

TWO ENGLISH MUGS PODCAST

How To Stay Motivated Every Day

Episode 24 · Full Transcript

Emma & Josh

B1 Intermediate

Two English Mugs Podcast · Episode 24 Transcription

- **EMMA:** Hello and welcome to Two English Mugs, where we learn English through real everyday conversations.
- **JOSH:** And I am Josh. Hello, everyone.
- **EMMA:** I am Emma. It is so good to have you here today.
- **JOSH:** Oh yeah, it is a good day. I have my tea ready.
- **EMMA:** Nice. Well, today's topic is a big one. We are talking about staying motivated every day.
- **JOSH:** Oh man. Motivation.
- **EMMA:** Yeah. The days it works and the days it really does not work.
- **JOSH:** Mostly the days it does not work for me.
- **EMMA:** Right. But before we get into that, uh a quick announcement.
- **JOSH:** What do we have today?
- **EMMA:** This is a B1 or intermediate English lesson.
- **JOSH:** So do not panic, right?
- **EMMA:** Exactly. Relax. If some words are new, we will explain them in line.
- **JOSH:** Just sit back and listen.
- **EMMA:** Enjoy the conversation. You do not need to catch every single word.
- **JOSH:** And the PDF transcript is right there in the description.
- **EMMA:** It sure is. So, Josh, I have something to teach you today.
- **JOSH:** Oh no. Is it grammar? Please tell me it is not verbs.
- **EMMA:** No, no.
- **JOSH:** Okay.
- **EMMA:** No boring grammar today.
- **JOSH:** Phew.
- **EMMA:** It is about everyday life.
- **JOSH:** uh That is a relief.
- **EMMA:** Here's the core idea of this episode.
- **JOSH:** Okay, I'm listening.
- **EMMA:** Motivation is not a feeling.
- **JOSH:** Wait, what? Yes, it is.
- **EMMA:** Nope. It actually shows up after you start moving.
- **JOSH:** I do not know about that, Emma.

- **EMMA:** Really? You don't believe me?
- **JOSH:** I mean, I only work when the motivation fairy visits me.
- **EMMA:** The motivation fairy?
- **JOSH:** Yeah, she brings the magic energy. Then I can wash the dishes.
- **EMMA:** And how often does this fairy visit your house?
- **JOSH:** Um, maybe once a month. I am very lazy without her.
- **EMMA:** Huh. Well, that is the main problem we all have.
- **JOSH:** What is the problem?
- **EMMA:** We think motivation is an emotion.
- **JOSH:** Because it feels like an emotion.
- **EMMA:** Right. We wait to feel like cleaning or studying or working.
- **JOSH:** Yeah, uh I definitely wait to feel it.
- **EMMA:** But TV and movies lie to us about this.
- **JOSH:** Oh, they totally do. The heroes always look so excited.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. The music gets loud. The hero wakes up at 5 in the morning.
- **JOSH:** They drink raw eggs and run in the rain.
- **EMMA:** Yes. And they look so happy to work hard.
- **JOSH:** I never feel like that. Uh Ever.
- **EMMA:** Nobody does, Josh.
- **JOSH:** It is just a movie.
- **EMMA:** It is just a movie.
- **JOSH:** So I am not broken.
- **EMMA:** You are not broken. Here is the good side of this news.
- **JOSH:** Okay, give me the good news.
- **EMMA:** You do not have to wait to feel good. You are in control.
- **JOSH:** Really?
- **EMMA:** Yes.
- **JOSH:** I can just control it?
- **EMMA:** Yes. You just have to start. The feeling will catch up to you later.
- **JOSH:** The feeling comes later? That is wild.
- **EMMA:** But Of course there is a bad side.
- **JOSH:** There's always a bad side. What is it?

● **EMMA:** It is hard. It is really, really hard.

● **JOSH:** Why is it so hard?

● **EMMA:** Because it requires doing something when you are tired or grumpy.

● **JOSH:** Oh, I am always grumpy in the morning.

● **EMMA:** Right. You have to move even when your body says no.

● **JOSH:** That sounds awful, honestly.

