

## Chatterbox #248 – Social distancing: Part 2

### Episode description

Andrew and Suzanne talk about COVID-19, the situation in North America, and English expressions that are used to talk about the pandemic in this special Chatterbox episode.



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## Transcript

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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.

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### **Andrew**

Hey everyone, Andrew here. In this Chatterbox episode and in the next one too, Suzanne and I talk about the COVID-19 pandemic and the current situation in North America.

Now, because we wanted to release these episodes to you as soon as possible, we decided to not make study guides for them. However, there are still transcripts available on Culips.com, our website, for all Culips members and we hope that you'll find them helpful.

We wanted to try something a little different and ask you some listening comprehension questions right here at the start. And at the very end of the episode, after the closing music, I'll tell you the answers. So please, keep your ears open for the answers while you listen to this episode.

Ok here are the questions:

1. What does Suzanne's mom do? So, what is Suzanne's mom's job? What does Suzanne's mom do?
2. What is a hypochondriac and why are they causing problems right now?
3. Toward the end of the episode, Suzanne and I talk about some funny images that are going around on the Internet. What are these kinds of jokes called?

And now, let's get started with this episode.

Hey everybody, my name is Andrew.

### **Suzanne**

And my name is Suzanne.

### **Andrew**

And you're listening to Culips.

Welcome back to another Culips episode everyone. You are listening to Chatterbox, which is our series where we have completely natural English conversations and we let you listen in. Today, I am joined by my co-host in Montreal, Suzanne. Hi, Suzanne.

### **Suzanne**

Hi Andrew. How are you?

**Andrew**

I'm not too bad. How about yourself?

**Suzanne**

Doing pretty good. Locked up in my house.

**Andrew**

Locked up in your house. Yeah. Suzanne, that is what we are going to talk about today. The continuing saga, the continuing story of the COVID-19 virus and pandemic and how it is now affecting life in North America. I think it was about a month ago, Jeremy and I talked about what was happening in Korea. So maybe listeners if you haven't heard that episode, but you're more interested in hearing the perspective of what is and was happening in Asia, then you could check out that episode. But today we're gonna focus more on what's happening right now, in North America. And Sue, we're also going to talk about some of the brand new English expressions that have suddenly become very, very popular when talking about COVID-19 and the pandemic.

**Suzanne**

Yes, they've become household words, household terms.

**Andrew**

Household terms. Yeah. So I think before we start, we should just say that we are thinking of all of our listeners around the world, in places like Wuhan, and Daegu and Italy and Iran, other parts of Europe and North America as well. And wherever else may be affected by this terrible virus. We hope that everyone is safe and sound and keeping strong during this stressful situation.

OK, Suzanne, so I think let's kick things off by maybe defining some of these COVID-19 expressions.

**Suzanne**

Yeah, there's some interesting words, right? That have come up.

**Andrew**

Yeah, and as soon as the virus started being taken seriously in North America, which was maybe about a week or so ago, everyone today is March 19th. So, this might take us a couple of days to post this episode, but as of March 19th, things really started getting hairy about a week ago, would you say Suzanne?

**Suzanne**

Yeah, I would say around actually, yeah, it was last Thursday, I believe that they declared it a pandemic. That raised everything to a higher level. And they started to take higher measures in the US and in Canada, for sure, starting on Friday. So, yes, I would say we're about a week into the intensity of our cautionary measures. So.

**Andrew**

OK. So let's just go through the list here of some of these expressions and talk about them. And Sue, you can tell me how many people around you are using these expressions and if this is common household language, like you said. OK, so the first one that I've been seeing a lot on social media is, social distancing.

**Suzanne**

Yes, social distancing. So, instead of doing your kind of daily routines, like going to school with 30 other people in a classroom, or maybe going to work in an open office situation or sitting in a restaurant, where you would be with lots of other people, they are asking us to distance ourselves socially from other people. And I think they kind of use the term or use the definition of six feet or more, right?

**Andrew**

Six feet or more, yeah.

**Suzanne**

I know that, that's not... is that like a meter? About a meter?

**Andrew**

Six feet is closer to two meters probably. Yeah, Suzanne's American. She's on a different system of measurement that I'm on.

**Suzanne**

I'm on feet. That's the only thing I don't know is the feet and meter, but I'm pretty good with like kilos and, you know, Celsius and all that stuff.

**Andrew**

Well, I'm about five feet 10 inches tall, which is about 1.78 meters. Two meters would be about six feet-ish. Maybe a little bit over six feet. Anyway.

