

The four deadly party personality types

The Crashing Bore

Favorite topics of conversation: Possible deadly reaction of buffet food to their medication. The "freaky" dream they had last night. How cool they were in high school.

How to handle: Play interested. To everything shake your head and say "that's interesting." (Note: This only works if your spouse knows that when you say something is interesting, it means you think it's not interesting.)

The Arrogant Real Estate Related Professional

Favorite topics of conversation: Their weekend at "the River." How much they bought their house for in 1998. Wine.

How to handle: Play dumb. Act as if you haven't ever heard of anything they are talking about.

"What river?" "Where is Villa Park?" "Is that a type of alcoholic beverage?"

The Salesman

Favorite topic of conversation: How much money you could be making selling (fill in blank here). How much money they made last year. How much money do you want to make?

How to handle: Say you and your spouse have more money than you could possibly manage already. "We are loaded. My husband makes so much money, I wouldn't know what to do with any more." Then blow your nose in a twenty dollar bill and throw it on the ground, just to drive the point home.

Minute-Detail Talker

Favorite topic of conversation: The difference between French goat cheese (or chèvre) and domestic sheep cheese. The thread count of the napkins and why I should care. How she wanted to bring her New Graphic Op Art Large Sabrina bag by Coach but was afraid the bold pattern would throw off her Dolce & Gabbana Satin Psychedelic Dress she got at...

How to handle: Ask the waiter if they serve Mountain Dew, when they don't storm off and go sit at another table.

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