

REC003: There's nothing like a good night's sleep



Episode summary

In this episode of Real English Conversations, you'll hear Lori and her mother talking about their bedtime routines and what they do to get good night's sleep.

The conversation includes lots of words and phrases related to going to bed, sleeping, waking up, and daily routines.

The vocabulary notes for this episode focus on multi-word verbs (phrasal verbs) and idioms.

Before you begin

Take a moment to think about the following:

How well do you sleep?

Are there things that help you sleep well, or that make you sleep worse?

Do you use electronic devices (phones, tablets, computers, TV's) right before bed, or maybe even IN bed? How do you think this affects your sleep quality?

What advice would you give someone who wanted to sleep better?

How would you describe your daily routines for going to bed and getting up?

Noticing new language

Noticing new language is a key to your learning progress. Before you can learn and use new language, you have to notice it.

As you read and/or listen, look for words, phrases or grammatical patterns that interest you. Make a note of them.

Test yourself later to see how much you can remember. Making flashcards or using a [spaced repetition](#) program can help you learn new items faster.

The next step is to try to use the new items.

Good luck!

INTRODUCTION

In this episode, a Real English Conversation on the topic of sleep and sleep habits. It features tons of vocabulary, especially idioms and phrasal verbs -- as you all know and love them. So come on -- let's get going!

Hello, hello, **how ya doin'**? Wherever you are, I hope you're having an awesome day. I am happy you're here, and I can tell you that my day is extra awesome already because I have a new Real English conversation for you.

Yes, in the conversation you'll hear me and my mom -- who is a very **good sport** I must say -- she had no idea I was recording because I didn't tell her until after we were finished. But she didn't mind at all, which is lucky for me. It's a bit sneaky, I know, but it's the best way to get you the most authentic conversational English possible for your listening and learning pleasure.

Anyway, our conversation features a ton of vocabulary related to sleep, sleep habits, and daily routines. Oh, and there's lots of idioms and phrasal verbs too -- several listeners have emailed to say they need extra help with idioms and phrasal verbs, so I've highlighted those in the transcript and vocabulary notes that you can download to go with this episode.

If you want to read along as you listen, or if you want to dive a bit deeper into the vocabulary, you can get the transcript and vocabulary notes at www.betteratenglish.com/003 .

So are you ready for the conversation? Here we go!

CONVERSATION TRANSCRIPT

Mom: ...Saturday morning they had to drive to Santa Barbara, and Sunday they had to drive home and today he has to fly back, so it's been a...they're exhausted.

Lori: Yeah, not a very restful weekend, **running around**.

Mom: I know, I stayed here, you know, stayed with Bella [the family dog]. They got home around four o'clock yesterday afternoon so that was **nice and early**. And then so Michelle and I were just visiting and, you know, talking, and we went downstairs and Aidan, Dave and Jackson were all in Michelle's bed... Michelle and Dave's bed, **purportedly** watching TV, but the only one with his eyes open was Aidan. Jackson and Dave were both quote "watching TV" unquote with their eyes shut. It was pretty funny.

Lori: I've actually had that happen before at parties and things, you know, when I was younger and used to do the whole partying thing, when you'd be a small group of people and everyone's **sitting up** late talking and you'd get so sleepy, but you're really just not ready to say, "Okay. I'm going to go sleep now," or, "I'm going to leave," and you sit there and you're **dozing off** but still kind of enjoying listening to people.

Mom: Right, right.

Lori: It can be like that watching TV too.

Mom: Well I've even done that, I will think I'm watching TV and then I'll suddenly realize my eyes have been closed for the last ten minutes.

Lori: Yeah.

Mom: I'll think, "I don't think I'm **getting too much out of this**, I might as well **turn it off** and go to bed."

Lori: You know, I've been thinking about sleep a lot lately because I've been really trying to get better sleep – and it's working – but what I've noticed is I'm falling asleep a lot faster, which is good, but I'm not really... it's like I don't have this in-between period where I feel like, "Oh yeah, I'm sleepy, I'm falling asleep now." It's like I'm aware that I'm lying in bed and I'm relaxed and getting a little sleepy and then **the next thing I know** I'm waking up and it's two in the morning and I have to **wee**.

Mom: Yeah.

Lori: Does that happen to you too?

Mom: Yeah, I usually wake up earlier because I'm usually – especially I think my natural **circadian rhythm** is to go to bed early and wake up early because I know when I'm home in Utah by myself I slowly **skew** earlier and earlier and earlier until sometimes I'm like going to bed at eight o'clock.

