

What to Do About an Overtalker

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Maybe the person sits near you at work. Maybe he or she is your second cousin-in-law, your Hinge date or your seatmate on a 19-hour flight to Sydney. Most of us have met a compulsive talker: A person who dominates discussions with nonmeaningful chatter and misses, or ignores, cues that listeners are scanning for the exit.

It's tempting to believe, when cornered by such a chatterer, that a chronic talker is a selfish egotist. Yet, it is often the opposite. Research has linked overtalking to anxiety, attention deficit disorder, being on the autism spectrum or to compulsive behavior on the lines of shopaholism or workaholism.

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Alternatively, consider that your conversation partner is socially awkward. "Some socially awkward people can talk ad nauseam about topics they're passionate about," says Ty Tashiro, a psychologist in New York City and author of "[Awkward: The Science of Why We're Socially Awkward and Why That's Awesome](#)."