**Suzanne**

Yeah, so about two. Yeah. So, they're suggesting about an Andrew apart. So to keep that distance from other people and also from sick people in the sense that if you are co-habiting or living with someone who has symptoms or might be diagnosed with the virus, then you need to keep a safe distance or an Andrew and a little bit away from that person.

**Andrew**

Yeah, Suzanne, I think if you were living with somebody who was showing symptoms or had tested positive for the virus, then you'd want to stay more than six feet away from them.

**Suzanne**

Yeah. So I have a kind of a personal story, if that's OK? It's quick, but my mom, as you guys met her, I think a while back.

**Andrew**

She was on Culips.

**Suzanne**

Yeah. She is a nurse practitioner. She works in a clinic, and it's been crazy there, obviously. People are worried, they feel symptoms, they get scared, they go to the doctor. And she works in a doctor's office. And they started a new protocol where they take people's temperature and sort of triage the patients outside of the clinic. So they're not allowed inside until they know what's going on with the patient.

**Andrew**

Right. They've been doing that over here as well.

**Suzanne**

Right. Yes, that's right. I think that's where we kind of adapted the protocol from was because they are saying that South Korea really has had success. So, we're trying to emulate that here. But because my mom has worked in the medical industry for a long time, her immune system is pretty strong. And suddenly, the other night my father started having a fever and also a bad cough. He is getting tested today, actually. And we'll know more, he started feeling a little bit better last like, last night. So we're thinking that if it is the virus, it's not something, it's not a maybe a severe case, which would be great. But we were worried that my mom could be a carrier of the virus. So someone who has the virus, but is not symptomatic, is not expressing symptoms, because of her working at a clinic. And that's worrisome too because she could be infecting other patients. It's not confirmed. We don't know that for sure, but we're just sort of speculating in our family.

**Andrew**

Right.

**Suzanne**

She has had to wear a mask and practice social distancing from my father, so she's had to sleep upstairs in another bedroom and not go too close to my father.

**Andrew**

Well, I certainly hope that it's not the case that he's caught the virus and that it's just a flu or a bug or something. But that is stressful.

**Suzanne**

Yeah, because he's an, you know, he's not super young. He's not extremely old, but he, you know, he has some of his own conditions as an older person. So, it's just, you know,

you want to be safe, but I think he's in good hands because she's, you know, in the medical field and....

**Andrew**

Right, that is exactly who you'd want to have around as a wife.

**Suzanne**

Right, it's helpful.

**Andrew**

In this type of situation. Actually, Suzanne, you touch on a good point here. And I think that a lot of people, like in my friend circle, we're not really scared for ourselves, but we are nervous for our parents, because it does seem to be that it affects older people, like you say, more seriously than younger people. And a lot of why younger people are social distancing is that they don't want to be carriers or spreaders because, perhaps like you said with your mom, she could be asymptomatic. This means that she's showing no symptoms. She feels fine, she looks fine, she is fine, but she could possibly have the virus and spread that to other people. And this is why it's recommended that everybody does social distancing, no matter what your age is.

**Suzanne**

Yes, and the other possibility is that my parents did travel a couple weeks ago, around March 2nd. So it is possible that maybe they picked something up on the plane, you know? Back when we weren't totally sure how quickly it was spreading here. So, who knows? We will know more today after they get tested. So yeah, so, you know, keep them in your thoughts, since you guys know Emily. But they're working hard on the front lines, there at clinics and things. So that's why social distancing is really important because it helps the medical people on the front line too. It helps their jobs so that there's not an influx of people suddenly in all of the clinics and hospitals.

**Andrew**

Yes and I've heard that this is actually a really big problem with hypochondriacs.

**Suzanne**

Yes.

**Andrew**

Right? A hypochondriac is somebody who thinks that they're sick all the time. Maybe there's a different medical definition but that's kind of what most people think, right? Is a hypochondriac always thinks that they're sick, always has some new bug or ailment. But in reality is OK and one of my cousins works at a hospital and she says that it's been a really big problem with people coming in and wanting to be tested, but they're not showing symptoms. They're not really sick. They're just worried about it. And of course, this causes, delays and backlogs and really makes things difficult when it comes to treating the people who are actually sick and need care.

**Suzanne**

Yes, yes, exactly. I have a few doctor's appointments coming up because of my four-month checkup. This is something I normally do now that I've gone through cancer treatment. And I'm kind of worried like, do I go? Do I postpone? How does this work?

