

## Catch Word #X – Rock

### Transcript

Maura: Hello everybody out there! This is Maura.

Harp: And Harp.

Maura: And we're here with your Culips English learning podcast.

Harp: Yes. Make sure you go to our website, that's Culips.com, C-U-L-I-P-S.com, because there, you can become a member and then you have access to our Learning Material, which includes a transcript, detailed explanation, and even a quiz.

Maura: Yes. And don't forget to contact us. You can send us an email, you can leave us a comment on our website, or you can leave us a comment on Facebook. Because we love to hear from you guys. We love to know what you're thinking and what's going on with you.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: Like right now, for us, in Canada, in Montreal, it's the summertime, Harp and I are having a good time enjoying the weather.

Harp: It's a beautiful summer evening right now.

Maura: Yes. Sometimes it gets a bit too hot, but you know, **we can't complain**, because the winters are long, so we're just **chilling out**, sitting on the patios and having a good time.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: Now, today's episode is a Catch Word episode, and that's where we look at different expressions that we use often, and we tell you how you can use them, what they mean, and we give you examples, too.

Harp: All right, so let's get started with today's Catch Word. What are we gonna talk about today, Maura?

Maura: Well, in this episode, we're going to look at expressions that we use to talk about a kind of person. And this kind of person is a really good friend or a family member who's always there to help you out and support you, especially when you're **going through a difficult time**.

Harp: Yeah. So today's expressions are all related to that person in your life who **is there for you**. When you're having a bad time, when something's wrong in your life, this person **is there for you**.

Maura: Yeah. So it's a good, solid person that you're lucky to have.

Harp: Yes, for sure.

Maura: The first expression that we're going to look at in this episode is to say that **someone is your rock**.

Harp: Yes, **someone is your rock**.

Maura: Right. So you can say **he's my rock**, or **she's your rock**, or any combination, but the important thing to note is that a person is being called a **rock**.

Harp: So, if someone is described as **your rock**, this means that the person is supportive and helps when times are difficult.

Maura: Right. So, when everything in your life is **out of control**, or chaotic, and things aren't going well, the person who is **your rock is there for you**, helping you out, and they're very solid and strong and not affected by all the craziness.

Harp: Exactly. They'll support you, maybe, if you need a little bit of money, or they'll listen to all your problems, or they'll just sit with you if you're crying.

Maura: Right. So, there are so many ways that someone who's **a rock** can be supportive. Like you said, it could be emotionally, or it could be physically, or it could be financially, too.

Harp: Yes. And Maura, why do we say **rock**?

Maura: Well, it is a funny choice, but like I already said, the person who's **your rock** is solid and strong and **there for you** when things are difficult. And **a rock** is also solid and strong and it doesn't change, right? It just sits there and it's a very powerful, heavy thing. So, just like this person **is there for you**.

Harp: Yes, definitely. That makes sense. Let's give some examples with this expression.

Maura: OK.

Maura: Shelley, I really need to talk to you right now.

Harp: What's wrong?

Maura:	I just lost my job. I don't have a job anymore. I don't know what I'm gonna do.
Harp:	Oh no, don't worry, we'll <b>get through this</b> . Let's think about some options. We can look at some new jobs for you to apply to. If you need to, I can lend you some money. Don't worry. <b>I'm here for you</b> .
Maura:	Thank you so much. You know, I knew you'd <b>be there for me</b> . You're <b>my rock</b> .
Harp:	<b>I'm here for you</b> .
Maura:	Thank you so much.

Maura: So, in that example, one person had some bad news and the other person, a friend, was **the rock**, was calm and offered advice and offered to help out that person in whatever way they needed help.

Harp: Exactly. And I hope everyone's lucky enough to have someone like this in their life.

Maura: Yeah, for sure. Do you have someone who you would consider **your rock**?

Harp: Definitely. I'm lucky to have a couple people that are like that for me in my life.

