

Analyze This

(Comedy) (1999)

© 2004 by Raymond Weschler

Major Characters

Paul Vitti.....Robert De Niro
The powerful head of a New York Mafia family who starts to have serious psychological problems, including feelings of great sadness or even depression whenever he engages in murder or other acts of violence.

Ben Sobol.....Billy Crystal
A successful divorced psychiatrist (a psychologist who is also a medical doctor), who suddenly finds himself treating the Mafia leader Paul Vitti, just as he is about to get married for the second time.

Jelly.....Joe Viterelli
Paul's loyal but stupid assistant, who protects him from other gangsters.

Laura.....Lisa Kudrow
A Miami TV reporter who is going to marry Ben.

Primo Sindone.....Chazz Palminteri
The head of another New York Mafia family that is often fighting Paul's.

Plot Summary

This film is the story of Paul Vitti, one of the most powerful and feared Mafia leaders in America, who suddenly discovers that if he kills someone or engages in any kind of violence, he gets emotional, sad and even depressed. This is obviously not a good situation for a gangster, who will be eaten alive by his enemies if they ever find out that he is so emotionally fragile.

Desperate to solve his problems, Paul agrees to go and see the psychiatrist Ben Sobol (Ben had previously met Paul's assistant Jelly, after having accidentally run into his car). Of course, it's not easy for Paul to admit that he has an emotional problem, and it's especially not easy to go to a psychologist, since most gangsters would think psychology is nonsense for the weak or crazy. Indeed, the worlds of modern gangsters and modern psychology rarely come together, and this is perhaps what gives this movie its charm.

At first, Paul is quite naïve about how psychological treatment works, and thus he believes he can be "cured" in a few minutes. Eventually though, Paul realizes that it will take time, and because he is desperate, he decides to make Ben an official employee of his Mafia family. This is obviously something that Ben

would prefer to avoid, especially after Paul and his assistants follow him down to Miami, where they quickly destroy his well planned wedding.

Unfortunately, Ben's Mafia problems follow him back to New York, where he soon finds himself as Paul's official "consigliere" or spokesman, in an important and rare meeting of all the most important Mafia families. For Paul, this meeting will allow him to decide whether Ben has done such a good job of treating him that he will now become the most powerful gangster again, or instead, decide to leave the Mafia life entirely...

A few words about the language used in this film: Professional gangsters are not known for having the best grammar; Be aware of typical non-standard English that you should avoid, including the use of double negatives, misconjugated verbs ("he don't"), and the frequent use of the word "ain't." Also be aware that such people use so much vulgar language that they're not even aware of it, and thus be prepared to hear a lot of "fuck" and its various grammatical forms (the adjective "fucking" being by far the most common).

Some Words and Expressions that You May not Know

Ben the psychiatrist runs into Jelly the gangster....literally.

He was running the family at the time some asshole thought it would be a good idea to have this meeting.

In this case, "to run a family" is to be in charge of leading an organized crime family. "Asshole" is a vulgar insult word for a jerk, bastard, etc...

Want to be a fucking rib-eye?!

Note that "fucking" is the most common adjective used in this film!
A "rib-eye" is a large piece of beef.

It turns out the local cops were watching Joe Barbara like a hawk, and some deputy sheriff notices all the traffic and calls the feds.

"To turn out" is a critical phrasal verb meaning to finish, end up, or be a certain way in reality, despite what others thought. "Cop" is a common colloquial word for a policeman. "To watch a person like a hawk" is to watch them very carefully over time, or perhaps to even spy on them (A hawk is a big bird). A "deputy sheriff" is high level police officer just below the rank of sheriff. "The feds" is a slangy way of referring to the FBI and others in law enforcement who work for the U.S. government.

The feds moved in, and bingo, the bosses, they moved out.

In this case, "bingo" is a way of saying suddenly, or right after. In this film, "bosses" are the gangsters who control the various crime families.

They hid out in the field with hay and corn, some kind of foliage.

“Hay” is a type of straw that horses eat, and
“foliage” refers to plants, branches and flowers.

So Dominic starts bullshitting the guy while my father holds out this .44 he used to carry, and hijacked the goddamn tractor.

“To bullshit” a person is to tell them lies or nonsense. A “.44” is a type of gun, and to “hijack” a vehicle or plane is to force it to go where you want it to. “Goddamn” is a crude filler word used to express anger or other emotion, and a “tractor” is a type of vehicle farmers use to plant crops.

He was the boss of all bosses and that was the last time this commission ever tried to meet until now.

In Mafia circles, “the boss of all bosses” is the most powerful gangster among the various heads of the families. A “commission” is a group of people who gather together to study or discuss a particular problem.

You got made guys informing for the feds, bosses are going to jail.

If a gangster is “informing for the feds,” they are secretly cooperating with the FBI in order to gather evidence that the government can use in a criminal trial.

