



ESL Podcast 1026 – Marrying Young

GLOSSARY

to get engaged – to make a promise and plans to marry another person

* They got engaged last summer, but they don't plan to get married until they've both finished college.

married – wed; with a husband or wife

* They've been married for six years, but they don't have any children yet.

to pose – to present, especially to present a problem; to introduce something into a situation

* The drought is posing a major problem to the orange growers.

maturity – the state of having full development and growth, especially the mental development of a responsible adult

* Ignacio is very smart, but he doesn't have the maturity to be a decision-maker for this company.

to play house – to pretend to be married and living together, maybe even starting a family, without actually being committed to each other

* Horace loves his girlfriend, but he isn't ready to marry her yet, so he's hoping she'll agree to move into his apartment and play house for a few years while they get to know each other better.

matrimony – marriage; the state of having a husband or wife and being fully and legally committed to that person

* Do you think it's wrong to raise kids outside of matrimony?

to sell (someone) short – to not give someone the full credit that he or she deserves; to underestimate the good qualities or characteristics of someone

* You're too modest! Stop selling yourself short during job interviews.

ideal – perfect; completely and entirely appropriate and an excellent match for something

* Brandon just found his ideal job as a professional beer taster!

to doom – to make one's future very dark and negative, full of destruction or even death

* If we don't get this new client account, our business is doomed!



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regret – a feeling of sadness and disappointment about something that happened or something that one did in the past, as well as a wish that one had done it differently

* At the end of her life, Shelly's greatest regret was that she never tried to get her book published.

harsh – severe, mean, and very critical; too strong

* Ten years in prison for stealing a loaf of bread? That punishment is too harsh.

to grow old – to age; to experience life as one becomes older

* They want to buy a house where they can grow old together.

milestone – an important event or accomplishment that is part of a larger project or process

* Turning 16 and getting a driver's license is an important milestone for American teenagers.

legal drinking age – the age at which one is allowed by law to buy and drink alcohol

* Many people think it's wrong that Americans can join the Army when they are 18, but can't drink alcohol until they reach the legal drinking age of 21.

facetious – without treating something as seriously as it should be treated; using humor inappropriately in a serious situation

* Alicia made a facetious comment about how the people who were being fired wouldn't need to worry anymore about getting to work on time.

stability – an unchanging state; a position or situation where things are not changing unpredictably; solidness; firmness

* Justin is looking for a job with stability where he might be able to work until retirement.

to lean on – to depend on another person; to rely on another person for assistance, support, and guidance when one is experiencing problems or weakness

* Marco found himself leaning on his children a lot when his wife was diagnosed with breast cancer.

to beat the odds – to do something better than expected; to win or succeed when statistical data shows that success is improbable or unlikely

* Very few people can complete all the training in just one year, but if you work hard enough, you might be able to beat the odds.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these phrases means to enter into matrimony?
 - a) To get engaged
 - b) To get married
 - c) To play house

 2. Why does Irene think Ken is selling them short?
 - a) Because he doesn't want to buy them a wedding present.
 - b) Because he doesn't like to attend weddings.
 - c) Because he doesn't think they're as mature as they actually are.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to pose

The verb “to pose,” in this podcast, means to present, especially to present a problem, or to introduce something into a situation: “The interviews posed a lot of hypothetical situations to find out how the applicants would react in certain situations.” The phrase “to pose questions” means to ask questions, especially in a formal setting: “The reporters posed some challenging questions during the press conference.” The verb “to pose” can also mean to position one’s body in a certain way, especially for an audience or a camera: “The photographer asked the model to pose with her chin on her hands.” Finally, the phrase “to pose as” means to pretend to be someone else, or to present oneself in a certain way: “Is it a crime to pose as a police officer?”

to lean on

In this podcast, the phrase “to lean on” means to depend on another person for assistance, support, and guidance when one is experiencing problems or weakness: “We expect new employees to lean on their colleagues for the first week or two, but after that, they should work independently.” The phrase “to lean on” also means to rest part of one’s weight against an object: “If you’re tired, you can lean on my shoulder.” The phrase “to lean toward (something)” means to favor a certain position or opinion: “After hearing his arguments, I’m learning toward supporting the new regulations.” Finally, when used as an adjective, the word “lean” means having very little fat: “The doctor recommended eating more lean meats, like chicken and fish.”



