

Catch Word #16 – Crazy

Transcript

- Maura: Hi everyone out there, this is Maura...
- Harp: And Harp...
- Maura: With the **Catch Word** podcast at Culips, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Harp: And this episode is where we take one word or one expression and we describe it. So, we give different synonyms or we explain how people use this word.
- Maura: We talk about slang and introduce new vocabulary too. But if there is something that you're not sure about, you can always go to our website...
- Harp: And check out our Lipservice. And in the Lipservice you get our Detailed Explanations, the transcript so you can see every word that we say, and also you can quiz yourself at the end.
- Maura: And today's word is...
- Harp: **"Crazy!"**
- Maura: **"Crazy?"** The way you said that was kind of **crazy**.
- Harp: You liked it.
- Maura: So, **"Crazy"**? What's **"crazy,"** Harp?
- Harp: Well, the literal definition would be "someone who is not mentally sane," or "someone who is maybe not mentally there."
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: Maybe, I would say...
- Maura: Has some mental problems?
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: Or is mentally ill?

- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: But, yeah, we don't really use this word anymore to talk about someone who was mentally ill because nowadays we are very **politically correct** and we respect people who are mentally ill. In the past, they were treated very poorly, but now we would use a more **politically correct** term than "**crazy**."
- Harp: Exactly. So, "**crazy**" in our **day-to-day** talk, in our everyday English, we would use it as a very positive term, but to mean something in a kind of fun, exciting adventurous way. Can you give me an example?
- Maura: Well, I could say that I went to see a movie and the movie was **crazy**.
- Harp: So, does that mean that it was mentally unstable?
- Maura: No, it means that it was interesting, different, probably lots of energy.
- Harp: OK, I understand, I understand. So, we use "**crazy**" in terms of something that is good, something fun, something exiting. For example, I went bungee jumping and it was **crazy**. Or I went skydiving, some adventure sport, something, you know?
- Maura: Yeah, that's a pretty **crazy** thing to do.
- Harp: I didn't. I am a bit of a **wimp**, but...
- Maura: But, yeah, "**to go crazy**" can be used for people or activities or movies or music, lots of things.
- Harp: Exactly, and "**crazy**" and "**insane**" are used synonymously, completely I would say. So, that movie was **insane**, that movie was **crazy**.
- Maura: And "**insane**" was also a word in the past that we used in a serious way to talk about people who are mentally ill. But now to say that someone is **insane** is very, I don't know, rude or too direct, maybe.
- Harp: Yeah, and I don't think that people would even understand. They would think "**insane**" in a good way.
- Maura: Yeah, exactly.

- Harp: If you said to me “this person is **insane**,” I would think they’re very adventurous, they’re very cool, they do something exciting. I don’t know...
- Maura: Yeah, they like to party or something.
- Harp: Yeah, yeah! Exactly, exactly!
- Maura: So, we really only use those words for slang nowadays.
- Harp: Yeah. OK, so now when we talk about “**crazy**” and we say that it’s only a positive, let’s explain that maybe because it’s not used to describe “mentally **insane**,” but someone can be **crazy** in a bad way.
- Maura: Right, someone who does something really strange and different that’s not positive. A great example, Harp and I took a French class together (that’s where we met) and the teacher was a weird guy, honestly, I didn’t like him that much, I would say he was **crazy**.
- Harp: **One hundred percent**, I agree with you! And I am laughing over here because I can’t believe you remember that. He was **crazy**, but not in a good way, in terms of adventurous or exciting. But not mentally unstable, he was just...
- Maura: He made the strangest comments and we only were allowed to do grammar and we couldn’t talk to anyone beside us.
- Harp: Even if we were talking in French, which was the language we were learning, he was very strict, which ... we’re all adults, you know, we’re not children taking a class, we’re adults so we should be allowed to talk and to, you know, we’re not, we’re not children. I don’t know how to explain that any better.
- Maura: And then, when we came back the next semester and we saw him in the hallways he acted like he didn’t even know us!
- Harp: I took the bus once, I think two days after we finished class, and he didn’t talk to me. He walked right past me.
- Maura: The guy was **nuts**.
- Harp: He was **crazy**, he was **bananas**.