● **EMMA:** It is. Think of it like this. It is like pushing a broken car.

● **JOSH:** Pushing a car. That is heavy.

● **EMMA:** Very heavy. At first, it is terrible. You push with all your strength.

● **JOSH:** And it does not move at all.

● **EMMA:** Exactly. Your legs hurt. You want to quit.

● **JOSH:** Yeah, I would just call a tow truck.

● **EMMA:** But if you keep pushing, what happens?

● **JOSH:** I guess the wheels finally start to turn.

● **EMMA:** Yes. The wheels start rolling, and then it gets easier to push.

● **JOSH:** Oh, I see. Once it moves, the heavy part is over.

● **EMMA:** Right. The motivation is the car rolling. You have to push first.

● **JOSH:** Man, that makes my running shoe story really sad.

● **EMMA:** Oh? Tell me about your running shoes.

● **JOSH:** Well, I bought these super expensive running shoes. Bright green.

● **EMMA:** Nice. Very sporty.

● **JOSH:** Yeah. I put them right by my bed. Every single night.

● **EMMA:** Ready for the morning run?

● **JOSH:** Yes. But I just stared at them for weeks.

● **EMMA:** You just looked at them?

● **JOSH:** Yeah.

● **EMMA:** From your bed?

● **JOSH:** Yeah. I was waiting for the shoes to give me the feeling.

● **EMMA:** Did they give you the feeling?

● **JOSH:** No. The shoes did absolutely nothing. They were broken.

● **EMMA:** The shoes were not broken, Josh. You just did not push the car.

● **JOSH:** I guess I wanted the car to push itself.

● **EMMA:** We all do. But think about everyday things. Things we do without feeling it.

● **JOSH:** Like what?

● **EMMA:** Like brushing your teeth.

● **JOSH:** Oh yeah. Brushing my teeth is boring.

● **EMMA:** Exactly. Do you wait to feel inspired to brush your teeth?

● **JOSH:** No way. I am never inspired to use toothpaste.

● **EMMA:** Right. You never say, wow, I have a fiery passion for dental hygiene today.

● **JOSH:** Definitely not. I just walk to the bathroom and do it.

● **EMMA:** You just do it.

● **JOSH:** Yeah.

● **EMMA:** It is automatic.

● **JOSH:** Yeah, I guess it is.

● **EMMA:** And that is exactly how learning English should be.

● **JOSH:** Just like brushing my teeth.

● **EMMA:** Yes. Do not wait for the feeling. Just Pick up the book.

● **JOSH:** Okay, I like that.

● **EMMA:** But starting is still so heavy.

● **JOSH:** It is.

● **EMMA:** Which brings us to part 2 of our episode.

● **JOSH:** Awesome. How do we make the heavy car lighter?

● **EMMA:** You start so small that it feels silly.

● **JOSH:** Silly? How small is silly?

● **EMMA:** One tiny step. And then you may stop.

● **JOSH:** Wait, I can stop after one step?

● **EMMA:** Yes, because starting is the hardest part.

● **JOSH:** That is true. Once I sit on the sofa, I do not want to get up.

● **EMMA:** Right. So the trick is to make the start tiny. So tiny you cannot say no.

● **JOSH:** I don't know, Emma. Um Small goals are kind of embarrassing.

● **EMMA:** Why are they embarrassing?

● **JOSH:** Because I want to be great. I want to read 50 pages a day.

● **EMMA:** 50 pages is a lot.

● **JOSH:** I know. Reading one page makes me feel like a child.

