.0)

Kerry: Is it a negative quality?

Natalie: Um ... I'd say in the main yes it is although I could see that it could be really functional depending on ... um ... (1.5) what it's being used ... (3.0) for yeah I guess it's sort of like well ... (2.0) yes when I don't like ...and no and no .. yeah

Kerry: Is it the same does it have the same meaning as opinionated? or is opinionated something else

Ken: I think it's to.. totally different for me it is totally different

Natalie: yeah [??]

Ken: [um] you can be opinionated but you can be polite as well? um it's just a way you you go.. approach it and .. um ... (1.0) the way you say things and it's it's also the way .. your body language is as well and how .. and you know how to interact with um ...

Natalie: mm

Ken: [I think]

Kerry: [is opinion]ated good or bad? For you

Ken: ... (6.0) I think it's healthy yeah ... but it's interesting .. it's it's healthy let's say I am going back to the work environment it's healthy in a work environment because you get you tend to get the best ... result? like if a team of players are all opinionated um you might have situations where it's it's like a bit awkward but the upshot is ... it's the best result for the team?

Kerry/Natalie: Mmm

Ken: Um ... (2.0) yeah ... (2.0) it's interesting wi ... (3.0) that's probably the best way of getting the best result .. but yet we sort of like ... have this way of ... of um ... (1.0) being polite? and not not saying just bluntly you know 'I hate your point' or you know 'it's crap' you know because of blah blah blah blah

Natalie: Mmm

Ken: whereas we s.. we tend to sort of you know sort of fluff it up if you like

Natalie: yeah

Ken: yeah

Natalie: I think Australians are quite um ... uncomfortable with disagreeing with each other .. like openly arguing about things?

Ken: Yeah [yeah]

Natalie: [you know like] I don't know about Asian cultures whether or not that they say anything means that you don't tend to engage in that but I think Europeans um ... (1.5) there's a l.. a lot less .. it's not personally offensive to say I disagree with you about this issue .. w.. whereas ... (2.5) I think we're quite uncomfortable with conflict? about issues?

Ken: Yeah if someone came up to me and said that you know ... I've just ah um ... (3.0) depends what .. how they said it if ... they said oh I just don't think your approach or idea is the way to go then I would .. I'd probably take it on the chin but if someone says you know sort of forceful way of saying that's you know that's rubbish or ...

Natalie: Yeah

Ken: um ... you know ... (2.0) I'd.. I'd feel uncomfortable ...and I'd feel uncomfortable telling someone 'that's rubbish' 'specially if they'd spent time sort of formulating through that idea or ...

Natalie: Yeah

Ken: Yeah

Natalie: I just .. um I went to this dinner party on Saturday night and there was two um people there who sort of had a .. a fairly kind of I s'pose hippyish kind of view of the world so they sort of thought that you know oh that's just the way things are things are a bit predetermined oh the universe will look after you like that was sort of ... they tended to speak like this and there were two neuroi .. um .. neuroscientists there? and one .. one of the [women]

Kerry: [Someone] had fun setting that up

(Laughter)

Natalie: It was a really odd bunch of people

Kerry: was there a camera ????

(Laughter)

Natalie: I dunno it was probably an experiment ... but um it was really .. and then there was a bunch of lawyers so [yeah]

Ken: [You] were the adjudicators [???

Natalie: [@@] it was just very odd but um ... (1.5) a.. th.. this woman who for simplicity I'll call the the hippy um she said 'Oh um ..' she came out with this statement 'Oh um I love summer because I have more de.. déjà vu because you have more [déjà]

Ken: [sorry]? you ?

Natalie: have more déjà vu

Ken: Right

Natalie: And um ... she said because ... déjà vu is um a recollection of past life ... and I thought that's a highly contentious statement and @@ but like .. there was like the neuroscientists they were like .. and they just were bursting to.. to sort of say that you know .. that déjà vu was this mental like loop of synapsis in the brain or whatever and they had this completely kind of um ... (1.5)

Ken: [phsy].....

