



All Ears English Episode 216:

Find Out Why Americans Don't Want to Live at Home

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 216: “Find Out Why Americans Don’t Want to Live at Home.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel’, from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Today we are back with our temporary co-host, Kristy, the ‘Fearless New Yorker’. Let’s get to the show.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: In today’s episode, you’ll hear some personal stories from Lindsay and Kristy about why we moved out of our family’s homes at age 18.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Guys, listen up. I know you wanna (want to) feel comfortable and confident when you speak English, but the only way to do that is to



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[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey, Kristy. How are you doing today?

Kristy: Great Lindsay. I am awesome. How are you doing?

Lindsay: Oh, my god. I am feeling great. It's a gorgeous day here in Boston. The air is crisp, (you know), it's mid-fall and I just love this time of year. I'm feeling good today. How 'bout (about) you?

Kristy: Yeah. I'm feeling good. (Um), I'm excited about the bright sunny skies that we should have tonight, today.

Lindsay: Yeah. Tonight. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. So today I wanna (want to) talk about an interesting topic, which is the fact that, (you know), here in the US, we have this expectation in society that we're expected to kinda (kind of) get out of our parents' home at about age 18, right?

Kristy: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: So we, we go off to college and even after college, a lot of times we're not expected to go back home and move back in...

Kristy: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: ...at home. What do you think about this trend, and what about you Kristy, (like) did this happen to you? Did you move out? What's your situation with this?

Kristy: Yeah, well, (I mean), at 18, I went off to college, (uh), out of state in another – so really far away. I was living in Hawaii, then I moved to Nevada. (Um)...



Lindsay: Okay.

Kristy: ...and then I came back, (uh), to go to school in Hawaii. So I was living in the dorms and then on the weekend, I would come back to the – my parents' house, (um)... But, (I mean), for me...

Lindsay: Okay.

Kristy: ...in a way I felt like I was still there. (Like), I still had a room. (Um), but I was...

Lindsay: Oh, so you went to college in Hawaii...

Kristy: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: ...but was it on a different island? Which island did you grow up on Kristy?

Kristy: (Uh), I grew up on Oahu. It's O-a-h-u.

Lindsay: Interesting. Oh my god, I've never been to Hawaii. I'd like to go. Can I come visit you at your parents?

Kristy: Yeah, you can. You can. It's nice. Yeah.

Lindsay: And so you grew up in Hawaii, so then you went to college on a different island?

Kristy: Oh, actually the same island so I could drive home within (like) 40, 40 minutes. So, (I mean), that was there. And I think my parents – I think it really depends on, (yeah), culture and (um) – maybe in Hawaii, since there's a lot of Asians there, it's mostly Asians.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Kristy: ...(um), there's still the sense of (kind of) the family and living there.

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Kristy: And in addition because rent is really, really high and it's very expensive in Hawaii. It's a small...



Lindsay: Oh, I didn't know that.

Kristy: ...island, so it's easy to get somewhere. It's almost – lots of people do (kind of), (like), they still live with their parents. (Um), but it's not – I don't know. It's, it's (sort of) like – it seems like they live with them, but they're (sort of) separate. It's not as much like they're still with them.

Lindsay: Okay. So are they having dinner with their parents? (Like), are their parents cooking? Are they living (like) in, in a garage – (uh), sorry – in a, an apartment above the garage, that type of deal. Just (like) slightly removed?

Kristy: Yeah, I think it depends. If you're, if you're a guy, they might still be having their mom cook for them.

Lindsay: Oh.

Kristy: And so...

Lindsay: All right.

Kristy: Yeah, so I think that's the case and I think, (uh), mentally, I (o-), I still think that my family's there and I'll say I'm going home there. And, (you know), mentally I always thought if I needed to go back I would, but when I talk to other people, (um), lots of times they'll say, "Oh, yeah, my parents were very clear 'When you reach 18, you're on your own. You're paying for your own things.'" So...

Lindsay: Right.

Kristy: ...I think there is a cultural difference a little bit.

Lindsay: Yeah. That's huge. And I, I've talked to a lot of our listeners and our, our students and often it's really different, (right). A lot of countries around the world – the expectation, I think, is that you'll be living with your family until you get married...

Kristy: (Uhn).



Lindsay: ...if you're a woman...

Kristy: (Uhn).

Lindsay: ...(right). So that's really interesting. (I mean), in my case, (you know), when I turned 18, I went to college in Virginia...

Kristy: (Uhn).

Lindsay: ...so that's pretty far south. I grew up in New Hampshire.

Kristy: (Uhn).

Lindsay: And I remember, I remember being really upset to leave my parents, (right). I was crying.

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: ...and I was homesick. It was horrible, but then, (um), I did move back after college for about, (um) four months before I moved to Tokyo. So there was that space where I needed to save money...

