



ESL Podcast 462 – Having Doubts About Getting Married

GLOSSARY

wedding party – the group of people who are officially part of a wedding ceremony and stand next to the people who are getting married during the ceremony

* All the women in the wedding party wore long purple dresses.

cold feet – fear that makes one think about not to do something that one was planning to do

* He was going to quit his job and start his own business, but then he got cold feet and decided to keep his job.

doubt – uncertainty; not knowing whether something is true or whether one should do something

* The project manager has doubts about whether his team will be able to finish the project on time.

to freak out – to act in an unusual way because one is very worried, anxious, afraid, or upset

* Rafael freaked out when he learned that his rent was going to increase by 50%.

rash – decided or done very quickly, without thinking about something ahead of time, so that one usually feels bad about the decision or action later

* She made a rash decision to cut her hair really short and now she hates the way she looks.

irresistible – something that one cannot say 'no' to; something that one must do or have because it is very desirable

* Takahiro wants to lose weight, but ice cream is irresistible to him.

impulse – a desire to do something, especially if the desire comes very quickly and isn't something that one has thought about very much

* Have you ever bought something on impulse, even though it cost more money than you should have spent?

soul-searching – a period of time spent thinking about what one really wants or what one really feels, trying to understand oneself better

* After a lot of soul-searching, Greg decided to stop studying to become a lawyer and start a band instead.



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to leave (someone) at the altar – to decide very quickly not to get married so that the other person and all the guests are waiting for one to come to the wedding ceremony until they realize that one is not going to come

* Ingrid was extremely embarrassed and angry when Ralf left her at the altar, and she never spoke to him again.

life-altering – an event that changes the rest of one's life in an important way

* The birth of his child was a life-altering event that made him stop smoking and work harder.

to get over (something) – to recover; to be able to live one's life normally again after one has gone through a very bad or painful experience

* Keenan still hasn't been able to get over his divorce, even though it happened more than three years ago.

to go through with (something) – to do something that one has said one will do, even if one doesn't want to; to keep a promise

* Are you going to go through with your decision to sell the car or have you changed your mind?

to regret – to feel bad about something that one has done in the past and wish that one had not done it

* He has always regretted not asking his college girlfriend to marry him.

to stay put – to not move; to stay where one is

* If you get lost in the forest, just stay put until the rescuers can find you.

to set (someone) straight – to correct someone; to make sure that someone understands something correctly; to help someone know and accept the truth

* Derrick thought that his girlfriend Francine was faithful to him, but his best friend, Curt, set him straight.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why doesn't Chris want to get married?
 - a) He's scared and nervous.
 - b) He doesn't love Kerry.
 - c) His feet are too cold in the church.

 2. What does Charlotte want Chris to do?
 - a) To tell Kerry that he doesn't want to marry her.
 - b) To think carefully before making a decision.
 - c) To search for his soul at the altar.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

rash

The word “rash,” in this podcast, is used to talk about something that is decided or done very quickly, without thinking about it ahead of time, so that one usually feels bad about the decision or action later: “The director never makes rash decisions, which is good, but that’s why his work gets done so slowly.” The word “rash” also means a group of red spots that appear on one’s skin and are usually itchy, often because one’s skin touched a plant or chemical: “When the rash spread from her hand to her entire arm, she decided to see a doctor about it.” Or, “Do you sell any lotions that are good for an itchy rash?” “Diaper rash” refers to red and uncomfortable skin on a baby’s bottom, usually because the baby has been in a dirty or wet diaper for too long: “Which cream do you use for your baby’s diaper rash?”

to go through with (something)

In this podcast, the phrase “to go through with (something)” means to keep a promise and do what one has said one will do: “Lynn went through with the surgery even though her doctor told her that she may not survive.” The phrase “to go together” means for two things to match each other or to complement each other in color, style, taste, etc.: “Do you think this shirt and tie go together?” The phrase “to go all out” means to try very hard to do something: “We’re going all out on this project, so we’re sure the client will like our work.” Finally, the phrase “to go after (something)” means to try to get something, especially if it is difficult to get: “Let’s go after more clients so that we can expand the company.”