Natalie: [med]ical model view of what [dé]jà

Ken: [yeah]

Natalie: vu did and there was this um ... this guy Mark there who was sort of saying "oh well you know I think we could probably say that um there's a whack of society that think this is déjà vu and there is a whack of society that says that and like really there's just no evidence you know @@ and in a way 'cos ...

Ken: don't [argue]

Natalie: [typical lawyer] and um but it was really fascinating because um ... whilst these people were arguing about what déjà vu was like .. everyone else was really

uncomfortable and were.. were either kind of deflecting .. like wanting to deflect the conversation either make light of it in that Australian way [and]

Ken: [Yeah]

Natalie: I think that's a really common Australian sort of response to .. kind of ... a moment of conflict or um something uncomf.. um like uncomfortable is to ..

Ken: They want to change the topic [yeah]

Natalie: [yeah] change it but make a bit of a joke about it and make it into something frivolous ['cos]

Ken: [yeah]

Natalie: that's a really good [sort of]

Ken: [yeah yeah yeah]

Natalie: social tactic and um and I just thought well that's really interesting 'cos I don't know whether this is my own particular stereotype about Europeans but I think that you know in the main ... you would .. like people would probably feel a little less uncomfortable and like compelled to move the topic on? they might be a bit happier just for people to for it to be okay that's there's conflict and to be okay that people have differing views and .. and stuff whereas I think you know part of our kind of ... (2.0) our culture is ... (1.0) that we're not particularly comfortable with that and I just thought it was hilarious that these bunch of people who were t.. talking about this subject 'cos it was really like somebody that believes in God and someone that doesn't believe in God debating whether or not God exists and [it's just]

Ken: [yeah]

Natalie: well you know you really you don't believe and you do @@ and you're re@@ally not going to come to any kind of .. you're not gonna be able to convince each other

Ken: @@

Natalie: you're really coming from different perspectives

Ken: Yeah

Natalie: over something which is there is no truth in as well like you can't prove in a way that's you know .. I thought that was really fascinating =

Ken: = yeah

Natalie: but um ...

Kerry: What makes you say that the Europeans would be ... like what ex.. ..is that through experience? or ..

Natalie: [um]

Kerry: [do] you know someone or it's just a general impression you have?

Natalie: Yeah I think it's a bit of a bit of ... like maybe it's the way that Europeans get po.. are portrayed through um ... (3.0) through film or media or whatever partly it's um ... observing ... observing like migrant Europeans? like and I guess and ... like certainly my mother's I dunno if it's particular to my mother's family ... like my

mother's Dutch and I notice that her family are much more kind of ... (2.0) well we would say probably less diplomatic but they would probably say more honest @@ ... and I mean I 'd I guess it's a bit of that stereotype too of like Italian men sitting in the park debating about you know I always like to think they're debating about philosophy but they're probably talking about where the best coffee beans are to get you know or something that that's not quite as grand @

Ken: [Yeah]

Natalie: [and] um yeah ... but maybe they're I mean maybe that really is a ... (3.0) um ... a stereotype because I always think of Europeans as being kind of more ... um colourful in the way that they interact more intonation in their voice more kind of you know physical gestures you know ... but I dunno maybe ...

Ken: are they more patient you think?

Natalie: more patient?

Ken: Yeah than us

Natalie: ... (2.0) Er um ... (2.0) I don't know I never really think of it in that term ... what [do you think]

Ken: [what .. um ..] tolerant if you like .. they're ... (1.5) [um]

Natalie: [um] .. actually ... (2.0) don't know ... (4.0) yeah it's sort of like some.. I think like if it doesn't matter then you know ... that it doesn't matter at all but you know if it does matter then it's okay to say so? that's how I sort of ..

