

## Chatterbox #245 – Shake up your life

### Episode description

Have you ever felt like your life is a bit boring, like you're stuck doing the same old routine every day? Then listen to this Chatterbox episode with Andrew and Kassy, where they introduce some useful tips on how to shake up your life and appreciate the world around you.

### Fun fact

According to the Alzheimer's Association, shaking things up and staying active in your life are some of the best ways to prevent Alzheimer's or memory loss later in life. Apart from a clean diet and exercising, doctors say that keeping social, challenging your brain, and continuously learning and discovering new things is the best way to keep your mind fresh, even into old age.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- To shake up [something]
- In a rut
- Out of the blue
- Creepy
- Stumble upon
- To expand one's horizons



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## Transcript

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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript.

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Andrew: You're listening to the Culips English Podcast. To download the study guide for this episode, which includes the transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations, real-world examples, and a quiz, visit our website, Culips.com, C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Hello, everyone. My name is Andrew.

Kassy: And I'm Kassy.

Andrew: And you are listening to Culips.

Good morning, Kassy.

Kassy: Good morning, Andrew.

Andrew: How are you?

Kassy: I'm doing really well. How about you?

Andrew: I'm doing pretty well, too. I have an email that I wanna share with you right off the start here, Kassy, because it's about you.

Kassy: About me?

Andrew: Yeah.

Kassy: What?

Andrew: You know, every episode we ask our listeners to send us an email and from time to time, you guys do. So this is great, and we got one in our inbox recently from Ryoya from Japan—and I'm sorry if I'm mispronouncing that—but Ryoya says, "Dear Culips, thank you for your very interesting and useful podcasts. I listen to them literally every day wherever I go in Toronto." So I guess this listener is living in Toronto. And the email goes on: "I'm a fan of you guys, especially Kassy." Yay, Kassy. So you have a fan. "So I'd appreciate it if you could tell me which episodes have Kassy in them and where I can listen to Kassy's voice anywhere else? If not, please ask her to have her own podcast or something. Thank you."

Kassy: Oh my gosh. Wow, Ryoya, thank you so much.

Andrew: Yeah. So, Ryoya, we are recording several episodes here today with Kassy, so you will be able to hear more of her coming up in the future. And this year, Kassy, we'd like to try and get you back onto Culips as much as we can. Whenever we're in the same place, we usually record, right? So, yeah.

Kassy: I love being here, so anytime.

Andrew: Yeah, that's great. And, Kassy, we have an interesting episode topic today that you have prepared for us.

Kassy: Yes, I read an article recently called "12 ways **to shake up your life.**"

Andrew: Twelve ways **to shake up your life.** So we're going to talk about that topic today.

But just before we do, I'd like to let everyone know about the study guide for this episode. It's available for download on our website, Culips.com, and it's got lots of awesome things that will help you get the most out of this episode. So if you'd like to download the study guide and follow along with us while you're listening here today, we'd recommend that you do that, and you can download it from Culips.com.

So, Kassy, 12 things you can do **to shake up your life.** And maybe we should start by talking about **shake up?**

Kassy: Yeah.

Andrew: What does it mean to **shake up your life?**

Kassy: If your life is, you know, kind of same old, same old. Every day, it's the boring routine. You're feeling a little bit like you're **in a rut**, right?

Andrew: Yeah, things are a little bit boring and stale and just not too interesting.

Kassy: Yeah, then you can use one of these 12 things that I have been reading about to **shake up your life.** Make it more interesting, exciting.

Andrew: Yeah, exactly. This is what **shake up**, it means to change things. To make them fresh and new and exciting.

Kassy: Yeah.

Andrew: We won't have time to go through all 12 items on the list today, but why don't you select some that you want to talk about? What is the first one?

Kassy: OK, the first one maybe isn't so great for you introverts out there.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: You can get outside of your comfort zone. The first one is to go to lunch with someone you barely know.

Andrew: To go to lunch with someone you barely know. So, OK. This kind of makes me feel scared, 'cause I think I'm a little bit introverted.

Kassy: I actually did this recently and it was fantastic.

Andrew: Oh, yeah? OK. So who is this person that you barely knew? Was it like a work colleague or somebody you had just met recently?

