

LESSON 2

BOB RETURNS HOME WITH BAD NEWS

*Bob tells his wife Susan that he lost his job.
Susan suggests that he start his own business.*

Susan: **What's the matter, dear?**

Bob: Susan, I **got canned** today at work.

Susan: But Bob, you were Peter's **right-hand man!**

Bob: Yes, and he **stabbed me in the back.**

Susan: **Keep your chin up.** Maybe he'll **change his mind** and take you back.

Bob: **When pigs fly!** Once he **makes up his mind**, he never changes it. Besides, I **told him off.**

Susan: **Look on the bright side:** you won't have to **set eyes** on Peter ever again.

Bob: **Thank goodness** for that!

Susan: **Hang in there.** I'm sure you won't be **out of work** for long.

Bob: In the meantime, we'll have to **live from hand to mouth.**

Susan: Don't get too **stressed out**, Bob. We'll **make ends meet.**

Bob: I can always get a job at McDonald's as a **last resort**.

Susan: I don't think they're hiring right now.

Bob: If **worse comes to worst**, we can sell our home and move into a tent.

Susan: Let's **think big!** Maybe you can start your own business.

Bob: **Easier said than done!**



IDIOMS – LESSON 2

(to) change one's mind – to change one's opinion or decision

EXAMPLE 1: Brandon wasn't going to take a vacation this year, but then he **changed his mind** and went to Bora Bora for two weeks.

EXAMPLE 2: Why aren't you applying to medical school this year? Did you **change your mind** about becoming a doctor?

easier said than done – more difficult than you think

EXAMPLE 1: You want to climb Mount Everest? **Easier said than done!**

EXAMPLE 2: Moving into a new home is **easier said than done**.

(to) get canned [slang] – to lose one's job; to get fired

EXAMPLE 1: After Chris **got canned**, it took him a year to find a new job.

EXAMPLE 2: Lisa is a lousy secretary. She deserves to **get canned!**

SYNONYMS: to get sacked; to be given the ax

(to) hang in there – to persevere; to not give up

EXAMPLE 1: I know you're four games behind, but you can still win the tennis match. Just **hang in there!**

EXAMPLE 2: **Hang in there**, Don! Your invention will soon be a success.

if worse comes to worst – in the worst case; if absolutely necessary

EXAMPLE 1: Ted's car isn't running well. **If worse comes to worst**, he can take the bus to school.

EXAMPLE 2: I know you're running out of money. **If worse comes to worst**, you can always sell some of your jewelry.

(to) keep one's chin up – to stay positive

EXAMPLE 1: Even when he was unemployed and homeless, Bill managed to **keep his chin up**.

EXAMPLE 2: **Keep your chin up!** You'll find your lost dog soon.

last resort – if there are no other alternatives left; the last solution for getting out of a difficulty

EXAMPLE 1: David was locked out of his house. He knew that as a **last resort**, he could always break a window.

EXAMPLE 2: I don't like taking medicine. I'll only take it as a **last resort**.

(to) live from hand to mouth – to barely have enough money to survive

EXAMPLE 1: Jenny was earning \$5 an hour working at the store. She was really **living from hand to mouth**.

EXAMPLE 2: George is really poor. He **lives from hand to mouth**.

(to) look on the bright side – to be optimistic; to think about the positive part or aspect of a situation

EXAMPLE 1: Leo was upset that his soccer game was canceled. His mother said, "**Look on the bright side**, now you can stay home and watch TV."

EXAMPLE 2: You lost your job? **Look on the bright side**, now you'll have more free time!

(to) make ends meet – to manage one's money so as to have enough to live on; to be okay financially

EXAMPLE 1: Kimberly wasn't able to **make ends meet** so she had to ask her parents to pay her rent.

EXAMPLE 2: If you can't **make ends meet**, you'll need to start spending less.

(to) make up one's mind – *see Lesson 1*

out of work – unemployed; not working

EXAMPLE 1: Gary was **out of work** for a year before finding a new job.

EXAMPLE 2: Bob is **out of work**. Do you know anybody who might want to hire him?

right-hand man – the most helpful assistant or employee

EXAMPLE 1: Juan's **right-hand man** helps him make all of his decisions.

EXAMPLE 2: When Jack Thompson retired as president of his company, his **right-hand man** took over.

(to) set eyes on – to look at; to see for the first time

EXAMPLE 1: Ted was in love from the moment he **set eyes on** Amber.

EXAMPLE 2: Susan knew from the moment she **set eyes on** Ted's friend Lucas that he would be trouble.

(to) stab someone in the back – to betray someone

EXAMPLE 1: Jill and Heather were friends, until Heather **stabbed Jill in the back** by stealing her boyfriend.

EXAMPLE 2: You're firing me after all I've done for this company? You're really **stabbing me in the back!**

(to be) stressed out – under severe strain; very anxious

EXAMPLE 1: Al is so **stressed out** about his job that he can't sleep at night.

EXAMPLE 2: You've been so **stressed out** lately. You really need to take a long vacation!

(to) tell off – to scold; to tell someone in strong words what one really thinks

EXAMPLE 1: When Ted showed up for chemistry class a half an hour late, his teacher really **told him off**.

EXAMPLE 2: Patty is going to **tell off** the plumber because the pipes he said he fixed are still leaking.

thank goodness – I'm grateful; I'm relieved

EXAMPLE 1: When Ted came home at 4 a.m. last Sunday, his mother said, "**Thank goodness** you're home! I was so worried about you."

EXAMPLE 2: **Thank goodness** you didn't go to California on Monday. It rained there every day this week.

(to) think big – to set high goals

EXAMPLE 1: Why run for Governor of New York? **Think big:** run for President of the United States!

EXAMPLE 2: Ken and Sandra hope to sell their house for \$3 million dollars. They always **think big**.

What's the matter? – What's the problem?

EXAMPLE 1: **What's the matter**, Bob? You don't look very happy.

EXAMPLE 2: Oscar looks very pale. **What's the matter** with him?

When pigs fly! [slang] – never

EXAMPLE 1: Will Ted teach Nicole how to play the guitar? **When pigs fly!**

EXAMPLE 2: Sure, I'll give you my new laptop. **When pigs fly!**

SYNONYMS: when hell freezes over; never in a million years

PRACTICE THE IDIOMS

Fill in the blank with the missing word:

- 1) What's the _____? You look upset.
a) situation b) issue c) matter
- 2) I know I can trust you. You would never stab me in the _____.
a) leg b) back c) arm
- 3) If Bob and Susan run out of money, they can always borrow money from Susan's sister as a _____ resort.
a) final b) first c) last
- 4) You look really stressed _____. Why don't you sit down, relax, and have a cup of tea?
a) about b) in c) out
- 5) Bob, everything will be fine. You just need to keep your chin _____ and remember that tomorrow is another day.
a) up b) down c) above
- 6) I just can't make up my _____ whether to order chicken or fish.
a) head b) brain c) mind
- 7) Nicole accidentally stepped on Ted's guitar. Ted got really angry and told her _____.
a) off b) out c) away
- 8) Your husband left you for his psychologist? Hang _____ there! I'm sure he'll realize she's crazy and then come back to you.
a) up b) in c) out

ANSWERS TO LESSON 2, p. 160



Ted's chemistry class is way over his head.