**Andrew**

Right, yeah.

**Suzanne**

You know, just because I don't know if I want to be in the hospital either. What if I pick something up, you know? Just being in there and bring it home. So, yeah, I'm sure it's OK because I wouldn't be in the same sort of department or, you know, it's definitely a different area. But yeah. Social distancing makes you realize how social or how unsocial you were before, I guess.

**Andrew**

Well, and it kind of makes me feel like, I'm unsocial because I feel like my life hasn't changed too much. I realized recently is that I'm kind of a workaholic, because I feel like I'm always working. And I don't really have too much time that I spend socializing with people other than my girlfriend or a couple close friends. But when I look at social media, my friends are going crazy. Like they're so bored staying at home. And I'm like, is it really that tough? Like, I'm always at home working anyways.

**Suzanne**

Okay, I'm gonna send you and maybe we can post it with this episode. It's really funny. It's really like when you realize that your regular life is actually called quarantine or something like that and it's a really funny picture.

**Andrew**

There have been a lot of really funny memes on the internet. I mean, this is one way that people deal with traumatic situations, is to make jokes, right? And I think everybody's feeling a little stressed out about it. So there's lots of really funny jokes on the internet these days. I have to send you one Sue, that I found as well, that's, that's really quite something.

**Suzanne**

Speaking of social distancing, and I know we need to move on to our other words, but there was one and I'll, also... maybe we could kind of post all of some of the memes that we talked about here, or if they're tasteful with our, like on the Instagram post, you know? Like have like a couple of photos posted together.



**Andrew**

Yeah, sure. We can post this on our social media, the images that we're talking about everyone. So if you want to check them out and get a visual, just take a look at our social media accounts. Probably Instagram is the best like you said Sue.

**Suzanne**

I think so. Well this one was really funny. It's a Where's Waldo? Where's Waldo social distancing edition.

**Andrew**

It's super easy to find him.

**Suzanne**

Yes, like normally if you guys know Where's Waldo? I think in France, it's called *Où est Charlie?* I think they call him Charlie.

**Andrew**

Oh, OK.

**Suzanne**

I didn't know that. I was like, his name isn't Charlie. It's Waldo. But whatever. That's probably different in different languages. And, yeah, he normally is in a crowd. And it's kind of everyone's really squished together and close and.

**Andrew**

Similarly dressed.

**Suzanne**

Yeah, and it's hard to find Waldo. But in this one, there's only like four people and so he's just like waving at you like, Hi, I'm here. And I think Oli showed it to me last night and he was like, look, and I go, oh, look, there he is. And he looked at me like, yeah, that's the joke. That's the joke, Sue. So it's really funny.

**Andrew**

Well, Suzanne, there's certainly more that we can talk about on this topic. And there's actually even more expressions that we should talk about. Actually on our list, there's seven or eight expressions and we only talked about one social distancing. But I am conscious of our listeners' time here, and I think that maybe we should do a part two for this episode and talk a little bit more about this topic.

So, everyone, maybe we will cut it off here for now. But in the next Chatterbox episode, we can do a part two and complete talking about this topic. And Sue hopefully, it'll be the last time that we talk about the topic. Actually, I would be pleased if it was the last time.

Thank you for listening, everyone.



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**Suzanne**

Don't forget to follow us on social media on Facebook and especially Instagram because we post videos and pictures and you can keep up with us. So, look for Culips English Podcast, and follow us there.

**Andrew**

Yeah, and if you have any questions or comments for us, just send us a message. Our email address is [contact@culips.com](mailto:contact@culips.com). That's it for us, but we'll be back soon and we'll talk to you then. Goodbye.

**Suzanne**

Bye, guys.

**Andrew**

All right. Thanks for listening to the very end! Here are the answers to the comprehension questions:

1. Suzanne's mom is a nurse practitioner.
2. A hypochondriac is someone who is worried all the time about their health and always thinks that they are sick when in reality there is nothing wrong with that person. And they are causing problems right now because they are clogging up the health care system. So what I mean by that is that they are taking time away from hospital staff that should be spent taking care of COVID-19 patients. So the doctors and the nurses can't treat the real COVID-19 patients because there are too many hypochondriacs that are distracting them.
3. Jokes on the internet are called memes. Memes. And that word is spelt m-e-m-e. Ok it looks like me-me but it's pronounced meme in the singular and memes in the plural.

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## Episode credits

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