

Transcript

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Section 1: "Sometimes I think I spend too much time on the computer."

Tess: Hello Welcome to the second series of the Learn English Elementary podcast. this is number three. I'm Tess.

Ravi: And I'm Ravi. It's a bright sunny morning here in London but the great thing about a podcast is that you can listen whenever you want, so, good morning! Good afternoon! Good evening!

Tess: That's true. Why not write and tell us *when* and *where* you listen to our podcasts? We'll give you the email address a little later. Do you listen at your computer or do you download us and listen on the bus, in the car, at the gym? Let us know. Do you listen to any podcasts Ravi?

Ravi: I do, actually, yeah. I listen to a couple of things. There's a football podcast I really like and there's quite a good comedy one that I listen to as well. I listen to them when I go out running.

Tess: *You* go out running?

Ravi: Well, I listened to one *once* when I was running. I usually listen at home. How about you?

Tess: No, not really. I'm too busy with my social networking site to have time for podcasts. Honestly, sometimes I think I spend too much time on the computer.

Ravi: I know what you mean. It's easy to spend hours and hours on the internet just looking at different things. Surfing the net. Oh, that reminds me – I wanted to ask you about something. You know I'm on Facebook, right?

Tess: Right.

Ravi: Well, I know you're not on Facebook but you're on a few other networking sites - you know how it works, don't you? People send you invitations to be their 'friend'

Tess: Yeah, OK. I know what you mean.

Ravi: Well, yesterday I got a message from someone inviting me to be 'friends' and the thing is, I just don't know who she is. I don't recognise her name at all.

Tess: So, someone wants to be your friend online and you don't know who she is? You're just so popular Ravi.

Ravi: Well she knows me – she wrote something about Manchester but I really can't think who she is. I mean, it's not a really big problem but what do you think I should do Tess?

Tess: Well, you could just not reply.

Ravi: But I don't want to be rude to her.

Tess: Or you could ask her where you met.

Ravi: Hmm. That's a bit embarrassing.

Tess: Well, why don't you say, yes, you'll be her friend? You don't have to write to her, do you?

Ravi: That's true. I'll just say 'yes, let's be friends' and then maybe I'll remember who she is.

Tess: She's probably a friend of a friend or something. Do you often forget people's names, then, erm what's your name again?

Ravi: Very good, Tess. No I'm usually quite good with names. Like today I can tell you we've got Sameena on I'd Like to talk about, we've got Davis doing the quiz and we've got Carolina and Jamie later. And Tom the teacher of course.

Tess: Well done. Shall we get on with it, then?

Section 2: I'd like to talk about...

Ravi: OK then. As usual, listeners, we'll start

with I'd Like to Talk About. This is the part of our podcast when we ask someone to tell us about something that's important to them. It could be a person, a hobby – anything. And today we've got Sameena in the studio. And she's going to talk about meditation. Hi Sameena.

Sameena: Hi

Tess: Hi Sameena. Before you start, why don't you tell us a bit about yourself.

Sameena: Well, my name's Sameena – as you know. Um, I'm twenty, and I'm a student at the London School of Economics.

Ravi: Are you from London?

Sameena: No, Leeds. I go back there in the holidays.

Ravi: Great place, Leeds. OK. So why did you decide to talk about meditation Sameena?

Sameena: Well I started doing it about three years ago. I was very stressed with exams and I was working too hard. So a friend told me about meditation – he taught me how to do it actually, in the beginning – and it worked. It made me a lot calmer and less stressed out. So I got really interested in it and started reading about it, and, well, I just think everyone should try it!

Tess: And how do you do it? Give us an idea of what you do. I always think of old men with long, white beards when I think of meditation.

Sameena: Well, it's very simple really. I sit still, somewhere quiet. You can sit in any position, on the floor, or on a hard chair, but you need to keep your back straight and you must be comfortable. I sit on a chair, close my eyes, and then I relax and try to be conscious of *now*, of the present moment. And my mind becomes calm. That's it really.

Tess: And you stop thinking?

Sameena: No, no. A lot of people think that, but it isn't true. It's more about watching your thoughts, just sitting and being conscious of what's going through your mind. You let the thoughts come and go, but you don't *follow* them, you just watch them so your mind stays

calm and peaceful.

Tess: But how do you do that – keep your mind calm and peaceful?

Sameena: Well, I use a mantra – that helps me.

Tess: A mantra?

Sameena: Yes, it just means a phrase that you concentrate on – you repeat it over and over again to yourself. But you don't have to use a mantra - there are lots of different ways of doing it. You can concentrate on your breathing – count your breaths for example, or you can try to imagine the energy moving around in your body, you know, try to see it.