People are getting whacked without permission.

“To whack” is to hit forcefully, although in Mafia slang and in this film, it is an extremely common verb meaning to kill.

When your papa died, I made him a promise that I’d always look out for you.

“Papa” is an old-fashioned word for father. “To look out for” a person is to watch over them in order to make sure nobody tries to hurt them.

You watch out for him. He’s a scumbag.

“To watch out for” a person is to be careful of them because they could be dangerous. A “scumbag” is vulgar but powerful and very insulting word to describe someone who is disgusting or totally immoral.

I needed room to grow and find myself as a person...as an independent entity.

An “independent entity” is anything that can survive on its own.
All of this is the type of thing one would say to a psychologist.

I needed to get in touch with my uniqueness, but he could not handle that.

“To get in touch with your own uniqueness” are silly words from modern psychology, to refer to the act of thinking about things that make you a different or special person. If a person can’t “handle” something about someone else, they can’t accept it, perhaps because it’s too disagreeable.

He said I was driving him away.

In this case, “to drive a person away” is to push them away emotionally.

He did take out a restraining order against you...and that's usually not a good sign.

A "restraining order" is a legal document, signed by a judge, ordering one person to stay physically away from another.

Stop whining about this pathetic loser, for Christ's sake.

"To whine" is to complain in a high-pitched and annoying voice.

A "pathetic loser" is a person whose life or personality is so bad that they are deserving of pity (Pathetic is pitiful). "For Christ's sake" is a common way of expressing emotion such as anger or frustration.

You are a tragedy queen!

A funny way of referring to a person who acts as if their life is dominated by horrible dramas and tragedies, even though their problems are often no worse than other people's.

Who gives a shit?

A somewhat crude but great colloquial expression (in the form of a question), which is a way of saying that whatever was just said is completely unimportant.

Get a fucking life!

"Get a life!" is a fun colloquial way of telling a person that they should not be so obsessed with just one thing, and that they should try to be more balanced ('fucking' is just crude filler which doesn't change the meaning).

You just want to get rid of me and then throw me out.

"To get rid of" a person is to force them to leave.

Shut the fuck up!

A very vulgar way of saying shut up (Note the use of fuck as a noun!).

You're going to crack me on the head with that pipe. :: It's a rhetorical question.

In this case, "to crack" is to hit, and a "rhetorical question" is one in which the answer is so obvious it is not expected that the listener will answer it.

You little motherfucker, who killed Dominic?

One of the most vulgar insult words in the English language (literally, a person who has sex with their own mother).

I can't be analyzed by someone who until a few years ago still believed in Santa.

In modern psychology, "to analyze" a patient is to try and find out what are the root childhood causes of their psychological problems. "Santa Claus" is the mythical bearded old man in a red suit who brings Christmas presents to all the world's children.

Let's talk about something else, OK buddy?

A common slang word for friend.

This is like voodoo. She knows where I am every second.
 "Voodoo" is a type of magic that allows witches and other evil spirits to harm people even if they are physically far away.

What are you---some kind of moron?
 A truly excellent insult word for a very stupid person.

Forget about it? Your rear end is all screwed up.
 The "rear end" of a car is the back end (The rear end of a person is their ass). If something is "screwed up," it is damaged, hurt or not doing well.

Let's call the police and file a report. :: Fuck the police.
 In this case, a "report" is an official accident report that the police make to determine who is at fault in an accident. Note here that "fuck" is used as a verb to mean forget or possibly used just to show hostile disrespect. Very vulgar, but common.

Fuck'em. Especially those mounted cops who leave those big piles all over the place and you just step in it up to your shoes.
 Note that in rapid speech, "fuck them" ----> "fuck'em." "Mounted cops" are police officers that ride horseback (or literally, mounted on the horse). A "pile" is a quantity of things placed on top of each other. Here, the speaker is talking about piles of horse shit, or more politely, horse *poop*.

I talked to a shrink one time, when I got sent upstate on a fishing trip.
 A "shrink" is a popular slang word for a psychologist. In this context, to be "sent upstate" is to be sent to a prison in a distant part of the state.

Let's go, come on!
 The most versatile phrasal verb in the English language, meaning everything from hurry up (here) to shut up.

Pings and knocks, cheap gas.
 "Pings and knocks" are the sounds that a car makes if not running well.

Feeling nervous and insecure, Paul turns to Ben for help.

Neurotics only! Thank god for Prozac!
 If a person is "neurotic," they are constantly worried about one thing or another. "Prozac" is a famous drug for treating emotional depression.

This is a twice-in-a-lifetime thing!
 A "once-in-a-lifetime" event is super important and supposed to happen just one time (though here Ben's dad is talking about marriage, which happens more often than once in a lifetime for many people).