Kassy: So I have a very tiny, private tutoring business in my town, and this woman was looking for someone to take over one of her student's classes. She's also an English tutor.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: She's from the US, but she's Korean-American and she has had the most amazingly cool, crazy life.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: I'm not going to go into detail, but hearing about her life and meeting someone just **out of the blue**—I had no idea she was like that. And just eating lunch with her and hearing her stories made me feel so inspired to follow some of her exciting adventures and, like, experience them for my own.

Andrew: Wow, OK. So that's a totally new experience that you never would have had, maybe wouldn't have been inspired in this way, had you not had lunch with this woman.

Kassy: Exactly.

Andrew: Wow, OK. So maybe I should try it.

Kassy: You definitely should.

Andrew: I'll have to go through my acquaintances and find somebody that I barely know. I guess you could also interpret this as meeting somebody new, right? Hanging out and making a new friend. This is always good.

Kassy: And they don't even have to be someone that you'll see again, necessarily.

Andrew: Right.

Kassy: It could be someone, you know, you meet in the subway who's not **creepy**. You have lunch, you learn things about each other and then you part ways.

Andrew: Yeah, sounds good. OK. I like it.

What is the next item on the list?

Kassy: The next one is to take a different route on your way to work.

Andrew: Take a different route on your way to work. And you're right there, Kassy, there's two ways that we can say this word, right? I think I have no preference, sometimes I say route, sometimes I say route. How about you?

Kassy: Same. I prefer route, maybe, I guess.

Andrew: OK. R-O-U-T-E is the spelling and this just means take a different path or different way to go to work or school or wherever you're going. I like this one.

Kassy: Yeah, one time I did this and I found the most delicious, amazing pizza shop.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: I never would have found it if I just kept going my same old routine.

Andrew: Yeah, that's interesting. I haven't done this recently on my way to work. But I did do this recently on my way to the subway station. I took a new route to the subway station, which is about, I don't know, a 10-minute walk from my house, a little under 10 minutes. And when I was doing this, I found an LP bar. In Korea, there are LP bars, which are kind of little bars where they have lots of vinyl records and you can go and listen to old music, and I love old music and old things. I never would have known about this place. I haven't visited it yet, but it's now on my radar as some place I want to go and check out next time I'm in the mood to listen to some old music on vinyl.

Kassy: Yeah, the things that you can **stumble upon** just by changing a tiny little thing in your routine is mind-boggling.

Andrew: I heard that this is also a good strategy to ward off Alzheimer's and forgetfulness.

Kassy: How so?

Andrew: It's just good to, like, not be into the same habit where you could be mindless—if you're always having to pay attention to things and be aware of your surroundings. I don't know, I'm not a doctor, but I read this somewhere online that it's a good strategy for fighting dementia.

Kassy: I could believe it.

Andrew: Yeah, seems good to me. I don't know if you'd have enough different ways to go to work that you could do a different way every day, but you could maybe have, you know, five or six different paths that you alternate between, sounds cool.

What about the next one?

Kassy: Another one is to photograph your city. But this doesn't mean taking random pictures. It means focusing on really unique or minor details. Like, I had a professor in university who made us take 10-second videos of one location every day for a month and see how it changes.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: I think this is to make you more aware of your surroundings.

Andrew: OK. So it's kind of photography project, to photograph your city. Interesting, yeah. I have an acquaintance on Facebook and, last year, he had the new year's resolution to take one photo every day and upload it. And at first I thought this was a stupid resolution, like, oh, your new year's resolution is to be more active on social media? Most people have the opposite, right? They wanna be less active on social media.

Kassy: That's right.

Andrew: His resolution was to be more active on social media and take one photo every day and upload it. But to tell you the truth, I really enjoyed it, because it seems like these days a lot of people are withdrawing from social media or the things that they post are very superficial. It's not personal things. But he went really personal and uploaded pictures about his city, but also his relationship to the city and his family and friends and stuff, and I really enjoyed actually following it over the course of the year.

Kassy: Yeah, and then when you have a mission like that, you realize, you know, if you do your same old, quote-unquote boring routine, there's nothing to post about, right?