Ravi: It's getting very popular nowadays isn't it? Oprah Winfrey was talking about meditation on TV the other day.

Sameena: Yes, it's getting more popular in the west, that's true. But it started as a Hindu tradition more than five thousand years ago – it's really old. And some form of meditation is involved in nearly all religions.

Tess: So is it always a religious thing?

Sameena: No, it doesn't have to have any religious meaning. A lot of people meditate just because it's good for the mind and good for the body. It's a really healthy thing to do.

Tess: I can see why it can be good for the mind, but how does it help the body?

Sameena: Meditation can help your blood pressure, your heart, your breathing - all sorts of things. Scientists have done tests – it's all been proved. So, as I said at the beginning, I think everyone should try it!

Tess: Well thanks for that Sameena. That was really interesting.

Sameena: Not at all. I enjoyed talking about it. Bye.

Tess: Bye Sameena.

Ravi: Bye Sameena, and thanks again.

Tess: So, are you going to give it a try Ravi? Might help you deal with some of that stress?

Ravi: It's not a bad idea you know. My dad

meditates, well he used to anyway – I remember seeing him when I was a kid. I don't know if he still does though. I'll have to ask him. I might ask him to give me some lessons next time I see him! That'll be a big surprise for him.

Tess: Well yes. A calm, peaceful Ravi would be a big surprise for all of us.

Ravi: Ommmmm

Tess: OK. What about you listeners? Do any of you meditate? Or what would you like to tell us about? Write – or record – what you think and send it to us at learn English podcast at British Council dot org, that's learnenglishpodcast - all one word – at - britishcouncil – all one word DOT org, that's o-r-g. If we like it, we'll stick it on the website.

Ravi: We should put some stuff up about mediation, too. Will *you* do that?

Tess: Yeah, OK. Remind me to do that later.

Section 3 – Quiz

Tess: Right, then. What's next? The quiz.

Ravi: Yep. And today we've got Davis on the line. Hello, Davis.

Davis: Hi Ravi.

Tess: Hiya

Davis: Hi Tess.

Ravi: Tell us a bit about yourself Davis. Where are you calling from?

Davis: I'm in London.

Ravi: Are you from London?

Davis: Yes, that's right.

Tess: Like me. Which part of London?

Davis: Tottenham

Tess: Ah, OK. I'm from south London. Wimbledon.

Ravi: Do you support Tottenham then, Davis? Which football team do you support?

Davis: Nah, man, I support Arsenal.

Ravi: Oh dear. Well, I'll forgive you. What do you do Davis?

Davis: I work in a market. Selling kitchen things.

Ravi: No market today then?

Davis: No, not today.

Ravi: Right then. You know how to play Hot Seat, don't you?

Davis: Yeah.

Ravi: Tess has got the cards with the words on. She'll give them to me and I'll explain them to you and we'll see how many we can get in a minute, OK?

Davis: OK

Ravi: But I don't know what the topic is. Tess?

Tess: Right, I've got the cards here. I'll give them to Ravi and he has to explain the words *without* using the words on the card. Are you both ready?

Ravi: Ready

Davis: OK

Tess: OK then today's topic is Places in an airport. Different things and places in an airport. Here are the cards Ravi. You've got one minute starting fromNOW

Ravi: Agh! It's the long road that planes take off from. The really long straight road. They land on it as well.

Davis: Runway?

Ravi: Yes. Oh no. Erm. The place you go to *just* before you get on the plane ... erm ...

Davis: Departure lounge

Ravi: No. "Could passengers travelling to Paris on Flight three seven two please go to *hnn* twenty one"

Davis: Gate!

Ravi: Yes. The first place you go to when you get to the airport.

Davis: The shops?

Ravi: No. You go there to put your bags in and they check your passport and ticket...

Davis: Passport control?

Ravi: No, before that. Erm ... "Did you pack this bag yourself, sir?"

Davis: Check-in!

Ravi: Yes. Now what you said before. The place where you wait to get on the plane but before you go to the gate.

Davis: Departure lounge

Ravi: Yes. It's a place. Where you go to pick up your suitcase when you get off the plane.

Davis: Oh, the thing that goes round.

Ravi: Yeah, that, but what's the room called?

{buzzer sounds}

Davis: I don't know it.

Ravi: It was *baggage reclaim*. Oh dear, we haven't done very well there, have we? Sorry Davis. How many was that?

Tess: Runway ... gate ... check-in ... departure lounge. Four.

Ravi: Eek. Sorry Davis. That was tough, wasn't it?