- **EMMA:** That is just your ego talking, Josh.
- **JOSH:** My ego likes big numbers.
- **EMMA:** But here is the good side of silly small goals.
- **JOSH:** Okay, what is the good side?
- **EMMA:** It is impossible to fail.
- **JOSH:** uh Oh, I like not failing.
- **EMMA:** If your goal is one tiny step, you always win.
- **JOSH:** And winning feels good.
- **EMMA:** Right. And usually once you take one step, you keep going.
- **JOSH:** So I trick my brain.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. But the bad side is that your ego hates it.
- **JOSH:** Yeah, it feels like I am not doing enough.
- **EMMA:** It does. It is like dipping your toe in a cold swimming pool.
- **JOSH:** Oh, I hate cold water. I just jump in.
- **EMMA:** But jumping in is a huge shock. It is scary.
- **JOSH:** True. Sometimes I just stand on the edge and shiver.
- **EMMA:** Right.
- **JOSH:** But if you just dip one toe in—
- **EMMA:** It is not so scary.
- **JOSH:** Exactly.
- **EMMA:** You do not have to swim. Just dip the toe.
- **JOSH:** And then I usually get in anyway.
- **EMMA:** Yes, um because you started. Let me tell you a story about my kitchen.
- **JOSH:** Oh, boy. Is your kitchen messy?
- **EMMA:** It was a disaster last week. Plates everywhere.
- **JOSH:** Mountains of dirty dishes.
- **EMMA:** Mountains. I felt so overwhelmed I wanted to cry.
- **JOSH:** I would just go watch TV.
- **EMMA:** I almost did. But then I made a tiny goal.
- **JOSH:** What was the goal?
- **EMMA:** I told myself to just wash one single spoon.
- **JOSH:** One spoon. That is nothing.

- **EMMA:** I know. It felt silly. But I picked up the sponge.
- **JOSH:** And you washed the spoon.
- **EMMA:** I did. And the water was running. My hands were warm.
- **JOSH:** The car was rolling.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. Since the water was on, I washed a fork.
- **JOSH:** And then a plate?
- **EMMA:** Yes. 30 minutes later, all the dishes were clean.
- **JOSH:** Wow. Just from one spoon?
- **EMMA:** Just one spoon? That— is how you bypass the fear.
- **JOSH:** Okay. I am going to try this. I have a new English goal.
- **EMMA:** Oh, what is your new goal?
- **JOSH:** I am going to learn exactly half of a new English word every day.
- **EMMA:** Half a word? Josh, that is ridiculous.
- **JOSH:** uh No, it is a tiny step. So tiny I cannot fail.
- **EMMA:** How do you learn half a word?
- **JOSH:** Well, if the word is apple, I will just learn A and P.
- **EMMA:** And what about the rest of the word?
- **JOSH:** I will learn P-L-E on Tuesday.
- **EMMA:** You cannot use half a word in a sentence.
- **JOSH:** Sure I can. I would like an ap, uh please.
- **EMMA:** People will think you are choking.
- **JOSH:** No, they will think I am mysterious.
- **EMMA:** Huh. Okay, even though that is a terrible idea—
- **JOSH:** Thank you.
- **EMMA:** The action of opening the book is still good.
- **JOSH:** Right. I open the book. I push the car.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. Now, listener, it is your turn. We have a question for you.
- **JOSH:** Oh, yes. We want to hear from you.
- **EMMA:** Finish this sentence for us in the comments.
- **JOSH:** Type it right down below.
- **EMMA:** The hardest thing for me to start is...
- **JOSH:** Oh, that is a good one.

- **EMMA:** Let me say it again. The hardest thing for me to start is...
- **JOSH:** I bet a lot of people will say exercise.
- **EMMA:** Or doing their taxes.
- **JOSH:** Ugh, that is a hard one.
- **EMMA:** That is a hard one. Or folding the laundry.
- **JOSH:** I hate folding laundry.
- **EMMA:** Let us know in the comments.
- **JOSH:** Okay, so we started. The car is rolling.
- **EMMA:** Yes, the car is moving.
- **JOSH:** Now we're in part 3?
- **EMMA:** Part 3, progress you can see. You must keep a small record.
- **JOSH:** A record.
- **EMMA:** Like writing things down.
- **JOSH:** Yes.
- **EMMA:** Because if you do not, you will feel stuck.
- **JOSH:** Why would I feel stuck? I am moving.
- **EMMA:** Because when you are in the middle of working, you cannot see your own progress.
- **JOSH:** I guess that makes sense. Every day looks the same.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. That is the core lesson here. You must keep a simple notebook.
- **JOSH:** Ugh. Writing things down feels like doing homework.
- **EMMA:** I know you hate homework, Josh.
- **JOSH:** I really do. It takes the fun out of it.
- **EMMA:** But the good side is amazing.
- **JOSH:** Tell me the good side.
- **EMMA:** When you look back after a month, you realize how far you have come.
- **JOSH:** Oh, like seeing a big list of words I learned.
- **EMMA:** Yes. You see 50 words become 500 words.
- **JOSH:** That would feel pretty good, actually.
- **EMMA:** It proves you are winning.
- **JOSH:** But there is a bad side, right?
- **EMMA:** Yes. Keeping the record can feel like a terrible chore.
- **JOSH:** Especially if it is complicated.

