



ESL Podcast 455 – Ending a Bad Date

GLOSSARY

from hell – horrible; as bad as something can possibly be; extremely unpleasant
* I've had a day from hell: I ran out of gas in my car, I spilled my coffee on my pants, I lost my keys, and my wallet was stolen.

creep – an unpleasant person who makes one feel uncomfortable
* We never walk alone at night because there are a lot of creeps on the street.

drunk – not thinking clearly or acting normally because one has had too much alcohol to drink
* Of course he's drunk! He's had five beers and half a bottle of whiskey in the past hour!

to let (someone) down – to disappoint someone; to do or say something that makes another person feel sad
* I don't want to let our son down by not going to his soccer game this afternoon.

to hit it off – to be friendly with someone and enjoy spending time with that person immediately after meeting him or her
* They met only last week, but they really hit it off and they're already talking about moving in with each other.

chemistry – feelings between two people of liking each other, especially romantically
* Frank is handsome, well educated, athletic, and a hard worker, but I just don't feel any chemistry when I spend time with him.

the time of (one's) life – a very enjoyable experience, one of the best moments of one's life
* We had the time of our lives in Hawaii. It was a great vacation!

round – a series of events; a group of things or actions that are repeated many times
* How many rounds of golf are you going to play?

straightforward – direct and sincere; saying something very clearly so that it cannot be misunderstood
* Kelly was very straightforward with Brock, and although she hurt his feelings, at least she was sure that he understood what she was saying.



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mixed signals – using actions or words that say one thing, but really mean something else

* He's always sending mixed signals, saying that he doesn't want to date her, but also telling her she's beautiful and buying her expensive presents.

the end of the road – the end of something; the point beyond which something cannot continue

* Sales have been decreasing for years, and the business has finally reached the end of the road. It's closing next week.

goodnight kiss – a kiss at the end of a date, usually when a man takes a woman back to the place where she lives

* I thought we had a great date, but he didn't give me a goodnight kiss, so I don't know whether he liked me or not.

to keep (one's) cool – to stay calm; to remain in control of one's actions, words, and feelings when one is upset or excited

* Is it difficult for you to keep your cool when you hear people say bad things about your family?

to be stinking drunk – a phrase used to describe someone who has had too much alcohol to drink and whose words and actions have become very unpleasant and inappropriate

* This bar is full of men who are stinking drunk. Let's go somewhere else.

Capisce? – an Italian word used in English to ask people whether they understand something, often in a challenging or confrontational way

* You and your brother need to stop fighting right now. Capisce?

Prince Charming – the handsome, brave hero in children's stories who saves and falls in love with the princess, also used to talk about the type of man that a woman is searching for

* If you find your Prince Charming, marry him!



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does she say that she's "on a date from hell"?
 - a) Because she isn't enjoying the date at all.
 - b) Because the name of the bar is Hell.
 - c) Because Rob doesn't believe in God.

2. Why isn't Rob Fatima's Prince Charming?
 - a) Because he's sending mixed signals.
 - b) Because he is a stinking drunk.
 - c) Because he lives in the same apartment building.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

creep

The word "creep," in this podcast, means an unpleasant person who makes one feel uncomfortable: "My sister really likes Aiden, but I think he's a creep and I wish she would stop dating him." The phrase "to give (someone) the creeps" means to make someone feel uncomfortable and a little bit frightened: "Watching that scary movie gave me the creeps and I wasn't able to sleep afterwards." As a verb, "to creep" means to move very quietly so that one isn't seen or heard by other people: "The little girl crept into the kitchen to eat cookies while her mom wasn't watching." Finally, the verb "to creep" is used to describe the slow movement of insects: "Blake likes to watch spiders creep across the ceiling."

round

In this podcast, the word "round" means a series of events or a group of things or actions that are repeated many times: "How many rounds of the peace talks will the president participate in?" The phrase "a round of applause" describes the period of time when people are clapping: "Everything he said was followed by a long round of applause from the audience." When talking about music, a "round" is a type of song where each singer sings the same melody and words, but they start at different times: "Most American children enjoy signing a round called Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Finally, when a doctor is "on (one's) rounds," he or she is checking on patients in a clinic or hospital: "The doctor is on her rounds right now, but as soon as she gets back I'll let her know that you called."