Davis: You just can't think when the clock's ticking.

Ravi: I know. Listen, thanks for playing – we'll find some things to send you. Enjoy the rest of your day.

Davis: And you mate.

Tess: Bye Davis. And well done Ravi. Right. More to come. We'll hear what some of you think about space exploration and we'll catch up with Carolina after *this*.

Section 4: Your turn

Ravi: Right. Your Turn. This is the part of the podcast when we go out and ask different people what they think about something. Every podcast has a different question and this time it's about space exploration – sending rockets and people into space. So, the big question is Do you think that space exploration is a waste

of time and money?" Or is it a useful thing to do? Let's hear what people think.

Voice 1: Er ... yeah, it's a waste of time and money. There's nothing out there ... er ... and that moon landing in the 60s, that was done in a studio in Hollywood.

Voice 2: I think that space exploration is a waste of money when you think about ... um ... poor people, climate change and disease.

Voice 3: Ah ... sometimes I think it's a waste of money when, like, the big countries - America or Russia - they just compete for dominance of space, but when it's used for scientific research that can improve ... um ... the equality of life on Earth, then I think it's not money wasted.

Voice 4: No, I don't think space exploration is a w... um ... we'd need to know what's out there – we have to advance ... there is obviously the argument though that mon... that money could be spent on cleaning up our own environment, and our own world, um ... but as I say we need to look forward, maybe our world won't be here forever and we should be looking towards other places.

Voice 5: I don't think space exploration is a waste of time and money ... um ... possibly in the future we might need space exploration and the discoveries they've made more now than we ever realised ... new sources of energy or ... we don't know where mankind is going to be in the future. I think space exploration is very important.

Ravi: Do you know, when I was a kid, I wanted to be an astronaut. I'd love to explore space.

Tess: Did you? I wanted to be a train driver.

Ravi: Well, maybe when you're older.

Tess: Yes. Maybe. And we'd like to know what you, the listeners think too. Send us your opinions.

Section 5: Carolina

Tess: Time now to see what's happening with Carolina. You remember that Carolina is a student from Venezuela who's studying in Newcastle in the north of England.

Ravi: It's not just study though – we've heard about Carolina going shopping, cooking and enjoying university life with her new boyfriend, Jamie. Let's find out what she's doing this time...

Outside the house

Jamie: Well here we are then – My home. The family mansion.

Carolina: Oh, is this the house? I'm a bit nervous Jamie.

Jamie: Don't be silly.

{doorbell – door opens}

Mary: Hellooo! {hugs and kisses Jamie}

Jamie: This is Carolina, mum ...

Mary: Hello Carolina. It's lovely to meet you.

Carolina: Hello. Um... it's nice to meet you too.

Mary: Did you have a good journey?

Carolina: Oh yes, thank you. The train was a bit late, but it was fine. We got a bus from the station. It was easy.

Mary: Doug! They're here! Come on in before we die of cold. Doug! They're here!

{dog barking}

Jamie: Hello Ernie! Hello, who's a good boy then?

Doug: Hello, hello, hello. You're here then. All right Jamie?

Jamie: Dad.

Doug: And this must be Carolina.

Carolina: Yes, hello, pleased to oh,

Mary: Get down Ernie! Ernie! I hope you like dogs Carolina.

Carolina: Well, I, um I don't know really...

Mary: He won't hurt you. He just wants to give you a kiss. Get down Ernie! Doug, put him in the kitchen.

Doug: Righty ho. Come on Ernie.

Mary: Now let me take your bags upstairs.

Carolina: Oh no, no. I can take mine. It isn't heavy.

Jamie: I'll take them. Go on mum. You lead the way. Carolina's in the spare room I suppose?

...

Mary: And you're in this room Carolina.

Carolina: How nice. I love the colour. And what pretty curtains too.

Mary: I'm glad you like it. We don't use this room very often.

Carolina: I think it's lovely.

Mary: Now, I've put some towels out for you – here they are on the bed. And we turned the radiator on in here this morning so it should be nice and warm for you.

Carolina: Oh thank you. That's very kind of you. I'm sure I'll be very comfortable. Thank you very much for inviting me.

Mary: Not at all. It's lovely to have you here. Now you unpack your bag and I'll go down and put the kettle on for a nice cup of tea. The bathroom's next door if you want to wash your hands...

...

{knock at door}

Jamie: Can I come in?

Carolina: Yes

Jamie: OK?

Carolina: Oh yes, I'm OK. Your mother's really nice.

Jamie: Ready to go downstairs?

Carolina: Yes.

