



ESL Podcast 178 – A Fight

GLOSSARY

I can't believe it – it's not possible; I can't believe this has happened

* After all of that studying, I failed my math exam. I can't believe it!

to get caught up – to be kept somewhere longer than you had planned

* I wanted to leave work at 5:00, but someone called me at 4:55 and I got caught up talking on the phone for 40 minutes.

to be worked up – to be upset

* My girlfriend got really worked up when she found out I had crashed our car.

to have it up to here – to be at the end of your patience; to be fed up with something

* I've had it up to here with his rudeness.

excuses – things you say to get yourself out of trouble; an explanation about why something bad that has happened is not your fault

* She asked Brent why he had lost the money, but instead of an answer, all she got were excuses.

to have been over this – we have already talked about this; we have already had this disagreement before

* Maria's parents asked her when she was going to go back to college, but all she would say was, "We've been over this."

and plus – and also; furthermore

* This trip would be very expensive, and plus, neither of us can take that much vacation time.

what's the big deal – what's the problem; why is this so important

* What's the big deal? I only borrowed \$20 from him, so I can easily pay him back.

to be inconsiderate – to only think about yourself; to not worry about what another person might need when you make a decision

* Bill said that it was very inconsiderate of me to give away the sofa without asking him first.



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look – an expression meant to get someone’s attention, similar to saying “listen”
* Look, we’re both tired, so why don’t we go home and rest, and then finish this tomorrow.

to ruin – to destroy; to make something unpleasant or bad
* Mike wore his new coat in the rain and it was ruined.

to overreact – to get too upset by a situation that is not really important; to make something more important than it should be
* When Charlie forgot my birthday I didn’t talk to him for a week. I guess I overreacted a little.

to make it up to – to try and fix a mistake or situation by doing something nice
* I lost the book you lent me. Let me make it up to you by buying you a new one.

to nag – to continue to find fault with someone; to complain over and over again
* My wife is always nagging me to clean the garage.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Ginger upset with Fred?
 - a) He forgot that they had dinner plans.
 - b) She asked him to bring home some food and he didn't do so.
 - c) He stayed at work late again and didn't call to tell her.

2. Ginger and Fred decide:
 - a) to not speak with each other for the rest of the night.
 - b) to go to dinner and to try to feel better.
 - c) that Ginger needs to stop nagging.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to be worked up

In this podcast, the phrase “worked up” means to be upset, to be angry about something: “Why are you so worked up?” Another meaning “to be worked up” is to be nervous or excited about something. For example, if you plan to attend a big party and someone you want to date was going to be there, you would be nervous about going to the party. You would be “worked up” about the possibility of seeing that person at the party: “I tried not to get too worked up about seeing Gerard at the party.”

to ruin

“To ruin,” in this podcast, is a verb that means to destroy something or to make it unpleasant. Another use of “ruin,” as a noun, means something that is old and falling apart, usually a building. For example, a very old building or temple that has not been used for several hundred years might be called a ruin: “We went to Central America to see the Mayan ruins.” We may also use “ruin” to describe what remains after something bad happens: “The fire left the house in ruins.” Or, “Their relationship was in ruins after she found out about his lies.”



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CULTURE NOTE

When people are in relationships, it is natural that they might get into fights. In the U.S., there are a lot of places where couples can go to find help if their relationship is not going well. “Marriage counselors” are people who have been trained to help married couples work out problems. They meet with couples to try and find out what is causing problems in their relationship, and to try and solve those problems through talking together. Churches are another place where couples can get help. Some couples may talk to their “priest” or “pastor” – the person who leads the church – to ask for advice and help.

Even with this help, there is a high divorce rate in the U.S. today. “Divorce” is when a husband and wife decide to stop being married. Some say that that fifty percent of new marriages in the United States end in divorce. Research shows that more than half of the divorces in America are “filed for,” or asked for, by women.

While divorce might end a relationship that has problems, it causes problems, too. A couple that can’t agree may go to “divorce court” to settle arguments about how to divide their money and which parent gets the children. In divorce court, the judge makes the decision and each side must do what the judge tells them to do.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – c; 2 – b



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast Number 178, "A Fight."

This is English as a Second Language Podcast Number 178. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California. Remember to get the Learning Guide for this podcast on our website at eslpod.com. This is an eight to ten page guide to this podcast; includes the complete transcript, as well as definitions, cultural notes, and other explanations that we don't talk about here on the podcast.

