



ESL Podcast 474 - Having Trouble Sleeping

GLOSSARY

newlyweds – people who married each other recently, usually within the past year

* Do you think newlyweds fight more or less often than people who have been married for many years?

to go with the territory – to be expected in a particular situation; to be part of something else

* They're worried about losing their jobs, but I guess that goes with the territory in a slow economy.

to snore – to unintentionally make a loud, repetitive sound with each breath through one's nose and mouth while one is asleep

* He snored so loudly that it woke up the dog!

bummer – an informal term meaning a disappointment; a misfortune; something that one feels bad about

* What a bummer that you weren't accepted at that university. I know you really wanted to study there.

to awaken – to wake up; to wake someone up

* The noise of the passing trains awakens them almost every hour.

to fall asleep – to begin to sleep

* If Ian drinks coffee in the afternoon, he has a hard time falling asleep at night.

to toss and turn – to move one's body many times while lying in bed, trying to get comfortable, but not being able to fall asleep

* Philippe tossed and turned all night, worried about the big presentation he'd have to make the next day.

to talk in (one's) sleep – to speak while one is sleeping, without remembering it when one wakes up

* Don't you remember our conversation last night? I guess you must have been talking in your sleep.

to make a beeline for (something) – to go straight to something without any hesitation; to do something or go somewhere right away, before one does anything else

* Craig was really hungry, so he made a beeline for the kitchen when he got home from work.



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sleeping pill – a medicine that makes one very tired and makes it easy to fall asleep

* The doctor said that I should take sleeping pills if I have trouble falling asleep, but that I shouldn't take them more than once a week.

groggy – not able to think or move normally, usually because one is very tired or sick

* If you call me in the middle of the night, I'll probably be pretty groggy.

disoriented – not knowing where one is or what is happening; confused

* The man was very disoriented when he woke up in the hospital, because the last thing he remembered was trying to fix the roof on his house.

insomnia – an inability to sleep most or all nights

* Heather is always tired because she has insomnia.

to load up on (something) – to have, use, eat, or buy a lot of something

* Runners often load up on pasta before an important race.

to wake (someone) up – to make a noise or touch a person so that he or she stops sleeping

* Betty doesn't need to use an alarm clock because the roosters always wake her up.

to sleepwalk – to get out of bed and walk around while one is sleeping, without remembering it when one wakes up

* Royce said I was walking around in the living room last night, but I don't remember it, so I must have been sleepwalking.

to rule (something) out – to decide against something; to decide that something is not an option; to decide that one will not consider something

* We were trying to think of ways to save money, and Jeannie suggested canceling our gym membership. I don't like that idea, but we can't rule it out.

to keep (something) in mind – to consider something; to not forget about something

* As you plan your vacation, keep in mind that plane tickets are cheaper if you buy them a few months in advance.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why doesn't Stevie want to take sleeping pills?
 - a) Because she thinks they're dangerous.
 - b) Because they make her feel strange.
 - c) Because they cause insomnia.
2. Which of these things might one do while one is awake?
 - a) Toss and turn.
 - b) Talk in one's sleep.
 - c) Sleepwalk.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to load up on

The phrase "to load up on (something)," in this podcast, means to have, use, eat, or buy a lot of something: "They loaded up on toilet paper because it was on sale at the store." The phrase "to load (someone) up with (something)" means to give someone a lot of things to carry: "Hold out your arms, and I'll load you up with boxes and bags to take into the apartment." The phrase "loaded down" means having many problems or too much work: "He's feeling really loaded down at work these days. Can we hire someone else to help him?" Finally, the phrase "a load off (one's) mind" is used to talk about how someone feels relieved not to have to worry about or do something anymore: "It was a load off her mind when her son finally found a good-paying job."

to rule out

In this podcast, the phrase "to rule out" means to decide against something or to decide that one will not consider something: "Why did you rule out Acme Corporation as a potential employer?" The informal phrase "(someone or something) rules" means that someone or something is very good and one likes him, her, or it very much: "Girls rule!" Or, "That movie rules! It's the best movie I've seen all year." The phrase "to rule the roost" means to be the most important, influential, or powerful person in a group: "The vice president really rules the roost during our meetings." Finally, the phrase "to rule (someone or something) with an iron hand" means to control someone or something very tightly and strictly: "He rules his children with an iron hand, but someday they're going to rebel against him."