Andrew: Right.

Kassy: So you're on a mission every day to find at least one unique thing to put on your social media, which is really cool.

Andrew: Yeah, I think it was a cool project. I don't know if I will do it myself, but I enjoyed looking at his uploads over the course of the last year. I wonder, we're just in a brand new year here, 2020, I'll have to see if he continues into the next year. I have a feeling he's just ready to stop.

Kassy: It was a lot of work.

Andrew: I think it was a lot of work for him, yeah, but he kept it up, so that's cool.

What about any other items on the list? Are there some other ones that you thought were cool?

Kassy: I guess we could talk about one more, which I also really love, and it's to learn something new and something random.

Andrew: Something new and something random, like every day?

Kassy: No, but it could be doing a new hobby. But I recommend picking something completely out of your comfort zone that you could never really imagine yourself trying to do.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: Like, for example, maybe if you are into sports, you could try knitting. Or if you're into knitting, you could try extreme sports.

Andrew: OK. Really toss it up and learn a new hobby that's really, really different from what you're used to.

Kassy: Or if you're really into reading romance novels, you could read a thriller or sci-fi, you know? Just **expanding your horizons**, expanding your mind.

Andrew: Yeah, I think this is a great suggestion and humans, you know, we're creatures of habit. We tend to do the same things over and over. And an expression that you used earlier, we don't like to get outside of our comfort zones too much, we have this little bubble that's comfortable and nice.

Kassy: We're like turtles, you know? In our shell.

Andrew: In our shell. And when we think about going outside of our shell, it's a little bit scary and, yeah, I've thought about doing this. You know, one thing that I'm really, really, really, really bad at is anything to do with visual art. So, like, drawing or anything to do with creating art at all, pottery, anything like this is bad. I thought about maybe taking up drawing and practice sketching.



Kassy: You should definitely do it. Especially in this city, you could find a class for anything.

Andrew: If you had to choose a new hobby, what would you do?

Kassy: I love this podcast, but I'm actually a little bit terrified of public speaking. Being behind a microphone anonymously over, you know, radio or podcast is so different then being in front of a big audience.

Andrew: Absolutely, yeah.

Kassy: I think I would try, you know, maybe Toastmasters or stand-up comedy, which I'd be terrible at but, you know, the best part would be laughing at myself and having others laugh at me, grow my self-esteem or lower it significantly.

Andrew: That's a great one, yeah, I think that would be good, too. I've always been curious about stand-up comedy. I think it would be really, really hard. Maybe one of hardest things that you could ever do is just go up onto a stage and try to make other people laugh.

Kassy: Oh my gosh, I get the sweats just thinking about it.

Andrew: Well, Kassy, thank you for sharing this list with us today. I think those are some great suggestions, but I'd also like to hear from our listeners. I'm wondering, guys, if you have any thoughts about how you could **shake up your life**, how you could make things more interesting and sort of break away from your routine.

If you have any suggestions or if you've done something **maybe to shake up your life** in the past, let us know about it. Send us an email. Our address is [contact@Culips.com](mailto:contact@Culips.com) and we love it when you email us, so please send us a message.

We are also all over the place on social media. We are on YouTube and Facebook and Twitter and Instagram, and it would be cool if you follow us and support us that way. You can just search for the Culips English Podcast to do so.

And, once again, the study guide for this episode is on our website, [Culips.com](http://Culips.com). So check it out and give that study guide a download.

That's it for us today. We'll be back soon with another brand new episode and we'll talk to you then. Goodbye.

Kassy: See ya.



## Detailed Explanations

### To shake up [something]

Phrasal verb

**To shake up [something]** is to make changes to something. Twelve ways to **shake up your life** is the topic of this episode, in which Kassy and Andrew introduce ways to change your daily routine to make your life more interesting.

Depending on the context, this phrase is also written as **shake [something] up**, such as in the expression “let’s **shake things up**,” meaning let’s try something new.

Here are a couple more examples with **to shake up [something]**:

Frank: How are you doing these days?

Tyrone: Oh, you know, the same old, same old. Not much changes in my life these days.

Frank: Why don’t you try **to shake up your routine**?

