

TRANSCRIPT · EPISODE 51

# The Superpower You Didn't Know You Still Have

Full episode script · English

291 lines

Your English Toolbox

What if the best solution for the anxiety and stress of modern life would be looking at life like a six-year-old child?

What if the cure for depression isn't in a pill but in the most unexpected place?

I'm Martin.

And I'm Julia.

Welcome to your English Toolbox.

Today we are talking about a superpower.

It is a superpower that you were born with.

You used it every day when you were five years old.

But somewhere along the way,

you lost it.

You traded it for efficiency.

You traded it for being a serious adult.

And today we are going to tell you why getting it back might save your mental health.

And of course how it will change the way you learn English.

This sounds like a big promise, Julia.

It is.

But I have a story that explains everything.

Are you ready?

I am always ready for a story.

Imagine a restaurant.

But this is not a

normal restaurant.

It is a dark restaurant.

Have you heard of them?

Yes, I have.

These are places where you eat in total darkness, right?

You cannot see the food.

You cannot see the waiter.

You cannot even see your own hand.

Exactly.

It is a sensory experience.

Now imagine two couples walking into this restaurant.

Let's look at couple A.

They sit down in the dark and immediately they start to struggle.

Let me guess.

They are uncomfortable.

They

are miserable.

The man says, I can't find my fork.

This is ridiculous.

The woman says, how do I know if the table is clean?

I can't see anything.

They spend the entire dinner complaining.

They feel out of control.

They are stressed because the environment is not what they expected.

They are fighting the reality.

Exactly.

Now look at couple B.

They sit at the next table in the exact same darkness.

But their reaction is completely different.

woman says, wow, listen to the sound of the voices in the room.

Without the lights, the sound is so clear.

The man says, I can't see the food, but I can smell the spices.

It's like tasting for the first time.

They are laughing when they can't find their water glasses.

They lean in closer to hear each other.

They turn the limitation into a game.

I love this example.

The situation is identical.

The darkness is the same.

The food is the same.

But the experience is opposite.

Couple A is suffering.

Couple B is amazed.

And that word is the key.

Amazed.

This is what we want to talk about today.

The attitude of constant surprise.

The ability to be amazed by everything we find in our life.

We usually think that amazement is something that happens only when we see something huge.

Like the Grand Canyon.

Or a rocket launch.

Or a miracle.

But children don't

need the Grand Canyon.

A child can look at an ant carrying a leaf and be amazed for 20 minutes.

A child can look at the washing machine spinning and see a whole universe.

That is the super power we lost.

We became used to the world.

We stopped seeing the magic in ordinary things.

And psychically that is a dangerous place to be.

Why is it dangerous?

Let's bring in some science.

There is a psychologist named Dr.

Dasher

Keltner.

He is a professor at the University of California Berkeley and he has studied the science of awe.

It means a feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear or wonder.

Exactly.

Keltner found something incredible about our brains.

He found that when we feel awe, when we are amazed, our brain changes.

Specifically, it quiets down the default mode network.

That sounds technical.

What is the default mode network?

Think of it as the self-critical voice.

It is

the part of the brain that thinks about me.

It worries about my future.

It regrets my past.

It says, did I do that wrong?

Or what do people think of me?

Ah, I know that voice very well.

It is the voice of anxiety.

Yes.

And here is the magic.

When you are amazed, that voice shuts off.

When you look at a sunset or when you focus intensely on the taste of a strawberry, you cannot worry about

your bank account at the same time.

This makes sense.

You cannot be in your head and in the moment at the same time.

If I am amazed by the rain hitting the window, I am not thinking about my emails.

Precisely.

Amazement forces you into the present moment.

And the present moment is the only place where peace exists.

So, the couple in the dark restaurant.

Couple A was trapped in the default mode network.

They were thinking, this

is inefficient for me.

I don't like this.

And couple B was simply observing.

They were outside of themselves.

They were connected to the world.

And this protects us from depression.

Depression is often an obsession with the past.

Anxiety is an obsession with the future.

Amazement brings you right here, right now.

But, Martin, people might say, my life is boring.

I don't have time to go to the mountains or see waterfalls.

I have a job.

I have

dishes to wash.

And that is the challenge.

You don't need a waterfall.

You need new eyes.

You can wash the dishes and be angry that you are losing time.

Or you can feel the warmth of the water on your hands.

You can look at the bubbles and see how the light reflects in them.

Okay.

That sounds a bit like being a monk.

Maybe.

But it is also practical.

It changes your brain chemistry.

If you can find

amazement in a traffic jam, you are invincible.

In a traffic jam?

That is difficult.

Look at the other people.

Realize that every car contains a whole human life.

With dreams and fears and families.

Suddenly you are not stuck in traffic.

You are in the middle of a human story.

