

Reflection on debate

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The Greek philosopher Aristotle himself, who was Plato's most important disciple and educator of Alexander the Great, said that **man is by nature a social animal**. The philosopher Aristotle is certainly not the only one who has acknowledged that humans are truly social beings. **No man is an island**, and by nature requires interaction with other people. From an early age, we are raised in the company of our family, we grow up surrounded by siblings, first friends, and people we have a relationship with.

Although we may feel a strong need to be alone or consider ourselves introverts, we are never completely alone. In life, we meet people we can share our feelings with, and we can find that their reality is similar to the reality we have. In the end, it can be beneficial for everyone to meet so many people in life. We can share our worldviews with others, and we may find that we resonate with the reality of others. It is good to be open to new worldviews and opinions on various topics, just as it is necessary to respect others with their ideas. Therefore, we understand other people. When we realize that there are many things in the world that we do not know, we begin to listen more than we speak. Once we see the value of other people's opinions and the benefits that others can pass on to us through their point of view, listening becomes a priority for us.

We are all unique, not only because we each have a unique fingerprint, genetic code, scent, or life story. Our uniqueness brings us originality, but also the probability that we will not get along with everyone. There is a polarity in the world that represents two opposite sides, such as good and evil, the sun and the moon, or two completely different views of two different people. It is possible to meet random people with whom we share a few minutes on the bus or train and agree with many of their opinions. On the other hand, there is a high probability that we will not agree with some people. All this is part of what is called polarity.

Conversations are a part of our reality throughout our lives and are very important from the moment we acquire knowledge of the language. Every day we have conversations not only in our head with ourselves, but also with our surroundings. The fact that two people disagree over something can ultimately lead to a great opportunity to have an enriching and interesting debate. For all people, sharing opinions and debating is a very rewarding opportunity to develop, enrich their minds and gain new insights into a variety of things.

Interacting with people in the form of conversations on various topics is beneficial regardless of people's age because what you want to talk about and what interests you certainly does not depend on your age. The stereotype that young people are not interested in politics is a great example of how long-standing myths created by society are beginning to dispel. Nowadays, it is repeated among adults that young people are not interested in politics, social and environmental problems over and over again, as when a broken record repeats the same song. I think the time has come for us to destroy prejudices and long-standing stereotypes.

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The ability to communicate one's opinions well is a never-ending learning process, which makes it both difficult and beautiful at the same time. The interactions with other people are always unique, you can never have the exact same conversation with another person again. For example, in a simple every-day conversation with a friend, one can never know or predict where the conversation will take you in the end and how you will feel about it. I would even suggest that communication can be a very adventurous thing, full of surprises and unexpected things. I have had many interesting conversations in my life and I guess I am not the only one. Sometimes it really made me feel inspired and very happy afterwards. However, there were many times when I felt I should have said something else or that I might have offended or even hurt the person. Or the other way around, when I felt insecure or irritated. Emotions play a significant role in the way people interact with one another. I think having control over them can be a huge advantage, however, I also believe it is an ideal, which can never be fully achieved.

In my opinion, debating can be a great way to practise communication skills. You have to work with your emotions a lot while debating, especially if you are a beginner. At least it was the case for me. I usually have this specific mixture of fear and excitement, when I am supposed to speak. It is fun, but I also have to push myself. I also like that during a debate I have to be present in every moment because I need to listen a lot to others so as to be able to react. The time always passes extremely fast for me and I can experience the flow for a while.

A big advantage of debating is that it makes you broaden your worldview. In the preparation, where you try to gather arguments pro and contra the notion, you really have a chance to explore the topic. It can be a very exciting process, especially if you are interested in the issue, because it forces you to look at the problem from different perspectives. It also pushes you to think how to refute an argument, why the proposal might not work and what the consequences could be for society. What I also like is the fact that it naturally makes you think about what is happening in the society and about other people. When I already know a bit more about an issue then I also tend to be more engaged in the society and in my community.

Debating also feels a bit like a game to me. I do not have that many experiences, but so far, I have always felt similar as when playing board games or collective sports. There are emotions in the game and you try to perform well, but it is not that serious. You have space for making mistakes and there are no real consequences if you fail. I think that is also the reason why you can learn a lot while debating. You can try out different things to see what works best and you usually get feedback.

Another nice thing about debating is the interaction with other people. It is interesting to talk to them about the debated issues informally as well. Obviously, one can learn a lot from them and get inspired by them. I am really happy to have the possibility to participate in the Debate Your Issues project, because it gives me the opportunity to meet and talk to people from different places in the Czech Republic and also of different ages. Hopefully, we will even get the chance to meet people from different European countries and debate with them, which could be a very enriching experience.