I have these book signings next weekend; I can't **piss off** those big bookstores.
 A "book signing" is an event where authors go to bookstores in order to sell and sign copies of their books. "To piss off" a person is to make them very angry. Colloquial and common.

That's the word on the street. Barnes is OK but that Noble is a vindictive prick.
 "The word on the street" is a slangy way of referring to what people in general believe, or are talking about among themselves. "Barnes and Noble" is a famous bookstore. If a person is "vindictive," they always want to get revenge for something bad that has been done to them. A "prick" is a very vulgar word for both a bad, immoral or horrible person, as well as a penis.

I think she should know that up front.
 To know something "up front" is to know it from the very beginning.

How's your practice? :: Excellent; I have interesting patients.
 A doctor's "practice" refers to their business, including all their patients.

Dad has a patient who dreams he shits trout.
 "To shit" is a crude way of saying to poop or more medically, to defecate, and a "trout" is a popular type of fish. This is a strange dream!

The Manetta family is bound to ask questions.
 If a person is "bound to" do something, they are almost certainly going to do it.

They think we put the hit on Dominic.
 "To put the hit" on a person is a slangy Mafia way of saying to order them killed.

If it wasn't for that I had go back for that toothpick because of the veal stuck in my tooth, I'd be lying dead with Dominic, God forbid.
 "Veal" is the meat of a baby cow. "God forbid" is a way of saying one hopes that God will never allow something so horrible to happen.

May he rest in peace.
 Another common religious expression that is said after a person dies.

Primo Sedone wants to run the whole show.
 A slangy way of saying to be in charge of everything.

I'm a little choked up.
 If a person is "choked up," they are often emotionally upset or touched about something that just happened.

I feel like shit.
 A common way to say that you feel very bad, either physically or emotionally.

You have one of those mindgraines.

Jelly is mispronouncing the word "*migraine*," which is a type of very painful headache.

Let's go for a **ride**.

Note that a "ride" is the most common way of referring to the act of being transported in a car.

You had an anxiety attack, a panic attack.

Two common medical expressions for what happens when a person starts to feel so panicked, anxious or worried, often for no obvious reason, that they start to sweat, get dizzy and even have trouble breathing.

I had a heart attack. :: Not according to your EKG.

A well known machine used by doctors to see if a person has had a heart attack.

Not a plastic surgeon. Do I have to spell everything out for you?

A "plastic surgeon" is a surgeon who operates on people to make them look younger or more attractive. "To spell out" something for a person is to explain it to them slowly and in great detail, so they'll understand.

This is like one of them psychic, ESPN things.

A "psychic" is a person who can predict the future (in theory!). ESPN is a cable TV station that is devoted to sports.

I just ran into a psychiatrist. Actually, he ran into me.

Note that "run into" can mean two different things. In the first case, it means to meet by chance, while in the second case, it means to physically hit or bump into something while moving forward (as in an auto accident). A "psychiatrist" is a "psychologist" who has a medical degree.

Somebody hears I've been talking to a shrink

...it could be interpreted the wrong way.

A "shrink" is a slang word for a psychologist (or psychiatrist) and "to interpret something the wrong way" is to misunderstand it.

Carl., I'm detecting a pattern. You settle too easily for things.

"To detect" something is to notice it, and in this case, a "pattern" refers to something that happens over and over. "To settle too easily" for things is to always accept them, even if you shouldn't.

I think it's your **fear of rejection** or disapproval.

A common expression that refers to people's fears that they will not be accepted or liked as much as they want to be (Teen boys who ask out teen girls on dates are always fighting against this).

Be your own man. Stand your ground.

To “be your own man” is to think for yourself while being strong and independent, while to “stand your own ground” is to forcefully defend yourself or your ideas.

You don't have to let people roll over you.

If people “roll over” you, they order you around and take advantage of that fact that you act weakly.

Excuse me, we're in session here.

If a psychologist and his patient are “in session,” they are spending time trying to understand or solve the patient's psychological problems.

Get out of here, upsy-daisy. Got a coat, nutbar?

“Upsy-daisy” is a way of saying get up or rise. “Nutbar” is a never used but funny word for a crazy person (If a person is *nuts*, they're crazy).

He's leaving. :: The hell he is! He's not going anywhere until he's done with his session.

A grammatically interesting, slangy and defiant or forceful way of saying “He is not!”

You ain't got no bugs in here, do you?

“Bug” is a common word for tiny, hidden electronic devices that are used to spy on people, usually by recording their conversations. Note that you should never say ‘ain't’ (Here, you would say “You don't have any...”).

Don't you think we should just take this up with our own insurance companies?

“To take up” a topic with a person is to discuss it with them.

Why don't you tell me why you think you need therapy?

“Therapy” is an important word in psychology that refers to the act of treating a person's emotional problems over time, often by exploring or discussing problems they had in childhood.

