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## Lying

A lie, also known as a prevarication, is when a person knowingly says something that's not true. You can tell bald-faced lies, bare-faced lies, bold-faced lies, or little white lies. You can lie to yourself, you can lie to other people, and you can lie through your teeth. You can be a pathological liar, a habitual liar, or just a plain old liar.

Lies come in all shapes and sizes. On one end of the spectrum are malicious lies, like bold-faced lies. These are things people say to avoid being punished, to get out of doing something, to impress someone, or to make themselves feel more important. On the other end of the spectrum are little white lies. People tell little white lies to avoid hurting someone's feelings. To be polite, that is.

In our world, good social etiquette requires recognizing when respect and kindness demand that you sometimes shade the naked truth. These little white lies as they're known, are not malicious. Telling your friend the pimple on his nose doesn't look bad when you really think it looks like Mt. Everest is a little white lie. Telling your parents you're spending the night at a friend's house and then going somewhere else is not.

A popular much-used little white lie is when you ask people how they are and they say, "Great!" Sometimes they are "great," but even when they're not, they still say they are. Ergo, a little white lie. Which, by the way, is more times than not the right response since no one really wants to hear an honest accounting of the sordid details.

Malicious lies, on the other hand, destroy the trust between two people. That's why it hurts when your girlfriend tells you she was just out with friends, but you know she was on a date with someone else. Best to remember that malicious lies don't solve problems. With every lie you're gambling you won't get caught. But, chances are you will and then things will be worse than if you hadn't lied in the first place. Lying damages what others think of you and what you think of yourself.

There is also a kind of lie told by those who care for us, like our parents and grandparents. These “lies,” although that may be too strong a word for them, are meant to stir our imaginations, share helpful tips, and discourage certain behaviors deemed inappropriate. They’ve been said so many times by so many people they must be true.

Or are they?

1. Santa Clause is real, along with his buddy, the Tooth Fairy.
2. That noise in a seashell is the ocean.
3. Swimming after eating causes cramps.
4. The hair on your face grows faster and comes back thicker if you shave it.
5. Sitting on cold ground makes you sick.
6. Reading in dim light hurts your eyes.
7. Masturbating makes you blind.
8. Eating chocolate causes acne.
9. Touching frogs gives you warts.
10. Washing your hair too often makes it fall out.

#### Lying Dos and Don'ts

- Tell the truth.
- Be sensitive to people's feelings.
- Understand when it's okay to shade the naked truth and when it's not.

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