

### Unit 1

#### 4 a Binging on nostalgia

#### Track 1

**Presenter:** Sitting in front of the television screen, wondering what to watch next, one may feel a spontaneous desire to skip past the new programmes available and revisit an early 2000s Disney show or 90s cartoon movie. By impulse, one may choose a “classic” movie or TV show over new releases. While this feeling may seem to stem from simple curiosity there are deeper psychological reasons driving such behaviour.

Besides re-watching a programme simply out of enjoyment, one tends to revisit movies and TV shows for either therapeutic or nostalgic reasons. Therapeutically, re-watching shows and movies helps heal previous emotional wounds, tapping into good memories to reconcile sadness or pain during hard times. Some may also feel nostalgic while watching old shows, remembering their past memories and experiences. Oftentimes, the programmes one chooses to re-watch are those that once gave comfort. For example, the 1990s show *Friends* could remind people of their youth and of watching it with their families.

**Dan Middleton:** “It’s refreshing to re-watch programmes because I get taken back to when I was younger. Also, because I re-watch TV shows years later, I find some of the jokes funnier than I had years ago,”

**Presenter:** teenager Dan Middleton says.

Another cause of re-watching is predictability. Some people may like to re-watch an old movie or TV show because they already know what’s going to happen, and they can prepare themselves for the worst. For example, if someone watches a horror movie multiple times, they will know who the killer is or who is lurking in the basement, lessening their fear of the unknown. In any genre of entertainment, re-watching also allows people to skip the parts they don’t like and focus on the ones they do. They can ask deeper questions about the characters and plot. In turn, people like university student Anna Paaske, start to notice and understand previously unknown qualities of a TV show or movie.

**Anna Paaske:** “*The Office* is really funny so whenever I want to watch something that makes me laugh, I know *The Office* is really good at that. After watching it numerous times, I get really connected to the show. So it is fun to go back and re-watch it.”

**Presenter:** Studies have shown that elderly people often recall disproportionately more memories from when they were 10 to 30 years old than at any other age. This is known as the reminiscence bump in which thoughts become enduring memories because the experiences are stored during a period of brain stability. They become memories that contribute to one’s sense of identity. As they are created during an individual’s peak physical performance, the memories from one’s youth have greater significance and will likely factor into one’s decision-making process when picking a show to watch. Re-watching favourite movies and TV shows has also been proven to give individuals a mental boost. Researchers at the University of Buffalo have found that when watching a rerun of one’s favourite show, one does not exert as much effort in controlling one’s thoughts or actions, thus conserving one’s mental energy for self-control and willpower in more important tasks. Generally, watching an old favourite show has been proven to have mentally and physically restorative effects, allowing the mind and body to recharge, explaining why some have a craving to watch their favourite show after a long day.

**Dr Lindsay Hallaway:** “Already knowing the storyline of a show reduces our cognitive load or mental effort. This gives the brain a chance to restore some energy, creating what you could think of as a mental recharge. While watching a new TV show requires a certain amount of mental effort to pay attention, process information and listen to what’s being said, watching a rerun or a favourite movie requires far less mental effort by comparison. We already know the story line and we don’t have to try very hard to interpret the sights and sounds we’re taking in, giving us a sort of mental boost after our minds have a chance to relax,”

**Presenter:** Dr Lindsay Hallaway explains. While many adults rewatch old childhood movies and TV shows, some also decide to watch current cartoons such as *Rick and Morty*, *Big Mouth*, *Bob’s*

*Burgers, Family Guy* and *The Simpsons*. One reason to explain this phenomenon is that watching these programmes allows adults to escape the stress of adulthood. Cartoons allow them to disconnect from reality and enter imaginary realms of *Pokémon* and fighting turtles. These programmes are also easy to enjoy as the plots are simple.

As people grow older, they may still continue to fall back into habits of watching their favourite shows and movies from their adolescence. This desire to reach for older pieces of entertainment is no coincidence. Although one might dismiss the natural gravitation to nostalgia-evoking shows and movies as habit or pattern, their therapeutic, nostalgic and even mind-boosting effects can be more meaningful than one may realise.

#### 4 d Letting go of *Grey's Anatomy*

#### Track 2

**Presenter:** It's Shonda Rhimes' baby, but the creator of *Grey's Anatomy* doesn't spend her days lording over the writer's room. She doesn't even sign off on the scripts! For our latest cover story, we talked to Rhimes about her hands-off approach to the hit drama.

**Interviewer:** Now that the day-to-day duties of running *Grey's Anatomy* have fallen to Krista Vernoff, can you sit back and enjoy the show, or do you still wake up in the middle of the night with a good idea about what will happen to Meredith?

**Shonda Rhimes:** No. Now I get the lovely experience of having Krista come and say, "Here is what I've got planned for the season," and I go, "That's fantastic," and I get to enjoy that part of it.

