

How to hold a civil discussion

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We aren't perfect human beings. We all have flaws. However, if it is your vice to interrupt people in the midst of discussions and not let them speak, then this is for you.

CHEW GUM

I know, you must be wondering what chewing gum has to do with holding civil conversations. Well, chewing gum has many benefits, starting from burning 11 calories a year by chewing gum an hour every day to boosting brain performance. The latter should be pertinent here given you're trying to absorb the information. Just chew on your gum and listen to what the other person is saying. It will also help reduce the stress that you must be feeling, being unable to intercede on behalf of all those who are on your side but nowhere around.

MAKE MENTAL NOTES

Making mental notes means trying to remember something without writing it down. Now, remembering things requires undivided attention. Thus, if you're interrupting the other person, how will you focus and be attentive and make good mental notes to combat their opinions? It is very, very important that you let them speak and concentrate with utmost attention before your train of thought takes over as speech.

NO PERSECUTION

Now you may be thinking that you only ever interrupt people but never reprimand them. However, your interrupting them may be alienating them for simply not thinking the way you do. You cannot expect them to have the same ideals as you, and they may be even incorrect in their perception, but there are certain ways to verbally approach them. Intimidating them mid-conversation, trying to jeopardise their social life, tagging them on SNS articles that you know will exacerbate their image, are not okay. Please, refrain from doing all that.

IMAGINE SOMEONE RESPECTFUL IN THEIR PLACE

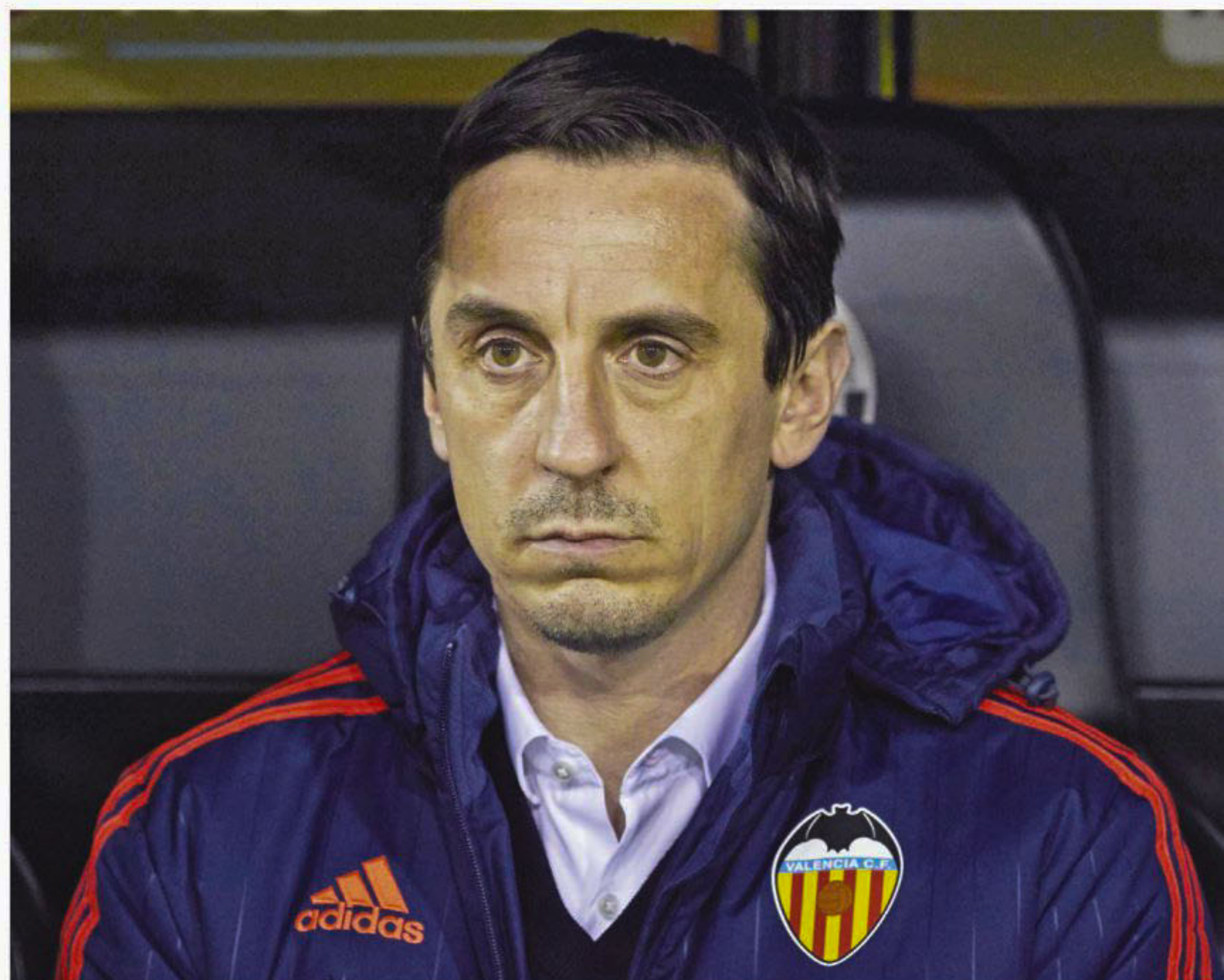
I know how easy it is to argue with an acquaintance or friend, especially when you ardently believe your opinion is paramount and indisputable. However, would you behave in the same manner if it were someone you revere deeply? No, you would actually give them the airtime to present their opinions. Above all, you would honour yourself by pondering over it. You can easily approach this the same way simply by listening to them, imagining someone you hold in high regards in their stead. If that shuts you up, the other steps will either follow or their necessity will cease to exist.

PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES

And someone like you in yours. If you were trying to express your opinion on something, trying to get it across, would you appreciate being interrupted? Just imagine not being allowed to speak the same way you don't let your peers speak just because you find their opinion wrong and obsolete. Imagine being interrupted because someone thinks your opinion is wrong and obsolete. It has to feel bad. Try not to do this to others. If people don't feel comfortable holding a discussion with you, what's even the point of trying so hard to learn more about what you believe in?

It is not as easy to let go of inherent traits as we try to make it seem when presenting a listicle to help a reader out. However, nothing is impossible if proper effort is given into it.

Aysha's friendship is worth a cup of tea. Just have a cup of tea and don't try to tell her it isn't just that at zaheenaysha@gmail.com



Retiring from football as a fan

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It's 2019, and if you are a football fan, you can easily tell that it's not really the best time to be a supporter of Manchester United or Argentina when it comes to football. Now you see, I personally am in a bit of a pickle as I support both. For fans like me, these are troubled times. Your favourite football team is out there making a mockery out of themselves on the pitch while thousands of miles away your friends and other rival supporters are busy making a mockery out of you.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOUR TEAM IS CONSTANTLY FAILING?

Success is something that is very inconsistent in football. The current champions may not even finish in the top ten at the end of the ongoing season. Legendary teams may lose their spark and eventually lose their position as a top ranked team. Football is just unpredictable. But no matter how poor your team performs or how low their win-loss ratio is, you can't just give up watching football because football is life. Nor can you just change and start supporting another club or team. The only viable option then is to retire as a football fan.

HOW DO YOU RETIRE FROM FOOTBALL AS A FAN?

Stopping yourself from watching football and retiring from football are two different things. In retirement, you will still be following all the action except this time, you will be doing it from a neutral point of view. This way, you will be identified as a fan of the game and not of any particular team, something you usually do after your team gets knocked out of the World Cup.

WHAT DO YOU DO DURING RETIREMENT?

When footballers retire they leave the pitch, but not the game itself. They find themselves working in commentary, as coaches or managers, as pundits or analysts, and so on. As fans, our post retirement plans will be somewhat similar. Some of us will boot up our consoles and start playing FIFA. We will become the manager we wanted our team to have, make the transfers that were needed to be made, and win every title there is to be had. Many retired fans will provide post-match analysis on social media. They will criticise the players, bombard the managers with uneasy questions, and take it upon themselves to become the next Gary Neville.

CAN YOU COME OUT OF RETIREMENT?

Yes, you most certainly can. If Paul Scholes can come out of retirement and win the Premier League, so can you. Except in your case, your team will have to start winning again before you decide to come back, right?

All that being said, I know that no one would want to retire as a football fan. But then, day in and day out, you see the opposition dribbling the ball past Phil Jones with ease, while on the other end, Young repeatedly falls as he tries to dribble past one single right-back, and you immediately know that it's better to just end your career as a football fan.

Faisal wants to be the very best, like no one ever was. To survive university is his real test, to graduate is his cause. Send him memes and motivation at abir.afc@gmail.com

