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Simplified Speech #203 – Iceland adventures with Indiana

Episode description

In this episode of Simplified Speech, Andrew is joined by Indiana to talk about her recent trip to Iceland. They discuss the stunning landscapes, the unique Icelandic culture, and how she decided to travel to Iceland to go on a nature expedition cruise. Indiana also shares interesting facts about Iceland's history, local traditions, and the memorable experiences she had while traveling to that special island.

Fun fact

Iceland was first settled by Norse explorers and Vikings around 874 AD, but many of the earliest settlers were also from Ireland and Scotland. One unique thing about Iceland is that it has one of the world's oldest parliamentary systems, called the *Althing*, established in 930 AD. It's still running today, making it a symbol of Iceland's long history of democracy!

Expressions included in the study guide

- To send a shiver up one's spine
- To be tight with someone
- To trace back
- To keep one's spirits up
- One's internal clock
- To get one's sea legs



Transcript

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. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Simplified Speech, Episode 203, "Iceland Adventures with Indiana." Featuring Andrew and Indiana. Joining me now to talk about her latest, or recent trip, I guess I should say. Maybe recent trip, not latest trip, but recent trip to Iceland is my co-host, Indiana. Indiana, hello! Welcome back to Culips, good to have you here.

Indiana: Thanks, Andrew, good to see you.

Andrew: Yeah, and for listeners who don't recognize Indiana's voice, she is one of our study guide writers, she is one of our small-group conversation leaders, and she has appeared on Culips before. And I interviewed her so that we could get to know her, and I'll leave the link to that interview in the episode description for this episode. So, if you are new to hearing Indiana's voice, maybe you could go back and listen to that interview first, and then continue with this episode, and that would give a little background to the story. But today, Indiana is joining me to talk about a trip that she had. Was it last year, Indiana?

Indiana: Yes, it was in July of 2023.

Andrew: OK, and you went to Iceland, right?

Indiana: Yes, it was very cool. It was actually a trip with my husband, he had freshly become my husband, it was, a month before it was our wedding.

Andrew: But was it the honeymoon? Would you consider it a honeymoon?

Indiana: Well, we also had my parents-in-law and his brother there, so I wouldn't quite call it a honeymoon. But yeah, in terms of being a big trip right after the wedding, it was. But yeah, seeing as though we had many other guests there, not really.

Andrew: Yeah, calling it an official honeymoon might be a stretch, but a family vacation maybe we could call it. OK, so let's start at the very beginning. I'm very interested to hear this story because I've always been interested in Iceland. It seems like one of those countries from around the world that's really unique and not quite like any other place, and so I'm dying to hear all about it. Maybe we could start at the start, and you could just tell us what brought the trip on. Like why did you decide to go on this epic adventure to Iceland with your newlywed husband and his folks and his brother? What brought this on?

Indiana: So, it was all thanks to his parents, my husband's parents, so, my parents-in-law. Several years ago, they went on a, I would call it, like a nature-expedition cruise. It was through a company called Adventure Canada, actually. And so, they primarily focus on, I think they do cruises with a small group of people, like maybe 180 people, which sounds like a lot, but sometimes you see these cruises with like 2,000 people. And I think they focus on going to the Arctic or like the north of Canada, Newfoundland. And so, they had gone on a cruise with this company. They really thought it was quite cool, to some island, I think, off the coast of Canada. And so, but they have always wanted to go to Iceland. And so, they saw that there was this opportunity to take this cruise in Iceland for, I think, it was about 10 days. And they graciously invited my husband and I and my husband's brother on the trip with them. So, I didn't know anything about Iceland, but I was like, well, absolutely, I'm gonna grab this opportunity. So....

Andrew: That's awesome. So yeah, that's a very nice invitation to get, I'm sure. Can I ask how comfortable you were with your in-laws before doing the trip? Like, for some people, that might **send a shiver up their spine**, like, oh, having to go on a cruise with my in-laws. Did you guys have a pretty **tight** relationship before going? You felt comfortable with them and everything?

Indiana: Yeah, I've known them for about 10 years, and we're extremely comfortable with each other. We have a very good relationship, so yeah, it was an immediate, "Yes!" from me to go on vacation with my in-laws, yeah.

Andrew: Good to hear it, OK. And so, was most of the trip spent on the boat, and doing like a cruise and sailing? Or did you get to spend some time actually on the island as well? What was the ratio of cruise ship to island time?