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: ...(um)... And that was hard. (Like), moving back into the home with them was a little bit embarrassing for me.

Kristy: (Uhn). (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: (Um), because I think we do have that (kind of) bias where we look at people and we say, "Oh, if you're living at home after college..." – we might kinda (kind of) put people in a category as being like a loser or – I don't know. What do you think?

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: Is, is that true?

Kristy: It is true.

Lindsay: (Uh-hmm).



Kristy: (Like), okay, so I was watching *The Bachelorette* and...

Lindsay: Oh.

Kristy: ...there was this, oh, there's this big part, where, (um), the next segment. They're like oh this big thing that the guy, the guy who's trying to romance the girl, his bachelorette is – there's a girl who's a bachelor, who's not married yet and all the guys are trying to win her heart over. And so the, one of the third finalists was like, "I have something to tell you. It's really big." He's like, "I still live at home with my parents."

Lindsay: Oh, no. Interesting. Interesting.

Kristy: So he was probably, (um), maybe 28, (um), and he was trying, again, save money, (uh), for (like) a career change.

Lindsay: I see. So, so yeah especially because we've just gone through this recession right. The great recession in 2008. It feels like we're still in it doesn't it?

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: I feel like we're still in it, but we're out of it. But a lot of people did move back home.

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: (Um), and I think that was hard for a lot of people in our generation, (right). So we're Generation Y. We're the millennial generation. Kristy, how old are you?

Kristy: I'm 32.

Lindsay: Okay. So I'm 33, so we're in the same generation. And that's, (you know), th-th-th-that's been tough for people of our generation...

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...(um), to do that.



Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: And yeah, it's just really interesting.

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: So, so Kristy, we're gonna (going to) take just a second right now to thank our sponsors.

Kristy: Okay.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey guys, do you wanna (want to) stop feeling afraid when you speak English? And do you wanna (want to) actually sound natural? Well, the only way to do that is to start speaking with Natives and stop thinking about it and start doing it. Now, you can go over to Italki and you can choose from 400 different Native English teachers online. It's awesome guys. This is my recommendation for you. This is the way to get fluent. Go over to AllEarsEnglish.com/Italki, and you'll have a chance to buy your first lesson and then you'll also get ten US dollars in free Italki credits. That's awesome guys. So go over to AllEarsEnglish.com/Italki. That's I-t-a-l-k-i.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Okay, so let's get back into it Kristy.

Kristy: All right. Yes.

Lindsay: Are you there?

Kristy: I'm here.

Lindsay: Excellent. Awesome. So, I wanna (want to) know about life in New York. (Like), what's typical? What's the typical living situation in New York? Do you know anyone who grew up in New York and is still living with their parents in the city?

Kristy: Oh, that's a good question. I think – I haven't met a... that many people living with their parents in Manhattan. The outer boroughs, which (incl-),



consist of Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx, which are technically still part of the...

Lindsay: Staten Island.

Kristy: ...Staten Island, still part of the city.

Lindsay: Come on, don't forget Staten Island.

Kristy: Of course, of course. (Um), so all those boroughs. (Um), I think it might be a little bit more different. (Um), it, they're not – (uh), there's a lot more people who grew up in the outer boroughs and might be living with their parents, (um), for different reasons.

Lindsay: Yeah. So that kinda (kind of) makes sense, (right) because New York is just so expensive. And if you grew up in New York and you know you wanna (want to) stay in New York City. (You know), I think I would probably live with my parents also, but I might be a little bit embarrassed, (you know), going and talking to people and saying that I live with my parents. So what's this about Kristy, this idea that we have to move out...

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...(you know), after age 18? What is this about, (like), within American culture? Whaddya (what do you) think?

Kristy: Well, I think that people assume that someone who's living on their own is independent, mature, able to pay for their own things. And when you live with your parents, people have this idea like "Oh, they're not (um), mature and not (um), self-sufficient."

Lindsay: Yeah. But there is a downside to this (right) 'cause (because) there is... there can be – (you know), it's tough to go out. (You know), you've just graduated from college...

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).



Lindsay: ...and let's say you moved to New York City. (You know), I moved to New York City when I came back to the US from Tokyo because that felt like my only natural progression.

Kristy: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: I had always wanted to live in New York and I said, "Hey, let's do it," (right). But god, pounding the pavement trying to find a, a job, trying to find an apartment with...

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: ...without much – (you know), I had the emotional support from my parents, obviously, phone calls and visits, but not a whole lot of financial support.

Kristy: (Uh-hmm).

Lindsay: (Um), (you know), that's kind of... that can be lonely sometimes.

Kristy: Oh, yeah.

Lindsay: And I think we end up with people being a bit isolated here in the US. What do you think?

Kristy: Yeah, yeah. Especially where things are... places where the rent is very high – because in New York City, or New York, where the rent is going to be more around 1,000 – 1200, people are really...