Maura: Very nice, yeah. It's good to have people that you know you can always call and talk to. For me, I know I can always call my mom and she'll always be there and support me and try to help me in whatever way that she can.

Harp: That's nice. Your mom's **your rock**.

Maura: Yeah. OK, now, there are also other expressions that we use, again, to talk about that person in your life that you know will always be there to help you in difficult times.

Harp: Yes, the next expression is **my shoulder to cry on**.

Maura: Yes, so, in the same way that you call someone **a rock**, you also call a person **your shoulder to cry on**. So, you could say **he is my shoulder to cry on** or **she is my shoulder to cry on**.

Harp: Yes, exactly.

Maura: And this one, if you think about it, is actually quite literal, because if you're very upset and **going through a difficult time**, you might get a friend to hug you and you cry and you actually cry on their shoulder.

Harp: Yes, it's a very visual expression.

Maura: Yeah. But this expression doesn't have to mean that's what actually happens. It just means that the person supports you when you're having a difficult time. So, even if I call my friend on the phone and talk about something that's bothering me, I could still say that **she is my shoulder to cry on**.

Harp: Yes. You don't have to actually cry every time, but when you're talking about difficult times in your life, the person who's listening, **they're your shoulder to cry on**.

Maura: Yeah.

Harp: Should we give an example?

Maura: OK.

Harp: Hey Samantha. How are things?

Maura: You know, they're going OK, better and better.

Harp: That's good. You're doing OK with the **breakup**?

Maura: Yeah, you know, of course it was really hard at first because, you know, I was with my boyfriend for so long, but I'm starting to get over it and, you know, I cried a lot, but **my aunt is really my shoulder to cry on**, and I talk to her a lot and she helped me through things, so I'm feeling better.

Harp: That's good. It's nice that you have her.

Maura: Yeah. I'm lucky.

Maura: So, in that example, Samantha **had a shoulder to cry on** and that was her **aunt**.

Harp: Yes. Her **aunt** was there to listen to her, to give her support while she was **going through a breakup**.

Maura: Right. Maybe Samantha actually cried on her **aunt's** shoulder, or maybe not. We don't know. It's not really important.

Harp: Mmhmm.

Maura: Now, we have one more expression that also can be used to talk about a supportive person.

Harp: Yes. The next expression is **to lean on someone**.

Maura: Yeah. **To lean on someone**. And this expression is a little bit different than

the first two, because this one is a verb, so it's used as a verb. So, I could say that I **lean on my dad** when I'm **going through a difficult time**. So, in that case, **my rock**, or **my shoulder to cry on**, is my dad.

Harp: Exactly. So it's used a little bit differently, but it's all related.

Maura: Yeah. So, you can use it all different ways too, like **she leans on him**, or **they lean on each other**, lots of different combinations.

Harp: Yeah. And **to lean on someone**, again, has a physical image of one person actually leaning on another person or touching them. It means that the person will support you and be **there for you**.

Maura: Right. So, physically, if you **lean on someone**, they will hold you up, hold up your body. But in this case, it's not physical anymore; it's more of emotional support in another way.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: Let's give another example of **to lean on someone**.

Harp: Sounds good. Let's do a dialogue.

Harp: Joni. I'm just having such a tough time right now.

Maura: Why? What's going on?

Harp: I don't know. I'm just having such a tough time **making ends meet**.

Maura: Oh, really?

Harp: Yeah. I don't think I'm even gonna have enough money to pay rent this month.

Maura: Well, you know, if you... If you need anything, maybe I could try to help you out and figure out where you could save, or if you really need some money you can borrow it from me.

Harp: That's really nice, but you know, I know I can always **lean on my parents**, so they've already offered to help me out with rent this month. Hopefully things will be better next month.

Maura: That's good though, it's always good to have someone you can **lean on** when times are tough.

Harp: Yeah. My parents are awesome.

Maura: Good.