**Interviewer:** So how does it work? Do you still sign off on every script?

**Shonda Rhimes:** Nope. I don't. It's a big deal for me, and it was really great to have Krista come in, 'cause you know, Krista was there for the first seven seasons. It's been a real experience for me to actually let go, or as I say, send a kid off to college. I don't think that I could be a person who sat and signed off on every script. If I allow myself to have input, then I'm going to have notes, and if I have notes, then everybody has to take my notes. I can't give a few notes. I have a lot of thoughts. Krista is the only person that I've ever known who has my sensibility and understands the voice of what I've always been saying about the show, and it's been really exciting to let her run with it.

**Interviewer:** Was that hard for you, or were you able to just rip off the Band-Aid, turn your cheek and move on?

**Shonda Rhimes:** I've been doing day-to-day almost for 13 seasons so there was a level of exhaustion of like, this has been a marathon. However, it was surprisingly hard in the beginning. I thought I would feel a little relieved to have a break, but in the beginning, it was really hard. Then it felt really good because the show was still really good. I think it would've been difficult if I had pulled back and I didn't like what was coming out.

**Interviewer:** *Grey's Anatomy* is on its way to becoming the longest running primetime medical drama. Of your list of accomplishments, where would that rank to you once you achieve that?

**Shonda Rhimes:** I don't keep a list of accomplishments. I'm incredibly proud of the show, and I still, every day, pinch myself that we even got on the air and that people watch and people care about it as much as they do. Everything about that show has been a miracle to me, so I love it.

**Interviewer:** Meredith has definitely demonstrated that she doesn't need a man in her life to feel content. Now looking back, was that partly out of design? You and Krista wanted her to take a long time to get over Derek. Is there part of you that would like to keep her that way, just as a fan of the show?

**Shonda Rhimes:** After Derek left, it was about really allowing Meredith to stand on her own two feet and figure out who she is and make it more about her career and not about who she's gonna date. Ellen also had strong feelings about that. I don't have strong feelings about what I want to have happen to her. I do have strong feelings about any one of my female characters basing her existence on whether or not she has a man. So it's not really about proving whether or not she can exist without a man, it's simply that none of our characters base their existence on whether or not they have a guy.

**Interviewer:** If and when this does finally wrap up, can you see yourself being a part of that finale?

**Shonda Rhimes:** I absolutely can see myself being part of it.

**Interviewer:** At one time you seemed to have an idea of how it would end. Is that now up in the air?

**Shonda Rhimes:** I have written the end of the show at least six times. Seriously, every time I felt like, “this will be how the show ends” ... We’ve gone past those moments so many times that I’ve stopped trying to come up with a vision for it. We just don’t end. I have no idea now. Krista and I have joked that my daughter, Harper, and her daughter Coco will end up running the show one day.

## Unit 2

### 2 b What it is like to be living in smart homes of the future?

### Track 3

**Presenter:** Hello and welcome to today’s segment on the “Living Laboratory”. Join us as we meet Todd Rath, Alabama Power’s marketing director, and go inside a neighborhood of smart homes in Reynolds Landing, on the outskirts of Birmingham, Alabama.

When we asked Todd Rath about the project, he said:

**Todd Rath:** What we’ve done here is create some very efficient homes, connect them up. And we’re trying to understand how we’re serving those customers ... and how they’re using that energy and interacting with those devices in their homes.

The homes you can see here, at Reynolds Landing, are 35% more efficient than standard newly built homes in the area, earning Alabama Power the Stars of Energy Efficiency Award. The electricity that powers them is generated locally, by a microgrid made up of solar panels, battery storage and a backup natural gas generator.

The biggest energy savers, though, are the temperature control systems, which are particularly important in Alabama’s extreme climate.

Here in the southeast United States, we have hot summers but also really cold snaps in the winter. The biggest energy user in an individual home is the heating and air-con system.

That’s why we wanted homeowners to be able to control temperature ranges in multiple zones in their home to prevent wasting energy heating or cooling unused rooms. The microgrid helps to maximize these energy savings. – If it’s a mild day and homes don’t need as much energy, it turns on the heat pump and water heater to store excess energy for later. This is all part of the smart home system that all our houses have.

The smart home system includes thermostats, voice-activated security and interconnected kitchen appliances. This means that the homeowner can control almost everything remotely: from room temperature to opening the door and turning on the oven. The little things do add up. Smart thermostats are a good example of a relatively pain-free way to have a big impact. Other examples are checking on an app if any doors or windows have been left open at home or even letting in a delivery. Another quite useful option is to use the refrigerator’s built-in camera to quickly check if there’s enough milk in the fridge or if you should pick some up when you’re at the grocery store.

For some, though, advanced technology can be an obstacle, especially with older people who might not have had access to technology at a younger age. But when they hear about the impact that we’re seeing financially ... how we’re using less energy and living more efficiently, I would say they are both open and interested.

**Presenter:** Are *you* interested? Houses in the smart neighborhood came onto the market in the usual fashion, costing around \$ 400,000 each – about average for a home in the area. When buying a home, residents agreed to share anonymized data on energy usage with Alabama Power and meet researchers monthly to discuss their experiences and likes and dislikes. Each of the homeowners is part of this research project, called the “Living Laboratory”.