So the first step to mental balance is to stop judging the situation as good or bad.

And just look at it with curiosity.

Like a child.

Yes.

this leads us to the next big feeling.

Because once you start noticing things with amazement, something else happens automatically.

You start feeling grateful.

Gratitude.

You cannot be grateful for something you don't notice.

If you drink your coffee while looking at your phone, you don't taste it.

So you cannot be grateful for it.

But if you stop and you smell it and you think about the beans growing in Brazil and the person who roasted them and the

heat of the cup, then suddenly you feel rich.

You feel rich not because you have more money but because you finally see the value of what you already have.

That is a beautiful definition of gratitude.

It isn't about getting new things.

It is about seeing the old things with new eyes.

Exactly.

And psychology tells us that gratitude is the strongest antidote to anxiety.

Anxiety screams you don't have enough.

You aren't safe.

You need more.

Gratitude whispers.

Look at what is right here.

It is enough.

It is amazing.

So the chain of reaction is amazement leads to presence and presence leads to gratitude and gratitude leads to peace.

Yes.

It is a mental immune system.

If you build the habit of being amazed, you are vaccinating yourself against the misery of modern life.

Okay, Martin.

I am sold on the philosophy.

I want to live like that.

But we are an English learning podcast and I

know our listeners are asking, how does this help me speak better English?

I am glad you asked, Julia, because this is the secret sauce of our method.

This is the heart of slow English.

Think about the two couples at the dark restaurant again.

Okay.

One was complaining about the darkness.

One was enjoying the sounds.

Now imagine two English students.

Let's call them student A and student B.

Student A is the adult mindset.

He looks at English

grammar and he sees an obstacle.

He says, why is the pronunciation so irregular?

This is inefficient.

Why do I have to use the present perfect here?

In my language, we don't do that.

Exactly.

He is fighting the reality of the language.

He is stressed because English is not logical.

He is rushing to get to fluency so he can stop studying.

He sounds like the man looking for his fork in the dark.

He is.

And because he

is stressed, his brain filters are closed.

Anxiety blocks memory.

Now look at student B.

Student B has the child mindset.

She looks at the same irregular pronunciation but she says, wow, isn't that funny?

English is so weird.

She is amazed by the strangeness.

Yes.

She reads a new idiom and instead of trying to memorize it desperately, she laughs.

She thinks, what a colorful way to say that.

She enjoys the texture of the words.

She is treating

English like a game or like a mystery to solve.

And do you know what happens biologically?

Her brain releases dopamine.

She is relaxed.

Her default mode network, that critical voice, is quiet.

So she absorbs the language naturally.

She learns faster because she isn't trying to force it.

This is a huge shift.

We usually think we need to be serious to learn.

We think, I must concentrate.

I must work hard.

But children don't work hard to learn

their first language.

They play.

They are amazed by every new word they discover.

They shout dog 10 times because the word dog tastes good in their mouth.

We need to find that feeling again.

We need to stop fighting English and start enjoying it.

And this brings us to slow learning.

You cannot be amazed if you are rushing.

If you drive your car at 200 kilometers per hour, you cannot see the flowers on the side of the road.

Everything is a blur.

You are just focusing on the destination.

But if you walk, if you go slowly, you see the flowers, you see the cracks in the pavement, you see the life.

In English, if you rush to finish the chapter, you learn nothing deep.

But if you stay with one paragraph and you look at it with amazement, look at how this verb connects to this noun.

Listen to the rhythm of this sentence.

Then the

English becomes part of you.

It stops being a subject you study and it becomes an experience you live.

That is the goal.

To move from studying to experiencing, from anxiety to awe.

So here is our challenge for you this week.

We want you to practice the superpower.

Put on your six-year-old glasses.

Find one ordinary thing today.

It could be your cup of tea.

It could be the sound of the bus engine.

It could be the way

the light hits your desk.

Stop.

Look at it for 30 seconds.

Try to find the miracle in it.

Don't analyze it.

Just feel it and see if you can feel that little spark of amazement.

And then try to do the same with your English practice.

Don't just do your exercises.

Look at the words.

Be amazed that these strange sounds can carry meaning across the world.

It changes everything.

It turns a boring task into a moment of

joy.

And we really want to hear about your experience.

This community is built on sharing these moments.

If you enjoyed this episode, please write a small comment before you go.

Your comments show the platforms that our community is real, active, and growing.

This support is crucial for us to continue creating new episodes every week.

Tell us, what ordinary thing amazed you today?

Did you see a color?

Did you hear a sound?

Let's build a list of

wonders together.

Do you want to be part of our slow English community?

We need your comments because your voice is more important than ours.

Your voice and comments will show us the right path.

Thank you for listening.

I'm Martin.

And I'm Julia.

See you in the next episode.

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Stay amazed.

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