

## Patience and Impatience

Source: Reginald W. Bibby, *The Boomer Factor*, 2006:81-82.

What about the perception Canadians have of the time pressures they are placing on others? After all, if most of us are feeling pushed, most of us, in turn, must also be doing some of the pushing. The results of a recent AP-Ipsos poll in the US. might be instructive. The poll found that, on average, people start to get on edge after being kept on hold on the phone for five minutes and waiting in a line for 15 minutes, with older people more impatient than younger people.<sup>1</sup>

So what about it? We put the question to our respondents in the 2005 survey. Just over half acknowledged that they probably are about as impatient with other people as those people are with them. Here, such a confession tends to increase with age: Pre-Boomers (65%) and Boomers (58%) are more inclined than Pre-Boomers (48%) to admit to being just as impatient as the people they encounter. Women and men, however, are almost equally likely to say that their impatience levels are similar to those of other people.

This leads us to a fairly obvious question: Given the time pressures we experience and the time expectations we are placing on others, it would seem that one way of neutralizing some of that strain would be for society – and for us as individuals – to cultivate an appreciation for patience.

Interestingly, 61% of Canadians say they personally place a very high level of importance on "patience." There is very little difference by age cohort; this is not a generational value more characteristic of Pre-Boomers, for example, than others.

However, it is significant that women are far more likely than men to see patience as "very important" (72% versus 50%). What's more, these gender differences in the valuing of patience persist across age

**Table 5.5. Patience by Age and Gender: 2005**

% Indicating "Very Important"

	<b>61%</b>
Women	72
Men	50
<b>Boomers</b>	<b>61</b>
Women	71
Men	51
<b>Pre-Boomers</b>	<b>60</b>
Women	70
Men	51
<b>Post-Boomers</b>	<b>61</b>
Women	74
Men	47

<sup>1</sup> *USA Today*, May 28, 2006.