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CULTURE NOTE

As described in today’s dialogue, sometimes one person thinks that everything is going well on a date while the other person thinks the date is horrible. How can you know what the other person is thinking? Here are three “signs” (signals) that you might want to look for on your next date to help you understand whether or not the date is going well.

First, if your date spends most of the time talking about his or her “ex” (the person whom one dated previously, or one’s former husband or wife), then you might want to end the date soon. Someone who “obsesses” (thinks about something too much) about an ex probably isn’t ready to start dating someone else. Or, worse, he or she might be comparing you to the ex.

Secondly, pay attention to whether your date is answering your questions. If you ask about his or her job and your date “changes the subject” (begins talking about a different topic), he or she is probably hiding something from you. If it happens just once, it’s probably okay. But if your date changes the subject many times, maybe you can’t trust him or her. Or maybe you don’t have “anything in common” (shared interests).

Finally, pay attention to your date’s “body language” (what ones does with one’s body while speaking). If your date “crosses his or her arms” (puts one’s arms in front of one’s body with the fingers of each hand near the elbow of the other arm), this might mean that he or she feels uncomfortable or doesn’t agree with what you are saying. The same is true if you date won’t make “eye contact” (look into another person’s eyes).

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 455: Ending a Bad Date.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 455. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

We have a website, it's eslpod.com. On it, you can find a Learning Guide for this episode that contains additional information to help you improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "Ending a Bad Date." It's a dialogue between Fatima and Rob, who are on a romantic date together that doesn't go very well. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

I was on a date from hell.

I agreed to go out with this guy who lives in the same apartment building as I do, but he's turned out to be a real creep. He was nice enough at the start of the date, but then he started drinking. Now he's drunk and I'm miserable.

I wanted to let him down gently since I'd be seeing him around the apartment building, but I didn't want to spend another minute with him.

Fatima: Listen, Rob, I just don't think we're hitting it off. You're a really nice guy, but I just don't think we have much chemistry.

Rob: Are you kidding? I'm having the time of my life. We're just getting started here. Bartender, another round!

I realized that I needed to be more straightforward with him in case I was giving him mixed signals.

Fatima: I'm sorry, Rob, but I think this is the end of the road for this date. Thanks a lot for the drinks and I'll see you around.

Rob: What? You're leaving? How about a goodnight kiss? Come over here and give me that kiss.



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I wanted to keep my cool, but when he tried to kiss me, that did it!

Fatima: You're stinking drunk and this date is over. Capisce?

I got up and left. What is it about alcohol that turns Prince Charming into a frog?

[end of dialogue]

Fatima begins our story by saying, "I was on a date from hell." The expression "from hell" means as bad as something can possibly be, terrible, horrible. "I'm on a date from hell" means I'm on a very bad date. A "date," of course, is when two people romantically interested in each other go to dinner or to a movie, do something together.

Well Fatima, unfortunately, is on a terrible date – a date from hell. She says, "I agreed to go out with (to go on a date with) this guy who lives in the same apartment building as I do, but," Fatima says, "he's turned out to be a real creep." When we say someone has "turned out to be (something)," we mean that our initial impressions (what we thought at the beginning) has changed because the person has demonstrated that they are not what we thought they were. A "creep" (creep) is a very unpleasant person who makes you feel uncomfortable. "Creep" has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at the Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Fatima says that this guy was nice enough at the start of the date, but then he started drinking – drinking alcohol. "Now he's drunk and I'm miserable." When we say someone is "drunk," we mean that they are intoxicated, meaning that they have drank too much wine or beer or alcohol, and now they are not acting normally because of the influence of the alcohol on their behavior. Fatima says, "I wanted to let him down gently." To "let (someone) down" means to disappoint someone, to do or say something that makes the other person feel sad. In this case, what Fatima means is that she wants to tell him "no," but doesn't want to hurt him or hurt his feelings. That's why she says, "I wanted to let him down gently." "Gently" means nicely, in this case. He lives in the same apartment building as Fatima, but she did not want to be on this date any more, so she says to him, "Listen, Rob, I just don't think we're hitting it off." To "hit it off" is an expression that means to enjoy spending time with someone, to be friendly with someone right after you meet them. So, you meet them and immediately you are comfortable with them, you enjoy being with them. We would say, "they hit it off." It can be used in a romantic situation, but it could also be used in a business



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situation: “The saleswoman and the manager hit it off,” they got along very well together.