But smart products could make homeowners less secure. A 2019 report by Avast, a cybersecurity software company, found that 40% of digital homes worldwide contained at least one device vulnerable to cyberattacks – citing printers as the most common entry point. The study suggests the rapid growth of the Internet of Things – a system of devices and objects connected to the internet, which is predicted to more than triple by 2025 to over 75 billion devices. This puts manufacturers under pressure to deliver affordable smart devices which can result in the fact that security features are sometimes neglected.

## Unit 3

### 3 d Exploring gen Y

### Track 4

**Kelly Jean Kelly:** Welcome to *This Is America*. I'm Kelly Jean Kelly.

**Jim Tedder:** And I'm Jim Tedder. This week on our program, we look at changes in the lives of Americans in their twenties.

Young people legally become adults at the age of 18. They can vote and sign contracts. But adulthood is more than a legal definition. Many Americans do not really consider young people "adults" until they move out of their parents' home and start a career. These days, people in their twenties are often criticized for delaying adulthood. Yet some researchers say this criticism may be misplaced.

**Kelly Jean Kelly:** Jeffrey Arnett is a research professor of psychology at Clark University in Massachusetts. He studies people in their twenties – or twenty-somethings. Mr Arnett says twenty-somethings today are different than their parents and grandparents were at that age.

**Jeffrey Arnett:** "Now that people stay in education longer, they get married later, they have their first child later. The twenties are a period of really trying out different possibilities and moving from one thing to another."

**Kelly Jean Kelly:** As a result, he says, the twenties are no longer about settling down. Instead, they are increasingly about exploring.

**Jim Tedder:** Today's twenty-somethings are often called "millennials." They grew up around the time of the millennium in the year 2000. Like other generations, millennials share some things in common. Millennials are staying in school longer and getting married later – the average age is almost 27 for women and almost 29 for men. Some millennials lack full-time jobs, and many are living at home or getting financial help from their parents. Are these adults?

The law says, "yes." In the United States and many other countries, 18 is the "age of majority." This means people are considered old enough to be held legally responsible for their actions.

But societies usually have their own definitions of adulthood, their own expectations for what being an adult means. The United Nations defines adulthood as a period of independence and, at the same time, responsibility to a community.

**Kelly Jean Kelly:** Journalists and researchers have been looking for new ways to describe the changes in the lives of the millennial generation. Some say today's twenty-somethings are living an "extended adolescence." In other words, they are still like teenagers. Others say they are having a "delayed adulthood."

The term "boomerang kids" is popular. That means young people leave their parents' house but, like a boomerang thrown through the air, later return.

Research psychologist Jeffrey Arnett says these terms can suggest that many Americans are frustrated with twenty-somethings.

**Jeffrey Arnett:** "There's a tendency, at least in the United States, for people to look at this negatively and to deplore it and say, 'What's wrong with them that they won't they grow up?'"

**Kelly Jean Kelly:** He calls the twenties a "special decade of life." He says Americans should consider the positive aspects. For example, twenty-somethings usually have a series of school and work experiences. They may have several serious romantic relationships. Or they might try living in different cities or even different countries.

**Jeffrey Arnett:** "It's the freest time of your life. It's the *one* time of your life where you can get up and go basically anywhere you want and travel and experience new things, do a service project in some remote part of the world, or just experience the freedom of being on your own."

**Kelly Jean Kelly:** He calls this a time of "emerging adulthood." In other words, twenty-somethings are more mature than adolescents, but not quite full adults. He says, because emerging adults try so many things, they will ultimately make better choices about work, love and home.

## Unit 4

### 1 c An interview about partition

### Track 5

**Robert Siegel:** This time of year, both Pakistan and India celebrate their national days, holidays that are deeply interrelated, marking an event that a diminishing number of their citizens can actually recall.

Diaa Hadid and Julie McCarthy are in the two countries, Diaa in Pakistan and Julie in India. And they've been talking to people about the partition of 1947, and they join us now. Diaa, hi! Julie, let's start with you. Take us back to 1947 and remind us of what was happening in those countries after partition.

**Julie McCarthy:** Well, partition was this enormous human cyclone, really. 14 million would move from one country, Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan, into India while in the opposite direction the Muslims were flowing out of India and into the new Islamic state of Pakistan. And Muslims had been agitating for their own state, feeling marginalised. And this whole enterprise becomes a runaway train in the months leading up to the actual formal announcement. I mean, there were killings, there were rapes, abductions, suicides on both sides of the border. But the most significant thing in partition is that it literally carves up the Indian subcontinent. And they live with the repercussions of that today.

**Robert Siegel:** Now, both of you spoke with people who lived through the partition. And, Diaa, tell us first about whom you met.

**Diaa Hadid:** Right. So, I met Mohammed Qureishi. He's an 83-year-old man who lives in Lahore. Now, Mohammed was actually born in India, in a city called Amritsar. It was a Sikh-dominated city. And during the violence of partition, they felt compelled to flee even though they wanted to stay. And so they managed to get on one of the trains that was leaving Amritsar to Lahore. But this in itself was an incredibly dangerous prospect because so many people fleeing on trains either towards India or towards Pakistan were butchered on the way. And these later became known as the ghost trains because of the eerie silence of the corpses that were arriving to these newfound states. So, Mohammed got onto one of these trains with his family, and he's been in Lahore ever since. And yet, he still yearns for his birthplace.