Today's podcast is called, "A Fight." Let's go.

[start of story]

Ginger: I can't believe it. You're late again!

Fred: I got caught up at work. What are you so worked up about?

Ginger: I've had it up to here with your excuses. If you knew you were going to be late, why didn't you call? We've been over this a hundred times.

Fred: There wasn't time to call. And plus, what's the big deal? I'm just a little late.

Ginger: A little late? You are an hour late. You are so inconsiderate sometimes...[sigh]...You look tired.

Fred: Yeah, I am. Look, I'm late and I was inconsiderate. Let's not let it ruin our evening.

Ginger: Okay, I'm sorry. Maybe I overreacted. I know you've been really busy at work.

Fred: I'm the one who's sorry. I should have called. Will you let me make it up to you?

Ginger: You don't have to. I shouldn't nag.



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Fred: You weren't nagging. Let's go get something to eat. We'll both feel better with some food in our stomachs.

Ginger: Yeah, you're right. Let's go.
[end of story]

We just listened to a fight between a husband and a wife. It was probably the shortest fight in the history of marriage, but not everything is real here on ESL podcast. The vocabulary and the expressions, however, are very real, very similar to what you might hear a husband and a wife say.

The story begins with Ginger saying, "I can't believe it. You're late again!" "I can't believe it" is something you say when you're very angry at something, when someone has disappointed you, has done something wrong. "I can't believe it." You're angry, you're mad at this person. And, Ginger is mad at Fred. Fred says, "I got caught up at work." To get "caught up" means that you got very busy, you got so busy that you didn't realize how late it was getting. Or, you had so much work that you had to stay longer than you expected. So, Fred says, "I got caught up at work." There's also an expression "to get caught up IN something." "I got caught up in an argument with my boss and his supervisor" - means that you became a part of something, you got involved in something that you didn't necessarily want to be involved in. That's to "get caught up in." You can also get caught up in a novel, which means you really like the novel; you really are interested in it. "I got caught up in it and I read it throughout the night so I could finish it before morning." Those are different uses of "caught up" and "caught up in."

Well, he says, "I got caught up at work. What are you so worked up about?" To be "worked up" is another one of those two word verbs in English and it means to be angry, to be upset. When you get "worked up," you're getting angry, you're shouting, maybe your face is turning red. These are signs of someone who is getting worked up. Fred says to Ginger, "What are you so worked up about?" Why are you angry? And, Ginger says, "I've had it up to here with your excuses." "I've had it up to here" means I'm tired, I don't want to tolerate, I don't want to put up with the situation anymore. I'm mad, I'm angry, and this is the last time I want this to happen. So, you may, for example, be talking to one of your fellow employees at work and you say, "I've had it up to here with that boss of ours. He's always yelling at us. I don't want to put up with or tolerate it anymore."



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Ginger says, "I've had it up to here with your excuses." And an "excuse" is a reason that you give someone that you did something wrong. Often it's a reason that is supposed to convince the person that it wasn't really your fault or you had some reason, a good reason for doing what you did wrong. That's an excuse. Ginger says, "If you knew you were going to be home late, why didn't you call?" So, if you knew that you were busy, you should have called - that's the idea here. Why didn't you call? "We've been over this a hundred times." To "go over" something means to talk about it, to discuss it, to review it. In this case, Ginger says, "We've been over this a hundred times" - means this has happened before, again and again, and they've talked about it many times.

Fred says, "There wasn't time to call." "There wasn't time to call." Doesn't sound very convincing, does it? But, okay, that's Fred. "There wasn't time to call. And plus, what's the big deal?" Couple of expressions there. "And plus" means "in addition," when you want to say something else to someone. We use that a lot in a fight, in an argument with someone and you want to give them another reason why they are wrong, Or, you want to give them another reason why you are right. "And plus..." You can also use it in another, less argumentative, we might say, a less, a situation where you weren't arguing with someone. But here, it's used to try to answer the other person.

So, Fred says, "And plus, what's the big deal?" "What's the big deal?" – means, what is the problem, why is this such a problem? The expression a "big deal" is when...can be used a couple of different ways. For example, someone who makes big deal of something else is someone who thinks it's very important and considers it very important. The expression "to make a big deal of" is usually a negative one. Someone says, "Don't make a big deal about it." Don't get so excited about it. Don't think it's so important." "A big deal" can also mean a large event. "I went to the Fourth of July parade and it was a big deal. They had a marching band and they had concerts and they had fireworks." This is a big deal; it's a big event. Here, it means, "What's the problem? Why is it such a big problem?"