Tyrone: Like how?

Frank: I don’t know. Maybe join a club or start running in the morning.

Tyrone: Yeah, it just seems like I never have the time or energy for all that.

Frank: You’d be surprised how much energy you get from doing something new.

Catherine: OK, ladies. We’re gonna **shake things up** in here today by working with some new flavours.

Martha: What kind of flavours?

Catherine: We’re gonna try baking with chilli peppers, black licorice, and matcha.

Martha: We really are **shaking things up**. I haven’t baked with any of these ingredients before. I’m not very confident about this.

Catherine: Don’t worry, ladies. These are difficult flavours to work with, but if we master them, you can master baking with anything.



## In a rut Idiom

To be **in a rut** is to be stuck in the same old boring, mundane routine in life, work, or even personal behaviour. In the old days before cars, a rut was literally the grooves in the dirt road created by horse and buggies wearing down the road over time by travelling the same path over and over. If someone says their life is **in a rut**, then they feel like they are stuck in a routine, just like the buggies of the past rolling over the ruts in the road.

Here are a couple more examples with **in a rut**:

Ronan: How are things with you and Bob?

Victoria: I don't know. I think our marriage is kind of **in a rut**. I just don't feel that passion anymore, you know?

Ronan: That's understandable. You guys have two kids and you've been married for over 15 years.

Victoria: Yeah, but we used to be so passionate. We literally couldn't stand to be away from each other.

Ronan: Well, then, maybe you should try shaking things up. Why don't you go on a few fancy dates and get really dressed up for it? You know, make it really special like when you first started dating.

TV ad: Are you stuck **in a rut**? Are you sick of just going through the motions day after day, stuck in the same old routine? Then sign up for the adventure of a lifetime at [changeyourlifetravel.com](http://changeyourlifetravel.com). We provide packages to destinations all around the world. Don't miss out on your chance to escape the office and experience the world!

Missy: Hmm. Maybe we should check it out. It's been forever since we took a vacation. We could do something really big, like a month-long trip!

Hank: I don't know. Do you think we can afford to take off work for that long?

Missy: C'mon, Hank! You've got about a million vacation days saved up and I'm sure Barbara would let me go if I trained a replacement before. Can we go, please?

Hank: Oh, all right. Let's at least look at the website and see what's available.

## Out of the blue

### Idiom

**Out of the blue** is a phrase that means something occurs without warning or unexpectedly. For example, if a son tells his parents **out of the blue** that he's getting married and his parents didn't even know he was engaged, then he has sprung the news on them without warning.

This expression relates to things seeming to appear magically from the big blue sky with no warning or explanation.

Here are a couple more examples with **out of the blue**:

Christy: What's that package sitting on the table?

Diane: I don't know. I didn't order anything. It just came **out of the blue**.

Christy: Open it! Did someone send it to you?

Diane: Yeah, obviously. It has my name on it, but there is no return address and no letter inside.

Christy: What's in it?

Diane: Oh, weird. It's filled with my favourite chocolates and rose petals.

Christy: That's really romantic!

Diane: I think it's creepy. I don't have a boyfriend or anything. What if I have some sort of creepy stalker?

Ned: Guess what? I'm moving to China.

Roger: China! What? Why?

Ned: My boss offered me a promotion **out of the blue**, but he said the position is in China.

Roger: Man, that's amazing! When do you leave?

Ned: The Monday after next.

Roger: That soon? Well, I'm happy for you, but I'm really gonna miss you, man.

## Creepy Adjective

To be **creepy** is to cause an unpleasant feeling of fear or unease. For example, bugs are known as **creepy**-crawlies because people find them scary and disgusting and they crawl along the ground. People are sometimes called **creepy** as well due to their odd behaviour, such as stalking, staring, or expressing emotions that don't reflect the environment around them.

Here are a couple more examples with **creepy**:

Layla: I hate that kid Michael. He's always staring at me when he thinks I'm not looking and following me around everywhere.

Taylor: Yeah, he is a bit **creepy**, isn't he?

Layla: He's not a bit **creepy**. He's a lot **creepy**.

Taylor: Why don't you tell a teacher or something?