**Robert Siegel:** Julie McCarthy, who did you talk to about memories of the partition in India?

**Julie McCarthy:** You had very similar sort of gushing emotions from old men who have a deep attachment despite what happened to them. They have these vivid memories. D. D. Arora barely made it out of Pakistan alive. He was 16. And he was not there with his family. He was studying. And he talked about how overnight his school became this refugee centre for 50,000 people. But his escape was also so harrowing. He boards a train and learns that the one in front of him has been attacked, everyone slaughtered. Now, these trains were like moving cities, Robert. They were so long. And he describes having to get out and walk around the train.

**Robert Siegel:** You're describing catastrophic stories that affected people right at the beginning of Indian independence, right at the beginning of Pakistan's existence. But it's 70 years ago. How does partition still shape the India and the Pakistan that we see today? Julie, I'll ask you first.

**Julie McCarthy:** You know, in India today and in recent years, it's very much a kind of formative, defining framework. In fact, what we have on this side of the border is a kind of Hindu swagger. And it subtly reminds minorities, especially the Muslims, that India is majority Hindu. And the underlying message there is if you don't like it, you can go next door to Pakistan. And you don't have to search too hard to find this kind of Hindu belligerence.

You find it in this upsurge of lynching involving outfits that protect cows, an animal that's regarded as sacred by Hindus. There's a crackdown on free speech. You know, let a Bollywood star – many of them are Muslim – say something even remotely critical of India and a ton of bricks come down on them. And it's silenced them. And I have to say, Robert, that I really discovered the Muslims that I spoke with about partition and about what's happened 70 years ago are really unwilling to go on the record about how they feel about things today. They're afraid. That's what the climate is like.

**Robert Siegel:** And, Diaa Hadid in Pakistan, how would you say partition still shapes that country as we see it today?

**Diaa Hadid:** Here the emphasis is on how Muslims were the victims of Hindus and Sikhs. And this also filters down to the very young generations. I was speaking to an oral historian who was working on a project that was meant to build goodwill between Pakistani and Indian children by sending each other postcards. She had two big shocks trying to implement this project.

The first was: quite a few schools rejected her because they didn't want their children speaking to Indians. And then when she finally made it into a classroom, she said some of the kids just refused to write postcards to Indians because they hated them so much. These are children who have never met someone from the other side.



And what's really interesting about this, is that the partition generation, those who experienced the terrifying flight from their homes into Pakistan, are often the people who are the most nuanced. But you don't hear their voices.

And nor do you hear this other thing that I found quite interesting, that many people who survived the horrors of partition survived because they were helped by people who were meant to be their enemies. People took unbelievable personal risks to help each other. And those are the stories we just don't hear today.

**Robert Siegel:** Julie McCarthy, among young people or children in India, do you sense the same thing? A resistance to any kinds of dealings with Pakistan?

**Julie McCarthy:** Well, I think the Indians tend to have a greater reserve about looking toward Pakistan. But there's also deep curiosity. I mean, because I lived there for years, a lot of people asked me, "Do you know, what their clothes are like? I love their soap operas – tell me more! What's it like over there?" So, there is certainly a curiosity. But what there is not, is the sentimentality that the older generation has for Pakistan.

## 2 c Mango mania

## Track 6

**Nicola Twilley:** Mango maniacs rave about mangoes. So where are they hiding all these magical aromatic, juicy, almost custardy mangoes of legend? You're listening to Gastropod, the podcast that looks at food through the lens of science and history. I'm Nicola Twilley. And in this episode, we are going on a mango quest.

**Sohail Hashmi:** If I am going to identify India with one fruit, it is the mango.

**Nicola Twilley:** This is Sohail Hashmi.

**Sohail Hashmi:** I make documentary films. I organise heritage walks in Delhi, and I write about Delhi.

**Nicola Twilley:** And Sohail is a mango obsessive. I asked him to describe his relationship with mangoes. And he told us that sadly he can't eat mangoes right now, because he's been diagnosed with high blood sugar.

**Sohail Hashmi:** But before that I had an extremely, extremely active relationship with mangoes. My idea was to demolish as many of them as I could at one sitting.

**Nicola Twilley:** This enthusiastic relationship is something Sohail has in common with many of his fellow Indians. In fact, the national passion for mangoes goes deep in Indian history and culture. There are references to mangoes in Hindu scriptures. The story goes that the Buddha was given a grove of shady mangoes by a follower to rest beneath. Mangoes were exchanged between Indian princes as diplomatic gifts.

**Sohail Hashmi:** Mango is so deeply ingrained in Indian culture of food and of music and of poetry and in embroidery, in carving, and it is the fruit of India.

