

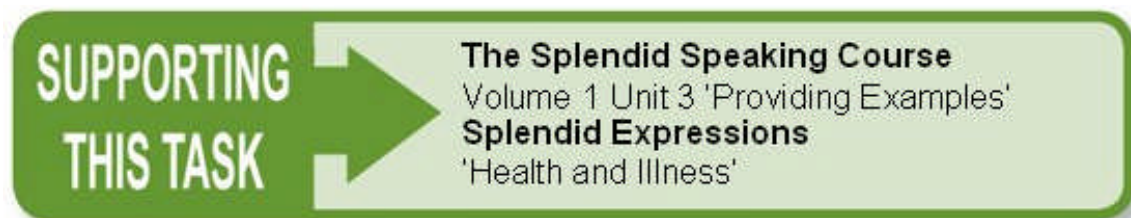
---

# Splendid Speaking Podcasts

Topic: Expressing & Justifying Opinions  
(Interview 21: April Archives)

This show can be listened to at the following address:

<http://splendid-speaking.com/blog/?p=28>



## Comprehension Questions

As you listen, decide whether according to Vukosava, the following questions are true or false.

- 1) It is easier to lead a healthy lifestyle now than in the past.
- 2) Good mental health is connected to healthy living.
- 3) Eating meat will help your brain function better.
- 4) People should spend a lot of time doing exercise.
- 5) Taking up running is a good alternative to paying to use exercise equipment.

## Transcript

### Introduction

Welcome to the Splendid Speaking podcast. My name's Pete Travis and this week we're listening to Vukosava. A reminder that the transcript for the most recent podcast along with comprehension questions are sent to subscribers of our mailing list when the podcast is published each week and remains available for seven days from the date of publication. You can sign up to the newsletter from [www.splendid-speaking.com](http://www.splendid-speaking.com).

Vukosava is preparing for the CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) examination and we decided to practise giving a short talk with the focus on expressing and justifying an opinion. Shortly before the interview in Skype, Vukosava was sent the following question:

“Talk about the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. “

She was told she could include any of the following issues if she wished:  
food / exercise /costs to society

As you listen decide how well Vukosava expresses her opinion and whether she gives appropriate examples to back up her views. Is her talk delivered clearly and within the 2-minute time limit? If you have access to the transcript, listen a second time and answer the comprehension questions. Finally, make a note of Vukosava’s use of English, which we’ll look at in the feedback session.

Let’s listen to Vukosava.

OK then, ... so Pete you have asked me what is the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. ... In my personal opinion, I think this is really important thing to do, ... especially ... in this now ... nowa ... nowadays ... when a person I think it’s more ... it’s much more maybe educated or ... or maybe much more informed ... about what is that doing good or wrong to your body ... because in a way that relates with your mental health. So now how is all this together connected? First of all yes we can say that by ... eating the vario ... various food ... we can prolong our life that we can improve our lifestyle ... that we can feel ... after all that we can feel better. Of course that it’s very well known that ... for ... for ... for example that fish is much better than ... than meat when it ... when it comes to all these vitamins and ... minerals that your body needs and ... that ... also helps brain to function better. ... Now another issue is also raised here and this is about the exercise ... how we can improve our ... our lifestyle apart from taking care of our nutrition. Well, ... to take up some exercise it’s really good idea. ... Now the only problem is whether the person has enough time to go to all these .... gym ... gymnastics ... exercise ... I have a kind of block ... well I mean to do the exercise it’s ... I mean as I said it’s a very good ... very good decision the only problem is a .. is a lack of time. What we can do we can also spend a lot of time I mean spend a lot of money by paying for registration for using this exercise equipment while at the other side we can just do a couple of runs ... when we have time and still feel ... feel OK.

## Feedback

First of all I'd like to thank Vukosava for taking part in this Skype interview. You can comment on her talk at the Splendid Speaking website.

Time for some feedback. This was a good attempt at the question and for the majority of the short talk Vukosava was able to express herself clearly, coherently and fluently. She began her talk by paraphrasing the question.