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CULTURE NOTE

Many Americans suffer from “sleeplessness,” or an inability to fall asleep, even when they are very tired. Some people “swear by” (say that something works very well) traditional “remedies” (cures; thing that one can do to solve a medical problem), although other people don’t think they work.

Often drinking a glass of warm milk before falling asleep can be helpful. Other people recommend “counting sheep,” or lying in bed and closing one’s eyes, imagining that one sees sheep jumping over a “gate” (a small door that opens in a fence) and counting them one at a time. If the sleeplessness is caused by loud noises, people might try wearing “earplugs” (small pieces of plastic that are put in one’s ears to block noises).

Many people say that the best way to cure sleeplessness is to change one’s “bedtime routine” (the things that one does before falling asleep each night). For example, eating right before bed can make it difficult to fall asleep, so some people recommend not eating after 6:00. They also recommend listening to quiet music and not reading the news or thinking about work before bedtime.

Other people focus on the bedroom itself. They might recommend getting softer “sheets” (thin pieces of fabric that one sleeps above and below while lying on a bed) or a warmer “comforter” (a heavy blanket, sometimes filled with feathers). Heavier “curtains” (fabric that hangs over the window) that make the room darker can also make it easier to fall asleep. Finally, it can help to make sure that the bed is used only for sleeping – not for reading or watching TV. That way, when one lies in bed, one’s brain knows that it is time to sleep.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 474: Having Trouble Sleeping.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast number 474. 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 that will help you improve your English even faster with vocabulary words, definitions, sample sentences, additional definitions, cultural notes, comprehension questions, and a complete transcript of this episode.

We're going to listen to a dialogue between Luis and Stevie; Stevie is a girl – a woman, here. Stevie is going to be talking to Luis about how she is having trouble sleeping at night, using a lot of vocabulary we might use to talk about that situation. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Luis: So, how are the newlyweds doing?

Stevie: Oh, we're great. I'm just a little tired.

Luis: Well, that goes with the territory, right?

Stevie: No, that's not what I mean. Patrick has been keeping me up with his snoring.

Luis: Oh, that's a bummer.

Stevie: Yeah, it really is. I'm usually awakened soon after I fall asleep, and then I toss and turn all night. That's not all. Patrick also talks in his sleep.

Luis: Wow, that's terrible. I'd make a beeline for some sleeping pills, if I were you.

Stevie: I took some one night last week, but I woke up groggy and disoriented. I'd rather have insomnia than load up on drugs.

Luis: Have you tried waking him up when he snores or talks in his sleep?



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Stevie: I tried that one night, but he just ended up sleepwalking!

Luis: Geez, what are you going to do?

Stevie: I wish I knew.

Luis: It's a little early in your marriage for separate bedrooms, but I wouldn't rule it out.

Stevie: I'll keep it in mind. If I don't get a good night's sleep soon, separate bedrooms will be the least of our problems!

[end of dialogue]

Luis asks Stevie, "So, how are the newlyweds doing?" A "newlywed" (newlywed – one word) is someone who has been married very recently, usually within the past year or so. So the year after you are married, you might be called a "newlywed," meaning you have been married recently. This is a question that Luis asks Stevie; he's asking about Stevie and her new husband. Stevie says, "Oh, we're great. I'm just a little tired." Luis jokes with her and says, "Well, that goes with the territory, right?" The expression "to go with the territory" means that it's to be expected in a particular situation, it's expected to be part of something. So if you are a police officer, you need to learn to use a gun. It goes with the territory: it's part of your job; it's part of your responsibility.

Luis is making a joke here, saying that Stevie is not getting very much sleep because she's newly married, and newly married couples may do other things at night, for example, that would cause them not to sleep as much. I'm not sure; I've been married too long, I don't remember far back in time! Stevie says, "No, that's not what I mean," meaning no, she is not having problems sleeping because she and her husband are doing other things in bed. Stevie says, "Patrick (her husband) has been keeping me up with his snoring." "To keep (someone) up" means to keep them awake, not allowing them to sleep. "To snore" (snore) means to make a loud sound each time you breathe through your nose while you are sleeping, something like [Jeff snores]. I know, it's pretty ugly, but that me snoring.