Indiana: It was really great the way they did it. So, most of the travel on the water took place at night. So, in the morning, you could get off the boat, disembark, and get on. A lot of the times it was not at a port, but it was sort of like a water entry. So, you needed to take this sort of boat-type of device called a zodiac and navigate these choppy waters to get to shore. But you could do that from very early in the morning, and there were activities all day, different, you know, hikes or expeditions. And yeah, so really mostly just at night it was the travel on the water. So, every single day, save for a couple of times when it was just a longer distance that needed to be traveled, yeah, we were on the island or doing things off the boat every single day.

Andrew: And so where did you start the trip from? Did you have to fly from the States over to Iceland and then board the boat in Iceland? Or you didn't sail from the USA to Iceland, did you? Where did you start the trip?

Indiana: No, but apparently some folks, they have these back-to-back trips from... like, they do Greenland, or they do Newfoundland and then they go over to Iceland. So, you could pay just a lot of money and be on this boat for like three months. But no, we didn't do that. I flew in from Boston, and yeah, and we flew into Reykjavík, so that's the capital. And yeah, we spent several days there, and that's where the cruise started from, and then we circumnavigated the island. So that is just a very fancy word for saying went around the island by boat.

Andrew: Awesome. And so maybe you could tell us your first impressions about Iceland. You said that you flew into the capital, and yeah, I'm not sure exactly how to pronounce it the way that Icelanders do. You said you sounded pretty good with your pronunciation. I've always said Reykjavík, but that's probably not correct. How did you say it?

Indiana: Yeah, as far as I remember, the correct pronunciation is Reykjavík. And yeah, you see that "vik" ending in a lot of city names around Iceland because it means "bay," and Reykjavík means "smoky bay." I remember that factoid from the trip. But yeah, I'm pretty sure that's how you pronounce it.

Andrew: Smoky Bay. OK. And so, I know Iceland is a very, very small country. I believe the population of the whole country is like maybe under 300,000 people, which would really be almost like a small city in the USA. And I think half of the population lives in the capital. So yeah, a pretty small place, pretty isolated place. What were your first impressions of seeing the city and being there?

Indiana: Yeah, definitely a small place. The downtown area, like, I think there's a main square, and it does feel like a downtown. But yeah, it feels very sparsely populated, like, for being a capital city. And I think it was maybe one of the most beautiful days of the year. It was mid-July, it was about 60 degrees Fahrenheit, sunny, not very warm. I'm not sure what that is in Celsius, but, you know, no clouds in the sky. And I kept being told that this is like the best that the weather gets. And yet there were almost, I mean, it felt like, yeah, it felt kind of like a ghost town for a main square, for a downtown capital city. It was very, yeah, there were very few people. So that was definitely a strong first impression, like yeah, this is a very isolated place.

Andrew: Are there any tall buildings at all, like in the downtown area? Are there any... I don't want to say skyscrapers, there's probably no skyscrapers, but any buildings that maybe are like 10 stories or taller than that?

Indiana: Yeah, I don't know if I would say taller than 10 stories, but I believe I remember that there was like a music venue or a sort of small stadium, so that had a big footprint in the downtown. Yeah, there were definitely some tall buildings, but yeah, did not give capital-city vibes to me.

Andrew: OK. And how about the people? I don't know too much about Icelanders, and I think we don't even have too many listeners from Iceland, probably just because there are

not that many people there in the first place. And if you are listening from Iceland, please leave a comment on our Discord or Instagram and tell us that you are listening, because it would be cool to know that we have some listeners there. But as far as I know, they speak English very well, so maybe that's one reason that we don't have too many people tuned in from Iceland. Yeah, I've heard they're very good English speakers. And also, I've heard Icelanders are quite tall. Was that your experience? Did you feel like that at all, or was that something that you didn't really notice?

Indiana: Hmm, I can't say that I noticed that. Yeah, I can't quite remember if there was a noticeable height in people that I met, but absolutely everybody spoke English perfectly fluently. I do believe that it is taught from a very early age. And I'm just thinking back to that day, I remember that we had a really wonderful tour of Reykjavík on that first day. And one of the most interesting things that the tour guide shared was that because this island, like Icelanders, there's such a small population.... And the island's history, like how people got onto the island, I believe it was immigration from like Ireland and, and Norway, maybe around the year 700. So, an incredibly recent history as far as, like, mass populating this island. And there is a registry, and when you're an Icelandic and you have your citizenship and your family history, there's a registry where you can check back as far as potentially the year 700, like when the island started being populated, to see all of your ancestors. Like, it's very well-documented, that genealogy is there. So, he was sharing that everybody can really **trace back**, like, where they came from and who their family was. So that was just, yeah. Not sure if that was related to the question you asked, but I just had that memory on that, from that tour.