- Maura: So in that example, Joni offered her friend some help or some money, but that person already had support from their parents. She could **lean on her parents**.
- Harp: Yes. So she had someone who supported her in her life.
- Maura: Yeah. And there are actually a few more different expressions we could use to talk about people like this and we'll definitely include that in our Learning Materials.
- Harp: Yeah. So become a member and you'll find out more expressions.
- Maura: Yeah. So, let's go over everything that we looked at today. The first expression that we looked at is to call someone **a rock**. To say that **she's my rock**.
- Harp: Yes. And that means that that person **is there for you**, they support you, they'll **be there for you** if you're **going through a rough time**.
- Maura: Right. And then we also looked at the expression to call someone **your shoulder to cry on**. So we can say **he's my shoulder to cry on** or **she has a shoulder to cry on**.
- Harp: And it means the same thing: someone who will support you and **be there for you** when you're **going through a tough time**.
- Maura: Yup. And the last expression we looked at is **to lean on someone**, and this is a little bit different because it's a verb, but it also talks about people who are there to support you and help you out.
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: So, we hope, of course, that you also have someone in your life to help you out when times are tough, because you gotta have those good people around.
- Harp: Yes, they're so important, because sometimes life is difficult.
- Maura: Yeah. So, don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, and check out everything that we have there.
- Harp: Yes, for sure, and leave us a comment on Facebook or rate us on iTunes.
- Maura: Yeah. Give us some feedback so we know you're out there.
- Harp: Exactly. Wherever you are, listening to us.
- Maura: OK. So this has been Maura.

Harp: And Harp.

Maura: And we'll talk to you soon. Bye!

Harp: Bye everyone!

## Detailed Explanation

### We can't complain

Here's an expression that means what it says. People might say that **they can't complain** in two possible situations: when something is perfect and there really is nothing to complain about, or when there are a few things that are not ideal, but they're not very important. Sometimes people even use this expression after they've already complained a bit, but then want to emphasize that the things they've been complaining about aren't really that important!

Maura uses this expression when she and Harp are talking about the hot Canadian summers. Maura says that it can get too hot, which could be considered a complaint. But she then says that **they can't complain** because the winters are so long, and so they're just happy that it's finally summer.

Here are a couple more examples with **can't complain**:

George: How was your vacation?

Jennie: The room we stayed in was great and the hotel location was perfect. We didn't run into any problems. We really **can't complain**!

Ken: The dinner last night was really fun.

Peter: How was the food?

Ken: The food was OK. Fast food's not really my favourite, but I **can't complain**, because I had such a good time!

### To chill out

This is an expression that we've looked at in previous episodes, as it comes up often. **To chill out** or **to chill** is to relax or become calm. **Chilling out** is a way that people choose to spend their time, often after a time of busyness.

In this episode, Maura and Harp talk about **chilling out** on a patio. Sitting outside in the sun with friends is something that many Canadians find relaxing to do in the summer. Patios of restaurants, bars, and cafes are often full in the summer.

Here's another example with **to chill out**:

Janine: Let's just **chill out** this afternoon. I worked so hard all week.

Carl: Sounds good! I don't mind taking it easy.



To be there for someone

This is an expression that's similar to **to lean on someone**, and it's used throughout this episode. *To be there* can be used to talk about an emotionally strong person in your life, who's caring and supportive. If someone **is there for you** during difficult times, then they are not just physically there, but emotionally "there" too.

For example, you could have a friend who lives in another country, who you know is always **there for you**. This means that if you have a problem, that friend will be there (available) to talk to you by phone or email.

You might also hear *to be here*, which is less common but used in the same way as *to be there*.

Here are a couple of examples:

Amanda: I'm sorry to call so late, but I knew you'd **be there for me**.

Nate: Sure. No problem. What's wrong?

Jackie: I'll always **be here for you**, OK? You can get in touch with me any time.

Pam: Thanks. That means a lot.