**Nicola Twilley:** So it's woven throughout culture, and it's also woven right into the fabric of people's lives.

**Rhithu Chatterjee:** Mangoes are what made my childhood summers sing despite the heat. So I grew up in India – I was born in India and I grew up there. And mangoes are essentially what I waited for every year.

**Nicola Twilley:** This is Rhithu Chatterjee. She's a reporter.

**Rhithu Chatterjee:** So, for me, summers meant it was pretty much all I ate.

**Nicola Twilley:** Rhithu's not the only one who couldn't wait for mango season. All of India goes mango crazy. When the season arrives, which is like late spring or early summer, it's like an event. All the newspapers cover it. There are festivals. When Sohail sees the news that the mangoes are ready, he hires a bus.

**Sohail Hashmi:** What I do, once a year, I take busloads of people 50 kilometres out of Delhi to spend one day in mango orchards.

**Nicola Twilley:** There are orchards all along the roads there. Miles and miles of orchards, as far as you can see.

**Sohail Hashmi:** So that is where we actually have a mango orgy.

**Nicola Twilley:** Before the trip, Sohail and his friends make special extra-spicy curries that go with the mangoes. And they bring those along into the mango orchard for their orgy.

**Sohail Hashmi:** You eat that. And then you attack the mangoes. You eat stuff, then you eat mangoes, then you eat some more stuff, then eat more mangoes. When can't look at mangoes you lie down under the shade of the mango tree. And when you are ready to eat more, there are more mangoes.

**Nicola Twilley:** So that's obviously one way to eat mangoes – at a mango orgy. But Indians also cook with mangoes.

**Sohail Hashmi:** So the range of food in which mango goes in is virtually countless.

**Nicola Twilley:** You don't even have to wait for the ripe mangoes to get started on your mango feasting. Rhitu told us that one of the first ways people eat mangoes in season is by turning green mangoes into a drink.

**Rhitu Chatterjee:** You sort of roast the green mangoes over a flame. And then you just take out the soft green pulp and you mix it with water and sugar and some spices and salt. Then you stick it in the refrigerator, and it becomes this wonderfully tangy, salty, sweet, spicy, cooling drink.

**Nicola Twilley:** Or you can cook green mangoes for dinner. Rhitu described a Mango Dal that she said is particular to her home state of West Bengal.

**Rhitu Chatterjee:** So you take lentils – what we call Masoor Dal or it's the orange lentils. And you take chunks of green mango, and you cook the lentils with the mangoes.

**Nicola Twilley:** Just in case you are not already drooling, there's more. There are mango chutneys, there's powdered mango, which adds a sour note to lots of Indian dishes ... Once the mangoes are ripe, the dishes turn sweet. Rhitu told us that her family would cut up mangoes and bread and soak them in milk.

**Rhitu Chatterjee:** It's very unsophisticated but somehow very delicious, our favourite summer comfort food.

## Unit 5

### 2 b The 40-hour workweek isn't working

### Track 7

**Interviewer:** Today I have with me Will Strong, the director of research at an UK based think tank, *Autonomy*, which focuses on the future of work. He is an advocate for a four-day work week.

Will, you say that a shorter working week can address the double labor that mothers take on when they get a job. They come home from work and start their second shift to care for their families.

**Will Strong:** If we talk about working time reduction, this is particularly relevant to women who both have their paid employment and their unpaid work at home. So, if you are talking about reducing hours in general, this will first and foremost benefit those who work the longest hours in total. At the same time, if you look at the most stressful and exhausting jobs with the poorest working conditions in our society, they are often carried out by women. So, we are talking about hospitality workers, waitresses, or carers, nurses, teachers, for example, and what we are seeing there is that these are some of the most exhausting and stressful jobs most prone to burnout. I am convinced that reducing the hours of work would speak to these women in such jobs in particular.

**Interviewer:** Beyond being an issue related to women, you also say that a shorter work week is also more environmentally sound. Can you get into that a little bit more?

**Will Strong:** Sure, yeah. So, there have been a number of studies carried out around the world around the link between carbon emissions or carbon footprints and a shorter week. One such study looked at 27 OECD countries and showed a direct correlation between the length of the working week and people's carbon footprints. And that's not just because of the kind of work people do – production, manufacturing and construction being obviously very carbon intensive, and so on, ... – it's also because of the consumption that goes on around work, so things like commuting. If people drive to work, that's a huge carbon burden. If we are taking ready meals and bottled water, ... – these kind of quick and easy foods that come with a work-centred lifestyle – they have high carbon footprints as well. So, I think any discussion of the future of environment and sustainability should talk about the way we work and how long we work for.

**Interviewer:** It sounds like a shorter working week would be a way to imagine different and more equal ways of working, but how do we get there? How do we start provoking people into thinking in these more equitable ways?

**Will Stronge:** I think it's important to put ideas on the table. There are organisations that do that, think tanks, campaign groups and so on. But I think putting an action behind ideas is something else entirely. There are social campaigns, the four-day week campaign in the UK and in several other countries around the world. Secondly, you have trade unions. It has been trade unions who have been leading on the shorter working week over the last 150 years. Trade unions are in workplaces, they listen to people in work, they're fundamental.