Andrew: That's really cool. In my family, like, I can only go back to maybe my great-grandparents, maybe I could **trace back** that far. But to go all the way back hundreds of years and many, many generations, that's really something. I don't know if you noticed this, Indiana, and I hope I'm not wrong about this fact, but I believe also that maybe in the Icelandic language, surnames, so your family name, I believe if you are a guy, your name ends with "son," and if you are a daughter, it ends with something that resembles the English word "daughter," maybe "dóttir" or something like that. Is that true?

Indiana: That is true. Yeah, that was another very interesting fact that we learned. And there's a few different letters as well in Icelandic, like, it shares predominantly the same alphabet as English, but there's a few different ones. I can't remember if you're right, "dóttir" or something, D-O-T-T-I-R, I think it's spelled. Yeah, I don't know if there's a different letter in there, but exactly. So, if you are a woman, you take that name and you have that suffix to indicate that bloodline, who your parents were, and then "son" for, for men.

Andrew: Right, so, I'm just gonna say a word that sounds like it could be a surname, and again, apologies if I'm butchering all of this to the Icelandic people out there, but maybe your name would be like Gunderson or something, and that would be like son of Gunder, right? Like, it's really cool how that connection there to your lineage is built right into their, their culture. So that's really fascinating. So, OK, back to the trip. So, you arrive in Reykjavík, and then what? You join up and you get on the ship right away, or you have some time to explore the city? How did that work?

Indiana: Yeah, I think we just had a couple days where we stayed at a hotel or an Airbnb, and we walked around the city for a few days. But yes, we boarded the ship in Reykjavík, and then we moved on. So, like I said, going around the island. And usually, when people visit Iceland, they want to see a lot of different places. They take something called the Ring Route and they rent a car and they have to go, you know, of course, on land. But we went to a lot of port cities on this trip. The first stop was Snæfellsnes Peninsula, and I believe there was a very beautiful waterfall there that we hiked up. Yeah, a lot of the trip was all about sort of seeing Iceland's natural beauty, unique geographical features. Yeah, it was very similar in many ways to Hawaii because of the volcanic activity that both islands share, but a lot colder. And yeah, I mean, we just had a lot of different interesting stops around the country. One of the first stops was also in, to the north of Iceland, a tiny, tiny island called Grímsey. I think the population is about 100 at any given time. Maybe it goes up and down with people going to the island to work and do fishing and stuff. But that is the northernmost part of Iceland, and it touches, just barely touches the Arctic Circle. So yeah, we got to go into the Arctic Circle. That was a very cool moment.

Andrew: Wow, yeah, that is cool. So, most of the little villages that you saw, were they predominantly just fishing villages? Or is there some different, I don't know, maybe mining or some other kind of economic activity that would bring people to live in such a remote place?

Indiana: Yeah, I think a lot of the economic activity was based around fishing. I... I can't remember the kinds of fish that were really critical for the fishing industries in those areas, but yeah, we went into many fishing villages. And I also believe that it was this city, or town, I guess. And this one I'm going to do my best to pronounce as well, Seyðisfjörður? Seyðisfjörður. That was a really cool, small, again, like a little port fishing town, but apparently, it is a hub of where artists go to find inspiration and set up. There might be an art school there, or it's just a very popular place for artists to go and stay and find inspiration, draw the landscapes. So, so there's other economic drivers, but definitely it did seem like fishing was a very, very a big one for the places that we visited.

Andrew: Cool. Yeah, I'm trying to think, like, one of my favorite singers of all time, Björk, is from Iceland, and there are some other bands too, Sigur Rós is a really popular kind of indie band, they're from Iceland. So yeah, even though it is a small country, they do have some really huge international stars from there, so that's pretty cool. Tell me about the food. What was Icelandic food like? I have no idea what their cuisine or anything is like. I imagine it's probably a lot of seafood, fish-based perhaps, since they are an island. But yeah, what was the food like there?