To go through something/to get through something

When a person is **going through something**, it means that it's a difficult time for that person. **To go through something** is very general and doesn't give any specific details about the difficult time the person is having, as many people would like to keep a difficult time private. *Something* can also be defined, for example, **going through a divorce**.

If someone **got through something**, it means that the person **went through a difficult time**, but now things are better. You always want **to get through something**, because then things are better! We can also be specific and say, for example, "Jon **got through all his exams**."

Here are a couple more examples:

Tim: I'm sorry I haven't completed my assignments on time. I'm just **going through something** right now.

Frank: It's OK. I understand.

Belinda: Drew doesn't seem that happy lately.

Andrey: He's **going through a tough time financially**. I think he's stressed about that.

### To be a rock

When someone is described as **your rock**, **his rock**, **their rock**, etc., it means that that person is supportive and caring. A rock is a symbol of strength and protection, just as this person is. Who **your rock** is depends on your personal relationships. It might be a friend or a family member.

Here's one more example:

Jean: Thanks for listening to me. You know, you're really **my rock**.

Mel: No problem. You can always come to me if you need to talk about something.

If someone is described as **a rock** (instead of **my rock**, **her rock**, etc.), it means that they are an emotionally strong person who doesn't become overly sentimental. This could also mean that they're a little too strong and almost unfeeling.

Here's an example with **a rock**:

Walter: When the company was firing so many people, Jack didn't even seem bothered.

Connor: Yeah. He's **a rock**. He knew his own job was safe anyway.

### To be out of control

If a person or thing is **out of control**, it means that there is no order or organization, no control. People like to feel in control of their lives, so when someone's life feels out of control, it's usually not a good feeling. This means that the person can't manage their own life.

Almost anything can be **out of control**. Hair can be **out of control** if it's not styled nicely. Children can be **out of control** if they're too loud or playing in an aggressive or boisterous way. An airplane can be **out of control** if something goes wrong with the machinery and the pilots can't control it.

### A shoulder to cry on

**A shoulder to cry on** is a person who will let you talk about your feelings or complain to them, or literally let you cry on their shoulder and support you when you're feeling bad. A person who is **a shoulder to cry on** might actually let you cry on their shoulder, but it's not necessary to use this expression literally. This is very similar to someone being called someone's rock. One difference is that calling someone your rock also implies that they are a strong person, but calling someone **a shoulder to cry on** does not.

This expression is often used with a possessive, like **my shoulder to cry on**, or **his shoulder to cry on**, but it can also be used simply as **a shoulder to cry on**. Using this expression with the possessive usually means that the person is a source of support that you've used many times before. Using this expression with **a** just means that in a particular situation, the person is supportive.

Here are a couple of examples showing that difference:

Justine: I got really upset at work the other day. Luckily, my new colleague gave me a **shoulder to cry on**.

Lucille: That's good.

Justine: Yeah. We're actually really good friends now.

Bernice: So what did you do the other night after you got in a fight with Brett?

Lisa: I called my cousin. He's always been **my shoulder to cry on**.

### A breakup

**A breakup** is the end of a relationship. This word is most often used to talk about romantic couples, but it can also be used to talk about the end of other types of relationships, like the relationship between the members of a rock band. This comes from the verb *to break up*, which means the same thing.

Sometimes **breakup** can be written as *break-up* or *break up*.

### Aunt

This is a word that's often covered in beginner English classes, when talking about family. Your **aunt** is your mother or father's sister. What's interesting about this word is that there are two pronunciations of it. In most parts of Canada, and some parts of the United States, the word **aunt** is pronounced just like *ant*. This is how we pronounced it in our episode. But **aunt** can also be pronounced so that it rhymes with the word *haunt*. This is how it's said in some parts of Canada and most parts of the United States.

England and Australia also often use the pronunciation that rhymes with *haunt*. But wherever you are, in whichever English-speaking place, both pronunciations are understood.