Lori: Oh my gosh, we are totally – I am totally **a fruit from your tree**.

Mom: Yeah. I mean it just happens naturally and then I'm waking up earlier and going to bed earlier. When I was younger I naturally skewed the other way, I would stay up later and later and later and want **to sleep in** later and later, but as I've gotten older it's totally gone the other way, it's really **bizarre**.

Lori: It's funny because I think I was the same way too when I was younger, I would eventually **turn the day around**, you know, I would be going to bed at five or six in the morning and then getting up at two or three.

And now it's funny. If I don't **observe** good **sleep hygiene** – because I have a whole ritual now that I do at night because I really – the sleeping was a real problem for me, so yeah, but if I don't do that and if it's like ten o'clock at night and I am kind of **stuck in** working on something and all interested and if I let myself keep going until eleven, then forget it. I will be up, it will take me a couple hours to fall asleep.

Mom: Yeah.

Lori: But if I make sure that I turn off the computer, everything is off by ten and I'm in bed say by ten fifteen, ten thirty, like ready to relax and, you know, not doing any more computer **glowing rectangle** things.

Mom: Right, right.

Lori: Then it works really well. But if I get in that sort of that pattern of working on something interesting late at night and I am **left to my own devices** I will eventually still turn the day around the other way.

Mom: I've done that too. What I've -

Lori: And I'll keep on staying up later.

Mom: Right. And one thing I've found that really affects me being able to go to sleep is I cannot eat or drink alcohol like within two or three hours of going to bed.

Lori: That's interesting.

Mom: Because I don't know if it's like digestion or what but sometimes I will even kind of think I am hungry and, "Oh, I'll just have a snack," you know, especially that late glass of wine and I only drink one glass of wine, at the most a glass and a half, I can never **get through** that second glass. But if I do it **right before** I go to bed, I don't know, it just... I don't go to sleep. So I've learned not, you know, if I'm going to have dinner and a glass of wine it's got to be at least two, preferably three, hours before I go to bed.

Lori: It's **funny** you mention the wine because I have not been... I used to have like a small glass of wine, actually, when I'd get in bed. I **would** read for a little while and drink my little glass of wine, but I haven't been drinking the wine and I'm going to have to check one day and see if it **makes a difference**.

Mom: It makes a difference.

Lori: I stopped -

Mom: I mean yeah -

Lori: - doing that around the time I started sleeping better, but I was also doing all these other things so I don't know which **variable** might have actually had an effect.

Mom: But yeah, my natural rhythm is to be... get up early and go to bed early.

Lori: Yeah. I think that's totally... that's what I've been doing as well. Now I'm real... I get really, really, really sleepy at around eight o'clock but then we're still doing our evening TV thing, so I can't say, "Okay, going to bed now," so...and then I kind of **get a second wind**. But

I've been waking up somewhere between four thirty and like six thirty every day. Usually between four thirty and five. And I just get up because I wake up and I'm like, "Well, I'm wide awake."

Mom: I usually wake up around midnight to go to the bathroom because I've gone to bed so early. You know, if you've gone to bed at eight thirty or nine. And then usually I really – when I first fall asleep – I really sleep soundly, because I'll wake up and think it's like three or four o'clock in the morning, and sometimes I'll look at my watch and it's like eleven thirty. And everybody else is still up and I have been **out like a light**.

Lori: Funny.

Mom: So then I'll get up and go to the bathroom and go back to bed, and then I will usually sleep until around four, then go back to sleep and then just wait for – at home I wait for, you know, my coffee pot goes off automatically. Here [where I am living right now] I have to actually get up and push a little button and go back to bed.

Lori: Oh dear!

Mom: It's such a trauma. But I survive.

Lori: Can you say "**first world problems**"?

Mom: Yeah. **Ain't it the truth!**

Lori: "Oh my God, I have to push the button on my coffee pot! I have to get up and..."

Mom: Well that's the thing, you know, if it was right here where I could reach it and just go take my arm out and go, "Bonk," but no, I have to get out of bed, walk ten feet and push a button and then get all the way back into bed.

Lori: Oh, how do you manage? How do you **put up with** that?

FINAL WORDS

OK, that's all for this episode, thanks so much for listening. If the conversation was challenging for you, I highly suggest you get the transcript and vocabulary notes to support your listening.

You can find it at betteratenglish.com/003

And if you have questions, comments, or feedback, I sure love hearing from you. And you can email or leave a voicemail at betteratenglish.com/contact

All right, then, that's all for this time -- happy learning everyone and bye for now!