Indiana: Yes, definitely very fish-based. But so, I think historically, like, times were tough in Iceland. The land was not easy to grow things in, it wasn't very fertile for a lot of crops. There were periods in Icelandic history where there were very little trees. Like, it was pretty tough to get food there. So, I think historically, a lot of root vegetables, cabbage, these kinds of things, meat, things that you could cure. But recently, I think, yeah, imports bring any kind of food to the island, so you can get, you know, what you would expect in any other city or country. But it is extremely expensive because of how far it has to be imported. But yeah, as far as I could tell for traditional cuisine, definitely a lot of, a lot of

fish. And there's another thing that's famous from Iceland, which is fermented shark that is buried. You know what I'm talking about?

Andrew: I think I've heard of this dish. It's shark. It's fermented and buried? Is that what happens? Like, what do you know about this?

Indiana: Yeah, I believe that it ferments after being buried in the earth. I'm not sure the period of time that it takes. But as a result, it has this incredibly strong ammonia-like smell. And yeah, I think it is a famous sort of daring dish to try because yeah, such a strong smell. If you're not familiar with it, you might not be able to handle that.

Andrew: Sounds quite pungent.

Indiana: Indeed, yeah.

Andrew: Did you try it at all?

Indiana: So, I'm a vegetarian, and I was intrigued, and I was compelled to, I think, a little bit, but some of my family did. But honestly, I think that we were given the sort of tourist version because they said it didn't taste very strong, and the smell was not that strong of ammonia. So yeah, I don't think we got the good stuff.

Andrew: It reminds me of a Korean dish called "hongeo," which is, I believe, a fermented ray, a kind of ray fish. And it also has a very pungent aroma, let's say, and it is like a very strong ammonia smell and ammonia taste to it. And yeah, I've had it, and it's quite strong.

Indiana: But do you think it's an acquired taste or sort of a delicacy? What was your thought when you tried it?

Andrew: Yeah, so I do think it is an acquired taste because the first time I had it, it was almost like, I can't even imagine that people eat this at all. And since then, I've had it a few times, and the last time that I had it, I actually had it with my father-in-law. He was like, "Let's eat some of this." And maybe it was because I was in that situation where it's like, I

don't want to look, you know like, weak in front of my father-in-law, like I can't eat this fish. But I felt it was fine the most recent time that I had had it. So, I think, yeah, acquired taste is a good word to use to describe it because it does get easier over time. Not like I'm running out to, to buy it every day or anything, but I think if somebody were like, "I really want to eat this, let's eat this dish," I wouldn't freak out about it. Whereas maybe in the past I would have been like, "Oh no, I don't want to do this."

Indiana: Nice, good personal growth. Awesome.

Andrew: Yeah, so Indiana, how about some of the highlights from the trip? Maybe there was some kind of landmark or geographic feature, you know, like a volcano, or a geyser, or maybe a hot spring or something that you visited? Or in your opinion, what was the highlight of the trip for you?

Indiana: Yeah, on the one hand, certainly the stepping into the Arctic Circle was pretty cool, but, you know, that's more of something you know you've done, but you don't actually feel any different for having done it. So, I don't know, that was cool. As far as a more, like, a sense memory or something that definitely stood out on this trip. You may have heard of, I think it's the Blue Lagoon, it's like the most, sort of, famous hot spring near Reykjavík. We didn't go to that one, but we did go to another beautiful hot spring that was right up against the ocean. And it kind of had that effect, if you've ever seen an infinity pool, where it looks like it's just spilling into the ocean. But of course, then you swim up and there's a wall there, but it has that feeling that you're just in this hot, steamy, wonderful water right on the ocean, and you have a drink, and you can go through this spa experience and do a salt scrub and sit in the steam room. And it was just very therapeutic and a really good time. That was definitely a very nice, a very nice moment.

Andrew: Sounds very relaxing.

Indiana: Mm-hmm. Yeah, and I guess one other thing I'll mention that I learned about Icelandic culture is it's very, very common for there to be public pools, like public bathhouses. I think similar in many ways to, yeah, some Nordic countries, there's a big

sauna culture. Yeah, but there were many, many public pools in Reykjavík. Yeah, and as you know, being so far north, it's absolutely dark in the winter. So, I think it's really necessary to have that like hot, communal area to just soak away the stress and, you know, enjoy the cold winter months a little bit better.

Andrew: Yeah, definitely probably needed in the winter to **keep your spirits going**, 'cause I imagine it is pretty cold and pretty dark for most of the winter. But the opposite is going to be true, at least in terms of the light, in the summer. So, what was that experience like? Do you remember how long the days were there? Were they 16, 17 hours of daylight or longer maybe?