### To lean on someone

When one person is said **to lean on another person**, it means that the first person knows that if they're having a difficult time, they can expect support from the other person. Imagine one person who's having trouble standing up, and so leans on a friend so that they don't need to sit down. This expression is used to talk about emotional support, too. (It can also still be used for physical support as well.)

Here are examples of both:

Becky: I think I broke my ankle! Do you mind if I **lean on you** to get back to the car?

Anne: No, go ahead. Let's get you to the hospital!

Linda: I know I can always **lean on you**. Thanks for that.

Kathy: Any time. You can always call me back later if you're still not feeling good.

There's a very popular song called *Lean on Me*. The song is by Bill Withers and was first released in 1972. It's about being there for a friend who's going through a difficult time. The song is still popular today. There was also movie called *Lean on Me* made in 1989 about a school with many student with difficulties.

### To make ends meet

**To make ends meet** is an expression about money. If you can **make ends meet**, it means that you have enough money to live on, you are able to pay all your bills and expenses. Some say that the "ends" in this expression are the beginning and end of the year. Others say that they are the earnings and expenses. This expression means that both of these "ends" are the same, or "meet."

In this episode, we use this expression in a dialogue example about someone who's having financial problems. This expression is often used in a negative way, when someone does not have enough money and cannot **make ends meet**.

Here's another example:

Brian: Steve's really been having trouble **making ends meet**. I'm not sure if I should offer to help him.

Nancy: Maybe you should. I think he's too proud to ask for help.

William: I can finally **make ends meet** again, thanks to my new job.

Estelle: I'm happy to hear it!

**To make both ends meet** is a variation on this expression.

### To count on someone

**To count on someone** is very similar to *to be there for someone* and *to lean on someone*. These are all verbs that can be used to talk about someone who relies on another person when they need help. We don't talk about **to count on someone** in this episode, but we promised to give you more expressions that could be used in the same way!

**To count on someone** can also have meanings other than emotional support. You can **count on someone** for many different kinds of help. For example, you can **count on someone** to help you move to a new house. You can **count on someone** to study with you. You can **count on someone** to pick you up for the airport.

Here are a couple of examples with ***to count on someone***:

Iris: She knows she can always **count on us** if she needs anything.

Spencer: I know, but I still think we should call her. She might be too embarrassed to ask.

Juliann: **Can I count on you** to watch my kids for me this weekend?

Vic: Sure! I love hanging out with those two!

## **Quiz**

**1. When might someone use the expression *I can't complain*?**

- a) when someone is complaining a little bit about something
- b) when someone is complaining a lot about something
- c) when someone is not complaining about anything
- d) a) and c)

**2. What expression means *to relax* or *to take it easy*?**

- a) to cool out
- b) to chill out
- c) to warm up
- d) to zonk off

**3. *To be there for someone* means that you support them emotionally. Is it also possible to say *to be here* for someone?**

- a) yes
- b) no

**4. Chris: Melanie is such a rock.**

**What does that mean about Melanie?**

- a) She is an emotionally strong person.
- b) Chris can count on Melanie.
- c) Melanie cries a lot.
- d) Melanie is a really fun person.

**5. Which of the following is the correct expression?**

- a) a hand to cry on
- b) an arm to cry on
- c) a shoulder to cry on
- d) an elbow to cry on

6. Which word in this episode was listed as having two popular pronunciations?
- a) rock
  - b) aunt
  - c) dad
  - d) shoulder
7. What is the meaning of *to make ends meet*?
- a) to earn enough money to pay all your expenses
  - b) not to earn enough money to pay all your expenses
  - c) to spend a lot of money on many bills every month
  - d) to earn a lot of money at the end of the year
8. Which expression is mentioned as having been used in the title of a song and a film?
- a) count on me
  - b) lean on me
  - c) be there for me

## **Answers**

1.d    2.b    3.a    4.a    5.c    6.b    7.a    8.b