EPISODE 382

Stop Comparing Yourself

Full transcript · mini-story · vocabulary review

Today, we're going to talk about something very common: **comparing yourself to others**.

Maybe you know this feeling.

You open social media, and suddenly everyone seems to have a better life than you.

One person is traveling.
Another person has a perfect body.
Another person has a beautiful house.
Another person has a wonderful job.
And another person is drinking coffee on a beach while you are answering emails in your kitchen.

Then you start thinking:

"Why is my life not like that?"
"Why am I behind?"
"Why are they doing better than me?"

But here is the problem: when you compare yourself to others, you usually compare your real life with their best moments.

You see their smile, but you don't see their stress.
You see their success, but you don't see their problems.
You see the photo, but you don't see the whole story.

In English, we say:

to compare yourself to someone

For example:

"I often compare myself to people who are more successful."

Another useful expression is:

to feel behind

If you feel behind, you feel that other people are moving faster than you in life.

For example:

"She feels behind because many of her friends are married and have children."

Or:

"He feels behind because his classmates have better jobs."

But life is not a race. And people don't all move at the same speed.

Another useful expression is:

to keep up with others

To keep up with others means to try to stay at the same level as other people.

For example:

"He bought an expensive car because he wanted to keep up with his neighbors."

But trying to keep up with everyone is exhausting. There will always be someone with more money, more success, more beauty, more confidence, or more free time.

So, what can we do?

First, remember that you are only seeing part of the picture.

Second, focus on your own progress. Maybe you are not where you want to be yet, but you are learning. You are improving. You are moving forward.

And the same is true when you are learning English.

Maybe someone speaks faster than you. Maybe another person understands movies without subtitles. Maybe someone has a better accent, or they seem more confident in conversations.

But that doesn't mean you are failing.

You are learning step by step. Every time you listen, every time you repeat, every time you understand a little more, you are making progress.

So don't compare your English with someone else's English. Compare your English today with your English six months ago.

Third, remember this expression:

You are on your own path.

This means your life is your life. You don't need to copy someone else's life.

Mini-Story

Speaking Practice

Answer the questions aloud with short and quick responses. Repeat the Mini-Story several times to improve your speaking and listening.

Let's start!

Leo had a problem. He compared himself to everyone.

Did Leo compare himself to everyone?
Yes, Leo compared himself to everyone.

Was this a good habit?
No, this wasn't a good habit. It made him feel bad.

Every morning, Leo opened social media and felt behind.

Did Leo open social media every morning?
Yes, Leo opened social media every morning.

How did he feel? Happy?
No, no. He didn't feel happy. He felt behind.

First, Leo saw Max, his old classmate. Max had a new car and expensive sunglasses.

Who did Leo see first?
Leo saw Max, his old classmate.

Did Max have a new spaceship?
No, no. Max had a new car, not a new spaceship.

Leo looked at his old bicycle and said, "My bicycle sounds like an angry duck."

Did Leo have a new car?
No, Leo didn't have a new car. He had an old bicycle.

What did his bicycle sound like?
His bicycle sounded like an angry duck.

Then Leo saw Anna, his neighbor. Anna had just finished a marathon and looked fresh.

Who did Leo see next?
Leo saw Anna, his neighbor.

Did Anna look tired?
No, Anna didn't look tired. She looked fresh.

Leo said, "I get tired when I run to the microwave."

When did Leo get tired?
Leo got tired when he ran to the microwave.

Was Leo comparing himself again?
Yes, Leo was comparing himself again.

Then Leo saw Mr. Fluffy, the neighbor's cat. Mr. Fluffy had 20,000 followers.

Who was Mr. Fluffy?
The neighbor's cat. Mr. Fluffy was the neighbor's cat.

Did Mr. Fluffy have many followers?
Yes, Mr. Fluffy had 20,000 followers.

Mr. Fluffy slept all day, ate expensive food, and never answered emails.

What did Mr. Fluffy do all day?
He slept all day.

Did Mr. Fluffy answer emails?
No, Mr. Fluffy never answered emails.

Leo whispered, "Even this cat is more successful than me."

Did Leo compare himself to a cat?
Yes, Leo compared himself to a cat.

Was that reasonable?
No, that wasn't reasonable. It was ridiculous.

So Leo decided to live like Mr. Fluffy for one day.

Did Leo decide to live like the cat?
Yes, Leo decided to live like the cat.

Was this a smart plan?
No. It was a terrible plan.

Leo slept on the couch, ignored his emails, and waited for someone to bring him expensive food.

Did Leo sleep on the couch?
Yes, Leo slept on the couch.

What did he wait for?
He waited for someone to bring him expensive food.

After five hours, nobody brought him anything. Not even a sandwich.

Did anyone bring Leo food?
No, nobody brought him food.

How long did he wait?
He waited for five hours.

Finally, Leo got up and made his own sandwich.

What did Leo make?
Leo made his own sandwich.

Was Leo a successful cat?
No, Leo wasn't a successful cat. He was just a hungry man.

While eating, Leo realized something important.

Did Leo realize something important?
Yes, he realized something important.

When did he realize it?
He realized it while eating his sandwich.

Leo said, “I don’t need Max’s car, Anna’s marathon, or Mr. Fluffy’s lifestyle. I need my own path.”

Did Leo need Max’s car?
No, Leo didn’t need Max’s car.

Did he need Mr. Fluffy’s lifestyle?
No, he definitely didn’t need Mr. Fluffy’s lifestyle.

What did Leo need?
Leo needed his own path.

So Leo closed social media and took his bicycle for a ride.

Did Leo close social media?
Yes, he closed social media.

What did he take for a ride?
He took his bicycle for a ride.

The bike still sounded like an angry duck. But this time, Leo smiled.

Did the bike still sound like an angry duck?
Yes, the bike still sounded like an angry duck.

Why did Leo smile?
He smiled because he was finally on his own path. Pun intended!

Note: A pun is a joke based on words with two meanings.

Leo was finally on the right track.

Pun intended! 😊

And that’s the end of the mini-story.

Remember: you can admire other people without comparing yourself to them.

You can learn from others without feeling behind.

And you can respect someone else’s path while staying on your own.

That’s all for today. Thanks for listening, and I’ll see you in the next episode.

Review

Vocabulary from This Episode

Review the most useful words and expressions before listening again.

01 compare yourself to someone judge yourself against another person.	**06 on your own path** following your individual journey instead of copying others.
02 feel behind believe that other people are progressing faster than you.	**07 make progress** improve or move closer to a goal.
03 keep up with others try to stay at the same level or speed as other people.	**08 confidence** belief in yourself and your abilities.
04 move forward continue making progress.	**09 success** achieving something you wanted or worked for.
05 step by step gradually, one small stage at a time.	**10 exhausting** extremely tiring.

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