- Maura: **Insane.** But we also have even more words. So we have **crazy**, **insane**, and another one, Harp?
- Harp: It's a food one. It's "**nuts**."
- Maura: So, right, **nuts** are generally things we eat. We have peanuts and almonds and walnuts, but...
- Harp: When someone is **nuts** they are...
- Maura: They're **crazy**!
- Harp: Exactly, but in a good way.
- Maura: I can think of an example, the other day I bought a toy for my cats, it was a fuzzy little mouse, and when I brought it home for them they went **nuts**.
- Harp: Ah! So they were jumping and...
- Maura: Exactly! They got really excited - kept playing with it. Yep, went **nuts**.
- Harp: **Nuts!** Now what about another one? There is another way to say **crazy, insane, nuts**.
- Maura: Of course.
- Harp: What is it?
- Maura: "**Bananas**."
- Harp: Of course it's a food one. We're obsessed with food.
- Maura: It's a funny one. So, if someone goes **bananas** they go **crazy**, they get really excited.
- Harp: Yeah, you were giving me the example about your nephew. So, it was your sister's son I believe.
- Maura: Yeah, we put on a video for him the other day, one of his favourites, and he went **bananas**. He got really, really excited, he started dancing around. He went **bananas**.

- Harp: Yeah, my nephew goes **bananas**, too. I think it's over **Dora**. Maybe he's a little bit older. So, maybe a different show. But, they just dance and go **crazy** when they are so young, but we all go **bananas** I think sometimes.
- Maura: Do you want to do one more?
- Harp: I do. This one's my favourite.
- Maura: Tell us what it is!
- Harp: It's "**to lose your mind.**"
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: Yeah, so, "**to lose your mind**" is "**to go crazy**" about something.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: I think a lot of people use this for music or something that they really like.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: Like, for example, the newest, I don't know, Radiohead album that made me **lose my mind**, it was **crazy**, it was **insane**. You know?
- Maura: Right. Or maybe if you went to see the concert, the concert was so awesome I **lost my mind**.
- Harp: Exactly, we want to go **insane**, we want to **lose our minds** in a good way in that it was so good they were such good performers. And we're lucky we both get to see the concert.
- Maura: Yeah, maybe we can review it after.
- Harp: Yeah, yeah.
- Maura: So, maybe we'll end it there.
- Harp: Sounds good.
- Maura: Yeah. And if you want to check out any more descriptions about going **crazy**, going **nuts**, going **bananas**, going **insane** or **losing your mind**, go to Culips.com.

Harp: And check out the Lipservice, because in the Detailed Explanations we'll give you a couple more ways to go **crazy** and ways to say that you go **crazy**.

Maura: OK, thanks for listening. This has been Maura...

Harp: And Harp...

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

Harp: Bye everyone.

Detailed Explanation

Crazy

There are so many meanings for “**crazy**”!

Literally, “**crazy**” is used to describe someone with mental problems, someone who is **insane**. But **BE CAREFUL**! In the western world there has been a big movement to respect people with mental illnesses.

We now say someone is “mentally ill” or name the illness specifically. For example, we can say, “he is depressed” or “she is schizophrenic.” “Schizophrenia” is the name of one specific mental illness.

To say that someone who is mentally ill is “**crazy**” is no longer acceptable.

Politically correct

This movement away from using offensive vocabulary to using more polite vocabulary is called “**political correctness**.” More and more we are being sensitive to people and describing them in a way that gives them more respect. We are now “**politically correct**” when we talk about gender, race, sexuality, etc.

In this case, to call someone who is mentally ill “**crazy**” is now considered rude.

It is also considered rude to call someone “old.” We can describe older people as “senior” or “elderly.”

More and more people do not use the term “Indian” to refer to Native Canadians or Aborigines (at least not in Canada).

Because being **politically correct** is a new thing, people can often be confused about what vocabulary is **politically correct** and what is not. For that reason, I cannot even tell you all the terms that are considered **politically correct**. I get confused with **politically correct** terms too!

The term “**politically correct**” can also be shortened to “**PC**.”

For example:

Can you read this text I wrote? I want to make sure it is **PC**.

Crazy slang

We still use “**crazy**” a lot in slang terms.

When someone does something funny or strange, we could call the person “**crazy.**”

Here are some examples:

She always wears **crazy** clothes.

Why are you singing to the teacher? You’re so **crazy.**

Doing something funny or strange can be good or bad. The examples above could be positive or negative. It depends on the context and, of course, the tone in your voice when you say “**crazy.**”

Here are two more examples:

Positive: Jason is coming to the party. It will be fun. He is so **crazy.**

Negative: Be careful of that guy. He’s a little **crazy** sometimes.

“**Crazy**” can also be used to talk about something that is exciting. We talked about this in this episode.

Here is another example:

I went on a hike. We were on the edge of the mountain. It was **crazy.**

Day-to-day

The “**day-to-day**” expression is just the same as saying “everyday” or “daily.” Harp mentioned this as she was talking about English we use every day or “**day-to-day.**”

Wimp

Harp calls herself “**a wimp**” in this episode. She calls herself that because she has never gone skydiving or bungee jumping. These are extreme activities and

she is too afraid to try them. Someone who is afraid of many things and who is not brave can be called “**a wimp**.”