(Vocabulary notes on next page)

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VOCABULARY NOTES

In the text	Basic form	Notes
how ya doin'?	<i>How are you doing?</i>	This is the informal spoken form of <i>How are you doing?</i> It means <i>How are you?</i>
good sport		someone who is always reasonable willing to help, especially in awkward or difficult situations
running around	<i>to run around</i>	to be very busy doing a lot of different things
nice and early		if you put "nice and" before an adjective, it means that you find it pleasant. Examples: <i>nice and early</i> (speaker likes that it is early), <i>nice and clean</i> (speaker likes that it is clean). Note: you can't say <i>early and nice</i> , etc. The <i>nice and</i> needs to come first.
purportedly		said by some people to be real or true, but not <u>proved</u> to be real or true. Similar to <i>supposedly</i> , <i>allegedly</i>
sitting up	<i>to sit up</i>	(Br. E) to go to bed later than usual
dozing off	<i>to doze off</i>	to start to sleep, especially when you don't intend to (like during a lecture, or when you are trying to watch TV or read a book).

getting (too) much out of this	<i>to get something out of something</i>	to get pleasure, enjoyment, or benefit from something. Note that in this example, <i>too</i> could be replaced by <i>very</i> , <i>so</i> , or even omitted.
turn it off	<i>to turn something off</i>	to stop a piece of equipment working temporarily by pressing a button or by moving a switch
the next thing I know	<i>the next thing one knows</i>	An idiom that means that you suddenly realize something, or suddenly become aware of something
wee	<i>to wee</i>	(Slang, mildly vulgar) to urinate
circadian rhythm		<i>circadian</i> relates to a period of 24 hours. <i>Circadian rhythm</i> is the name for the changes that happen in animals' bodies over 24 hours .
skew	<i>to skew</i>	In this text, the meaning is <i>to change in a certain direction</i> . For example, to go to bed and get up a little bit later each day.
a fruit from your tree		This is Lori playing with language. She has inherited qualities from her mother (like a fruit from a tree). A similar expression is <i>we are apples from the same tree</i> .
to sleep in	<i>to sleep in</i>	to sleep later than your normal time (because you want to). Compare with <i>to oversleep</i> , which means that you accidentally sleep later than you planned to.
bizarre		strange and difficult to explain or understand
turn the day around	<i>to turn something around</i>	to change something. By going to bed later and getting up later each day, Lori is changing the hours of her "normal daytime" so that she is awake at night and sleeping in the day.
observe	<i>to observe something</i>	in this example, <i>observe</i> = to practice, to do regularly

sleep hygiene		Hygiene = habits and actions that keep people healthy, usually related to keeping yourself and your environment clean. Sleep hygiene = habits and practices that help you sleep well.
stuck in	<i>to be stuck in</i>	[Br. Eng., spoken] working or doing something with determination, energy and/or enthusiasm
glowing rectangle		Lori is playfully referring to the glowing rectangular screens that are everywhere in modern life: TV's, smartphones, tablets, computers, etc.
left to my own devices	<i>to be left to one's own devices</i>	to do what you want with nobody stopping you. Also <i>to leave someone to their own devices</i> = to let someone else do what they want without stopping them.
get through	<i>to get through something</i>	to finish, to complete
right before		directly before, just before, immediately before. You can also say "right after."
funny		funny has many meanings in English. Here Lori means that her mother's comment is interesting, and worth talking more about. The phrase It's funny you mention... is often used in this way. <u>Funny is a tricky word – it is worth looking it up in the dictionary to learn more about</u>
would		This is a good example of using the modal verb <i>would</i> to talk about a past habit or routine.
makes a difference	<i>to make a difference</i>	If something <i>makes a difference</i> , it has a noticeable effect.
variable		(noun) A variable is something that can change and affect the result of a situation. If you change more than one <i>variable</i> at a time, you don't know which one had an effect.

get a second wind	<i>to get a second wind</i>	If you get a second wind, you get a feeling that you are no longer as tired as you were
out like a light	<i>to be out like a light</i>	to fall asleep very fast
first world problems		a relatively trivial or small problem or frustration compared to the serious problems people might have in the developing world (clean drinking water, war, famine, etc.). Speakers mention “first world problems” to show that they feel guilty about complaining, or want to point out that someone else's problem is actually very trivial compared to serious problems.
Ain't it the truth!		In informal American English, “Ain't it the truth” is a way to show you emphatically (strongly) agree.
put up with	<i>to put up with something</i>	to tolerate something