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This is an All-Ears English Podcast episode 8. How to Get Over Your Fear of Talking with Native English Speakers. Welcome to the All-Ears English Podcast. Downloaded more than 200 million times. Are you feeling stuck with your English? We'll show you how to become fearless and fluent by focusing on connection, not perfection. With your American hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the English adventurer, and Michelle Kaplan, the New York Radio Girl. Coming to you from Colorado and New York City, USA. What is the risk of not taking risks when it comes to speaking English? What connections or relationships or opportunities are you missing out on? Find out how to get over your fear of speaking English with natives today. Hey Michelle, how's everything going today? How you feeling? Hey, Lindsay, I'm good.

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I'm good. How are you? What's going on? Not much, not much. I'm excited to talk to our listeners today about this idea of how we can get over our fear of talking with native English speakers. But you'll have you seen that students, listeners, professional, international professionals or listeners are nervous when it comes to talking with native speakers? Oh, for sure. I mean, while I think about, you know, when I've tried another language to talk to people, it's scary. It's intimidating. It really is. So I can understand the feeling. But guys, we are here to help.

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If you are afraid of talking with native English speakers, you know, we want to show you how you can get over that fear in this episode. And I think, you know, at the baseline, it really comes down to connection, not perfection. We want you guys to take that idea on as your new way of learning English and thinking about English. If you change the way you think about English, you will actually be able to start opening up those conversations. Okay. But I want to talk a little bit about risk, Michelle, because sometimes by not taking a risk, we're actually taking a bigger risk. Do you agree with that? Yeah. I do agree with that. If you're taking a risk like, you know, especially with speaking to someone, I mean, I think it's a greater risk to not say anything at all.

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And then you're not practicing at all. Yeah, because what happens if we don't set? Let's imagine it's at work, guys. You're at work. You're in a multilingual office environment. What happens if you don't start that conversation in the break room with a native English coworker? Right? What will happen, Michelle? If you don't start the conversation, you have a chance to form that connection. And especially, it's very important to form those connections. That's how people move up in the business world. Exactly. Through those connections. So you're kind of missing that opportunity. You're missing a very big opportunity.

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And also, you want to think about, you know, being perceived, how you're being perceived. Like, you want to be seen as someone who will take a risk, who can connect things like that. So, yeah, maybe if you say something and it's maybe you make one grammar mistake. Okay. Like, that's fine. That happens, but it's less of an issue than to not speak at all, I think. Exactly, Michelle. And maybe we can do another episode on this another day. But in a way, it's your responsibility, guys, to show your coworkers. Yes. Okay. You are learning English, but your English is good enough. And despite any grammar mistakes, you can still do the job just as well as anyone else. That's your responsibility to go after that and do that and you totally can.

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Right? And we want to empower you to do that. So let's give our listeners a quote, Michelle, about risk today to start off. Okay. The quote is, life is inherently risky. There is only one risk you should avoid at all costs. And that is the risk of doing nothing. Oh, I like it. Because that leads to, in a way, that leads to kind of an insignificant life, missing opportunities, sitting back, watching other people get promoted, get relationships, and then you watch your life go by. It sounds dire. It sounds dire. But let's talk to our listeners about how they can take these risks of starting these conversations and then watch yourself getting that confidence will lead to more confidence.

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Michelle? Yeah. Well, I mean, there's just like a lot of good concrete tips we can give you that are small ways to reach outside your comfort zone. I mean, number one, it would just be asked for directions, right? Yeah. And that's an opportunity, right there. This is an opportunity. And you know what I think about New Yorkers? They're busy. But if you're a New York City and you need help, you're lost. You can pretty much stop any New Yorker. You can ask them for help. And they will help you with directions. What do you think about that, Michelle?

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You live in New York. So you can be our New York person. Yeah. I think people are pretty helpful. Yeah. So another thing you can do is you can ask someone to repeat themselves. And that's fine. There's nothing wrong with saying, oh, sorry, I didn't hear you or could you say that again? And this is a way, I mean, also at the same time, you're continuing to speak more with a person. And you might even find a connection starts, you know, then you hear what they say. Exactly. And these are ideas where, well, here's another one that I like to extend the conversation is to ask for a restaurant recommendation.

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Let's say you're visiting L.A. and you have a quick exchange with someone in a cafe. How could you extend that conversation to get more practice? You could ask for a restaurant recommendation. Oh, yeah. That's fun because people like talking about their favorite things, their favorite restaurants, things like that. So that's fun. Yeah. For sure. And another common one, of course, is joining me up. But we tell you that all the time, guys, join me up.com, find a group, do it. Definitely do it. What's another thing we could do? Well, find some way to draw attention to yourself so that people start conversations with you.

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So maybe you have something fun you want to wear, a fun outfit or cool hat or, I don't know, it could be something like that or, I don't know, what else? Yeah, there are t-shirts. I mean, if you look up like funny, t-conversation starter t-shirts, like ask me what I had for breakfast, right, right on the front of your t-shirt. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, why not? It's kind of a crazy idea, but this tactic is fun and people are going to laugh and they're going to think you're kind of a funny person way from the start. And they're going to say, would you have for breakfast? All of a sudden, you are communicating. You are practicing, guys. Exactly. And that kind of brings us to the next one, which is create an alter ego. So there's alter ego.

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It's like, it's not who you, it's not you, but it's like, it's kind of a character you're playing. So you can think of yourself as like an actor on stage and make your English speaker persona. So it can be a social and outgoing person. Maybe you don't feel it. Maybe you yourself don't feel it, but you kind of make your character. And this person is that way. And that can be a way to like get out of your head into someone else and that can be a way to connect with people more. Yeah, this is huge. I think we're going to touch on this in another episode in the future. We're going to come back to this concept of the alter ego. I actually think it's so powerful. And it's actually similar to something you said in a previous episode, Michelle, that you like to just act.

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I can go and pretend like you're on stage in job. Yeah. Yeah. So guys, we'll talk about that a little bit more. But basically, we want you guys to reflect today as we finish up on risk. What is it? Ask yourself the question, what are you missing by not taking a risk? And really think about the risk of missing that thing, right? The relationships, the promotions, the experiences, what is the risk of losing that? Okay, that's the question. Very good. A deep thought for today, Lindsay. And guys, remember to hit follow or subscribe wherever you're listening to the all-year English podcast. We are here four days a week.

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And we believe in connection, that perfection. And we can't wait to have you listen more. Yep. You got it, Michelle. I'll see you in the next episode. Bye. Bye. Thanks for listening to all ears English. Would you like to know your English level, take our two-minute quiz, go to all earsEnglish.com forward slash fluency score. And if you believe in connection, not perfection, then hit subscribe now to make sure you don't miss anything. See you next time.