I gotta tell you, Doc, I ain't that thrilled with the level of service to this point.

Note that “have got to” ---> “gotta” in rapid speech. “Doc” is a common slang term for Doctor. If a person is “thrilled,” they are excited, or in this case, completely satisfied or pleased.

Now all of a sudden, he's like falling apart.

If a person is “falling apart” emotionally, they are so disturbed, anxious or unstable that they are no longer able to function normally.

Panic attacks. :: What is it with you guys and all those fucking panic attacks?

“What is it with you guys?” is a colloquial way of asking a person why they or the group they're in keep saying the same things.

Not panic....dizzy, breathing, constricting attacks.

If a person is “dizzy,” they have trouble standing because they feel like the world is spinning or turning around them. If something is “constricting” your air supply, it is making it narrow or drawn together, so that it becomes difficult to breath.

Mr. Vitti, I’m going to **go out on a limb** here.

“To go out on a limb” is to do or say something that might be considered risky, radical or controversial (A limb is an arm or leg).

You’ve got a gift!...You **figured that out!**

In this case, a “gift” is a very special talent or skill. “To figure out” a problem is to solve or effectively explain it.

God bless you, you got a fucking gift.

A common way of thanking or wishing good things for a person.

If you really want to get to the root of the problem, you’re going to want to get some form of therapy.

“The root of a problem” is the underlying or fundamental cause (In modern psychology, the root of most problems is considered painful childhood experiences, which can be discussed in psychological therapy).

My roster of patients is full.

A “roster” is an official list.

I felt better after I got all of that off my chest.

“To get something off your chest” is to talk about it with somebody, even though it is embarrassing or difficult to discuss.

I felt like a load is off my shoulders.

If you are able to “get a load off your shoulders,” you’re able to get rid of or solve a big problem that’s been bothering you (A load is a quantity of material or things that often weighs a lot).

Can we define ‘fag,’ because... :: I go fag, you die.

“To define” a word is to explain its meaning. “Fag” is a common but vulgar and abusive word for a male homosexual.

*Ben heads to Miami to marry Laura, but unfortunately,
Paul soon follows him with his own psycho-sexual issues.*

We take on Manetta, what does Vitti do? Nothing!

In this case, “to take on” a person is to challenge or fight against them.

This shit's really going to come down.

A very slangy way of saying something very violent or bad is going to happen.

A lot of tough guys get fed to the crabs off of Red Hook.

A "tough guy" is a person who can endure a lot of pain or punishment, who is often strong and violent (Red Hook is a place on a beach).

Vitti; That name has been haunting me since I was a kid.

"To haunt" a person is to scare them, perhaps the way a ghost scares the people in an old house where someone had died.

He was the smart guy, I was the dope.

A good word for a stupid person, or perhaps an idiot or moron.

My father was a nickel and dime shitheel.

A slangy and never used way to describe a poor or powerless person (A nickel is a five cent coin, a dime is a 10 cent coin, and the 'heel' of a shoe is its bottom).

Vitti blew it...because he forgot to kill Gambini before the meeting.

"To blow it" is an excellent colloquial expression meaning to do something very poorly or in such a way that it causes big problems.

He's some fucking tailor. You look good.

A "tailor" is a person who makes and fixes clothes.

I don't want to come back to a science fair.

A large exhibit or festival that has lots of experiments and events that people can explore. They are often in high schools, and have many tables or booths devoted to chemistry, physics, etc..

I'm sealing up the vent in your room.

"To seal" something is to make sure it is tightly closed shut, often with glue, tape or some other sticky material. A "vent" is a large pipe through which air can travel.

It's so cool; Was that really Paul Vitti?

The most popular slang word in English for good, excellent, fun, etc...

I didn't ask to see his Mafia decoder ring, but it was Paul Vitti.

A device that lets people identify others as well as solve complicated problems. This is more an item from fiction than reality.

Despite the summer heat and the popularity of more exotic Caribbean destinations, Florida's hospitality industry reports booming business.

An "exotic" tourist area is one that is considered exciting, mysterious and different. The "hospitality industry" is a business term for hotels, and if business is "booming," it's very busy and making lots of money.

Judging from the mob scene around the pool today, there's nothing off about the off-season in Miami beach.

A "mob scene" is a place where there are lots and lots of people, often in a small or confined space. Here, it is used as a play on words since "the mob" is also a term for the Mafia or organized crime. The "off-season" refers to those months when there are not that many tourists around.

This is my last report for WVBF.

Note that TV and radio stations are identified by three or four letters, usually starting with either a K or a W.

He's crazy about you.

To be "crazy about" a person is to like them a lot, often in a romantic or sexual sense.

I'm going to be a step-mom to a grown kid.

Your "step-mom" is your dad's new or second wife.

I am distracted. I got things on my mind.

