

## Catch Word #18 – Out of it

### Transcript

- Maura: Hello everyone out there, this is your Culips podcast with Maura ...
- Robin: And Robin ...
- Maura: And this is our **Catch Word** podcast, where we take one word or one expression and then what do we do?
- Robin: We try to break it down, find different ways of saying the same thing, basically.
- Maura: Yeah, so we take one word or one expression, and we look at different ways, yeah, to say the same thing. And if you want to know more about this episode, or any episode, go to our website.
- Robin: That is Culips, C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Maura: Yeah, and click on Lipservice, and you've got all the information you need there. Today's expression is ... **"Out of it."**
- Robin: **"Out of it!"**
- Maura: **"Out of it!"**
- Robin: **"Out of it!"** Now, when do we use that expression?
- Maura: We use that expression when we are not using our brains really, we're kind of sleepy, not much energy, you know, you're not really there, you're not talkative. Is that how you feel right now?
- Robin: Yeah, absolutely, when you are **groggy**. Maybe you've just woken up, you have to do something, but you don't have the energy just yet, you haven't had your coffee or your tea. You're still kind of tired, that's definitely it.
- Maura: Yeah, a lot of people are **out of it** in the morning, for sure. I remember an old roommate of mine used to tell me that I was **out of it**.
- Robin: Really?
- Maura: And when are you **out of it**?

- Robin: When am I **out of it**? I think sometimes if I do a lot of exercising and then I come back home and I'm really tired, I can be pretty much **out of it**.
- Maura: Right! So, you are kind of tired, not talkative. It's important that we point out (about this expression) that we really don't pronounce each word properly. It is "**out of it**," but we never pronounce it clearly, do we?
- Robin: No, no, no. In North America, the T's, when they are between vowels, we never pronounce them. So, it is not going to be "**out of it**." "**Out of it**" becomes "**oud ov it**." "**Oud ov it**."
- Maura: Yeah.
- Maura: Yeah, and it makes sense because if you're tired and not really thinking clearly, you don't talk clearly either, you don't speak fast or pronounce your words properly, you're kind of **out of it**.
- Robin: Absolutely! Absolutely!
- Maura: So, what is another expression that is **out of it**?
- Robin: Another expression would be, "to be **zoning out**."
- Maura: Yeah!
- Robin: Or, "to **zone out**."
- Maura: Yeah, exactly! So, it is basically exactly the same, instead of "**out of it**," we can also say "to **zone out**." We could say, last weekend, I was at the beach. I found a really great beach not that far from Montreal.
- Robin: Where was it, **Oka**?
- Maura: No, it was in the **Pierrefonds**. It is on the other side of **Oka** and we'll explain more about that in Lipservice, where that is, but yeah, I was at this beach and it was a really hot day and I was totally **zoned out**. I was really **half asleep** lying on my blanket on the sand because of the heat probably and just lying around. I was completely **zoned out**. Were you **zoning out** while I was telling that story?
- Robin: What story? I don't even remember what you were talking about.

- Maura: Oh, I caught you! So, sometimes, you can see in someone's eyes when they are **zoning out** because you can see that they are not really paying attention, Robin!
- Robin: I was, I was, I was! What is another expression that we use?
- Maura: Yeah, another one could be "**staring off into space.**"
- Robin: OK.
- Maura: Yeah, so like I said, in someone's eyes you can see that they are not really looking at you, they are not really focused on you, maybe they are just **staring into nothing**. You can see that they are thinking about something there, **in their own head**. Kind of another way we could talk about it too when you're "**in your head.**"
- Robin: I think teachers probably see that a lot in their students, especially in big lectures.
- Maura: For sure.
- Robin: You know, students just kind of **stare off into space**, they are not really paying attention to the professor or the teacher, they're just looking maybe at him or her.
- Maura: OK, maybe we could do one more that was similar?
- Robin: What is that going to be?
- Maura: Well, we can also say that **someone has their head in the clouds**. Yeah?
- Robin: Is this one as popular as the other ones?
- Maura: No, it's not, you are right! I think that "**out of it**" or "**zoning out**" are the most popular, but you could also hear that if **someone has their head in the clouds** they are not really here, yeah?
- Robin: Physically they might be, but mentally they are somewhere else, they are on a different planet, or they are in the clouds, basically.
- Maura: Far, far away from where we are.
- Robin: Exactly, exactly.

Maura: So, since you're so **out of it**, Robin, we'll end this podcast here so you can go to sleep

Robin: OK. Well, thank you once again for joining us on this week's Culips Catch Word episode. Like we said, if you want to check out any transcripts go to our website, and we hope we can see you next time. For now, this has been Robin ...

Maura: And Maura ...

Robin: And we are signing off, goodbye!

Maura: Bye!