“Skydiving” is when you jump from a plane with a parachute on your back and fall towards the earth. Then you pull the parachute and slowly come back to the ground.

“Bungee jumping” is when you jump from a high place (often from a bridge over water) and you are attached by a long elastic cord. You fall until the cord stops you and then you bounce and hang upside down.



Like Harp, I have never done either of these activities.

Insane

“**Insane**” is an old term for people who are mentally unstable or mentally ill. You won’t often hear it in a serious way. “**Insane**” can be used just like “**crazy**” to mean that something or someone is fun or exciting.

One hundred percent

When I was talking about how **crazy** our teacher is, Harp said to me, “**One hundred percent**. I agree with you.” To say “**One hundred percent**” means that you agree with someone completely.

Actually, some people who want to show that they agree so much, might even say “I agree with you, **one hundred and ten percent**.” And of course 110% doesn’t really exist.

Strict

“**Strict**” is like “severe” and “serious.” A **strict** teacher is someone who doesn’t allow talking and expects homework to always be done. A **strict** teacher probably doesn’t want students to be late for class.

I am not a **strict** teacher (mostly because I don’t like when I have a **strict** teacher).

Nuts and bananas

Like we say in this episode, a **nut** is a dry fruit. The dictionary tells me it is a dry fruit, but I think of **nuts** as something different. They are a hard edible plant

product, like a seed. Popular **nuts** are peanuts, almonds and walnuts. We also have cashew **nuts** and macadamias.

Bananas are a tropical fruit that monkeys like to eat. Maybe the reason why we call someone **crazy** “**bananas**” is because monkeys can sometimes act **crazy**!

But we use “**nuts**” or “**bananas**” to describe something that is “**crazy**.” For example, “That party was **crazy** last night. It was **nuts**!”

Or another example, “She has gone **bananas**. She stayed up all night studying for the exam.”

We also can call someone a “**nutjob**.” A “**nutjob**” is someone who does **crazy** things.

Dora the Explorer

Dora is a children’s cartoon show that is very famous among kids. **Dora** is a kid that explores and travels to different places. She always asks the kids at home to help her find the thing she is searching for. It started in the USA in English, but **Dora** also teaches kids who to speak Spanish and the show is now is translated all over the world into many languages.



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To go crazy

So, if we want to say that someone becomes **crazy**, we say “**to go crazy**.” There are some examples of this in the transcript.

Here are some more examples:

She **went crazy** when I gave her tickets to the concert.

They have been **going nuts** since they found out we lost the contract.

My dogs **go insane** every time I take them for a walk.

To lose your mind

“**To lose your mind**” is another expression that has a different structure but is just like “**to go crazy**.” And just like “**to go crazy**,” “**to lose your mind**” can also be negative. Here are some positive examples that use this expression.

Harp **lost her mind** when she heard the new Radiohead album.

I **lose my mind** when the weather is so nice. I love being outside in the summer.

Most common slang

“To lose your mind” is not as common as slang like **“crazy”** and **“insane.”** **“Crazy”** and **“insane”** are the terms used most often to describe something exciting or different. **“Bananas”** and **“nuts”** are less common too.

Radiohead

Radiohead is a music band from England that has been making music for a while. They have released seven albums since 1993. I am sure they are quite international and you may have heard of them.

Harp and I both went to the **Radiohead** concert on August 6. It was outside at Parc Jean Drapeau, which is a small island beside Montreal. It was a rainy evening and there were somewhere between 32,000 and 35,000 people there. There was lots of mud, but lots of fun too.

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

1. Which of the following words is a synonym for “crazy”?

- a) insane
- b) nuts
- c) bananas
- d) all of the above

2. Is it politically correct to call someone with a mental illness “crazy”?

- a) yes
- b) no

3. Maura: The Radiohead concert last night was crazy!
Harp: Yeah, I totally _____ my mind when they played the song “Paranoid Android”!
Maura: Yeah, me too! I went insane because I loved it so much.

- a) lose
- b) lost
- c) loser
- d) losed

4. Match the word to the meaning.

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| a) wimp | i) synonym for “crazy” |
| b) one hundred percent | ii) someone weak, or not brave |
| c) bananas | iii) expression meaning “completely” |
| d) day-to-day | iv) “every day,” or “daily” |

5. A teacher who demands complete silence in the classroom and who gets angry if the students don't complete their homework is

- a) paranoid
- b) strict
- c) schizophrenic
- d) insane

6. To be politically correct means that you _____.

- a) use respectful and non-offensive terms to describe people
- b) vote for George W. Bush
- c) ask a politician what to do
- d) call mentally ill people “crazy”

Answers: 1.d 2.b 3.b 4.b-iii 5.b 6.a
c-i
d-iv