

International Conversation Cafe

Lifestyle Topic: Temptation

According to the Freedictionary.com, temptation is the desire to have or do something that you know you should avoid.

Sometimes temptation has to do with having immediate pleasure despite the pain that may later accompany it. For example, we may be tempted to drink too much at one time knowing that afterwards we will encounter headaches, fatigue, embarrassment and possibly worse. Or temptation could be something much simpler, like watching movies or playing video games instead of getting homework done. In the context of some religions, temptation is the inclination to sin, to ignore God and treat others badly.

More informally, temptation may be used to mean "the state of being attracted and enticed" without anything to do with moral, ethical, or ideological valuation; for example, one may say that a piece of food looks "tempting" even though eating it would result in no negative consequences. (Source: Wikipedia)

Share a story about temptation.

A recent survey conducted in the USA reveals the following about temptations among the Americans.

The top 3 problems for the Americans are procrastination, overeating and spending too much time on media.

The survey said that 60% of Americans admitted that they're tempted to worry too much or procrastinate; 55% said they're tempted to overeat, and 41% said they're tempted by sloth, or laziness.

The sex, drugs and rock and roll-like vices fell dead last in the temptation categories: 11% of Americans said they were tempted by drug abuse; 9% were tempted by sexually inappropriate contact.

Temptation also seems to affect men and women differently – more women said they're tempted by gossip and overeating, and only 8% of women admitted to being tempted by online pornography versus 28% of men.

The study said that 59% of Americans admit that they don't do anything to avoid temptation and half can't explain why they give into temptation.

(Source: <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2013/02/08/americans-reveal-their-3-favorite-sins/>)

Let's discuss.

1. *Of the three most common temptations: procrastination, over eating, and laziness, which are you most tempted by? Explain.*
2. *What are the ways you usually use to resist temptations?*
3. *Share an example from your life where you had a temptation and you*
 - a. *resisted it.*
 - b. *gave in to the temptation.*
4. *According to your faith/ religion are there any special things you do to overcome temptation?*

Todd Hunter, author of *Our Favorite Sins*, gives advice for staying clear of temptation: fast, pray and stay out of places and relationships that lead you toward temptation.

5. *What is your opinion of his advice? Have you tried any of these methods? What happened?*

For those who aren't religious, Hunter recommends thinking about sports. He cites the practice habits of superstars like NBA legend Michael Jordan. They practice, progress, repeating athletic exercises every day until their body complies.

6. *How could the sports model help a person to withstand temptation?*

What do you notice in the painting?

Explain what is going on.

What temptation is each person considering?



Georges de la Tour. The Cheat with the Ace of Diamonds, 1635. Oil on canvas, 146 x106 cm. Musee de Louvre, Paris