

## Chatterbox #20 – Alethe the Aussie!

### Transcript

Maura: Hello everybody. This is Maura ...

Alethe: And Alethe.

Maura: And this is the Chatterbox podcast at Culips, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. And don't forget to go to our website where you can check out our Lipservice and in the Lipservice we have the complete transcript for this episode and all our episodes, as well as more explanations and a quiz. So today this episode is the Chatterbox episode and in the Chatterbox episode we talk. We like to chat about all different kinds of things, interesting subjects and sometimes we chat with interesting people, like today. Today, I have a very interesting person with us. Hello.

Alethe: Hello! How are you?

Maura: Good! Thanks for being here today!

Alethe: You're welcome.

Maura: So Alethe, that's an interesting name.

Alethe: Yes, I am Australian however my name is French. My mum's sister was living in Switzerland when I was born so my name is Swiss French.

Maura: Oh, OK. Yeah, that's an interesting point because our accents are a little bit different. If you listen to this podcast regularly you usually hear Canadian, North American accents but you do not have a Canadian accent.

Alethe: No, I have no Canadian in me. I was born in Australia, and have always lived in Australia. However I like to take little side kicks everywhere I go.

Maura: So you're from Australia but you're in Canada. So, how did you **end up** here?

Alethe: Well, I had a **mid-life crisis** at 25 and decided I wanted to go and travel the world.

Maura: OK, yeah, I think a lot of Australians travel.

Alethe: Yes.

- Maura: They're everywhere around the world.
- Alethe: Yes. It's a very common thing for Australians. We finish high school, we go to university, we work for a couple of years and then we travel.
- Maura: It's almost like **a rite of passage**.
- Alethe: Yes.
- Maura: OK cool. So, you did that. You went to school, you worked and then you decided that you wanted to do a trip around the world, right? You are doing a trip right now around the world, right?
- Alethe: Yes, of course.
- Maura: That sounds awesome and long.
- Alethe: Yes, both of the above.
- Maura: So when did you start?
- Alethe: I began my trip in July of 2009 where I visited Hawaii and then on to Alaska. I **made my way** down through Alaska to the western side of Canada and then over to the eastern side of Canada which is where I am now.
- Maura: Wow.
- Alethe: I've been living in Ottawa and working for a couple of months. From here I will go to New York, to Mexico and on to South America. I will spend three to four months in South America and then I will go to the Europe and the U.K.
- Maura: So first you went to Hawaii. How long did you spend in Hawaii?
- Alethe: I spent one week in Hawaii. I lived there in 2002 for one year.
- Maura: OK, so you knew it already?
- Alethe: Yes. I went to visit some friends.
- Maura: Is it as beautiful as everyone says?
- Alethe: Yes. You should go there.
- Maura: Yeah!

- Alethe: And it is a lot warmer than here.
- Maura: Yeah! Yes, right now it's very cold. But after Hawaii you went to Alaska, was it cold in Alaska?
- Alethe: It wasn't too bad. It was July so it was their summer.
- Maura: OK.
- Alethe: So it was OK. It was nothing like it is now.
- Maura: Could you wear, like, shorts and a t-shirt?
- Alethe: Yes.
- Maura: So the summer in Alaska is nice?
- Alethe: Yes. I think I was very lucky with the weather. At night time, we were camping so it would get a little cold. Some days were a little cold but one **layer**, pants, t-shirt, **jumper** -- **sweater** as you would call it.
- Maura: Yes.
- Alethe: And that's OK. No scarf, no jacket, no **toque** -- **beanie** we call it.
- Maura: Yeah, so there are some differences between words that we use in Canada or North America and Australia.
- Alethe: Of course.
- Maura: So we'll explain those in the Lipservice because sometimes I don't understand either. But yeah OK, so you went to Hawaii, Alaska and then you came down into Canada?
- Alethe: Yes.
- Maura: And what time was that? Was that in the summer still?
- Alethe: Yes, I started in Canada in early August, early to mid-august on Vancouver Island.
- Maura: Wow, how was that?