If a person is "distracted," they have trouble concentrating because they're being bothered, or because they're unable to stop thinking about other things.

Goddam it, Shelia; Why can't you keep your mouth shut?

A common and crude way to express emotions like anger or frustration.

I got news for you, you little two-bit prick, son-of-a-bitch, rat bastard!

A colorful list of crude insult words!; "Two-bit" is an interesting adjective meaning very unimportant or trivial. A "prick," "son-of-a-bitch" and "bastard" are vulgar terms for a mean, abusive or immoral person. A "rat" is a person who tells the police or other authorities about the activities of gangsters or other criminals.

Whatever you did the other day, it didn't take. I'm still fucked up.

In this case, "to take" means to last. If a person is "fucked up," they are troubled, disturbed or have big problems.

I have a serious practice and I don't have time for your bullshit.

A doctor's "practice" is their business, including all their patients. "Bullshit" is a vulgar but wonderful word for lies, and nonsense.

I couldn't get it up last night.

In a sexual context, "to get it up" is a common way of referring to a man's ability to get an erection.

Can I get this straight?

“Let me get this straight” is a widely used way of saying you want to completely understand something, often by listening very carefully.

You flew 1,500 miles, you dragged me out of bed in the middle of the night just because you couldn't get an erection?! :: Don't that prove I'm motivated?

“To drag” a person is to physically pull them. An “erection” is a hard penis, or more colloquially, a hard-on. If a person is “motivated,” they are excited, focused or determined to do something.

You start with the pills and the next thing you know you're putting in hydraulics.

Mechanical devices or machines that are used to move water.

A hard-on should be gotten legitimately or not at all.

A “hard-on” is a slang term for an erection, and in this case, “legitimately” means naturally (It more generally means legally or appropriately).

Has this happened to you before? :: The dead dick thing?

“Dick” is a widely used slang word for a penis.

Eight times is not catastrophic.

A powerful word meaning horribly tragic, violent or deadly.

Animals are very cunning and they sense weakness.

If a person is “cunning,” they are very smart or clever at cheating, manipulating or taking advantage of others (Paul is talking about gangsters in general).

What is my goal? To make you a happy, well-adjusted gangster?

If a person is “well-adjusted,” they are happy and emotionally stable. A “gangster” is another word for a mobster or a member of the Mafia.

If you slap a pair of tits on me, I'm a woman.

“To slap on” some clothes is to put them on very fast. “Tits” is a vulgar word for females breasts (“Boobs” is a safer word).

Are you turning me down?

“To turn down” a person is to reject them, or refuse their offer (In this case, Paul's offer to have Ben be his psychologist).

When I got into family therapy, this was not the family I had in mind.

“Family therapy” is the practice of psychology among members of families (parents, children, etc.) Here, it's used as a play on words since Ben is also referring to organized crime families.

You, with your schmucky little office and house; You're turning me down?!

A “schmuck” is a Yiddish (Jewish) word for a jerk or fool (though it literally means penis, and regardless, is rarely used, as an adjective).

So you can listen to housewives piss and moan about how nobody fucks them right anymore?

“To piss” is to urinate, and to “moan” is to make deep sounds of pain (or pleasure), though when combined like this, it basically means to complain. “To fuck,” of course, is an extremely vulgar verb meaning to have sex.

You’re a phony!

An important word for a fake, or a person who is really not at all like they pretend to be.

A real doctor could never turn his back on a person whose suffering.

“To turn your back on” a person is to pretend that you don’t notice them, or perhaps more generally, to ignore their suffering.

Are you going to start moralizing with me now?

“To moralize” is to talk about what one considers moral and immoral, or right and wrong, especially in matters of sex and people’s personal lives.

Have you been under a lot of stress lately?

A critical word for emotional pressure that causes great tension and discomfort.

Like seeing your best friend murdered? :: That would qualify.

If something “qualifies,” it is considered sufficient of good enough for a particular purpose.

They’re underlying things.

As an adjective “underlying” means fundamental or basic.

You’re right on the money.

An interesting expression which means exactly right or correct.

I feel the juices rushing back to my balls as we speak.

“Balls” is a common slang word for a man’s testicles.

That settles it; You are my shrink!

“To settle” an argument or decision is to finally resolve it or end it.

You’re not ready to open up! You’re not a good candidate.

In psychology, to “open up” means to talk openly and honestly about your problems and emotions. A “candidate” is a person who runs for political office, or more generally, who hopes to qualify for some event, honor or process.

Do you want me to clear your schedule for you?

“To clear” a schedule is to get rid of everything that is filling it or taking up space or time (In this case, Paul is referring to Ben’s other patients).

The pause that refreshes.

A “pause” is a brief rest before moving on, and “to refresh” a person is to usually give them something cold to drink if they are hot and thirsty (These are the words of a well known soft drink advertisement).

