

Teenagers can't drive, pffft!(1)

Recently, after having realized I had been on my learners licence for over a year, I decided to go and try to get my restricted. On my way into town to the local NZ Transport office to sit my license I suddenly notice a lot more about other drivers(2). Every time someone does something stupid, I start grumbling to my mum who is in the passengers' seat, conveniently forgetting all those times I've accidentally cut someone off or missed a sign increasing the speed limit, haha.

But far out, I can't wait to get rid of these L' plates, they're so embarrassing! When people see you driving with them stuck very visibly to your windscreen, you know what the first thing that goes through their head is (3)'Bloody hell, why do they let those reckless, accidents-waiting-to-happen they call teenagers on the road for?'(4) Which if you ask me is extremely hypocritical because they were my age once weren't they? It's just this stereotypical view that adults seems to have. They might as well renew the dictionary meaning for teenagers: 'irresponsible, trouble making young people who have bad judgement and can't drive' (5).

Sure this possibly is true for a certain proportion of the teenage population, but there are those of us who are exceptions to the rule, and we get labelled too. I get it that teenagers statistically have the most accidents on the road, but no- one ever tells you that the second group of worst drivers are the oldies (late 50's to early 60's), and they are the ones who pick on us for it! (6)There is one funny thing I find about being on a learners license, and it's when other drivers see you with those unsightly 'L' plates, they HAVE to pass you. No matter what speed you're going, it's always too slow. And they call us irresponsible!

But anyway, by the time I stop thinking about how unfair life is when you're a teenager, I've made it to town (7) safely (I hope all you experienced drivers take note of that). I park in front of the AA building, sit for a few seconds, start up again, move the car to park around the side of the building. It's a much quieter street around the side, and easier to pull out of. I might as well give myself a head start.

Soon the driving instructor is sitting beside me but I'm not nervous. That is not until he asks me to perform the ridiculous task of parallel parking. Out of all the things he could ask me to do, it had to be the parallel park. I'm confident at a hill start, or reversing around a corner, but that would make the test far too easy for the instructors liking. So I do the parallel park sweet as first try, but now for the rest of the test it feels like a bevy of butterflies are having a party in my tummy.

Nervousness: what causes it? Why do we get it? Wouldn't life be easier without it? (8)These are things I've always wondered. I think even though no-one likes to get nervous and it feels horrible, we need it. It's almost like a sick type of motivation. But the funny thing is that no-one tends to get nervous at things they should be nervous about, but more for about the unknown. For example, if you have failed a maths test, and you know Dad is going to be really mad when you get home, you won't be nervous, even though you know something bad is going to happen. But if you are going to be in the final of the hundred metre sprint, and it's something you've been training for, you will most likely be shaking in your shoes! (9)There are two ways it could go: you win, you don't win. But because you don't know which way it's going to go, the butterflies appear. And they don't go away until the race is over.

This was the case for my licence, because as soon as I got the butterflies, they stayed until the test was over. But it was well worth it in the end because I passed. When the instructor told me, I let out a sigh of relief, mainly because I hadn't wasted my money, but also because I had just proven my point because some of us teenagers can drive!(10)