Indiana: Yeah, thanks for reminding me about that because that was a really cool part of the experience. Yeah, I don't think that it ever really got dark. The sun would dip below the horizon, and it would look like sunset, but then it would just come right back up. So yeah, pretty much almost full daylight all day long. And I learned that you absolutely have to have blackout curtains or else you're not gonna get any sleep. And some Airbnbs have those, and some don't, so bring your own, you know, eyewear.

Andrew: Yeah, an eye mask for sleeping. I haven't been to Iceland, of course, but I have been to northern Canada, into a territory called Nunavut, which is in the Arctic, and I visited in the summer. The sun would set for a couple of hours around... yeah, I remember being about 10:30 or 11 at night, the sun would dip down for a little bit, and then it would be right back up. But yeah, it'd be like 3 in the morning and it's full sun. So, if you don't have the blackout curtains, it just really messes with your **internal body clock**, getting that much sunlight. And yeah, I'm happy that we got to visit in the summer, you to Iceland and me to Nunavut, because in the winter, it's got to be pretty tough. I know that a lot of the people that I met there told me that they had some lights inside, some special light bulbs so that it could sort of mimic the sunlight's effect. And they'd have those set up in their home to kind of turn on when the sun would rise for their regular work schedule and stuff. But yeah, it is rather harsh in that way, to live in an area where it's really, really dark for a long time of the season.

Indiana, we'll wrap things up here in a moment, but before we do, I wanted to ask you about actually being on the boat. So, you slept on the boat, or you slept on land? Would you get off the boat every day to sleep, or were you sleeping on the boat too?

Indiana: Yeah, so for each night of the cruise, we were on the boat. So, I think it was about 10 days, so I slept in a little windowless cabin for 10 days with my husband and my brother-in-law.

Andrew: Did you get seasick at all?

Indiana: I actually did a little bit. The first couple nights, I felt quite sick, and I noticed a lot of people on the boat had little patches of medication behind their ears, and I think that was for seasickness, yeah. But I think I took a little bit of, it might be called Dramamine, and it improved. Yeah, I got used to life on the boat, but there were some pretty crazy waves on that very small cruise, yeah.

Andrew: You got your **sea legs** eventually.

Indiana: I did get my **sea legs**. Took a few days, but I got my **sea legs**.

Andrew: I watched this movie last weekend called *Triangle of Sadness*. Have you seen that movie at all?

Indiana: Oh, I have seen that movie.

Andrew: In that movie, for listeners who haven't seen it, there's a big part of the movie that happens on a small cruise boat, and they encounter some pretty nasty weather. So, I'm hoping that your trip wasn't like that. I'm just thinking of those scenes, that's fresh in my mind. But I imagine your waves weren't nearly as big as that. But yeah, Indiana, I think this is a good place to wrap things up. So, thank you so much for telling us your story about visiting Iceland. And it's on my bucket list. I think it's a place that I would love to visit one day. Unfortunately, it's like really, really far from Korea here, where my home base is. I know it's not that far from Canada, but my family is based out of the western part of

Canada. So, it actually is extremely far even for me when I'm back home in Canada as well. So, I don't know when I'll be able to get there, but it is on my bucket list. Would you say it's a place worth visiting? Would you recommend it to anyone who's curious to go there?

Indiana: I would, but I would warn everybody that, you know, due to what I said earlier, like the need to import a lot of foods and a lot of supplies, that the cost of living, cost of eating food out at a restaurant is extremely high. So, make sure that you, you prepare for some pricey meals while you're there. But yeah, absolutely, it's definitely worth going.

Andrew: Nice. Yeah, I envision that at some point I'll probably visit, but it will probably be like a stopover. I've heard that it's a good place to do, maybe when you're going to Europe, you could stop in Iceland for, you know, two or three days and then continue on your trip to Europe, something like that. So yeah, because it's small, probably you can see quite a bit in a few days. And because of the high cost and because it is in that nice, convenient location between North America and the mainland of Europe, it's just perfect for breaking up a flight as well so you don't have to do one of those long-haul flights. But yeah, one day I will have my own Iceland story. But for now, it was great to hear yours, Indiana. So, thank you so much for sharing it with us, and we'll have you back on to Culips very soon to continue with some more Simplified Speech episodes. So yeah, we'll talk to you in the next one.

Indiana: Thanks, Andrew. Yeah, thanks for allowing me to relive some nice memories from last year.

Andrew: That brings us to the end of today's episode of Simplified Speech. I hope you enjoyed hearing Indiana's travel stories as much as I did. And I have to say, I can't wait for my own Iceland adventure. Indiana got me all fired up to go visit that special island, so I hope one day soon I can also make a trip there. Well, that's it for me for now. Thank you again for listening, and we'll be back here at Culips with another brand-new episode soon. Until then, take care and happy English learning, as always. Goodbye.