I was out of my mind!

If a person is “out of their mind,” they are totally crazy or acting in a crazy manner.

I’ve covered the mob down here. I see what they do.

Another term for the Mafia, or organized crime.

Come on; Get into it!

In this case, to “get into” something is to become interested in or excited by it.

There’s splashing of water, they eat fish. This is not a big stretch for a whale.

“To splash” water is to make it fly off in all directions after jumping into it. “A big stretch” is the extending of arms or legs, or more generally here, the act of accomplishing something that was a great challenge. A “whale” is the biggest animal on earth, and lives in the ocean.

I’m pretending, because, you know, we have to bond and everything.

“To bond” with a person is a popular verb from psychology which means to become emotionally close to them.

A little snack for her might be 50 pounds of mackerel.

A “snack” is a small amount of food eaten between meals, and “mackerel” is a type of small fish.

You’re pretending to have a good time and I don’t want to spoil that.

In this case, “to spoil” a good time is to ruin or destroy it.

Do you think those whales piss in that water?

“To piss” is to urinate, or more colloquially, to take a leak.

You’re on call 24 hours a day, just like the rest of us.

If an employee is “on call,” they must be ready or prepared to work even though they might be relaxing at home or far from the job.

They threw me in the shark tank. :: They were trying to make a point.

A “shark tank” is a large container for sharks (large killer fish).

In this case, “to make a point” is a way of saying to send a message.

That you’re a scary guy? Believe me, I get it.

Note that one key meaning of “to get” is to understand.

I had an episode.

An “episode” is an event or incident, and in this case, a panic attack.

I am redefining weird on an hourly basis.

“To redefine” a word is to change its meaning. “Weird” is a great adjective meaning strange or bizarre. If something changes on “an hourly basis,” it changes every hour.

I could take him out with a rifle and a scope,
but I don’t have any of that shit with me.

In this context, “to take out” a person is to shoot and kill them.

The “scope” of a rifle is the part of it through which one views or aims.

No sweat. You told me to take care of him. I’ll take care of him.

“No sweat” is a way of saying no problem. Here, “to take care of” a person is to kill them (but this would only be used like this by criminals).

Maybe he’s Vitti’s new consigliere.

An Italian word meaning counselor or assistant.

Put his picture on the wire and see what you come up with.

Here, “the wire” refers to the internet, and to “come up with” something is to find a correct identification, or more generally, a solution.

The Miami wedding is ruined by a falling body, and Ben starts to explore the possible psychological roots of Paul’s battle with nerves.

Normally a patient wouldn’t have a vat of scotch during a session.

A “vat” is a very big container for liquids, and “scotch” is a type of strong liquor. A “session” is usually an hour of conversation between a psychologist and their patient.

I’ll have to remember it if I’m ever on Jeopardy.

A famous TV quiz show, where people try to show who knows the most useless information.

I just like saying “God rest his soul.” Of course he passed away!

“God rest his soul” is a very religious way of talking about people after they die. “To pass away” is a euphemistic or gentle way of saying to die.

I was hanging out in the neighborhood...a kid gang, hooligan shit.

“To hang out” is to pass time, doing nothing in particular. A “hooligan” is a young teenage kid who causes lot of trouble by breaking the law and often destroying property.

He slapped me around a couple times.

“To slap around” a person is to physically hit or strike them a few times.

I’m just speculating that maybe in some way, maybe you wanted him to die.

“To speculate” is to guess, based on experience or physical evidence.

He slapped you around because you were rebellng against his authority.

“To rebel” against something is to fight back against it. A person’s “authority” is their official title, rank or more generally, their power.

There may have been some unresolved Oedipal conflict. :: English!

If a problem is “unresolved,” it hasn’t been solved yet. An “Oedipus complex” is the theory, from both Ancient Greece and modern psychology, that young boys want to unconsciously kill their fathers so that they can be with their mothers.

It’s an instinctual developmental drive. A young boy wants to replace his father so that he can totally possess his mother.

An “instinctual developmental drive” is a ridiculous term from psychology which refers to a person’s desire or wish, that they have developed over time, perhaps from childhood experiences. In this case, “to possess” a person is to totally control or dominate them.

Are you out of you’re fucking mind?! :: It’s Freud!

If a person is “out of their mind,” they’re crazy. Freud is the famous Jewish Austrian founder of modern psychology, who died in 1939.

Freud is a sick fuck and you are too for bringing it up.

“A sick fuck” is a strong insult for a sick or sexually perverted person. “To bring up” something in a conversation is to start to discuss it.

My friends call me Captain.

A “captain” is the head of a ship (and a high level in the navy).

I’d like a morphine and a soda.

“Morphine” is a drug that’s often used to take away pain when people are trying to stop using other drugs like heroin. A “soda” is another word for a soft drink such as Coke or Pepsi.

