



**Episode Name: Be Inspired & Dream Big**

**By: Amy Whitney**

This is the Real English Conversations Podcast where you'll find the lessons and advice you need to be able to confidently use your English in the real world.

Hey, everybody. This is Amy from [realenglishconversations.com](http://realenglishconversations.com). And in this podcast, I have something really fun, exciting, and inspiring that we're going to be doing, and that is thinking about what we would like to achieve with our English within the next year.

And I know for many of you, you have been learning English for a very long time already. Maybe it's been a few years, and for many of you it may even be a decade or longer.

And let's be honest, after working at improving your English for so long, you kind of realize that this isn't something that happens quickly and you might even be okay or starting to become comfortable with making this very slow progress.

And that is exactly the purpose of today's podcast.

First of all, I need to get you dreaming big again, being hopeful about moving forward fast and overcoming these obstacles that are currently holding you back.

And the reason why we need to do that is because of the next three podcast episodes where I'm going to be explaining a concept called deliberate practice.

And this concept, this idea or this way of approaching language learning is something that can really help you to overcome those barriers and to see much faster progress with your English.

So one of the first things that we need to do is a little exercise to really see how far we've come over the last twelve months with our English.

I really want you to think about how you were one year ago, even if it's not too much better. Take the time to think about the little areas of improvements that you have had, but try to get a clear idea of what your skill and ability was one year ago.

When you reflect back on how your English was a year ago, often it's easier for us to see the progress that we have made, whether it be a huge improvement or just a little bit by being consistent and working on it.

And it's really important for you to take a moment and congratulate yourself on the progress that you made.

I know that the majority of you that are doing this exercise right now, you will see, in fact, that there was a little bit improvement.

Maybe you're able to understand movies or TV shows better, maybe you feel like you've learned some vocabulary and you can speak a little bit better than before.

Even those little differences and measurements of progress are important, but at the same time, if you have this feeling that you're not really happy with the progress that you made last year and you'd like to see better results this year.

And the only thing that we need to do different is making sure that you actually have a strategy and a plan to make it happen.

You would be surprised how many students are just learning English, kind of randomly doing whatever or they feel like doing without really working toward a specific goal.

And this year you are going to see that progress and that success because you're going to have that help and guidance that you need to put that plan together and make that strategy happens so you do actually hit your goals.

And this may seem overly simple, but it's a step that many of my students are missing, and the reason why most of them are stuck.

And the thing that you need to do differently this year is to really take the time to have a strategy, have a plan, and to make sure that you're focusing on the right things so that you can actually improve your skills and reach those big goals.

And that's exactly what this training podcast the next three episodes are going to do for you.

They're going to help you to identify where you're stuck.

They're going to help you to recognize which activities you need to be doing to get unstuck and to start developing the skills that you need, which is going to make it a lot easier to try to figure out how to put a plan together so that you can actually achieve what you're planning.

The only thing that you need to do before that special training is to really think big and think about what you would like to be able to accomplish this year. And I thought one of the most inspirational ways to have you setting big goals about what you can achieve this year would be to share a couple of student stories with you.

And I'd like to start with our student, Min, who is from China last year. Min's number one concern was her speaking fluency. She realized that she was spending a lot of time thinking about everything that she wanted to say. She was worried about saying things correctly and thinking she was making a ton of mistakes and really just feeling uncertain about everything that she was saying. She didn't know if it was understandable if it was natural or maybe it was even offensive.

After just a few months of working with her teacher, she started to gain the confidence that she needed and realized that she didn't really need to think so hard about everything that she was saying these days. Obviously, her speaking fluency is a lot better, but probably the best part is that she's able to speak easily. She knows that she can just say whatever it is that she's thinking and it's going to come out and be understood. She's no longer worried about trying to get everything correct and speaking perfectly and really just has the confidence to be able to enjoy communicating in English.

I would like you to think for a second about Min's story.

She had two problems that she was having to deal with. One was not really feeling comfortable when she had to speak in English. And Secondly, was that she was thinking so much about what she wanted to say, that she had really bad fluency. Do these sound like problems that you're facing right now? Are these things that you would maybe like to overcome this year in 2022? And keep in mind, Min is just a regular person, a regular student, just like you, and I someone that has problems, but with the right type of practice, she was able to overcome them.

So if Min can do it, there's no reason why you can't do the same thing. Maybe it's not speaking fluency for you. Maybe it's listening. That's the biggest obstacle, just like it was for our student Young, who's from South Korea. For Young.

He was working for an American based company, and that meant that a lot of the meetings that they had were taking place in English. And the problem was that when Young was attending these meetings, he was really struggling to understand what they were talking about. He was able to hear enough to grab the general idea, but there were many things that he wasn't able to understand. This made it really difficult for him to be able to answer questions if somebody asked him something specifically, and it's even harder to try to give an answer to a question when you don't clearly understand what the question is.

The thing that is really frustrating, especially for Young, is that he had been actively trying to improve his listening skills for so long.

He had tried different courses, different teachers, everything he could possibly think of to try to improve his listening. But no matter what he was doing, nothing was working. And in fact, when he first started learning with us, he was only able to understand 60% of one of our podcast lessons after being shown how to practice his listening in a way that was actually going to get him the results he was looking for. He started to have this insane progress within just two weeks. I remember receiving a message from him asking for more difficult audio because the first time he listened to the podcast, he was able to understand 90% without reading it.

And that's crazy. That is a massive improvement after struggling with a certain skill for so long. And as you can imagine today, Young is able to participate in his work meetings.

He's no longer stressed out when he has to interact and communicate and ask questions and give answers, which is a huge relief for him. And I am so happy for him to have this breakthrough.

Now I'd like you to think about your listening skills. Would you like to be able to talk to people in meetings or just your everyday life and understand exactly what they're saying? or maybe watch a movie without needing to have the subtitles on? Is improving your listening part of your goals for this year. So now it's time for you to dream big and think about what you can accomplish this year.

Just remember these stories that I shared about these students. This didn't take an entire year for them to achieve.

This was done in just a few months. So if they're able to do that in a few months, what are you going to be able to do by the end of this year?

Now, here's the thing.

Thinking about what you would like to accomplish and actually taking a couple of minutes and writing it down are two completely different things.

And I think a great way to start this training is by taking a couple of minutes and just making some notes, trying to think about which skill you want to improve the most, why you need to improve that skill, and really what you use your English for.

Those are going to be really important points for you to think about and reflect on as you go through the training that we'll be covering over the next three episodes.

Now one more thing. I have all of the transcriptions for this training, as well as some worksheets and additional activities that are related to it. And I'd really like you to get access to it because I think it's going to help you to get the most out of this and to really feel like you have a solid plan by the end of the episodes.

And if you would like to get access to all of those transcriptions and the worksheets, the only thing you need to do is go to the description area of this podcast and click on the link and just sign up for the Deliberate Practice training.

And after that you're going to receive emails reminding you about the next episode or the next lesson that you need to listen to and you'll have instant access to the Mp3 downloads, the transcription and the worksheets that I've prepared for you.

So, until then, dream big, think about your goals, and I'll see you in the next episode to get started.