That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time. Bye!

Detailed Explanations

To send a shiver up one's spine Idiom

The idiom "**to send a shiver up one's spine**" means to make someone feel very scared, nervous, or uncomfortable. In the episode, when Andrew says, "for some people, [the idea of going on vacation with their in-laws] might **send a shiver up their spine**," he means that for some people, the prospect of spending that much time with their in-laws might make them feel nervous or uncomfortable.

To send a shiver up one's spine refers to the chill or cold feeling in your back you feel when you are really scared or uncomfortable. It can be used for physical fear, like when you see something frightening, or for nervousness, like when you are in an awkward or uncomfortable situation. You can use this expression when you want to say that something made you feel scared, uncomfortable, or nervous. For example, if you watch a horror movie and a scary scene happens, you could say, "That scene **sent a shiver up my spine**." You can also use it for less scary situations, like feeling nervous about speaking in front of a big crowd: "Thinking about giving that speech **sends a shiver up my spine**."

Some similar expressions are "to give someone goosebumps" or "to make someone's skin crawl," which also describe feelings of fear or discomfort. For example, if you say, "Hearing that ghost story gave me goosebumps," it means the story scared you. Another example is, "That old, abandoned house made my skin crawl," meaning the house made you feel very uncomfortable.

Here are a couple more examples with **to send a shiver up one's spine**:

Alex: I saw a spider crawl across my desk this morning.

Nina: Ugh, just hearing that **sends a shiver up my spine**. I hate spiders!

Gus: I finally watched that horror movie you were telling me about.

Lily: Oh yeah? What did you think?

Gus: It was terrifying. The scene in the abandoned hospital **sent a shiver up my spine**. I had to turn the lights on in my living room so that I wouldn't feel so scared!

Lily: I hope you were able to sleep afterwards! I remember that I was too scared to sleep after the first time I watched it.

To be tight (with someone)

Slang

The slang phrase "**to be tight with someone**" means to have a close or strong relationship with someone. In the episode, Andrew asks Indiana if she was close with her in-laws before the trip, saying, "Did you guys have a pretty **tight** relationship before going?" He wants to know if they were comfortable and had a good connection.

Just like having a strong bond with a good friend or family member, being "**tight with someone**" means you are close to them, trust them, and spend a lot of time together. For example, if you and your best friend share everything and always hang out, you can say, "We're really **tight**." If your older brother and you have a close sibling relationship and you support each other, you might say, "I'm really **tight with** my brother."

When you **are tight** with someone, you are very connected to them emotionally or personally. To remember this expression, think of two people being close together, almost like they are tied tightly with a rope. The **tighter** the relationship, the stronger the bond. It's like being in a small circle of trust.

Some similar expressions are "to be close with someone" or "to have a strong bond." These also mean that you have a good and close relationship with another person.

One important thing to remember is that the phrase "**being tight with someone**" is informal and mostly used among friends. It wouldn't be used in formal situations like at your workplace. For instance, you could tell your friends, "I'm pretty **tight** with my boss," but you would tell your coworkers, "I have a pretty close working relationship with the boss."

Here are a few more examples with **to be tight with someone**:

Eric: You seem like you and your neighbor are good friends.

Zoey: Yeah, **we're tight**. We help each other out all the time, and we've known each other for years.

Rhonda: You and Alex have been friends forever, haven't you?

John: Yeah. Actually, we used to **be** really **tight with** each other, but not so much anymore. Life got busy with work and family, and we don't talk as much as we used to. I miss that sometimes.

To trace back

Phrasal verb

The phrasal verb **to trace back** means to find out where something started or where it originally came from. In the episode, Indiana talks about how Icelanders can **trace back** their family history for hundreds of years. This means they can follow their family tree to see who their ancestors were and where they came from.

Just like following a path to its starting point, **to trace back** means finding out where something began. For example, you might **trace back** your family history by learning about your grandparents, great-grandparents, and the people who lived before them. You can also use this expression for other things, like **tracing back** the history of a company or finding out where a problem started.

To trace back is often used when talking about family history, like in the episode, but it can also be used for objects, events, or ideas. You might say, “I **traced back** the error in my work to a mistake I made last week,” meaning you found where the problem started. If there is a foul smell in your kitchen, you might search for the source and **trace it back** to a bag of rotting vegetables in your fridge.