Do I walk up to you and say you’re so and so?

“So and so” is one way of referring to a person or thing in general when you don’t know or want to use their name.

A little something for the bride and groom. God bless.

A “bride” is the woman getting married, and the “groom” is the man.

I had a really weird dream last night.

A great word for strange, odd or bizarre.

Why did you interrupt my party? :: You know, you're really very rigid about certain things.

"To interrupt" an event is to make a lot of noise or commotion so that people are disturbed by it. If a person is rigid," they are stubborn and refuse to change their beliefs or behavior.

I don't want to hear any more filth about my mother.

"Filth" refers to anything that is very dirty, in this case in a sexual sense.

All right, doc, I'm letting it go this time.

In this context, "to let something go" is to forget about it, or forgive a person for having done it.

Why don't you look over that way before I bust your fucking head open?

"To bust open" something is to violently force it open.

I'm going to grab a bite to eat.

"To grab a bite" is to quickly get something to eat.

Now, nod your head and smile.

"To nod" your head is to move it up and down, as if you're saying yes.

I know what your game is, and you better call it quits.

This is Paul's slangy way of saying he knows what Ben is doing, and he should stop doing it immediately.

Just guy stuff between me and the Captain.

A colloquial way of referring to the kinds of things that men talk about between themselves.

There was an assassination attempt on Paul in the hotel.

An "assassination attempt" is the act of trying to kill somebody well known or important, usually with a gun.

That's it! I've had it with you!

If you have "had it with" somebody, you can no longer accept their behavior because it is too ridiculous or annoying.

I just saw a man fall seven stories into a platter of poached salmon.

A "platter" is a large tray of food. If food is "poached," it is cooked in near boiling liquid. "Salmon" is a popular type of fish.

They're still pulling capers out of him.

"Capers" are a type of pickled flower that is often served with fish.

"Life is bullshit, I can't take it no more. Signed, the dead guy."

If a person "can't take it" anymore, they can no longer deal with or survive a particular situation. "To sign" a letter is to write your signature.

They're probably **on to** you, right now.

If you're "on to" a person, you know what they are doing, even if they are trying to keep it secret.

Being an **accessory** to a murder was not part of our understanding.

If a person is an "accessory" to a crime, they are legally responsible for having helped the criminal commit or do it.

Of course I'm **upset**. My wedding is **ruined** because you got problems.

If a person is "upset," they are emotionally angry, worried or agitated. If something is "ruined," it has been seriously damaged or even destroyed.

It'll all **work out**. I promise.

If a situation "works out," the related problems are solved.

First he tries to kill me, then he **whacks** one of my guys, then he **fucks up** your wedding.

In this film, "to whack" a person is to kill them (and not just hit them). "To fuck up" a wedding is to seriously hurt or ruin it.

I'm so fucking **enraged**, I don't know what to do with myself.

One way of saying extremely angry.

Because of this little **homicide**?

This is the official legal term for murder.

You don't have a **shred** of **human decency**. Not a shred.

A "shred" is a tiny piece or scrap of paper, or more generally, a very small amount. "Human decency" refers to noble things like kindness, honesty and compassion.

There's no helping you because you're a common **thug**.

"A thug" is a bully, gangster or anyone who acts violently against people who are weaker or unable to defend themselves.

I'm trying to get some **closure** on that.

"Closure" is an important word from modern psychology that refers to the act of trying to end the emotional pain that resulted from something bad or even tragic that happened in the past.

Ok, **whatever**. I'm just trying to tell you about my feelings.

A widely used filler word that expresses the desire of the speaker to move on to something else in the conversation, even if there is disagreement.

Anger is a blocked wish.

A typical observation from modern psychology.

You make one more move on me, you motherfucker, I'll fucking cut your balls off!

In this case, to "make a move on" a person is to try and kill them. "Motherfucker" may be the most vulgar insult word in English!

I'll put fucking ice picks in your eyes!

An "ice pick" is a sharp tool that is used to cut big blocks of ice.

It was going great until the cutting up of his balls and the shoving it up his ass.

"To shove" is to push forcefully. This is a funny line by Ben about Paul's attempt to control his anger.

Will you unload the car please?

"To unload" a car is to take out all the things in it.

You didn't want to go ahead with the ceremony.

A "ceremony" is any type of formal ritual. In this case, a wedding.

Oh, there's the guy that plunged to his death.

"To plunge" is to fall very far very quickly.

The clergymen and any of your family members who are done with their crisis counseling.

A "clergyman" is a church official, and "crisis counseling" is the act of talking with a psychologist or other trained person, after something horrible or tragic has happened, such as a death in the family.

The FBI moves in as Ben gets Paul to make an amazing realization about his father, his career and his life.

Federal Bureau of Investigation, OCD.