- Alethe: Fabulous. I did the north coast trail hike with a French guy and a Belgian guy and then I joined up with a tour group and did a tour. It was a get-on, get-off bus so very flexible, through the Rockies, Vancouver, Vancouver Island, um Whistler, Banff, Lake Louise, all those places.
- Maura: So are you travelling alone generally?
- Alethe: Yes.
- Maura: How do you like that?
- Alethe: I love it! I believe that travelling alone you meet more people and you are forced to make friends because otherwise you won't have any.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Alethe: But in saying that I have a lot of friends in the places that I have visited. As you said, Australians like to travel. So I have been lucky to have a lot of friends along the way, which is very nice, being away from home. Nice to see friends.
- Maura: Yeah, so you get a little bit of **both worlds**. You travel by yourself sometimes and then you have friends around you.
- Alethe: Yes. But when you travel by yourself you're never by yourself.
- Maura: Yeah, you meet someone and one day later you're best friends with them.
- Alethe: Yes, and it's good because you don't have any plans and then you meet someone and you decide that what they're doing, maybe that's fun, so you join them.
- Maura: Yeah, you get ideas from other people travelling around too. Cool. And then so you made your way over to Ottawa. How did you get here? Did you fly or take a train?
- Alethe: From Vancouver I flew to Toronto.
- Maura: OK and you spent a little bit of time in Toronto too?
- Alethe: Yes, I spent probably one week in Toronto. Then I went down to Lake Erie with a friend, then I went to Ottawa for one week, **then Montreal for one week, two weeks**, Quebec City for **one week, two weeks**. Up north of Quebec City through Charlevoix.

- Maura: Charlevoix, yeah.
- Alethe: Up to Gaspésie.
- Maura: Gaspésie, oh wow, so you've actually seen a lot of Canada. More than some Canadians actually.
- Alethe: Yes, yes.
- Maura: So what do you think of it so far?
- Alethe: Yes, I love it. I don't like the minus thirty.
- Maura: Yeah. It's a little bit too cold right now.
- Alethe: But I have loved seeing the summer go to the fall go to the end of the fall with no leaves, go to the snow.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Alethe: That's really, really cool.
- Maura: The seasons changing, that is pretty cool.
- Alethe: Yeah, um and a nice mix going through that. And I love the outdoors and to be outside so I love that Canada has a lot of hiking and outdoor activities.
- Maura: Yeah, especially if you go north. There are fewer and fewer people and more open spaces to do that.
- Alethe: Yes.
- Maura: So what have you been doing in Ottawa?
- Alethe: In Ottawa I have been working at **Le Moulin de Provence**, a French **boulangerie** ...
- Maura: Oui ...
- Alethe: ... **charcuterie** ...
- Maura: Yes ...
- Alethe: ... **pâtisserie**.

- Maura: Yeah, so that's a bakery.
- Alethe: Yes. I've been learning a little bit of French and working there which has been fantastic. I've met some really cool people.
- Maura: That's good.
- Alethe: And the food there -- the croissants, **the mille feuille** -- is very good.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Alethe: Yeah, so that's what I've been doing.
- Maura: Cool. It's good, I'm glad you had a good experience. OK. And then from here you're moving on soon. You're leaving soon.
- Alethe: Yes, I'm **hitting the road**. I wanted to experience a white Christmas.
- Maura: Yes.
- Alethe: So I will do that and then I am following the waves and the sun.
- Maura: That is also a very good idea.
- Alethe: So I am going to visit friends in New York then to Mexico for one week to **thaw out**.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Alethe: And then I meet one of my friends from Australia in Eto, Ecuador and we will travel together.
- Maura: So when is your trip going to end? Do you have a plan to finally finish your trip?
- Alethe: No.
- Maura: Wow.
- Alethe: I don't plan!
- Maura: So, you're eventually going to **end up** in Europe or England?

- Alethe: Yes, after South America I will go to Europe and then I will try and find work in the U.K. somewhere. I'd like to work in Scotland.
- Maura: OK, why Scotland?
- Alethe: Well, because every Australian is in London, so I don't want to go there.
- Maura: Yeah, OK. So it's not as much fun when you're travelling and you see tons of people from your home country. You want to see people from different places.
- Alethe: It is nice to see people from my home country but I can see them at home and I am travelling to meet new and different people, not to meet a hundred Australians. So I go on **the path less travelled**.
- Maura: Yes good. Ok and so then you're going to be in Scotland for ... who knows?
- Alethe: Who knows? Who knows? But I hear it gets cold there. So when it gets cold, I'm out.
- Maura: Yeah. I totally understand. The weather lately in Montreal, and Ottawa too, has been a bit too cold, minus 18 I think it is today.
- Alethe: Last week I was in Calgary, minus thirty.
- Maura: Yeah yeah, too cold. But I'm glad that you decided to come to Canada and I'm glad that you like it.
- Alethe: Yes, I will come back.
- Maura: Cool. So do you have any last advice for someone who's listening and thinking about travelling?
- Alethe: DO IT! GO! Leave. Buy a ticket!
- Maura: Travelling is a pretty great experience, I agree. OK, thank you so much for letting us interview you.
- Alethe: Thank you for having me.
- Maura: And have a great trip however long it lasts.
- Alethe: Thank you.
- Maura: OK. So, this has been Maura and one more time ...

Alethe: Alethe, the Aussie!

Maura: And this has been Chatterbox at Culips. See you later.