The origin of this phrase comes from the word “trace,” which means to follow something carefully, and “back,” which means going in the opposite direction, toward the beginning. When you **trace** something **back**, you are following it to see where it started.

Here are a few more examples with **to trace back**:

Lucas: My dad’s been really into genealogy lately.

Olivia: Oh, cool! Did he find anything interesting?

Lucas: He **traced back** our family to some early settlers in Canada. It’s pretty amazing how far back the records go.

Annika: My allergies have been really bad lately, but I’m not sure what’s causing it.

Richard: Did you change anything in your routine? Maybe you can **trace it back** to something new, like a different detergent or food.

Annika: Oh, you’re right! I did start using a new laundry soap last week. That could be it.

Richard: Try using your old detergent and see if anything changes!

To keep one's spirits up

Idiom

To keep your spirits up means to stay positive and cheerful, even when things are difficult. In the episode, Andrew says people need to do things **to keep their spirits going** (it's more common to say "up") during the dark, cold winters in Iceland. This means they need to do things that help them stay happy and not get too sad or depressed because of the weather.

Just like keeping your mood high, **keeping your spirits up** means staying optimistic, even when things are hard. We often use this idiom as a suggestion or light command to encourage someone to stay positive. For example, if you are feeling sad because you are sick, your friend might say, "Try and watch a funny movie to **keep your spirits up!**" They are encouraging you to stay positive and not feel too down. You might also tell a friend who recently broke up with their boyfriend, "I know it feels really hard right now, **but keep your spirits up.** Things will get better, and I'm here to help you through it."

The origin of this phrase comes from the idea of the "spirit" as a person's emotional energy or mood. Keeping your spirits "up" means keeping your mood high, instead of letting it fall "down" and feeling sad or negative. To remember this expression, think of it as keeping your mood like a balloon that floats up in the air, instead of letting it fall to the ground. It's about staying cheerful, even when things are not going well.

Some similar expressions are "stay positive," "keep your chin up," or "hang in there." These phrases also encourage someone to stay hopeful or strong during hard times.

Here are a couple more examples with **to keep your spirits up**:

Masen: Ever since I lost my job, I've been really down. I'm not sure what to do next.

Ilana: I know it's tough, but **keep your spirits up.** You're talented, and I'm sure you'll find something better soon. In the meantime, let's grab lunch and take a break from all the stress.

Nathan: I'm not sure how to **keep the team's spirits up** after that loss. Everyone's feeling pretty down.

Emily: Yeah, it's tough, but maybe organizing something fun for the team could help. A little bonding might lift their mood.

Nathan: That's a good idea. Maybe we could arrange a team dinner or a game night.

One's internal clock

Noun

Your **internal clock** is your body's natural way of keeping track of time, especially when it comes to sleep, waking up, and feeling tired or alert. In the episode, Andrew talks about how being in a place with long days of sunlight, like Nunavut, can confuse your **internal clock** because the sun stays up so late, making it hard to know when to sleep.

An **internal clock** is like an invisible clock inside your body that tells you when to wake up and when to go to sleep. For example, if you always wake up at 7 AM, your **internal clock** is used to that routine. But if you travel to a place with a different time zone or if the sun doesn't set for many hours, your **internal clock** can get confused, making it hard for you to know when to sleep or wake up.

One's internal clock is often used when talking about how people feel in different environments or time zones, especially when their body's schedule gets disrupted. For instance, when you travel to a new country and experience jet lag, your **internal clock** is not adjusted to the new time, so you might feel tired or wide awake at the wrong times.

The origin of this phrase comes from the idea that our body acts like a clock, following a regular schedule or pattern that tells us when to do things like sleep and eat. To remember this expression, think of your body as having a personal clock that runs in the background, keeping track of time. When this clock works well, you feel energized during the day and sleepy at night. When it's out of sync, like when you travel to a new time zone, you might feel tired at strange times.

A similar expression to this is "circadian rhythm". Circadian rhythm is a more scientific way to talk about the same idea, the natural cycle of when your body feels tired or awake during the day.

Here are a few more examples with **one's internal clock**:

Derek: Ever since daylight saving time started, I've been feeling so tired.

Genevieve: Yeah, **my internal clock** is all messed up too. It always takes me several days to adjust to the new time.

Stephen: I've been waking up hungry at 2 AM every night since we got back from vacation.

Yvonne: That's probably because your **internal clock** hasn't adjusted back to our time zone yet. It might take a few more days to get back to normal.