Fatima says to Rob, “You’re a really nice guy, but I just don’t think we have much chemistry.” “Chemistry,” here, means the feelings between two people, whether they are romantically interested in each other. Chemistry can also refer to chemicals or the study of chemicals in the world, but here it means the romantic feelings. Fatima is saying she doesn’t think that there are romantic feelings between them.

Rob is quite surprised. Of course, he’s drunk so almost anything would probably surprise him! He says, “Are you kidding (are you joking)? I’m having the time of my life.” When someone says they’re “having the time of their life” they mean they’re having one of the best experiences or moments of their life; they’re doing something that they enjoy very much. Rob says, “We’re just getting started here,” we’re just beginning our date. Then he calls out to the “bartender,” the person who prepares and gives you your drinks in a bar. He says, “Bartender, another round!” A “round” is usually a series of events, a group of things that are repeated different times. Here, in a bar, the term “round” means another set of drinks – another drink. So, someone may say for example, “I’ll buy the next round of drinks,” they mean the next drink that you want to order I’ll pay for. Rob, here, is asking the bartender for another drink – another round. “Round” has several meanings in English, as you probably know; take a look at our Learning Guide for some more explanations of that term.

Poor Fatima says that she realized she needed to be more straightforward with Rob. When we say you need to be “straightforward” (one word) we mean that you need to be more direct, you need to say something more clearly. Instead of saying, “Oh, well, um, I don’t think so, probably not,” you need to say, “No, absolutely not.” So Fatima needs to be more direct – more straightforward with Rob. She doesn’t want to give him mixed signals. The expression “mixed signals” means using actions or words that indicate one thing but really mean something else. Or, mixed signals can mean confusing messages, when a person can’t understand what you mean because you say one thing that’s good then maybe one thing that’s bad and it isn’t very clear.

Well, Fatima doesn’t want to send mixed signals to Rob; she doesn’t want Rob to think that she is romantically interested in him. We would say she doesn’t want to “lead him on,” which is when a woman or a man makes the other person think that they are interested in them, but are really not. So, Fatima says, “I’m sorry, Rob, but I think this is the end of the road for this date.” “The end of the road” is the end of something, it’s the finish, it cannot go on any more. If your girlfriend



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says to you, “This is the end of the road for you and for our relationship,” you might want to start looking for another girlfriend. I’ve been to the end of the road many times!

Fatima says, “Thanks a lot for the drinks and I’ll see you around,” meaning I’ll see you later. Rob still doesn’t believe what is happening. He says, “What? You’re leaving? How about a goodnight kiss?” A “goodnight kiss” is a kiss at the end of a date. Usually when a man takes the woman back to where she lives, he says “good night” and gives her a kiss. That’s a goodnight kiss; it’s a romantic kiss usually on your first or one of your first dates with a woman or a man.

Rob wants to give Fatima a goodnight kiss, which, of course, Fatima is not interested in. She says, “I wanted to keep my cool,” meaning I wanted to stay calm, to remain in control, not to get angry. “But when he tried to kiss me, that did it!” meaning that was enough, that caused me to change my actions. She then says to Rob, “You’re stinking drunk and this date is over.” “Stinking drunk” is a phrase that is used to describe someone who has had too much alcohol and whose words and actions are very unpleasant, someone who starts yelling or screaming or saying bad things after they drank too much alcohol. Fatima then says, “Capisce?” “Capisce” we use in English to mean do you understand. It comes originally from the Italian, but Americans give it their own American pronunciation: we say “capisce,” the Italian pronunciation I think would be “capisce,” but we say “capisce.”

Fatima says she got up and left. Then she asks, “What is it about alcohol that turns Prince Charming into a frog?” “Prince Charming” is a handsome, brave man in a children’s story. Prince Charming saves the beautiful woman – the princess – and falls in love with her. We use this term, “Prince Charming,” to refer to the ideal husband or the ideal man for a woman, the person that every woman is looking for – her Prince Charming. The reference to the frog is that in some children’s stories when a girl kisses a frog, the frog becomes (turns into) a man – this beautiful, handsome man, Prince Charming. I think the idea here is that a woman can take a man and change him, which is probably not the best philosophy to have if you are looking for a husband or a wife. Men are more difficult to change than it appears – trust me!

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

[start of dialogue]

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[end of dialogue]

This is the end of the road for this episode. We'd like to thank Dr. Lucy Tse for writing the script 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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