Luis says, "Oh, that's a bummer." A "bummer" (bummer) is an informal term meaning a disappointment, something that you feel badly about: "I'm not going to be able to go to the concert tonight, what a bummer," or "that's a bummer." It's a bad thing. It's an informal expression, however. Stevie says, "Yeah, it really is,"



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meaning yes, it is a bummer. “I’m usually awakened soon after I fall asleep,” she says. “To awaken” means to wake up or to wake someone else up. She wakes up soon after she falls asleep. “To fall asleep” means to begin to sleep: “I fell asleep last night at 11:30 p.m.” Stevie says, “then I toss and turn all night.” The expression “to toss and turn” means to move your body; first you lie on your left, then you lie on your right. You keep moving back and forth because you can’t fall asleep, that’s to toss and turn.

Stevie says that Patrick also talks in his sleep. “To talk in your sleep” means to start saying things even though you are unconscious – even though you are sleeping. This can be very dangerous, especially if you’re dreaming about your former girlfriend, for example, or boyfriend, or dog – if your dog is in the room where you are sleeping, for example! Luis says, “Wow, that’s terrible. I’d make a beeline for some sleeping pills, if I were you.” “I’d make a beeline for” means I would go directly to something without any hesitation. “To make a beeline for (something)” means to go to do something or to go somewhere right away, without hesitating, without stopping, to do it immediately.

Luis says, “(I would immediately get) some sleeping pills.” “Sleeping pills” are drugs that help you sleep. Stevie says, “I took some (I took some sleeping pills) one night last week (meaning last week – one night in the last week), but I woke up groggy and disoriented.” “To be groggy” (groggy) means that you are very tired; usually you just woke up and you’re not mentally awake yet, you’re not able to move or think normally. This happens, too, sometimes if you take a certain drug; the drug could make you groggy – could make you sleepy, could make you not as alert as you would be otherwise. “To be disoriented” means to not know where you are or what is happening, to be confused. If someone spins you around very fast or gives you a certain drug, you might become disoriented: you’re not sure where you are, what you’re doing here, what is going on.

Stevie says, “I’d rather have insomnia than load up on drugs.” She prefers, she says, she’d rather have insomnia. “Insomnia” is the inability to sleep during the nighttime or most nights. Insomnia: not able to sleep. “To load up on (something)” means to have, to use, to eat, or to buy a lot of something. “I’m going to load up on pasta when I go the grocery store” – I’m going to get lots and lots of pasta because I love pasta. I do, I really do! I’m going to load up on it. The word “load” has several different meanings in English however, so take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Stevie says that she’d rather have insomnia than load up on drugs. Luis says, “Have you tried waking him up when he snores or talks in his sleep (have you tried waking Patrick up)?” “To wake (someone) up” means to make a noise or do



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something so that they stop sleeping. Stevie says, “I tried that one night, but he just ended up sleepwalking!” “He just ended up...” means the final result was..., what happened after I did that was...; in this case, he ended up sleepwalking. “To sleepwalk” means to get out of your bed and to start walking, even though you are still sleeping. You don’t usually remember this after you wake up. That is sleepwalking.

Luis says, “Geez, what are you going to do?” “Geez,” here, just is an expression of surprise or, in this case perhaps, confusion. Stevie says, “I wish I knew,” meaning I don’t know, I wish I did know. Luis says, “It’s a little early in your marriage for separate bedrooms, but I wouldn’t rule it out.” Luis is saying that maybe you should sleep in different rooms although you just got married, so it’s a little early for that. He says, however, he wouldn’t rule it out. “To rule (something) out” is to decide not to do something, to decide that something is not an option. I’m not going to do that in the future, I’m not even going to consider it – I’m going to rule it out. “Rule” has several different meanings, also, in English, so take a look at the Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Finally, Stevie says, “I’ll keep it in mind.” “To keep (something) in mind” means I will consider it, I will not forget about it. “If I don’t get a good night’s sleep soon,” she says, “separate bedrooms will be the least of our problems!” meaning we will have more serious problems than just sleeping in different rooms.

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

[start of dialogue]

Luis: So, how are the newlyweds doing?

Stevie: Oh, we’re great. I’m just a little tired.

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Stevie: I tried that one night, but he just ended up sleepwalking!

Luis: Geez, what are you going to do?

Stevie: I wish I knew.

Luis: It's a little early in your marriage for separate bedrooms, but I wouldn't rule it out.

Stevie: I'll keep it in mind. If I don't get a good night's sleep soon, separate bedrooms will be the least of our problems!

[end of dialogue]

It would be a bummer if we didn't have Dr. Lucy Tse to write our scripts for us, as she did for this episode.

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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