Lindsay: Per month, did you mean?

Kristy: Yeah, for a, for a month, (um), and it's barely even – and that's if you rent a room. That's, (um) – people are spending almost 70% of their rent on – I'm sorry, their salary on rent and that's – usually people say you should only spend 30%. So people...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Kristy: There's a word that some people might like. (Um), it's called 'the hustle'. Like...



Lindsay: Oh, 'the hustle'. Love it. What's the hustle?

Kristy: 'The hustle' is just trying to make ends meet, trying to make enough money to cover rent and...

Lindsay: Tryna, tryna (trying to) – wh-what's that expression? Can you pull that out one more time? Trying to make what? Trying to make...

Kristy: (Um), trying to make enough money to cover the rent.

Lindsay: Yeah, or 'to make ends meet', (right). I like that expression.

Kristy: Right.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Kristy: Right.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Kristy: You can't hate the hustle. It's a, it's a very funny term, but it's true because in New York City where you have to walk everywhere and catch the subway and you're doing it all really to make enough money to cover your rent and then make enough money to eat. It's...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Kristy: ...it's a journey.

Lindsay: It's a journey. And the kind of living situation that we put ourselves through especially in our 20s. (You know), I'm gonna (going to) be candid here and when I was living in New York, I was in a 2-bedroom apartment and there were three of us. So one of us was in the living room.

Kristy: Oh, yeah.

Lindsay: It was a (rail-) – Kristy listen to this. It was a railroad apartment.

Kristy: Wow!

Lindsay: That is just insane. What is a railroad apartment, Kristy, do you know?



Kristy: Yeah, that's when you have to go through another person's room to get to another... your room or another room.

Lindsay: Exactly. So the entire apartment guys, if you're listening in here, is set up like railroad tracks. So that means you have to walk through the entire apartment if you're in the back room, walk through everyone else's room. And this, this – (I mean), I'm not doing this ever again, (right). Obviously, this is only something that you can do as a crazy 20 [crosstalk].

Kristy: When you're excited.

Lindsay: When you're excited and you don't spend any time at home and you're always out in the city, right.

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: You're out learning languages, you're out enjoying life. (Um), but that's the kind of sacrifice that I made to live in Manhattan...

Kristy: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: ...and to live in Brooklyn, and, (you know), I'm glad I did it, but honestly, right now, I don't think I could...

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...I could do it again.

Kristy: Yeah, yeah. Excitement's over. 'Cause (because) I, I was the same. (I mean), when I first moved to New York I lived totally in an unsafe, (um), (sort of) situation at times like, (you know), I don't know if I had a contract for my lease and...

Lindsay: Oh god.

Kristy: ...all that kind of stuff, people I didn't know living in a room that had no windows, (um) just so I could...

Lindsay: Wow, Kristy.



Kristy: ...pay so little bit of rent. So I...

Lindsay: So, so were you, were you in Queens? Was that in Queens or in Manhattan or...? Where was that?

Kristy: The first place I lived in was in Brooklyn, (um), in like Sunset Park area. And...

Lindsay: Oh, okay.

Kristy: ...it was (um) – yeah, I just... I really didn't know anything about anywhere. But I was so excited to just be independent, truly independent because before that, (I mean), I would go home, I was still near my parents...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Kristy: ...so it didn't feel like I was really independent.

Lindsay: That's, I think that's what it comes down to. I think here – well, I can only speak for myself and what I'm hearing from you, it sounds like it's similar. I think here – (uh), (you know), I-I'm willing to, (you know), give up some freedom in terms of my space or my living conditions to be independent...

Kristy: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...to be in the city on my own, paying my own rent. I would rather be doing that than be living in my hometown or even in the suburb with my family but having maybe a more comfortable household situation and having great meals. (Like) that's just my priority, and I think these days if you look at 20, 30-somethings in, in the urban areas, that's what they want, that's what – and I think that reflects a little bit on American culture, like that's...

Kristy: Oh, yeah.

Lindsay: ...what we go after a lot of times. Not to generalize.

Kristy: (Uh-huh).

Lindsay: It's hard to say something about one entire culture, (right), and that's the struggle we always have on this podcast. But it's super interesting.



Kristy: It's a – well, I think it's definitely true for – (um), they all say American culture is they – we, we really embrace independence, concept of feeling independent and free and it, it kind of relates to this topic of wanting to move out and saying to yourself, 'I'm independent. I have nobody who's asking what time I'm going to be home tonight.'

Lindsay: Right, right. So we'll go for the hustle over the cozy home.

Kristy: (Uh-hmm), (uh-hmm).

Lindsay: I like that. Awesome. Well, thanks for chatting with me today Kristy.

Kristy: Thanks for having me Lindsay, it was a lot of fun.

Lindsay: Absolutely.

Both: See you.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