Ken: Yeah

Natalie: that's the way that I .. I guess I categorise it but like literally it's probably ... (1.0) um ... such a stereotype yeah

Ken: Yeah

Natalie: yep

Ken: ... (3.0) yeah I would I actually when I um ... (2.0) I.. I don't know why that came to mind to my mind but when I was travelling from ... (1.0) Singapore to Melbourne ... um b.. right behind me was a French lady and her two kids ... (1.0) and ... you know ... at ... you know the best of times these sort of long haul trips are you know ... (1.5) are reasonably comfortable .. and are could be .. quite often they're just horrible and we just put up .. well I put up with it partic.. well particularly if you're in economy class

Natalie: [Yeah]

Ken: [and] this was in economy class and ... there was this French lady and she was like ... (1.5) um ... demanding this and that 'take away my ... um ... (1.0) tray when it's finished' and ... um ... whereas you know in economy there's this sort of like orderliness? you know .. y.. you get served ... um ... from the back and they come down to the front and they they pick up the trays ... (1.0) whereas she wanted to be um ... served straight away? her trays being cleaned up you know ... um 'help my kids' you know ... and I thought ... (2.0) ah I don't I don't wanna say what I thought at the .. but ...

Natalie: You [have to now]

Kerry: [You have to now]

Ken: [Ahhhhh ...] I just thought ... I thought typical French!

All: @@@@

Ken: Um ... I've just contradicted what all I said about them being very hospitable but .. um ... (3.0) they're hospitable ... (1.0) I could I could um ... I make myself up don't I? um they're hospitable when ... it's the right environment and um ... (2.0) but they get really impatient? I tend to find ...

Natalie: [yeah]

Ken: [um] I mean that's the case for a lot of people even around here

Natalie: do you think their standards of serving people are ... better than ours?

Ken: P'haps ... but .. sorry but ... it's not that they're more impatient than us it's just the way that she went about it I th.. I s'pose ... thinking more about it um ... (2.0) and then she was you know ... (3.0) what I thought was pretty rude towards this stewardess ... the s.. stewardess you know sort of took it on the chin and sort of apologised and ... (1.0) then another stewardess ... um ... took over but then that stewardess came back about ten minutes later when the whole situation diffused and said I'm sorry and then the French lady w.. to my surprise got up and said I'm so sorry ... you know I've just I've just had a thirteen hour flight and this is another sort of like ... four more hours on this trip and it's just I'm just tired and blah blah blah so she explained it to her why ..

Natalie: yep

Ken: Yeah ... which was to my surprise but yeah

Natalie: yep ... and the stewardess thought everyday @@ I'm on a flight .. (laughter) you're the first person .. to have a thirteen hour flight mmm

Kerry: It's interesting that she obviously didn't feel that that was normal behaviour ... she apologised for it afterwards so part of her realised like it wasn't just that's the way she always carried on because then she apologised for it so ..

Ken: yeah a:h

Kerry: j.. at some level she must have realised ... (2.0)

Ken: yeah yeah yup um... (2.0)

Kerry: cos if that's .. if that's how she always was like why would she apologise .. she'd just [be like that wouldn't she]

Ken: [yea:h [true]]

Natalie: [mm]

Ken: I was gonna say it's probably it's more of an instinctive sort of ... (1.5) reaction?

Kerry: I'm just [defending the French]

Ken: [I mean er .. before m..] it would take .. sorry?

Kerry: I'm just defending the French

Ken: @@as you do! But I love the French .. love the country love the people ... um ... and you know it's ... (1.5) whether they're this type or that type you know I'm s.. I'm happy to .. embrace all of them ... um ... I'm sounding very corny there but um ...

Kerry: You know I better turn off this before you backtrack again because every time he says something he goes back on it ...

Ken: I do .. that's the wishy-washiness of us guys ... um ... (1.5) I.. I was gonna say ... (1.0) yeah .. that was instinctive for her ... um ... maybe she's got low tolerance or sort of a short wick ... whereas for myself I don't know .. I mean maybe it's just the way I've been brought up ... (1.0) and ... (4.0) um I'm sure a lot of ... Aus.. Australians that are that way ... um ... (1.5)

Kerry: It's also very hard to judge a whole culture based on one person because you don't know how typical if you like that person is [or]

Ken: [true]

Natalie: [True]

Kerry: [rep]resentative or ... (1.0) it's just a bad day or they're always like that they're just a rude shit and they would be in any culture [it's just]

Ken: [yeah true]

Kerry: you don't know it's quite hard to ... (2.0)

Natalie: Yeah

Kerry: just edit out that swearing at the end