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Pre-Intermediate
Learning new words and expressions
Episode 12 - Help... help!



Hello again! The topic of today's podcast is "Asking for Help". And as always we listen to a dialogue first:

Dialogue:

- Excuse me. Could you help me? I am looking for a grocery store. Could you tell me where it is?
- Sure, no problem. It's not far from here. You can walk. Actually, you know what? Follow me, I will show you.
- Oh, I can't thank you enough!
- ...
- Oh, my Gosh! This is a big supermarket!
- It is the biggest one around here.
- Can I ask you another favor?
- Yes, of course!
- I can't see well enough. I left my glasses at home. Would you mind helping me pick up some things? I'd really appreciate it.
- Sure. What do you need?
- I need cheese, ketchup and I need two packets of potato chips.
- Here you are! Is that it?
- Yes, thank you. You've been very helpful. Could you give me a hand with these grocery bags?
- Ok.
- Just one more thing... do you have the time?
- Err, yep, a bit.
- My new apartment is on the twentieth floor and the elevator doesn't work. Could you help me get the bags to my door?
- I'm sorry. I'm afraid I can't, I must be off now and I'm very busy.
- It won't take long. You're in good shape, it will be easy for you!
- I'm sorry, I can't. Is that ok?
- It's fine. I just thought I'd ask. Anyway, thank you!
- Bye. I am glad I could help.

First of all let's look at some phrases you may use to ask a person to help you or do something for you:

Could you help me? Could you help me with these documents? Could you help me find the contract?

Would you mind? (*for example, Would you mind calling the office and say I will come in 10 minutes?*)

Can I ask you a favor? means Can I ask you do something for me? (*for example, can I ask you a favor? Could you please take this to Mr. John's office? I have no time*)

Could you give me a hand with something? (*for example, Could you give me a hand with this month's sales report. I need to finish it by tomorrow.*)

I'd really appreciate it if you... (*for example, I'd really appreciate it if you could tell me where the money is*)

Just one more thing... And you may add: "do you have the time?"

It is possible to assure the person you ask for help by saying: Don't worry! It won't take too long.

There are several ways to thank for help:

The easiest is - Thanks for your help.

Another one is - Thank you. You've been very helpful.

That's very kind of you.

I can't thank you enough.

There are also a few new words and expressions to look at and explain:

- **groceries** means foodstuffs, this is the food you buy in a shop.

For example:

My wife is the person responsible for buying groceries and household supplies.

- **grocery store** is a grocer's shop, i.e. a shop where they sell foodstuffs and some household supplies.

For example:

They run a small grocery store.

We ran out of milk and had to go to the grocery store to buy it.

- **Oh, my Gosh!** is an exclamation similar to "Oh, my God!" There are several different ways of saying it:

Oh my God.

Oh my Gosh.

Goodness gracious.

Goodness.

Good Lord!

Christ Almighty (this is a very strong one, usually to express shock)

And my personal favorite: Holly Cow!

They are all used to express surprise and disbelief.

I left my glasses at home. - Here you must pay attention to the usage of leave. You can't say: I forgot my glasses at home. You forget some information, it has to do with your mental activities. For example you may change it into: I forgot to take my glasses. But - I left my glasses home.

to mind is to be distressed, annoyed, or worried by something. It is used as follows: mind something or mind doing something or mind if somebody does something.

For example:

I don't mind the rain. - I have nothing against the rain.

My sister doesn't mind cooking for the whole family. - She cooks for the entire family, but she's ok with it.

Do you mind if I smoke? - Do you have anything against it?

favor is an approval, support, or liking for someone or something:

I try not to show favor to any of my students. (which means that I try not to have favorite students.)

The second meaning is an act of kindness beyond what is usual:

I've come to ask you a favor - I have come to ask you to do something for me.

For example,

He did a favor for me once, now I owe him one.

pick up something is to choose or buy something, get something from a store.

We went to the pastry shop, picked up some croissants and returned to our hotel.

to be off means to go away.

I am sorry, I must be off now. (that is I must go now.)

He said goodbye to us and was off.

to be in good shape, the synonym to it is to be fit, which means to be physically healthy usually as a result of having a good diet and doing sport on a regular basis.

He jogs every morning and goes to the pool three times a week. No wonder it is in such a good shape.

If you want to be fit, you must lead active lifestyle and have a healthy diet.

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