## Detailed Explanation

### Out of it

This “**out of it**” expression means that you are a bit tired and not thinking clearly. When you are “**out of it**” you are lost in your own thoughts.

“**Out of it**” can also be used in other ways. You can say that someone is “**out of it**” if they do not know about something. For example, this could be used with someone who is older and doesn’t know a lot about what is happening with popular culture.

Here is an example:

Richard: Does he know about the new animated Disney film?  
Karen: No, he’s **out of it**. He doesn’t know anything about it.

### Deformation of “out of it”

When we speak fast, we often do not pronounce words clearly. In this case, we do not usually pronounce “**out of it**” clearly. How we mispronounce or change words when we speak is called *language deformation*.

Robin explains this by saying that when we have a T between two vowels, we do not pronounce the T. We often change this sound to a D.

In this case, “**out of it**” sounds more like “**oud ov it**.” If you listen to this episode, you will see that Robin and I often pronounce it this way.

### Groggy

To be “**groggy**” is to be tired, like you have just woken up. After you have just woken up, it takes at least a couple minutes to be able to talk and make decisions. At this point, before you have fully woken up, you are **groggy**.

Here is one example of “**groggy**”:

Dave: Did Jon tell you what he wants to do today?  
Susan: Not yet. He is still **groggy**.



Zone out

As a verb, “**to zone out**” is to become inattentive, to stop paying attention or to stop listening to someone. When someone **zones out** they are lost in their own thoughts and not participating in the conversation. It is just like “**out of it**,” except usually that when someone **zones out** it is just for a temporary time.

Here is an example conversation:

Jill: So, I went to the store and then I saw him. Hey, are you listening to me?  
Dawn: Sorry, I **zoned out** for a second there. What did you say? (verb)  
Paula: Look at Dawn over there. She is **zoning out**. (adjective)

A similar expression is “**to be in your head**.” This means the same thing as “**to zone out**”: it means that you are lost in your thoughts (in your head) and not paying attention.

Oka / Pierrefonds

**Oka** and the **Pierrefonds** are two areas close to Montreal. **Oka** is actually off the island of Montreal (yes, Montreal is an island) and has a popular beach in the summer. The **Pierrefonds** is a suburb of Montreal, but it is much more natural than the city centre. This past summer, I found a nice little beach in the **Pierrefonds**.

Half asleep

This is really another expression that has almost the same meaning as “**out of it**.” If you are “**half asleep**” you are definitely not thinking clearly and you don’t have much energy either.

If you are **asleep**, you cannot have a conversation or move around. If you are “**half asleep**” then you are similarly not able to do much. (Of course this is just an expression. You are tired, but completely awake.)

Stare off into space / stare into nothing

A person sometimes **stares off into space** or **stares off into nothing**, when they are thinking about something. When someone is lost in their thoughts, like “**out of it**” and “**zoned out**,” their eyes are still and they focus on nothing.

“**To stare**” is to look at something intently and for a long time. When someone **stares** at “**nothing**” or “**into space**” (which is the same as nothing) they appear “**out of it**” or “**zoned out**.”

These expressions are all similar. In this case, “**to stare off into space**” or “**to stare into nothing**” is a verb. “**To zone out**” is usually a verb too, but it can also be used as an adjective. “**Out of it**” is an expression that describes someone (not a verb).

Here is one example: “I have been so **out of it** today. I keep **staring off into space** when I need to pay attention.”

#### To have your head in the clouds

“**To have your head in the clouds**” is to not pay attention to what is happening around you. Some people **have their head in the clouds** temporarily, and others have personalities where it seems like they always **have their head in the clouds**.

“**To have your head in the clouds**” means that your head is somewhere else, not on earth and not involved in whatever is happening on earth. This is similar to all the expressions mentioned above.

Here is an example:

Craig: Did you ask him if he was interested in joining our project?  
Amanda: Yes, but he **has his head in the clouds** again and so I am not sure what he thinks.

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

1. After someone has just woken up, and can't think properly yet, we can describe them as \_\_\_\_\_.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) gregory
- b) groggy
- c) giggly
- d) gag

2. Vince: Did you hear what the teacher just said?  
Becky: No, I just \_\_\_\_\_ for a second there too.

Please fill in the blank

- a) out of it
- b) zoned out
- c) head in the clouds
- d) groggy

3. What does "to be out of it" mean?

- a) to be outside
- b) to be lost in your own thoughts
- c) to be in it
- d) to like to look at the clouds

4. To \_\_\_\_\_ off into space.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) state
- b) star
- c) stair
- d) stare



5. What special place can you go at Oka and the Pierrefonds?

- a) the bowling alley
- b) the clouds
- c) the beach
- d) the zone

6. Another expression that means “out of it” is “to have your \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_.”

- a) head / clouds
- b) clouds / head
- c) thoughts / clouds
- d) head / sky

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