



Jackie: Hello, welcome to London Life with BBC Learning English and me, Jackie Dalton.

Growling pussycat

Jackie: Do you ever feel a bit like this in the morning? Well you're not the only one and it's now official, Londoners are the most grumpy people in England when it comes to getting up in the mornings. 'To be grumpy' means to be in a bad mood. When I'm feeling grumpy I find everyone else really annoying and get very cross when my bus to work is late – like it was this morning.

Well, a new survey by the Sleep Council shows that people living in London are more grouchy in the morning than people in the rest of England. Listen to this news report. What percentage of people in London spends most of their morning in a bad mood?

News report

Londoners are the grumpiest in the morning compared to anyone else in the country. That's according to researchers at the Sleep Council, who say nearly twenty per cent of us in the capital stay in a bad mood for up to four hours after waking up.

Jackie: Did you catch that figure? Nearly twenty per cent of Londoners stay in a bad mood for up to four hours – that's a lot of people! I asked three people who moved to London in the last few years whether they agreed

that Londoners are especially irritable. What did they have to say?
Listen out for some more words meaning 'grumpy'.

Interviews

Londoners are definitely more grumpy.

I don't know about grumpy, but I find them kind of quiet and sullen and surly and sort of sulky, even.

On the tube in the morning, Londoners look really serious and nobody is smiling and it's a really solemn atmosphere.

As long as anyone's had a cup of coffee they're not too bad, but I don't think you should speak to anyone before they've had their morning cup of coffee.

Jackie: Well, that's pretty unanimous; we are a miserable bunch here in the capital. Did you spot any new words? We heard 'sullen', 'surly' and 'sulky' – all good words to describe someone who is grumpy. We also heard 'solemn', which means very serious. So what is it that makes people miserable in the early hours of the day?

Interviews

Well, I'm pretty good in the mornings, I don't really get to grumpy but I think if my routines is disturbed in any way, I can get quite grouchy about that.

I think I'm quite grumpy in the mornings especially if I am still sort of half awake and have people ringing me in the morning that makes me grumpy.

If I can't get into the bathroom in the morning, that makes me grumpy...if I've run out of milk and I can't have my breakfast and if I'm late – if I'm running late.

Jackie: No milk, not being able to get into the bathroom, being late – all things that get people into a sulk. Life just seems too difficult sometimes!

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Jackie: Another finding in the research was that women are generally more grumpy in the morning than men. Why could that be? Let's hear now from Judith Holder, who has just published a book called *The diary of a grumpy woman*. Why does she think women are more grumpy in the mornings?

Judith

Well I'm not surprised that women are more grumpy... are you, really? I mean, we've got so much more to do and I think most women actually feel if they don't do absolutely everything then it's not going to get done, nobody else is going to do it and I think that's the main kind of thrust of it, isn't it?

Jackie: Judith thinks women are more irritable in the mornings because they've got so much to do. What sorts of things have they got to do?

Judith

We are our own worst enemy because we've got to have the beds made and the dishwasher on and I'm sort of like a bad tempered Mary Poppins in the morning, kind of doing all these things that really I'm the one that cares about.

Jackie: Judith complains women have to do things like make the beds, put the dishwasher on. Although she does admit that women are they own worst enemies – now that's an interesting expression. 'To be your own worst enemy' means to behave in a way that causes problems to yourself. Judith is arguing that actually the beds don't really have to be made and the dishwasher doesn't really have to go on. But women create their own problems by convincing themselves that these things do have to happen. Women are their own worst enemies. Now let's hear from another author, Mike Gayle. What's his advice?

Mike

I leap out bed with a smile on my face and I'm ready for the day. I think it's just about being a bit more chilled. You don't have to get everything perfect, you don't have to get everything done.

Jackie: Some good advice from Mike there: just be a bit more chilled – relax!
 It's not the end of the world if the beds aren't made and life is there to
 be enjoyed.

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