Ginger...Fred says, "I was just a little late." And, this really gets Ginger mad. She says, "A little late? You're an hour late. You are so inconsiderate sometimes." To be "inconsiderate," to be inconsiderate means that you don't think of other people, that you only think about yourself. We might say, "you're selfish." To be "selfish" means you only think about you. To be "inconsiderate" is to be "selfish." The opposite would be to be "considerate." To be "considerate" means you think



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about other people and other people's feelings. That's the same as to be "unselfish," to be considerate.

Well, here Ginger says that Fred is inconsiderate. And, Fred says that he is tired because Ginger says he looks tired. He says "Yeah, I am." "Look, I'm late, and I was inconsiderate." The expression there, "Look," you may know, is one that we use in English to get someone's attention, to get them to listen to you carefully. And here, what Fred is doing is what any good husband would do when they're in an argument with their wife, which is to realize that they are wrong and that they should apologize to their wife. And, if you do not understand this, you are missing one of the important parts of a good marriage. The husband is always wrong. So, Fred says, "Look, I'm late and I was inconsiderate. Let's not let it ruin our evening." The verb "to ruin" means to take something good and make it bad. We have a similar verb in English - "to spoil." "Let's not spoil our evening." Let's not ruin our evening. Let's not make it a bad thing, turn it into something bad. Something that is good that becomes bad is "ruined." We also use that word as a noun in the plural. We say "these are ruins." Ruins is when you have, for example, in Greece, you find an old temple from classical Greece, from 450 BC. But, it isn't of course in the same condition. It's...most of the things are missing, and lots of things are broken. Well, you go in and you look at those things and you call that area, "the ruins." So, ruins are when something has been damaged, something has been hurt. What remains of it later is called "the ruins." Well here ruin is used as the verb, to mean to spoil, to make worse.

Ginger says, "Okay, I'm sorry. Maybe I overreacted." To "overreact" as a verb, all one word...to overreact means that you replied or responded to someone in a way that was too angry, you got more angry or more upset than the situation called for, or that was appropriate for the situation. So, for example, your son may come in and say, "Dad, I broke my watch." And you say, "You broke your watch? I'm never going to buy you another watch again!" Well, that would be overreacting. It was a small thing and you make it into a big thing. You make a big deal about it, a big deal of it. So, that's to "overreact."

And, Ginger surprisingly says, "I overreacted. I know you've been really busy." Fred says, again as a good husband, "I'm the one who's sorry. I should have called." "I should have," meaning it was my obligation, it's something I was supposed to do. I should have called. "Will you let me make it up to you?" "To make something up" to someone means that you try to do something good for that person after you did something bad. So, you may say to your son who broke



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his watch you son begins to cry, because you yelled at him and you say "I'm sorry, let's...let's go get some ice cream." So, you're trying to "make it up" to them. You're trying to do something better for him because you did something wrong.

Ginger says, "You don't have to...You don't have to make it up to me. I shouldn't nag." "To nag," as a verb, means couple of things. It's a word that is often used for wives or girlfriends who keep bothering their husband or their boyfriend about something. They keep telling them, and they keep telling them, and they keep telling them, and finally the man may say, "Stop nagging me," stop bothering me." It definitely has a negative meaning. A man, of course, can also nag somebody else. You may even use this expression in other circumstances, but it's usually used in a relationship, and often of women, which is probably not fair, but that is how it is often used.

Fred says, "You weren't nagging." "You weren't nagging. Let's go get something to eat," he says. "We'll both feel better with some food in our stomachs." "To have food in your stomach," of course, means "to eat." So, he's saying, "Let's go eat. We'll feel better when we have some food in our stomachs." Your stomach is where your food is after you eat it, at least right away. It later goes other places. Ginger says, "Yeah, you're right. Let's go."

Now, let's listen to this wonderful fight at a native rate of speech.

[start of story]

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Ginger: Yeah, you're right. Let's go.
[end of story]

The podcast today was written by Dr. Lucy Tse. Good work, Lucy!

That's all we have time for today. As usual, if you have questions or suggestions you can email us at esl@eslpod.com. Be sure to go to our website and take a look at what else we have to offer here at ESL Podcast. From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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