**Interviewer:** You consult with companies as they transition to shorter work weeks. What are the benefits for them?

**Will Stronge:** For many organisations, what you lose in labour time, you gain in greater productivity on the job. So that's a lot of desk-based work. Creative organisations or lots of administrative organisations, but not just them, but small manufacturers as well. There is recognition actually, for eight hours a day, there is some slack, we can't concentrate all the time. Particularly if you are overworked and if you have burnout. So reducing the working week has helped in terms of productivity and worker well-being, which means they come to work refreshed, they come to work liking their job a bit more and wanting to get the work done, so they can have a nice weekend and so on ... (*fading out*)

## Unit 6

### 2 a Extreme cycling

### Track 8

**Host:** Hello welcome to the "Tales to inspire" podcast. Today I have an interview with Vedangi Kulkarni. Vedangi is the youngest person to circumnavigate the world on a bike. Cycling over 18,000 miles in 160 days, she was 20 when she completed it. Let's just go to cycling around the world ...

Vedangi, you don't go to every country, you'll go circular around the world?

**Vedangi Kulkarni:** Basically, the rules are that you have to ride at least 18,000 miles, you cross two antipode points on the opposite ends of the Earth, and you have to always go just in one direction. So, those are the rules for circumnavigating around the world.

**Host:** So, the trip ... How did you plan the trip?

**Vedangi Kulkarni:** Your start and finish line is the same. Mine was Perth, Australia, and I rode across Australia and then across New Zealand, then just north Thailand. I was supposed to go to Alaska, but didn't get a US visa, so I went to Canada, all the way across Canada. Then Iceland, Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, then half across Russia, India and then back to where I started in Australia. It took like 159 days across 14 countries.

**Host:** You did these 18,000 miles in 159 days around the world at the age of 19 and 20. As a young lady doing it, I find that amazing as well. You're going to these unknown countries, ... visas and all that kind of stuff. What about some challenges you came across? Was there any interesting challenge, something that was personally difficult?

**Vedangi Kulkarni:** I faced tons of challenges, honestly. The first one was actually getting to the start line because I had to get a visa for Australia, for New Zealand, for Canada, for every country in Europe, for Russia. I was supposed to get one for Mongolia and China as well. Obviously, I did not end up going there. I had to arrange all these visas on the go, which was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. So, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada were sorted. The US visa: somehow, I had applied for the visa, but the day they gave me for the interview was *after* I was supposed to be already in the country and I was like "that just does not make sense" and, honestly, I was not sure why they did that anyway ... – And then again, I had a few other visa issues at the end of Canada, after my halfway point, actually. I realised that I might need a Schengen visa. I already knew that, and I was supposed to get it at the halfway point. But in the way, it happened I was in Canada on a tourist visa. And on a tourist visa, I'd have to go either to India or the UK and apply for the visa I needed and then come back. And I was just like "I can't do that." I literally went to at least 13 embassies and said just, "Look, I have these many documents including a letter from Indian prime minister. Please help me." And after a lot of struggles, the Danish embassy decided to give me a visa. After I told them everything, they said they can give me only two visas, one for Iceland or one for Denmark. And then I was like "hang on, let me see." And then, suddenly, I had to decide to go to Iceland because if I went to Denmark, I would not be able to kind of go back down. And if my entry point is Denmark, I'd have to continue from Denmark to the



other countries northbound. So that would not make sense. I wouldn't have been able to cover the distance. I was like, "right, I have to go to Iceland and then fly to Portugal ..."

**Host:** It's so many things ... What about physical challenges? Did you get blisters? Did you have any muscle problems? How was your mental health when you were doing this?

**Vedangi Kulkarni:** You know, for the first half of the journey I was doing 200 miles each day, which was a challenge in itself. It was taking me between 16 and 18 hours, I believe. And it was extremely hard. In Canada, in the Rockies, there were really bad wildfires. I got a lung infection. – And I also got chased by a bear.

**Host:** You got chased by a bear while you were on your bike?

**Vedangi Kulkarni:** Yes. I was literally going up this climb and I saw a group of grizzlies right by the highway. I was told, "You're not supposed to see them by the highway," and I was also told, "They don't like people ..." Blah blah. "They will leave you alone." That's what I was told. And then when I saw the grizzlies, I was fascinated. They are huge, they are furry; and I saw three. And the cub was really cute. And then there was the mom. And the cub and the mom were doing something. And then, I think, there was a male grizzly! And I was just like, "Don't look, don't look, calm down, it's okay!" And then he stands on the street and then I'm like, "Go for it! Now is the time, you absolutely go for it!" And I just rode really hard up the hill. Well, I was not going to stand a chance against grizzlies. They run like 60 kilometres per hour. And they're really good at running uphill; and I was also going uphill. But I could have turned back. Then there was like a dip. Anywhere I went I had no chance. I stood no chance, so I just kept riding up. Whatever, I was going up and then I went to the other side of the road. I went all the way to the left and a big black lorry came from the other side, screeching its brake honking really loudly. I can only imagine that must be heavy as well. It stops inches away from me, still honking loudly. And because I had this massive adrenaline rush, I couldn't hear properly at all. All I could think about was, you know, flight. Just ride away from that. The grizzly went really close by me into the valley rather than coming for me, and I think lying there, the lorry shoed the grizzly away. One of the scariest things that can happen to you is being chased by something *that* big.