*"OK then, ... so Pete you have asked me what is the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle ..."*

If you have no time to prepare a talk, doing this can certainly help you to get started and buys you a little time to think about what you're going to say:

Vukosava used several expressions which showed she was attempting to organise her thoughts and which, for the listener acted as useful signposts:

*"...In my personal opinion ..."*  
*"...So now how is all this together connected?"*  
*"...First of all yes we can say ..."*  
*"...Now another issue is also raised here ..."*

During the first half of her talk Vukosava gave her opinion of the importance of eating healthily and listed a number of examples to justify her views.

*"...First of all yes we can say that by ... eating the vario ... various food ... we can prolong our life that we can improve our lifestyle ... that we can feel ... after all that we can feel better..."*

During the second half of the talk, Vukosava suffered the dreaded 'mental block' and was unable to think of the word she needed:

*"...Now the only problem is whether the person has enough time to go to all these .... gym ... gymnastics ... exercise ... I have a kind of block ..."*

The word she was looking for was of course 'gym' or 'gymnasium'. Should she find herself in a similar situation again, Vukosava could try describing the word she is having problems remembering. For example in this instance, she could have said something like:

*" ... the place you to go to do exercise..."*

Finally, listen to the following extracts from Vukosava's talk. Can you spot the mistakes in each one?

*"...when a person I think it's more ... it's much more maybe educated..."*

There are two subjects here: 'person' and 'it'. So not 'it's more' but 'is more'.

*“...about what is that doing good or wrong to your body ...”*

This would be better expressed as: ‘about what is healthy or harmful for your body’ or ‘about what’s good or not good for you’.

*“...because in a way that relates with your mental health...”*

This is a pronunciation error. It should of course be ‘way’ and ‘with’. Vukosava is aware of this problem and is taking steps to improve her pronunciation of words beginning with ‘w’. We would also say ‘relates to’ rather than ‘relates with’.

*“...and this is about the exercise ...”*

The mistake here is the use of ‘the’. ‘Exercise’ here has a general meaning and does not take the definite article.

*“...while at the other side we can just do a couple of runs...”*

Rather than ‘at the other side’ more natural would be ‘on the other hand’ or ‘alternatively’.

OK. That's the end of this podcast. Once again, many thanks to Vukosava. Until next week it's ‘bye’ from me Pete Travis.

## **Answers to Comprehension Questions**

1) It is easier to lead a healthy lifestyle now than in the past.

Ans: True

2) Good mental health is connected to healthy living.

Ans: True

3) Eating meat will help your brain function better.

Ans: False

4) People should spend a lot of time doing exercise.

Ans: False

5) Taking up running is a good alternative to paying to use exercise equipment.

Ans: True

# The Splendid Speaking Self Study Course

Many of the skills involved in delivering short talks are practised in Volume 2 of the 'Splendid Speaking Self-Study Course'.

## **Volume 1: Introductions and Small Talk**

In this volume you'll learn how to:

- Make an impact with a 15-second introduction (Unit 1) - a useful skill in a job interview or networking situations.
- Make small talk using the S.O.F.A. strategy (Unit 2)- a surefire way to make social situations much easier.
- Listen effectively and show interest in what others have to say (Unit 2), so you can build an immediate rapport with other people.
- Relate a S.T.A.R. story (Unit 3) that illustrates a personal achievement - ideal in an interview for a job or training course.

Plus 2 other key speaking strategies on body language and giving examples.

## **Volume 2: Powerful Presentations**

In this volume you'll learn how to:

- Captivate your audience by choosing one of five memorable ways to start a presentation, and then signpost it clearly so your audience don't get lost (Unit 4).
- Introduce photographs and information graphics (graphs, charts, tables, etc) to illustrate your talk (Unit 5).
- Avoid worrying when you're asked to "say a few words". You'll soon be giving a T.O.P. spontaneous talk, and using pauses for effect (Unit 6).

In addition to these 12 key strategies you can test yourself with our interactive quizzes on useful collocational phrases to do with work, business, education and relationships, for example.

For further information visit

[www.splendid-speaking.com/products/shop.html](http://www.splendid-speaking.com/products/shop.html)