Alethe: See you mate.

## **Detailed Explanation**

### Mum/mom

Have you ever noticed the different pronunciations of the word **mom**? People in the U.K. and Australia spell the same word with a *u*, **mum**. The pronunciation is a little different too. Can you hear the difference in this episode when Alethe says **mum**?

### End up

Maura asks Alethe, “how did you **end up** here?” **To end up** has a similar meaning to “resulting in”, like *finally* or *in the end*. So Maura’s question asks: after deciding to travel, how did it result in Alethe coming to Canada? Alethe also says later that she will **end up** in Europe or finally get to Europe. To end up is pretty common and particular to certain situations. Here are more examples using **to end up**.

Alison: Did you get all your shopping done today?

Tonisha: No! I **ended up** meeting a friend instead.

Vince: What did you **end up** doing on the weekend?

Robert: I **ended up** just watching movies. It was really relaxing.

Yasmina: What did you **end up** deciding to do about work?

Aaron: I decided to quit my job.

### Mid-life crisis

A **mid-life crisis** is a very dramatic and confusing time in a person’s life when they question what they are doing and evaluate their lives. This is a kind of **crisis** that many people experience around the middle of their lives, so we say **mid-life**. A mid-life crisis usually happens when a person is 45 years old. Alethe is making a little joke here because she is quite young to experience a **mid-life crisis**.

Actually people can experience a crisis at any time in their lives, but sometimes they still use the expression **mid-life crisis**. Saying that you are having a **mid-life crisis** is often not serious, but used as an exaggeration to express that you are making a big decision or



something stressful is happening to you. A **mid-life crisis** also could describe the time in a person's life when they look back on their life, and wish to be young again.

Here are a couple other examples that are not being said in a serious way.

Jon: Can you believe that my dad bought a new sports car?

Carmen: Yes, it is kind of strange. Do you think he is having a **mid-life crisis**?

Jon: Ha ha! Maybe!

Kiesha: I don't know which job offer to take. I feel like I am having a **mid-life crisis**.

Ned: Don't worry. You still have a few days to make a decision.

### A rite of passage

**A rite of passage** is an event or experience in someone's life that moves them to the next phase in life. Traditionally an event or ceremony takes place and then that person moves onto the next part of their life, such as going from a teenager to an adult. This exists in many cultures and religions around the world.

**A rite of passage** in the Catholic religion is the First Communion which is a ceremony for children around the age of 8. In the Jewish religion the Bar Mitzvah is **a rite of passage**.

Nowadays in North American culture the term is used more generally to apply to events that most people experience at different points in their lives, like becoming legal drinking age or getting married.

Because Australians travel so much, travelling is like **a rite of passage**. Many Australians finish university and then travel to other countries, before they get permanent jobs and start a family.

### Made my way

**To make your way** somewhere is just like saying *to go*. **To make your way** also implies that the person went slowly or that the way was complicated, but not always. Alethe says that she **made her way** down through Alaska to the western side of Canada. This means that Alethe slowly travelled down Alaska and the western side of Canada, probably stopping along the way whenever she felt like it.

Here are some more examples of how we can use **to make your way**.

Brett: So what happened after you got a flat tire on your bike?

Tara: I **made my way** to school in the rain, but I got there late.

Zack: How was your time in Amsterdam?

Lyle: It was great. It was fun **making our way** through all the streets.

### Layer

Alethe talks about **layers** in this episode because at the time we recorded it, it was very cold in Canada. When it is very cold sometimes you have to wear more than one **layer**.

Here is an easy explanation of clothing **layers**. If you wear a shirt, that is one **layer** and if you wear a jacket, that is the second **layer**. Some people might wear two **layers** of pants if it gets very cold!



#### Jumper/sweater and Toque/beanie

Alethe talks about wearing a **jumper**. This is the Australian word for what North Americans call a **sweater** or a sweatshirt. Another Australian word she uses is **beanie**. A **beanie** is a winter hat, and in Canada we call a winter hat a **toque**. Many words are similar between Canada and North America but the word **toque** is Canadian only. It is the French word that English Canadians use too.

#### Vancouver Island

What? Vancouver is an island? No, Vancouver is a city on the west coast of Canada. Not far from Vancouver there is an island called Vancouver Island. The biggest city on the Island is Victoria. It's a really beautiful place. In fact, all of the places that Alethe speaks of are interesting places.

#### Both worlds

Maura tells Alethe that she gets a little bit of **both worlds**. Sometimes we use **world** to represent distinct experiences or places. When Maura says **both worlds**, she is talking about two things -- travelling alone and travelling with friends.

Here are more examples using the word **world** to represent experiences.

Mark: How was your trip to Asia?