## Unit 8

### 3 c Suitcases could have rolled much earlier

### Track 9

In 1970 an American luggage executive unscrewed four little wheels from a wardrobe and fixed them to a suitcase. Then he put a strap on his contraption and trotted it gleefully around his house. This was how Bernard Sadow invented the world's first rolling suitcase. It happened roughly 5,000 years after the invention of the wheel and barely one year after NASA managed to put two men on the surface of the moon using the largest rocket ever built. We had driven an electric rover with wheels on a foreign heavenly body and even invented the hamster wheel. So why did it take us so long to put wheels on suitcases? This has become something of a classic mystery of innovation.

Nobel prize-winning economist Robert Shiller discusses the matter in two different books, *Narrative Economics* and *The New Financial Order*. He sees it as an archetypal example of how innovation can be a very slow-footed thing: how the "blindingly obvious" can stare us expectantly in the face for a very long time.

Nassim Nicholas Taleb is another world-renowned thinker who has pondered the mystery. Having lugged heavy suitcases through airports and railway stations for years, he was astonished by his own unquestioning acceptance of the way things were. Taleb sees the rolling suitcase as an example of how we often tend to ignore the simplest solutions. As humans, we look for the difficult, grandiose and complex. Technology – such as having wheels on suitcases – may appear obvious in hindsight, but that doesn't mean it was obvious.

Similarly, in management and innovation literature, the late invention of the rolling suitcase often appears as somewhat of a warning. A reminder of our limitations as innovators. But there is one factor that these thinkers have missed. I stumbled upon it when I was researching my book on women and innovation. I found a photo in a newspaper archive of a woman in a fur coat pulling a suitcase on wheels. It made me stop in my tracks because it was from 1952, 20 years before the official "invention" of the rolling suitcase. Fascinated, I kept looking. Soon, a completely different story about our limitations as innovators was rolling out.

The modern suitcase was born at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When mass tourism first took off, Europe's large railway stations were full of porters, who would help passengers with their bags. But, by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the porters were dwindling in number, and passengers increasingly carried their own luggage. Advertisements for products applying the technology of the wheel to the suitcase can be found in British newspapers as early as the 1940s. These are not suitcases on wheels, exactly, but a gadget known as "the portable porter" – a wheeled device that can be strapped on to a suitcase. But it never really caught on.

In 1967, a Leicestershire woman wrote a sharply worded letter to her local newspaper complaining that a bus conductor had forced her to buy an additional ticket for her rolling suitcase. The conductor argued that "anything on wheels should be classed as a pushchair". She wondered what he would have done if she had boarded the bus wearing roller-skates. Would she be charged as a passenger or as a pram?

The woman in the fur coat and the Leicestershire woman on the bus are the vital clues to this mystery. Suitcases with wheels existed decades before they were "invented" in 1972 but were considered niche products for women. And that a product for women could make life easier for men or completely disrupt the whole global luggage industry was not an idea the market was then ready to entertain. Resistance to the rolling suitcase had everything to do with gender. Sadow, the "official" inventor, described how difficult it was to get any US department store chain to sell it: "At this time, there was this macho feeling. Men used to carry luggage for their wives. It was ... the natural thing to do, I guess." Two assumptions about gender were at work here. The first was that no man would ever roll a suitcase because it was simply "unmanly" to do so. The second was about the mobility of women. There was nothing preventing a woman from rolling a suitcase – she had no masculinity to prove. But women didn't travel alone, the industry assumed. If a woman travelled, she would travel with a man who would then carry her bag for her. This is why the industry couldn't see any commercial potential in the rolling suitcase. It took more than 15 years for the invention to go mainstream, even after Sadow had patented it.

## Unit 9

### 3 b Faster, better, stronger?

### Track 10

The Olympic motto is "Citius, Altius, Fortius." Faster, Higher, Stronger. And athletes have fulfilled that motto rapidly. The winner of the 2012 Olympic marathon ran two hours and eight minutes. Had he been racing against the winner of the 1904 Olympic marathon, he would have won by nearly an hour and a half. Now we all have this feeling that we're somehow just getting better as a human race, inexorably progressing, but it's not like we've evolved into a new species in a century. So, what's going on here? I want to take a look at what's really behind this march of athletic progress.

In 1954, Sir Roger Bannister became the first man to run under four minutes in the mile. Nowadays, college kids do that every year. On rare occasions, a high school kid does it. As of the end of last year, 1,314 men had run under four minutes in the mile, but Sir Roger Bannister ran on soft cinders that stole far more energy from his legs than the synthetic tracks of today.

