

Revised Edition

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OPEN TO DEBATE

70 wide-ranging topics of current interest to Koreans
70 authentic and idiomatic conversations
304 lively discussion questions &
Numerous fascinating facts
about contemporary Korean culture

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UNIT 01

Korea's Greatest Hero

- Patricia:** Tom, do you know anything about Korean history?
- Tom:** Well, a little. I've taught English in Korea for two years.
- Patricia:** What leader do you think Koreans admire the most?
- Tom:** Do you mean currently or from the past?
- Patricia:** Well, either.
- Tom:** I don't know. I know that a lot of Koreans still like Park, Chung-Hee.
- Patricia:** Yeah? What is he remembered for?
- Tom:** He was President of Korea during the economic boom of the 60s and 70s.



The inventor of hangul, the designer of the turtle ship, or the creator of economic development—whom shall I choose as my hero?

Over its long history, Korea has had many heroes, but who is Korea's greatest hero? A poll taken in late 2005 revealed the following results:

- 38% of Koreans ranked Admiral Yi Sun-Shin as Korea's greatest hero.
- 15% chose King Sejong.
- 10% chose President Park Chung-Hee.

Admiral Yi Sun-Shin is remembered for defeating the Japanese in a naval battle in 1592, after Japanese forces, under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, had invaded Korea.

King Sejong is honored for inventing the Korean alphabet.

Park Chung-Hee is remembered for leading Korea's economic growth.

Kim Dae-Jung was the first Korean to become a Nobel laureate when he won the Nobel Prize for Peace in the year 2000.

What do you think?

- (1) Whom would you choose as Korea's greatest hero?
- (2) Who has been a hero to you in your own personal life?
- (3) Of well-known Koreans living today (politicians, actors, sports stars, etc.), whom do you admire most? Why?
- (4) In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a hero?
- (5) Some people cite their parents as their hero. Why do you think this is true?

UNIT 02

Smart Phone Addiction

Ji-Hoon: Excuse me, Olivia. May I borrow your smart phone? My battery is running low, and I need to call my mom.

Olivia: Sure, but didn't you charge your battery last night?

Ji-Hoon: Yes, but I've been playing a smart phone game, and my battery is weak.

Olivia: Uh-oh. You aren't one of those smart phone addicts, are you?

Ji-Hoon: Well, I don't think so. I just use it for sending texts and playing games mostly.

Olivia: Have you ever forgotten your smart phone when you went to school?

Ji-Hoon: Yes, that happened once, and I felt totally frustrated all day.

Olivia: Well, that's one of the signs of smart phone addiction.

Ji-Hoon: Hmmm... I didn't know that.

Olivia: Maybe you should check out this ad for a digital detox camp. It might be helpful.



Who's smarter:
the smart phone user
or the smart phone?

Korea has long been known as one of the most wired and connected nations on Earth. However, along with its many high tech devices has arisen a social problem, namely, digital addiction, especially smart phone addiction. A Korean government survey of 4,000 smart phone users found that more than 77% of them check their phones frequently for no reason, and some 60% begin and finish every day with their smart phones. Smart phone users make statements such as these: "I cannot imagine a single day without using my smart phone." "I feel very frustrated when I can't check my smart phone." "I always check my smart phone for messages, and I even re-read messages that I've already checked." "My friends and I usually play with our smart phones, even when we are meeting face-to-face for lunch." In addition to the problem of smart phone addiction, non-stop users face increasing risks of fraud because the smart phone's level of growth has far exceeded its level of security.

Various organizations in Korea have taken steps to help smart phone addicts reduce their dependency on the device. To cite a few examples, the SK Broadband Human Resources Development Center hosted a 3-day youth camp to prevent and cure digital addiction. The National Natural Recreation Forest Office is attempting to find ways to use Korea's recreational forests as a space to cure digital addiction. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family opened a National Youth Internet Dream Village. Finally, the Seoul Metropolitan Government started a 1-1-1 Campaign that encourages people to have family time once a week for an hour with no smart phones.