To get one's sea legs

Idiom

The idiom **to get one's sea legs** means to get used to being on a boat or ship, especially when it's moving and rocking on the water. In the episode, Indiana talks about feeling a bit seasick during the first night of her trip, but after a few days, she **got her sea legs**, meaning she adjusted to the movement of the boat and felt better.

Getting your sea legs means becoming comfortable with the motion of a boat or ship. When you first get on a boat, you might feel dizzy or unsteady because of the waves, but after some time, your body adjusts to the movement, and you don't feel sick anymore. For example, when someone says, "It took me a while, but I finally **got my sea legs**," they mean they're no longer seasick and can move around easily on the boat.

The phrase originally comes from sailors. When they first started working on ships, they would sometimes feel sick or lose their balance because they weren't used to the constant motion of the sea. After a few days, they would **get their sea legs** and be able to walk around without feeling dizzy or unsteady.

To remember this phrase, think of how your legs need to adjust when walking on a moving boat. Once you **get your sea legs**, you feel steady and comfortable.

It's important to note that **getting your sea legs** is mostly used when talking about adjusting to being on a boat or ship. However, it can occasionally be used in a figurative way to mean getting used to any new situation. For example, after starting a new job, you might say, "I'm still **getting my sea legs**," meaning you're still adjusting to the new environment.

Here are a couple more examples with **to get one's sea legs**:

Rowan: I don't know if I can handle this cruise. I feel dizzy already!

Julian: Don't worry, you'll **get your sea legs** soon. It just takes a little time to adjust.

Rowan: I hope you're right...

Ivan: I'm struggling with these university courses. The workload is so much more than I'm used to.

Jessica: Yeah, it's tough in the beginning. But don't worry, you'll **get your sea legs** soon enough. Once you get into a routine, you'll feel more comfortable with everything.

Expressions Quiz

1. Which situation would most likely "send a shiver up your spine"?

- a) Watching a scary movie alone at night.
- b) Attending a birthday party.
- c) Walking your dog in the park.
- d) Eating a delicious meal.

2. Which of the following shows that two people are "tight with each other"?

- a) They always fight and argue.
- b) They don't speak to each other anymore.
- c) They share secrets and spend a lot of time together.
- d) They work in the same office but don't talk much.

3. What does the expression "to get one's sea legs" mean in a literal sense?

- a) To feel sick while walking on a boat.
- b) To adapt to the motion of a boat and feel steady.
- c) To fall down while on a boat.
- d) To jump into the ocean.

4. In which situation would you most likely trace something back?

- a) Drawing a sketch.
- b) Planning a weekend vacation.
- c) Deciding what to eat for dinner.
- d) Finding the origin of a strange noise in your house.

5. What would be the OPPOSITE of "to keep one's spirits up"?

- a) To feel motivated.
- b) To feel neutral.
- c) To start to feel hope.
- d) To give up hope.

Listening Comprehension Quiz

6. Was Indiana's trip to Iceland her honeymoon? Why or why not?
7. Where did Indiana's cruise around Iceland start?
8. What did Indiana learn about Icelandic surnames during her tour?
9. What did Indiana say was common in Icelandic culture that helped people relax during the long, dark winters?
10. What food did Andrew mention as a comparison to Iceland's fermented shark?

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever traveled to Iceland? If not, would you like to? Which country would you most like to visit?
2. Would you feel comfortable going on a vacation for two weeks with your parents-in-law, or does the thought **send a shiver up your spine**?
3. How far can you **trace** your family history **back**? Do you know anything about your grandparents, your great-grandparents, or even further back?
4. Have you ever been on a boat or a cruise before? If so, did you feel seasick or were you comfortable? Did you **get your sea legs**? If you haven't, would you like to?
5. This time, Indiana went on vacation on a small cruise. She went around the island of Iceland and stopped at many different places to walk around, view nature, and go on hikes. Does this sound appealing to you? What would your ideal vacation involve?

Quiz Answers

1.a 2.c 3.b 4.d 5.d

6. No, because her in-laws and her husband's brother were also on the trip, so it wasn't a typical honeymoon.

7. In Reykjavík, Iceland's capital.

8. Icelandic surnames use "son" for men and "dóttir" for women, meaning "son of" or "daughter of" their parent.

9. Public pools and bathhouses, which are used for relaxation and soaking in hot water.

10. Andrew mentioned "hongo," a fermented ray fish from Korea, which also has a strong ammonia smell and taste.

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