I consulted biomechanics experts to find out how much slower it is to run on cinders than synthetic tracks, and their consensus is that it's one and a half percent slower. If you apply a one and a half percent slowdown conversion to every man who ran his sub-four-mile on a synthetic track, this is what happens: only 530 are left. If you look at it from *that* perspective, fewer than ten new men per year have joined the sub-four-mile club since Sir Roger Bannister.

Athletes have also gotten savvier about performance-enhancing drugs as well, and that's made a difference in some sports at some times, but technology has made a difference in all sports, from faster skis to lighter shoes. Take a look at the record for the 100-meter freestyle swim which was improved upon in three stages. The first one, in 1956, is the introduction of the flip turn. Rather than stopping and turning around, athletes could somersault under the water and get going right away in the opposite direction. The second one, the introduction of gutters on the side of the pool that allows water to splash off, rather than becoming turbulence that impedes the swimmers as they race. The final stage is the introduction of full-body and low-friction swimsuits.

Still, technology isn't the only thing pushing athletes forward. While indeed we haven't evolved into a new species in a century, the gene pool within competitive sports most certainly has changed. In the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, physical education instructors and coaches had the idea that the average body type was the best for all athletic endeavors: medium height, medium weight – no matter the sport. And this showed in athletes' bodies. In the 1920s, the average elite high-jumper and average elite shot-putter were the exact same size. But as that idea started to fade away, as sports scientists and coaches realized that rather than the average body type, you want highly specialized bodies that fit into certain athletic niches, a form of artificial selection took place, a self-sorting for bodies that fit certain sports. So, in sports where large size is prized, the large athletes have gotten larger. Conversely, in sports where diminutive stature is an advantage, the small athletes got smaller. The average elite female gymnast shrunk from 5 feet 3 inches to 4 feet 9 inches on average over the last 30 years, all the better for their power-to-weight ratio and for spinning in the air.

Changing technology, changing genes, and a changing mindset. Innovation in sports, whether that's new track surfaces or new swimming techniques, the democratization of sport, the spread to new bodies and imagination in sport, an understanding of what the human body is truly capable of, have conspired to make athletes stronger, faster, bolder, and better than ever.

### **Textnachweis Listening tracks (MP3s)**

Track 1: based on: Divya Nelakonda, Kelsey Lu – [lhsepic.com/2446/in-depth/binging-on-nostalgia-why-we-replay-tv-from-our-youth](https://lhsepic.com/2446/in-depth/binging-on-nostalgia-why-we-replay-tv-from-our-youth) (adapted), Track 2: based on: Lynette Rice – [ew.com/tv/2018/09/24/greys-anatomy-shonda-rhimes-hands-off-approach](https://ew.com/tv/2018/09/24/greys-anatomy-shonda-rhimes-hands-off-approach) (adapted), Track 3: based on: Nell Lewis – [edition.cnn.com/2019/08/07/business/alabama-power-smart-neighborhood/index.html](https://edition.cnn.com/2019/08/07/business/alabama-power-smart-neighborhood/index.html) (adapted), Track 4: based on: Voice of America (Kelly Jean Kelly, Jim Tedder) – [learningenglish.voanews.com/a/emerging-adulthood/1748638.html](https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/emerging-adulthood/1748638.html) (adapted), Track 5: based on: NPR (Julie McCarthy, Diaa Hadid) – [www.npr.org/2017/08/15/543730298/70-years-later-india-and-pakistan-still-feel-impact-of-partition](https://www.npr.org/2017/08/15/543730298/70-years-later-india-and-pakistan-still-feel-impact-of-partition) (adapted), Track 6: based on: Gastropod (Cynthia Graber, Nicola Twilley) – [gastropod.com/mango-mania-how-the-american-mango-lost-its-flavor-and-how-it-might-just-get-it-back](https://gastropod.com/mango-mania-how-the-american-mango-lost-its-flavor-and-how-it-might-just-get-it-back) (adapted), Track 7: based on: NPR (Ruth Tam, Clare Marie Schneider) – [www.npr.org/2021/10/04/1043145165/four-day-work-week](https://www.npr.org/2021/10/04/1043145165/four-day-work-week) (adapted), Track 8: based on: Tales to Inspire (Millie Davies, Vedangi Kulkarni) – [talestoinspire.com/around-the-world-in-160-days-vedangi-kulkarni-the-youngest-women-to-circumnavigate-the-world-by-bike](https://talestoinspire.com/around-the-world-in-160-days-vedangi-kulkarni-the-youngest-women-to-circumnavigate-the-world-by-bike) (adapted), Track 9: based on: Katrine Marçal – [www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/jun/24/mystery-of-wheelie-suitcase-how-gender-stereotypes-held-back-history-of-invention](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/jun/24/mystery-of-wheelie-suitcase-how-gender-stereotypes-held-back-history-of-invention) (adapted), Track 10: based on: David Epstein – [www.ted.com/talks/david\\_epstein\\_are\\_athletes\\_really\\_getting\\_faster\\_better\\_stronger](https://www.ted.com/talks/david_epstein_are_athletes_really_getting_faster_better_stronger) (adapted)

Alle übrigen Texte stammen vom Autor:innenteam.