Layla: I don't want to get him in trouble. It's not like he's doing anything to me. He just weirds me out.

Daniel: Why are people in horror movies so dumb?

Alex: I know, right? Like, they hear a **creepy** sound and they're like, "Hmm, what's that noise? Let's go investigate."

Daniel: Yeah, like, if I heard a **creepy** noise like that in an old **creepy** house, I would run in the opposite direction!

## Stumble upon

Phrasal verb

To **stumble upon** something is to discover it by chance or happenstance. It is also possible to **stumble across** or **stumble on** something. In this episode, Kassy says it is easy to **stumble upon** interesting things, such as new restaurants or parks, when you change your route on the way to work. In other words, it is easy to discover new things in your neighbourhood if you shake things up and take a different path than your usual one.

Here are a couple more examples with **stumble upon**:

Rita: Do you like Thai food?

Cora: Oh my goodness, I love Thai food!

Rita: Really? I was jogging the other day and I **stumbled upon** this really cool-looking Thai restaurant. Do you wanna check it out with me?

Cora: I'd love to! How about Friday?

Rita: Great. Sounds like a plan.

Drake: Dude, where'd you get that cool baseball card collection? It looks so old school.

Bryant: I think my dad collected them over the years. I **stumbled across** them when I was digging through my dad's old stuff in the garage.

Drake: I bet they're worth some money now.

Bryant: Yeah, maybe, but I'm not selling them. Now that my dad's gone, these are one of those things I wanna keep to remember him by, you know?

Drake: Yeah, I get it. The memory makes them priceless.

## To expand one's horizons

### Phrase

**To expand one's horizons** is to gain experience and learn about new cultures or ways of living. Imagine the things you know are like the horizon, and the things you don't know are like the things you can't see that lie somewhere past the horizon. If you gain new experiences and learn new things, you are expanding your knowledge, thus **expanding the horizon** of your mind and making the world around you more clear and visible.

Here are a couple more examples with **to expand one's horizons**:

Dakshi: Mom, I don't want to go to summer camp. I just wanna stay home with you.

Mom: Dakshi, summer camp will be good for you. You can make new friends, go on adventures, and **expand your horizons**. Staying home with Mommy all summer won't be any fun.

Dakshi: But I'll miss you!

Mom: If you miss me, you can write me a letter. I'll write you a letter every day, too. It's only 2 weeks, not forever.

Dakshi: Yeah, I know. I guess I can do it.

Mom: Sure you can.

Simon: I applied to the Peace Corp last week.

Paul: Really? That's so cool. Aren't you worried it's gonna be difficult? You could be placed where there's no running water or indoor bathrooms.

Simon: Yeah, it might not be what I'm used to, but that's what I'm looking forward to. I want to get out, explore the world, **expand my horizons**, you know?

Paul: Yeah, it's a great way to really learn about a different culture while helping the community. Maybe I should sign up, too.

Simon: Do it! I'll help you fill out the application if you want.

Paul: Thanks! That'd be great.

## Quiz

**1. Which of the words below CANNOT be used in the following sentence?**

**While walking around the neighbourhood, I stumbled \_\_\_\_\_ a cool ice cream shop.**

- a) upon
- b) across
- c) of
- d) on

**2. Which action might be considered creepy?**

- a) falling asleep in class
- b) yelling at a coworker
- c) eating the last piece of cake
- d) smiling oddly or insincerely

**3. If your life is a bit boring and always follows the same routine, than you are stuck in a \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a) ditch
- b) rut
- c) whole
- d) whirlwind

**4. What has a similar meaning to the phrase shake things up?**

- a) make some changes
- b) stir something
- c) make the pot boil
- d) get things started

**5. True or false? The phrase out of the blue means that something that was previously unknown becomes known.**

- a) true
- b) false



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## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Which of the methods in this episode would you like to try the most to shake things up in your life?
2. What are some other ways to shake up one's life?
3. Have you ever tried a hobby that was really outside your comfort zone?
4. Describe a place you stumbled upon completely by chance when travelling.
5. What experience would you like to try to expand your horizons? Why?

## Quiz Answers

1.c    2.d    3.b    4.a    5.b

### Episode credits

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