What do you think?

- (1) Is the problem of digital addiction in Korea really a serious social problem?
- (2) Do you know anyone that you would consider addicted to a smart phone or digital device?
- (3) Do you personally exhibit any signs of smart phone addiction?
- (4) Have you ever forgotten or misplaced your smart phone? How did you feel?
- (5) Have you ever used your smart phone while dining with a friend? In a class? In a cinema?
- (6) Some argue that, even if someone uses a smart phone 24/7, we can't call him or her an addict because using a smart phone has become essential for modern people. Do you agree? Why or why not?

UNIT 03

An Evening of Pork, Rice & Soju

Tom: Sandra, did you hear that our office group is going out tonight?

Sandra: Yeah, but I heard it's a "boys' night out." I'm not invited.

Tom: Well, I wish that I wasn't, actually. They always eat and drink a lot.

Sandra: Don't you like grilled pork and soju?

Tom: Well, in small amounts. However, I tend to overdo it at these dinners.

Sandra: Just exercise some self-control: eat slowly, and eat a lot of side dishes.

Tom: Yeah, that's good advice.

Sandra: Well, have a good time, and tell me about it tomorrow.

*I eat a lot, but I'm still
tired and hungry.*



The daily caloric need for the average woman is about 2,000 calories and for men about 2,200. On a typical night out for Korean men, featuring pork, rice, and soju, they will consume about 3,000 calories, far above their daily caloric need. In order to burn off these calories, a person would have to exercise for an hour every day for a week.

Such calorie-laden meals are a contributing factor to the fact that almost one-third of Korean adults are now considered obese according to the Korean government. This figure is 1.6 times greater than the number of a decade ago. The health problems created or worsened by obesity are well known. They include diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. Women who are just slightly obese are eight times more likely to get diabetes than those of normal weight; for men, the likelihood is four times as great.

The two main causes of obesity are very simple: overeating and lack of exercise. To combat obesity, people need to reduce eating and lead a more active lifestyle. For example, at company dinners and evenings out with friends, it is recommended that one try to consume an amount of food that is equal to a normal meal. Even those who don't like exercise can still use up more calories just by walking whenever possible and taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

Note: Some people use the term *kilocalorie* instead of *calorie*.

What do you think?

- (1) How will the widespread problem of obesity affect the future of Korea?
- (2) How often do you go out with a group for such a heavy dinner?
- (3) Are you satisfied with your current weight, or would you like to lose some? What would be the best way for you to lose the weight?
- (4) Many people say their stress forces them to eat, drink, and smoke more. Do you understand them or is it just a lame excuse?

UNIT 04

Most Stressful Day of the Week?

Jane: Well, TGIF!

Fred: Yeah, *thank God, it's Friday!* The weekend starts in a few hours.

Jane: I always feel great on Friday.

Fred: Me, too, because I always have the weekend off.

Jane: What is your most stressful day?

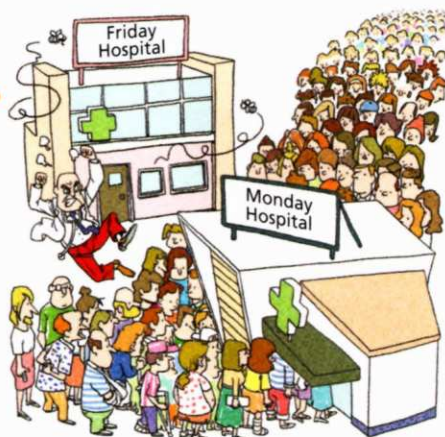
Fred: Oh, I would say Monday, for sure. It's always hard to get up early on Monday.

Jane: I feel the same way. Maybe Monday is the most stressful day for most people.

Fred: I don't know. Maybe we should find out what day has the most cigarette sales.

Jane: Yeah. Smokers usually smoke a lot on stressful days.

It's strange how no one seems to get sick on Fridays!



Here's a new illness for the medical textbooks: "Monday morning disease."