Jamie: Come on then. Mum's making a cup of tea. My family drinks tea all the time.

Carolina: OK. So ... let's go then.

...

Mary: Here you are Carolina. A nice cup of tea.

Carolina: Thank you Mrs Lawrence.

Mary: Oh no. Call me Mary. Mary and Doug. We're not formal in this house are we Jamie?

Jamie: Mum, Carolina drinks tea *without* milk.

Carolina: No, no, it's OK Jamie. I can drink it with milk.

Doug: No, let's get you another.

Carolina: Well OK, if it isn't too much trouble. Thank you.

Mary: Don't be silly. It's no trouble at all. I'll just go and get another cup.

Carolina: Aargh!

Doug: Get down Ernie! You let the dog in Mary! Ernie! Down! Leave her alone! He's just being friendly.

Jamie: I'll put him back in the kitchen.

Carolina: It's OK. I don't mind.

Jamie: Come on Ernie. Kitchen.

Doug: So Carolina. What do you think of this country of ours? A bit cold for you is it?

Carolina: I like it. It's very different from Venezuela, but I like it here. And the people are very friendly.

Doug: Well that's good.

Mary: Here you are Carolina.

Carolina: Thank you very much. ... You've got a lovely house.

Mary: Well thank you. It's nothing grand but we like it.

Carolina: How long have you lived here?

Mary: Since we got married, that'll be what, twenty-five years nearly is it Doug?

Doug: Aye. Twenty-five years in April.

Carolina: So Jamie was born here?

Mary: That's right. He's lived here all his life, haven't you love?

Jamie: Yep.

Mary: He's still got some of his old toys in his room, hasn't he Doug?

Carolina: Really?

Doug: Oh aye. Won't let us throw them out. All his old toy cars. And Mr Potter the panda's still there.

Mary: That's right. Mr Potter the panda. But Jamie couldn't say Mr Potter – he could only say Po Po – so it was Po Po panda. Do you remember Jamie?

Carolina: Mr Po Po panda?

Jamie: Oh god! Stop it all of you. Let's change the subject. How's work going dad? Been busy recently?

...

Ravi: Ah. What a nightmare. Poor Jamie. But, you know, it must be getting serious. Carolina met Jamie's parents.

Tess: Yes. Isn't it nice? Ahhhh.

Section 6: The Joke

Tess: Well, I think that's about all we've got time for on this podcast ..

Ravi: No, hang on a minute. I've got another joke for you.

Tess: I hoped you'd forget.

Ravi: I think you'll like this one, Tess.

Tess: OK. Let's hear it.

Ravi: OK. A man

Tess: A man? Oh? Not a dog? A duck? A frog?

Ravi: Definitely a man – I told you – not all of my jokes are animal jokes. Right. A man goes up to the ticket desk at the airport. The ticket clerk says 'Good morning, sir. Can I help you?' and the man says 'Good morning. I'd like a

ticket to Tokyo, please. And I'd like you to send my luggage to New York". Well, the ticket clerk looks surprised and says "You want us to put you on a plane to Tokyo and send your luggage on a plane to New York?". "Yes, that's right" says the man. "I'm very sorry sir but we can't do that – it's impossible." The man says "Well, I don't understand why it's so difficult. That's exactly what you did last time".

Tess: I lost my bag at an airport once you know.

Ravi: You'll have to save that story for another time Tess. That's all we've got time for today.

Remember, the address for anything that you want to send us is

learnenglishpodcast@britishcouncil.org. But don't go away, listeners. Tom the teacher will be here in a moment to talk about learning English and some of the language you heard on the podcast – {pause} – and we'll be back next time. Bye!

Tess: Bye!

Tom the teacher

Tom: Hi, I'm Tom. I'm here at the end of every podcast to talk about some of the language you heard in the programme, and to talk about ways to help you learn English. Today I want to talk about the word 'too'. Listen to Carolina meeting Jamie's mother, Mary. See how Carolina uses 'too'.

Mary: Hello Carolina. It's lovely to meet you.

Carolina: Hello. Um... it's nice to meet you too.

Tom: We can use 'too' to mean 'as well'. I'm sure you know this already. If someone says "I really like chocolate", you can say "Me too!" – you have the same opinion. This use of 'too' is easy. But some learners have problems with a different way to use 'too'. Listen to Tess talking about why she doesn't listen to podcasts. How

does she use 'too'?

Tess: No, not really. I'm too busy with my social networking site to have time for podcasts.

Honestly, sometimes I think I spend too much time on the computer.