CULTURE NOTE

Non-Traditional Students in College

Traditionally, students attend college “straight out of” (immediately after graduating from) high school and their studies are their main focus, with students not working or not working very much during their studies. However, many students are “non-traditional students” who do not “fit the image” (meet people’s expectations) of a traditional student.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, a “non-traditional student” is a student who has one or more of the following characteristics:

- “Delays” (does something later) “enrollment” (officially registering to take classes) by more than one year after the high school graduation
- Is a part-time student for at least part of the year
- Works 35 or more hours per week
- Is “financially independent” (responsible for one’s own expenses, without receiving significant financial assistance from family members)
- “Supports a family” (is responsible for children or other family members)
- Is a “single parent” (someone who is raising children without being married to the mother/father, and without the help of the father/mother)
- Does not have a high school “diploma” (a certificate stating that one has completed high school)

Universities recognize that many non-traditional students “face” (deal with) significant “challenges” (something that makes it more difficult to achieve one’s goals) and require additional support in order to earn their degree.

“Consequently” (as a result), many colleges offer special programs and scholarships that are designed for non-traditional students.

For example, single mothers who are studying at the university might have access to scholarships that are not available to other students, and they might be invited to attend meetings of “support groups” (groups of people with similar problems) to talk about their problems and learn how their “peers” (people with similar characteristics) are “coping” (dealing with a difficult situation).

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 1,026 – Marrying Young.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,026. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at ESLPod.com. Become a member of ESL Podcast. You can also like us on Facebook at facebook.com/eslpod, or follow us on Twitter at [@eslpod](https://twitter.com/eslpod).

This episode is a dialogue between Irene and Ken about people getting married. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Irene: Damon and his girlfriend just got engaged. They're planning on getting married this summer.

Ken: They're too young! Marrying young poses all kinds of problems.

Irene: Such as?

Ken: Such as the two of them lacking maturity. They may think it's fun to play house right now, but they're not prepared to face the realities and responsibilities of matrimony.

Irene: I think you're selling them short. They've been dating for two years, and there's no ideal age for marriage.

Ken: Yes, but we all know that marrying young will doom them to a life of regrets.

Irene: That's a bit harsh, don't you think? A lot of people who marry young have successful marriages. I like the idea of growing old with your spouse. You can reach many of life's milestones together.

Ken: Like reaching the legal drinking age?

Irene: Don't be facetious. Getting married will give them stability and someone to lean on. I think they'll be great as a married couple.



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Ken: Well, I hope they beat the odds . . . or at least learn a lot for their second marriages.

[end of dialogue]

We begin this dialogue with Irene saying to Ken, “Damon and his girlfriend just got engaged. They are planning on getting married this summer.” “To get engaged” (engaged) means to promise and make plans to marry someone. Normally, you get engaged at least a few months before you get married. Some people get engaged a year or even more before they actually do marry, but “to be engaged” means to be promised, if you will, to another – that you have promised to marry another person.

Irene says that Damon and his girlfriend are planning on getting married this summer. “To get married,” of course, means to become husband and wife, to be legally recognized as a married couple. In many places, marriage is both a “civil” – that is, government – action as well as a religious action. You may get married in a church or a temple or some other religious institution. You can also get married by going down to the government office and getting something called a “marriage license.”

One does not necessarily imply the other. That is, just because you get married by the government doesn’t mean you’re married in a religious sense. You can have one without the other, or both. However, in the U.S., if you are married by someone who is considered a religious leader, such as a rabbi or a minister or a priest, you will be considered married by the government as well. The government allows religious leaders, if you will, to officially witness the marriage of two people. But let’s get back to our story and Damon and his girlfriend.

Ken says to Irene, “They’re too young! Marrying young poses all kinds of problems.” “To pose” (pose) means to present. We often use this verb when talking about problems. You’ll hear people say, “This poses a problem for us,” meaning this introduces a problem into this situation. Ken believes that marrying young – getting married when you are young – poses all kinds of problems. We’re not exactly sure what Ken means by “young” here. Irene asks what kind of problems marrying young poses. She says, “Such as?” meaning she’s asking Ken to give her some examples.

Ken says, “Such as the two of them lacking maturity.” “Maturity” (maturity) is having the outlook and perspective of a responsible person – an adult, if you will. We talk about children maturing. They’re getting older and, we hope, getting



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wiser. Teenagers often lack maturity. That is, they don't have the responsible perspective of an adult.

Ken says, "They may think it's fun to play house right now, but they're not prepared to face the realities and responsibilities of matrimony." The expression "to play house" (house) means to, in a way, pretend that you're living together. It's a game that children sometimes play. When little girls get together and play house, they pretend as though they are wives and mothers or women who are living in their own house and responsible for the house. And so they do things that might traditionally be done by someone who is married.

