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Episode #085

Food Idioms in English

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Hi everyone! I am Georgiana, founder of speakenglishpodcast.com. My mission is to help you to speak English fluently.

Do you want to sound more like an English native speaker?

Well, today you'll learn six new popular expressions in English related to food. After that, I'll practice your speaking with a funny mini-story.

Ok. Let's learn some new idioms:

There's a type of food that always makes us feel better because it reminds us of our childhood. That kind of food is called **COMFORT FOOD**.

We eat **comfort food** because it comforts us.

Although we tend to feel better after eating this type of food, it is not necessarily healthy food.

Example:

"After a tiring day, it's so wonderful to cook some **comfort food** and read a good book."

And who doesn't like eating cake? I just can't say no to a **piece of cake**. And when something is extremely easy to do, we say it's a **PIECE OF CAKE**.

However, this expression doesn't have anything to do with food.

There's another similar expression. Instead of "piece of cake," you could say "**AS EASY AS PIE**."

Examples:

"I thought the test would be difficult, but it was a **piece of cake**."

"Compared to learning Japanese, learning English was **as easy as pie**."

But you know what? Sadly, there are times when **YOU CAN'T HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO**.

Yeah! You guessed, right! This is another expression :)

When someone says, "**you can't have your cake and eat it too**," they mean that you can't have two incompatible things at the same time.

In other words, the cake cannot be eaten and saved for later.

Example:

"James works too hard to pay for that luxurious house. The irony here is that he never has any time to stay at home and enjoy it. I guess **he can't have his cake and eat it too.**"

Do you like these two expressions? I hope that you are not hungry because I'll continue talking about food.

So my question is: Do you enjoy eating cake? And please be honest.

Well, if you love cake, then eat as much as you want but make sure you don't **bite more than you can chew**, or you'll choke!

There's a popular expression called to **BITE MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW.**"

When someone **has bitten off more than they can chew**, it means that they are trying to do something too complicated.

So please, **don't bite off more than pie than you can chew** :)

Example:

"Tom has taken on too much responsibility. He **shouldn't bite off more than he can chew.** "

Anyway, after so much pie, let's talk about something less sweet.

There's a common expression called "**TO TAKE SOMETHING WITH A PINCH OF SALT.**"

What do you think this means?

No. It doesn't mean that I want to eat something with a pinch of salt.

You could use the expression "To take something with a pinch of salt" or the word **skeptical**. When you

are skeptical, you don't entirely believe something you are told because you think it's unlikely to be true.

Therefore, you **take things with a pinch of salt** when you don't believe something is completely true. You're skeptical.

Example:

"I don't trust everything Sarah says, so I **take anything she says with a pinch of salt.**"

Let's listen to the new expressions once again:

- **COMFORT FOOD**
- **PIECE OF CAKE**
- **AS EASY AS PIE**
- **YOU CAN'T HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO**
- **BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW**
- **TAKE SOMETHING WITH A PINCH OF SALT**

And don't worry about it. You probably won't remember the meaning right away. If that's the case, I recommend that you listen to the lesson several times until you're familiar with the new idioms.

Mini-Story

(Practice your Speaking)

Great! Now, you can practice with a **mini-story**. You will be able to go over the vocabulary we saw in the first section.

A mini-story is very simple. I give you information using phrases, and then I ask you questions.

I recommend that you listen several times until it's easy to answer.

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Jason used to eat all the time, especially when he was stressed-out.

When did Jason eat? Did he eat only occasionally?

No. No. Jason didn't use to eat occasionally. He used to eat all the time.

Did he eat more when he was stressed-out?

Yes. He ate more, especially when he was stressed out.

What type of food did Jason eat? Did he only eat greens?

No. Jason didn't only eat greens. Jason ate **comfort food**.

Jason thought that since he ate all day, it would be easy to become a professional cook.

Why did Jason think being a cook would be as easy as pie?

Because he ate all day, he thought being a cook would be a piece of cake because he ate all day.

Who ate all day? Jason or the cook?

No. No. The cook didn't eat all day. It was Jason who ate all day.

Did Jason think that becoming a professional cook would be a piece of cake?

Yes. Jason thought that becoming a professional cook would be **a piece of cake**.

However, his friends were skeptical about Jason's intentions.

Were Jason's friends convinced of his intentions?

No. Jason's friends weren't convinced about his intentions. They were skeptical about Jason's intentions.

Did Jason's friends take his intentions with a pinch of sugar?

No. No. Jason's friends didn't take his intentions with a pinch of sugar. They took his intentions **with a pinch of salt**.

Jason realized he had to stop eating all day and start learning to cook.

Did Jason realize anything?

Yeah. Jason figured something out. He realized he had to stop eating all day.

Jason wanted to learn how to cook only a dish.

Right?

No. No. Jason didn't only want to learn how to cook a dish. He wanted to become a professional cook.

Did Jason realize that he could have his cake and eat it too?

No. Jason realized he couldn't have his cake and eat it.

He couldn't keep eating all day if he wanted to become a professional cook.

Finally, Jason took it easy and became an excellent amateur cook, but not a professional.

Was Jason stressed out about becoming a professional cook?

No. He wasn't stressed out. Jason took it easy. He was relaxed.

What did Jason become? A professional cook?

No. Jason didn't become a professional cook. He became an amateur cook.

Why didn't Jason become a professional cook?

Because he didn't want to **bite any more than he could chew.**

Becoming a professional cook would be too much effort for Jason.

Perfect! It's the end of this **mini-story**. As you can see, through questions and answers you can practice and improve your speech.

If you want to get hours of audio with mini-stories and point of view lessons, I'd like to recommend my Fluency Course.

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Well, I think that's enough for today. Try to listen to this content several times.

Please help me spread the word about the podcast. Tell your friends and family about the show and leave some comments on iTunes when you have some minutes. That would make me very happy!

I'll see you next week!

Bye! Bye!



Georgiana

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