- **EMMA:** Right. If you make it too hard, you will quit.
- **JOSH:** Like uh buying 10 different colored pens.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. It is like watching a tree grow in your garden.
- **JOSH:** A tree. Okay. Paint the picture for me.
- **EMMA:** If you look at a tree every single day—
- **JOSH:** It looks exactly the same.
- **EMMA:** Yes. It does not look any taller. You feel sad.
- **JOSH:** You think the tree is broken.
- **EMMA:** Right. But if you take a photo on day 1,
- **JOSH:** And then look a year later.
- **EMMA:** Yes. A year later, the tree is huge.
- **JOSH:** Oh, wow. The photo is the record.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. You need a photo of your English progress.
- **JOSH:** Well, I tried to keep a record once.
- **EMMA:** How did that go for you?
- **JOSH:** Terrible. I used a loose piece of paper, like a napkin.
- **EMMA:** A napkin?
- **JOSH:** Yeah.
- **EMMA:** Josh, that is not a notebook.
- **JOSH:** I know. I wrote my words on it, but then I lost it.
- **EMMA:** Of course you lost a napkin.
- **JOSH:** So I got a second piece of paper.
- **EMMA:** To write down new words?
- **JOSH:** No, I wrote down where I thought I lost the first paper.
- **EMMA:** You made a map to find your napkin?
- **JOSH:** Yes, it was my tracking system for my tracking system.
- **EMMA:** And let me guess, you lost the second paper too?
- **JOSH:** I totally lost it. It fell under the sofa.
- **EMMA:** This is why we keep it simple, Josh.
- **JOSH:** Okay, teach me simple.
- **EMMA:** Just put a tick on a calendar.
- **JOSH:** A tick? Just a little mark?

- **EMMA:** Yes. Did you read today? Put a tick on the day.
- **JOSH:** I can do that. Maybe I will buy a giant calendar.
- **EMMA:** A normal calendar is fine.
- **JOSH:** No, a giant one with loud colors and glitter.
- **EMMA:** Glitter? That sounds very messy.
- **JOSH:** It will make it exciting. Every tick will sparkle.
- **EMMA:** Huh. Huh Okay, if glitter helps you, do it. Just keep the habit visible.
- **JOSH:** Okay, simple tick, glitter optional. Got it.
- **EMMA:** Perfect. Now what happens on the bad days?
- **JOSH:** Oh, the days when I do absolutely nothing.
- **EMMA:** Yes. This is part 4, the days you fall off.
- **JOSH:** I fall off a lot.
- **EMMA:** We all do. Bad days happen to everyone.
- **JOSH:** They really do. Sometimes you just get sick.
- **EMMA:** Or you are just very tired. You will break your habit.
- **JOSH:** I always break the chain.
- **EMMA:** The secret is what you do the next day.
- **JOSH:** This is the hard part for me, Emma.
- **EMMA:** I know. When you miss a day, how do you feel?
- **JOSH:** I feel like a total failure. I want to quit entirely.
- **EMMA:** That is the problem. We are so mean to ourselves.
- **JOSH:** I am my own worst enemy.
- **EMMA:** Yes. The bad side is that it is hard to quiet the angry voice in our head.
- **JOSH:** The voice says, Josh, you're lazy. Just give up.
- **EMMA:** But the good side is forgiveness.
- **JOSH:** Forgiveness? For myself?
- **EMMA:** Yes. You get to forgive yourself and come back fresh tomorrow.
- **JOSH:** That sounds nice, but it is hard to do.
- **EMMA:** Think of it like dropping your phone.
- **JOSH:** Oh, I hate dropping my phone.
- **EMMA:** Right.
- **JOSH:** My heart stops.