So, Ken is making a little joke here. He's saying that Damon and his girlfriend are playing house just like a child would, even though the child doesn't understand the full responsibility of being married. Ken says that these two are "not prepared to face the realities and responsibilities of matrimony." "To face" (face) something means to understand it and to deal with it – to be able to, we might also say, "confront" something. You have to look at a difficult situation and figure out how to deal with it.

The word "matrimony" (matrimony) means marriage. It's the state of being married. Irene says that she thinks Ken is "selling them short." "To sell someone short" means to underestimate someone's good qualities, to think someone is worse than they really are. In this case, Irene thinks that Ken is selling Damon and his girlfriend short by saying that they are not mature enough to get married.

Irene says, "They've been dating for two years, and there is no ideal age for marriage." "Ideal" (ideal) here means perfect, or completely appropriate. The "ideal age" to get married would be the best age to get married. Here in the United States in recent years, people have been getting married later and later, and in many cases not getting married at all.

But, back to our fictional dialogue. Ken says, "Yes, but we all know that marrying young will doom them to a life of regrets." "To doom" (doom) someone is to make your future very dark. If you are "doomed," something very bad will happen to you in the future, maybe even death. Of course, death will happen to all of us sometime in the future. I hope not too soon, at least not for me.

Ken thinks that marrying young will basically ruin Damon and his girlfriend's lives. It "will doom them," he says, "to a life of regrets." "Regrets" (regrets) are things that you wish you had not done. For example, I regret not talking to my neighbor last week. I wish I had spoken with him. "To regret" something, as a verb, means



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to feel badly that you didn't do a certain thing, or perhaps that you did do a certain thing.

Here it's being used as a noun meaning that situation where you feel badly about something that you did or didn't do. "I regret not going up to that beautiful girl and asking her for her telephone number." That's something I did a lot of when I was in my 20s. I finally got a little bit smarter and decided to start asking women out on dates, but that wasn't until after I was 30, really. I'm someone who married very late in life. Well, later than the average man marries in the U.S. Anyway, it's not about me, is it, really. It's about our dialogue. So, back to the dialogue.

Irene says to Ken, "That's a bit harsh, don't you think?" Ken is saying that poor Damon and his girlfriend will have a terrible life, and she's saying, "No, that's a bit harsh" (harsh). "To be harsh" means to be mean, to be too critical. She continues, "A lot of people who marry young have successful marriages. I like the idea of growing old with your spouse." "To grow old" means to experience life as you get older. All of us, of course, grow old. Irene is talking about growing old with your spouse, the person you're married to.

She says, "You can reach many of life's milestones together." A "milestone" (milestone) is an important event or accomplishment in life, in this case. You can have a milestone in a project at work – things that you want to get done by this date, or this date. Ken says, "Like reaching the legal drinking age?" Irene is talking about important events in one's life, and Ken gives an example of one: the legal drinking age.

In the U.S., the legal drinking age is 21, which means that Damon and his girlfriend are not yet 21 years old. Normally, people wait until after they're 21 to get married, and that's probably why Ken is in a way making a joke with Irene, saying, "These kids are so young, they can't even drink legally."

But Irene says, "Don't be facetious." "To be facetious" (facetious) means to not take something seriously – to joke about something. Irene says, "Getting married will give them stability and someone to lean on." "Stability" (stability) is a position where things don't change. Irene is saying that if these two people get married, they will have stability and each will have someone to lean on. "To lean (lean) on" someone is a phrasal verb meaning to rely on someone, to depend on someone for support and advice and help.

Ken says, "Well, I hope they beat the odds." "To beat (beat) the odds (odds)" means to do better than what you might expect. He's suggesting that it will be difficult for them to have a happy marriage since a lot of people who get married



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very young sometimes don't have successful marriages, although I'm not sure exactly what the statistics are on that, really.

But in any case, Ken thinks that they don't have a very good chance at a marriage if they get married very young. He then ends by saying, "Or at least learn a lot for their second marriages." He's suggesting that their first marriage won't last. That is, they'll get divorced and then they'll marry again.

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

[start of dialogue]

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Irene: Don't be facetious. Getting married will give them stability and someone to lean on. I think they'll be great as a married couple.

Ken: Well, I hope they beat the odds . . . or at least learn a lot for their second marriages.

[end of dialogue]



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We have the ideal scriptwriter here at ESL Podcast – our very own Dr. Lucy Tse. Thank you, Lucy.

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

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