Jasmine: It was amazing. It is like another **world** there. (meaning: it is a very different experience)

Maryse: How is your new job going on the eighth floor?

Kathy: It is a completely different **world** up there.

#### "...then Montreal for one week, two weeks..."

When Alethe talks about her time in Montreal and Quebec City she repeats "**one week, two weeks**" to tell us how long she stayed there. What this means is that she stayed some time between one week and two weeks. She is estimating and not being precise.

#### Le Moulin de Provence

What did Alethe say here? She says the name of the place where she works in Ottawa, **Le Moulin de Provence**. If you are French, you probably found this part easy or funny! Alethe then also says, "...**boulangerie, charcuterie, patisserie**." These are more French words. Here is your translation.

**Boulangerie** – Bakery

**Charcuterie** – Deli

**Pâtisserie** – Pastry Shop

Alethe also mentions one of the pastries – **mille feuille**. **Mille feuille** is a puffed pastry with many **layers** (remember the word layer from above?). It has different kinds of creams and custards between the **layers**. It can also be called a Napoleon, especially in the U.S.

### To hit the road

**To hit the road** means that you are leaving. When someone leaves a place their feet hit the road or their car tires hit the road. Of course, this is not a literal expression and it doesn't matter how you leave a place. **To hit the road** always mean to leave.

In fact, in this episode, Maura says, "You're leaving soon," and then Alethe responds with, "Yes, I'm **hitting the road**."

Here are some more examples with **to hit the road**.

Stephanie: Are you having fun at the party?

Lucy: Yes, but I have **to hit the road** now. I work early tomorrow morning.

Ben: When do you want **to hit the road**?

Vicky: I think it is better to get a start early. We have a lot of driving to do!

### Thaw out



Alethe says a few times in this episode that it is cold in Canada at the moment! **To thaw out** is connected to being cold. When something **thaws out** it means that it melts or unfreezes or becomes warmer. If you have some frozen food in your freezer you may need to let it **thaw out** before you cook it. Or at the end of winter when the snow begins to melt and the trees and other plants come alive again, we can also say things are **thawing**.

**To thaw out** and simply **to thaw** mean the same thing and can be used in the same way.

Alethe uses **thaw out** to talk about herself. Because she has been so cold in Canada, when she goes to Mexico it is like she will **thaw out** or "unfreeze" or warm up with the nice weather.

Here are more examples with **to thaw** or **thaw out**.

Michelle: What are we having for supper tonight?

Don: We are having meat and potatoes. That reminds me I need to let the meat **thaw**.

Anita: Have you taken a vacation this year?

Daniel: Not yet, but in a couple weeks I am going to **thaw out** in Florida.

### The path less travelled

This is an expression that is used to describe life experiences. When someone says “**the path less travelled**,” that person is speaking of a direction in life that not many people have taken. In other words, a person who likes to take **the path less travelled** likes to do things that not many people have done before. For example, a person who does a job that not many people do has taken **the path less travelled**.

You can also use this expression a bit more literally. Alethe uses this expression literally. She likes to travel where not many people have travelled before, or she likes to take **the path less travelled**. When you are walking up a mountain you can also take **the path less travelled**.

We can also replace **path** with **road**, like **the road less travelled**. Some other variations are **the path/road less taken** or **the path/road not taken**.

This expression possibly began because of a poem by American Robert Frost called *The Road Not Taken* which was published in 1919. In this poem there are two path choices, one which has been used a lot and another which looks like not many people have used it. The speaker takes the path less travelled and finds that it is more rewarding.

**Quiz** (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)

1. **Where do they spell and pronounce *mum* with *u*?**
  - a) Canada
  - b) Australia
  - c) The U.K.
  - d) Australia and the U.K.
  
2. **Which of the following means the result of something, like *finally* or *in the end*?**
  - a) end out
  - b) end up
  - c) ended
  - d) ending
  
3. **Alethe says she was 25 when she had this:**
  - a) a croissant
  - b) a first airplane trip
  - c) a mid-life crisis
  - d) an Australian accent
  
4. **The experience of Australians travelling after school and before settling down to a job and family could be called:**
  - a) a rite of passage
  - b) a mid-life crisis
  - c) a right
  - d) a passage
  
5. **Beanie is the Australian word for a winter hat. What is the Canadian word?**
  - a) hattie
  - b) toque
  - c) beanie
  - d) cap

6. When it is cold it is a good idea to wear lots of \_\_\_\_\_.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) hats
- b) layers
- c) snow pants
- d) glasses

7. The expression for *to leave* is to \_\_\_\_\_ the road.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) hate
- b) jump on
- c) travel
- d) hit

8. Alethe likes to take \_\_\_\_\_.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) the path less travelled
- b) the path more travelled
- c) the road travelled
- d) a road

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