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CULTURE NOTE

When people get married, they usually promise to love each other “until death do us part” (a traditional phrase included in most marriage ceremonies), but sometimes marriages fail. Usually this “leads to” (comes before) a “divorce,” or the legal end of a marriage. But sometimes people can get an “annulment” instead.

A “divorce” ends a marriage. In contrast, an annulment “voids” a marriage, saying that a “valid” (real; true) marriage never existed “in the first place” (to start with). To get an annulment, the people who have been married must show that one or more of the situations below “applies” (is relevant) to their situation:

- The husband or wife was already married to someone else when the marriage began.
- The husband or wife was not old enough to be legally married.
- The husband and wife are closely related to each other.
- The husband or wife “lacked” (didn’t have) the “mental capacity” (intelligence and emotional abilities) to be married, maybe because one had a mental illness or was “drunk” (acting strangely because one drank too much alcohol).
- The marriage was “fraudulent” (based on a lie), such as if the husband or wife didn’t let the other person know that he or she was a criminal or was very ill.
- The husband or wife was married “under duress” (was forced to be married).
- The husband or wife wasn’t able to “consummate the marriage” (have sex to make a marriage official).

People who want to end their marriage work closely with a lawyer to “determine” (find out and identify) whether they are “eligible for” (meet the requirements of) a divorce or an annulment.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 462: Having Doubts About Getting Married.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 462. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. Go there to download a Learning Guide for this episode, an 8- to 10-page PDF guide that gives you a complete transcript of this episode, as well as additional help in vocabulary, cultural notes, comprehension questions, and a lot more.

This episode is called "Having Doubts About Getting Married." It's a dialogue between Charlotte and Chris, which uses a lot of vocabulary that you might use in talking about someone getting married and someone who isn't sure they should get married. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Charlotte: What are you doing in here? The entire wedding party is looking for you.

Chris: Yeah, I know.

Charlotte: Well, what's the matter? You're not getting cold feet, are you?

Chris: That's just it. I'm really having doubts about getting married. What am I doing here? I think I'm about to make the biggest mistake of my life!

Charlotte: Whoa, slow down. You're just a little freaked out right now. That's understandable. Just don't do anything rash.

Chris: I have an irresistible impulse to run. I've got to get out of here!

Charlotte: You'd better do some serious soul-searching before you decide to leave Kerry at the altar. It would be a life-altering experience for her and for you. She may never get over it.

Chris: You're right, but what can I do? If I go through with this, I may regret it for the rest of my life.



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Charlotte: Sit down and stay put. I'm going to get someone who'll set you straight.

Chris: Who?

Charlotte: Kerry!

[end of dialogue]

Charlotte begins our conversation by saying, "What are you doing here?" "What are you doing here?" means why are you here. Charlotte says, "The entire wedding party is looking for you." A "wedding party" is not the celebration where you eat and drink; for a wedding, that is called a "reception." The wedding party is actually the group of people who are an official part of a wedding. In a typical American wedding you have the man getting married (called the "groom"), the woman getting married (called the "bride"), and they may have friends of theirs who are part of this wedding party. Usually one friend is called the "best man," could be a brother or a relative as well, and for a woman, it's a "maid (or matron) of honor." That's usually the minimum you have for a wedding party, at least at a formal wedding.

Chris says, "Yeah, I know," meaning I know people are looking for me. Charlotte says, "Well, what's the matter?" meaning what's wrong. Charlotte says, "You're not getting cold feet, are you?" The expression "to get cold feet" means that you are afraid that you are making a mistake. This is something that is possible before you get married; it's also possible for other large commitments. Usually, however, it refers to getting married: "He got cold feet," meaning he decided that he did not want to marry her, or he had doubts about marrying her and changed his mind.