- **EMMA:** Right. When you drop it once, what do you do?
- **JOSH:** I pick it up super fast and check the screen.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. You rescue it.
- **JOSH:** Yeah, I wipe off the dirt.
- **EMMA:** Do you smash it on the ground 10 more times?
- **JOSH:** What? No, that would be crazy.
- **EMMA:** Right. You do not say, well, I dropped it once, uh let me destroy it.
- **JOSH:** I would have to buy a new phone.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. So why do we do this with our habits?
- **JOSH:** Oh, I see what you mean.
- **EMMA:** If you miss one day of studying, do not smash the phone.
- **JOSH:** Do not give up for the whole month.
- **EMMA:** Yes, just pick the phone up tomorrow.
- **JOSH:** Man, I definitely smashed the phone last year.
- **EMMA:** What happened last year? Tell me the story.
- **JOSH:** Well, I was trying to exercise every single day.
- **EMMA:** That is a big goal.
- **JOSH:** It was going great for about a week.
- **EMMA:** And then? Um
- **JOSH:** Then I had a terrible day at work. I was so stressed.
- **EMMA:** You were exhausted. Exactly. The car was too heavy.
- **JOSH:** Exactly. I got home and I did not exercise.
- **EMMA:** That is okay.
- **JOSH:** You just dropped the phone.
- **EMMA:** But I did not just drop it. I sat on the sofa.
- **JOSH:** Nothing wrong with the sofa. And I ate a giant bowl of ice cream.
- **EMMA:** Okay, still. Not the end of the world.
- **JOSH:** But I beat myself up so badly. I felt so guilty.
- **EMMA:** You let the angry voice win.
- **JOSH:** I did. I felt worse, so I just stopped exercising for a whole month.
- **EMMA:** You smashed the phone into tiny pieces.
- **JOSH:** I smashed it. All because of one bowl of ice cream.

- **EMMA:** It is so common.
- **JOSH:** So how do we fix this? Yeah, how do I save the phone next time?
- **EMMA:** We use the rule of doing the minimum.
- **JOSH:** The minimum? Like the smallest amount?
- **EMMA:** Yes. On a bad day, do not try to do 100%.
- **JOSH:** Because I am too tired for 100%.
- **EMMA:** Right. If you usually read 10 pages, just read 1 page.
- **JOSH:** Keep the habit alive.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. Just keep the car rolling an inch.
- **JOSH:** I like this. My minimum for reading is very easy.
- **EMMA:** What is your minimum?
- **JOSH:** I just look at the COVID of the book.
- **EMMA:** You just look at it?
- **JOSH:** Yeah. I nod at the book. I say, hello, book. Habit Alive.
- **EMMA:** Well, it is better than eating ice cream on the sofa.
- **JOSH:** See? I am doing the work.
- **EMMA:** You are. And tomorrow, opening the book will be easier.
- **JOSH:** Because I did not smash the phone.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. So we have covered a lot today.
- **JOSH:** We really have. My brain is full.
- **EMMA:** Let us give the listener one simple thing to try today.
- **JOSH:** A call to action.
- **EMMA:** Yes. Here is the challenge. Write down one silly, tiny goal for tomorrow morning.
- **JOSH:** Make it so small you cannot fail.
- **EMMA:** Exactly. Maybe the goal is just put my textbook on the table.
- **JOSH:** Or find my pen.
- **EMMA:** Yes, just one tiny step to push the car.
- **JOSH:** I am going to write down my half-a-word goal.
- **EMMA:** Please pick a whole word, Josh.
- **JOSH:** Fine, one whole word.
- **EMMA:** Thank you. Now, it is time for our favorite part of the show.
- **JOSH:** Oh, it is time for the vocab unwind.