Tom: She says "I'm *too busy* to have time for podcasts" and then she says "I think I spend *too much time* on the computer". 'Too' here means more than you want – more than is good. If you say that you spend *too much* time on the computer, you mean that you think it's a bad thing. You think that you should spend *less* time on the computer. Listen to another example. Sameena is talking about why she started doing meditation. Listen for 'too'.

Sameena: Well I started doing it about three years ago. I was very stressed with exams and I was working too hard. So a friend told me about meditation.

Tom: Yes, she says "I was working *too hard*". She means she was working hard, more than was good for her.

Tom: Now let's look at the difference between 'too' and 'very'. Some learners find this difficult. Listen to Carolina talking to Jamie's father about life in Britain. Listen to 'very'.

Doug: So Carolina. What do you think of this country of ours? A bit cold for you is it?

Carolina: I like it. It's very different from Venezuela, but I like it here.

Tom: She says Britain is *very* different from Venezuela – but she likes it. Now imagine she says "Britain is *too* different from Venezuela". 'Too' gives the idea that she doesn't like Britain – that she's unhappy, because it's 'too different'

– the difference isn't a good thing. And that isn't what she wanted to say. Let me give you another example. I can say "My house is very small". OK, my house is small, but maybe I like small houses! 'Very' can be good or bad. But if I say "My house is too small" then you know that I'm not happy with my house – that I'd like to have a bigger one. Listen to one more example. Jamie's mother is going to get Carolina another cup of tea. Listen to what Carolina says.

Carolina: Well OK, if it isn't too much trouble. Thank you.

Tom: We use 'If it isn't too much trouble' a lot – when we want to be polite. You can use it when someone offers to help you.

Now I want to talk about something to help you learn and remember vocabulary. Do you remember the quiz? All of the words were places in an airport. Listen.

Ravi: Erm. The place you go to just before you get on the plane ... erm ...

Davis: Departure lounge

Ravi: No. "Could passengers travelling to Paris on Flight three seven two please go to hnn twenty one"

Davis: Gate!

Ravi: Yes.

Tom: You can do this too. When you're in a place, maybe an airport, or a train station, or a cinema, or a supermarket – try to name everything that you see in English. Or imagine that you're in a place – and imagine what you can see around you. Make a note of the things that you don't know and then try to find out how to say them in English. Ask your teacher, or a friend, or find the word in a bilingual dictionary. A bilingual dictionary is useful when you want to know the names of things. You can use the internet for finding translations of words too. Or

you can buy very good *picture* dictionaries nowadays. See what you can find. And if you're in a place with a friend you can play a game together. At the airport you can say "I can see something beginning with 'R' – and your friend can say 'runway!'". Try it – it's good for your vocabulary.

Now for something different. This isn't really about language, but it's important if you go to Britain. It's about what we do when we meet people for the first time. What people do in Britain may be different from what you do in your country. Listen to Carolina when she meets Jamie's mother for the first time.

{doorbell – door opens}

Mary: Hellooo! {hugs and kisses Jamie}

Jamie: This is Carolina, mum ...

Mary: Hello Carolina. It's lovely to meet you.

Carolina: Hello. Um... it's nice to meet you too.

Tom: Mary kisses Jamie, but she doesn't kiss Carolina. In some countries, people kiss when they meet people for the first time. But we don't usually do this in Britain. When you meet someone it's polite to say "Hello" or "Nice to meet you". In more formal situations, you can shake hands too. But most British people don't kiss. *Some* British people kiss people that they know well – their friends and family – when they say "hello" or "goodbye". But not all British people. So it's probably better not to kiss until someone offers to kiss you!

And now for a phrase that *you* can use this week. Listen again to Tess talking about spending too much time on her computer. Listen to Ravi's answer.

Tess: Honestly, sometimes I think I spend too much time on the computer.

Ravi: I know what you mean. It's easy to spend hours and hours on the internet just looking at different things.

Tom: Ravi says “I know what you mean”. He sometimes does the same thing himself so he understands what she’s saying. He agrees with her. If someone says “I didn’t enjoy the English class today”, you can say “I know what you mean. It was a bit boring wasn’t it?” But of course, I hope you don’t think your English classes are boring! Anyway, try to use “I know what you mean” this week.

OK. I’m going to stop there. I’ll talk to you all again next time. Remember you can write to me about any language that *you* noticed in this podcast. The address is `learnenglishpodcastATbritishcouncilDOT org`. In a moment you’ll hear the address for the website where you can read everything you’ve heard in this podcast. You can also find some practice exercises to do online and a support pack that you can print. Right. That’s all for this time. Bye for now! See you next time.

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