Chris says, "That's just it. I'm really having doubts about getting married." "Doubt" meaning uncertainty, not knowing what to do. Chris says, "What am I doing here? I think I'm about to make the biggest mistake of my life!" Chris may be right! Charlotte says, "Whoa, slow down." That expression, "whoa," is one that you could use for a horse that was moving too fast, but we use it informally when we want someone to not talk so fast, to slow down. Charlotte says, "You're just a little freaked out right now." To "freak (freak) out" means to act in an unusual way because you are very worried, anxious, possibly upset. Someone who freaks out is someone who starts to act in a very strange way: maybe yelling, maybe doing something that they would not normally do. It's an informal expression for the most part. It can often be used to replace the word "panic"



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(panic), which means the same thing: to be scared of something. Charlotte says, “That’s understandable (it’s understandable that you are freaking out).” She advises Chris to not do anything rash (rash). To do something “rash” means to do something very quickly without thinking about it. Usually it is something that you later decide is a bad decision, something that you should not have done – you made your decision too quickly. A teenage girl goes to get your hair cut, and she decides right before they begin that she wants to have very short hair. She didn’t think about it a lot, it was a rash decision, and when she got home she decided it was a bad idea. I don’t have this problem with hair cuts anymore myself, personally! There are other meanings of this word “rash.” Take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Chris says, “I have an irresistible impulse to run.” Something that is “irresistible” is something that is not resistible; the “ir” at the beginning of the word means not. So, “irresistible” mean you cannot say no to something; it’s something that you have to do because it is very desirable. An “impulse” is a desire to do something, especially if it comes very quickly, without a lot of thinking. You could have, for example, a rash impulse – a decision you make very quickly. An “irresistible impulse” means it’s something that you can’t say no to, you must do it.

Well, Chris has an irresistible impulse to run, meaning to leave this situation, in this case his wedding. He says, “I’ve got to get out of here!” – I have to leave. Charlotte says, “You’d better do some serious soul-searching before you decide to leave Kerry at the altar.” “Soul-searching” is a period of time when you think about what you really want, what your life is about, what the meaning of your life is; that would be soul-searching. To “leave (someone) at the altar” means to decide very quickly at the wedding that you are not going to get married. This happens usually in movies, not so much in real life. People decide they don’t want to get married, and they just leave the church or leave the place where the marriage is taking place and they don’t get married. Then, of course, they find the true love of their life and they marry that person, and they live a wonderfully happy life. Well, not always!

Charlotte says that Chris needs to do some soul-searching before he decides to leave Kerry (his bride – his soon to be wife) at the altar. Charlotte says, “It would be a life-altering experience for her and for you.” To “alter” (alter) means to change something. So, a “life-altering” decision would be an event that changes your life forever. “She may never get over it,” Charlotte says, meaning Kerry will never recover – will never be able to live her life normally again because of this very bad and painful experience.



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Chris says, “You’re right, but what can I do? If I go through with this, I may regret it for the rest of my life.” To “go through with (something)” means to do something that you said you would do even if you don’t want to. To “keep a promise” is another way of saying that. “Go through” has a couple of different meanings in English, however, so take a look at the Learning Guide for a complete explanation of that expression.

Chris is saying if I go through with this – if I decide to get married, I may regret it for the rest of my life. To “regret (regret)” something means to feel bad about something that you have done in the past, something you wish you had not done. Charlotte says, “Sit down and stay put,” meaning don’t move; to “stay put” means not to move. “I’m going to get someone who’ll set you straight.” To “set (someone) straight” is a phrasal verb meaning to correct someone, to make sure that someone understands the situation correctly, to help someone know what the truth of the situation is. Chris asks, “Who?” – who is this person, and Charlotte says, “Kerry!” – your bride, your “fiancée,” the person that you said you would marry.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

Charlotte: What are you doing in here? The entire wedding party is looking for you.

Chris: Yeah, I know.

Charlotte: Well, what’s the matter? You’re not getting cold feet, are you?

Chris: That’s just it. I’m really having doubts about getting married. What am I doing here? I think I’m about to make the biggest mistake of my life!

Charlotte: Whoa, slow down. You’re just a little freaked out right now. That’s understandable. Just don’t do anything rash.

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Charlotte: Sit down and stay put. I'm going to get someone who'll set you straight.

Chris: Who?

Charlotte: Kerry!

[end of dialogue]

This life-altering script was written by our very own Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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