- **EMMA:** Yes, we are going to review some important words from today.
- **JOSH:** To help them stick in your mind.
- **EMMA:** Word number 1 is automatic.
- **JOSH:** Automatic.
- **EMMA:** Repeat after me: automatic. It means doing something without thinking about it. Josh, your example?
- **JOSH:** Making coffee in the morning is automatic for me. My eyes are still closed.
- **EMMA:** Good one. Word number 2 is routine. Repeat after me: Routine. This is the normal order you do things every day. Josh?
- **JOSH:** My morning routine is waking up, stretching, and complaining about the weather.
- **EMMA:** Very healthy routine. Word number 3 is progress. Repeat after me. Progress. This means moving forward and getting better. Example?
- **JOSH:** I made real progress today. I finally understood an English movie without subtitles.
- **EMMA:** That is huge! Word number 4 is minimum. Repeat after me.
- **JOSH:** Minimum.
- **EMMA:** Minimum. This is the smallest amount possible. Josh.
- **JOSH:** I always do the minimum amount of cleaning before my guests arrive.
- **EMMA:** Just hiding things in the closet.
- **JOSH:** Exactly. Under the bed too.
- **EMMA:** Word number 5 is Expectation. Repeat after me.
- **JOSH:** Expectation.
- **EMMA:** Expectation. A strong belief that something will happen. Your example.
- **JOSH:** I have a strong expectation that it will rain right after I wash my car.
- **EMMA:** That always happens. Finally, word number 6 is habit. Repeat after me.
- **JOSH:** Habit.
- **EMMA:** Habit. Uh Something you do often and easily. Josh, last example.
- **JOSH:** I have a terrible habit of eating salty snacks at midnight.
- **EMMA:** Oh, that is a hard habit to break.
- **JOSH:** It really is.
- **EMMA:** Let me say all the words once more for the listener to repeat.
- **JOSH:** Say them loud.
- **EMMA:** Automatic, routine, progress, minimum, expectation, habit.
- **JOSH:** Great words today.

● **EMMA:** Very useful everyday words. Let us do a quick recap before we go.

● **JOSH:** 3 points to remember.

● **EMMA:** Point 1: Motivation is not a feeling. Push the broken car to get it rolling.

● **JOSH:** It feels heavy, but it gets easier.

● **EMMA:** Point 2: Start tiny. Do not jump in, just dip your toe in the pool.

● **JOSH:** Or wash one spoon.

● **EMMA:** Point 3: Forgive bad days. Do not smash your phone just because you dropped it once.

● **JOSH:** Save the phone. Pick it up tomorrow.

● **EMMA:** Beautiful. If you smiled today or learned something new, please like and subscribe.

● **JOSH:** It really helps the show.

● **EMMA:** And leave that comment about starting.

● **JOSH:** Yes, we love reading those.

● **EMMA:** Thank you so much for spending this time with us today.

● **JOSH:** We appreciate you.

● **EMMA:** Please take care of your family this week.

● **JOSH:** Be good to yourselves.

● **EMMA:** We hope to see you back here next week.

● **JOSH:** Have a wonderful day. keep moving forward. Bye.

● **EMMA:** Bye, everyone.

Vocab Unwind

6 key words and phrases from this episode

#	WORD	MEANING	ANALOGY	EXAMPLE
1	automatic	Doing something without thinking about it.	Like brushing your teeth — you never wait to feel inspired.	<i>Making coffee in the morning is automatic for me. My eyes are still closed.</i>
2	routine	The normal order you do things every day.	—	<i>My morning routine is waking up, stretching, and complaining about the weather.</i>
3	progress	Moving forward and getting better.	Like watching a tree grow — the photo shows the change.	<i>I made real progress today. I finally understood an English movie without subtitles.</i>
4	minimum	The smallest amount possible.	One spoon, not the whole kitchen.	<i>I always do the minimum amount of cleaning before my guests arrive.</i>
5	expectation	A strong belief that something will happen.	—	<i>I have a strong expectation that it will rain right after I wash my car.</i>
6	habit	Something you do often and easily.	—	<i>I have a terrible habit of eating salty snacks at midnight.</i>