This is the Organized Crime Division of the FBI (Ben mistakenly thinks OCD stands for "obsessive-compulsive disorder," which is a psychological disease in which patients continue to repeat the same irrational behavior, such as taking a shower 10 times a day.

I'm a psychotherapist. Paul Vitti is my patient.

A "psychotherapist" is a psychologist who treat serious emotional problems that have roots in childhood.

I got a television set from a kleptomaniac, so it's really not that big a deal.

A "kleptomaniac" is a person who feels a psychological need to steal. If something is "a big deal," it is considered very important.

Let me **cut to the chase**, Dr. Sobol.

“To cut to the chase” is to speak quickly and very directly about a particular issue or problem, rather than diplomatically or vaguely.

We think the stage is set for a major bloodbath.

If “the stage is set” for something, this means the conditions are ready to have that occur. A “bloodbath” is a dramatic word for a explosion of violence in which many people are killed or injured.

“Bloodbath” is something that sticks out in a conversation.

If something ‘sticks out,’ it is easily noticeable and hard to ignore.

If this ever gets out on the street, we’re dead.

If news “gets out on the street,” this means that lots of people or even the general public becomes aware of it.

I beg to differ. If you’re looking to establish an insanity defense for later on, that’s OK.

“I beg to differ” is a way of saying “I disagree.” An “insanity defense” is a legal strategy in which a person accused of a serious crime such as murder claims they are not guilty because they were crazy or insane.

Everybody will think that you’re falling apart.

If a person is “falling apart” emotionally, they become very unstable, and perhaps even close to a nervous breakdown.

Get rid of the shrink. He knows too much.

“To get rid of” a person is to force them away, eliminate them, or in this case, to kill them.

You look lousy, alright.

A good word for bad, of poor quality, or in this case, being in poor shape.

It’s a boundary issue. :: If more people gave from the heart, we’d be better off.

In psychology, a “boundary issue” refers to the emotional space or distance that people want to keep between each other (A boundary is a border). “To give from the heart” is to give with sincerity or honesty, and if a person is “better off,” they are happier or doing better than before.

Piece of junk. You’re getting a Rolex.

If something is “a piece of junk,” it is considered lousy or of very poor quality. A “Rolex” is a very expensive and well known brand of watch.

He was on his way to talk to a federal prosecutor. Got hit by a truck.

A “federal prosecutor” is a lawyer who prosecutes or puts on trial accused criminals, for the federal government (And *not* the 50 states).

My condolences.

What you can say to a person whose spouse or family member just died.

Are you **nuts**?

“Nuts” is an excellent slang word for a person who is crazy or insane.

I don't **buy** that. In my dream, I'm bringing the baby the black milk.

Note that in some contexts, “to buy” a story is to believe it.

What kind of work does your father do?... You **paused**.

“To pause” is to wait for a little while before moving forward.

A psychiatrist? Now I know why you're **fucked up**.

If a person is “fucked up” psychologically, they have serious mental or emotional problems.

If you want to spend it **screwing around**, I can't help you.

“To screw around” is to pass time doing things that aren't serious or productive.

Have you guys ever **snorkeled**?

“To snorkel” is to swim under water while breathing through a tube.

He's a **lunatic**.

A wonderful word for a truly crazy or insane person.

We got to **nip** that shit right **in the bud**.

“To nip something in the bud” is to stop or kill it before it has time to grow (The bud of a flower is the center part that contains the seed).

If the first **comes through**, that'll fix everything.

If a person “comes through,” they accomplish what they hoped to.

Scumbag, garbage pail.

A very strong insult word for a disgusting person (Scum is the dirt or filth that is found on shower walls if not cleaned for a long time).

Jelly, I have to... :: **Poop**?

“To poop” is a safe and gentle way of saying to shit or defecate.

You got to get more **roughage**, Doc. A **bran muffin** in the morning could help.

“Roughage” is a part of some foods that helps people digest their food better. A “bran muffin” is a type of popular and healthy bread.

It's all this **shoot-them-up** action bullshit.

“Shoot-them-up” is an adjective that refers to many Hollywood films that are filled with violent guns fights.

They **spotted** that guy at Pettite's restaurant.

“To spot” a person is to see them, often after trying to find them.

Let's make it his last supper. :: You got it.

A "supper" is a meal (and "The Last Supper of Jesus" is a famous story in the Bible describing events before he was killed). "You got it" is one way of saying. "No problem, I'll get what you want."

Just for fun, tear out his heart and bring it to me.

"To tear out" something is to forcefully pull it from where it had been attached (This is a very violent image!).

I'll bring it back to you on a fucking platter.

A large tray for serving lots of food.

Raisin brand, that goes right through me. :: Good tip.

The first sentence is Jelly's way of saying he can eat Raisin brand breakfast cereal with no digestive or stomach problems. A "tip" is an excellent word for a piece of advice.

You're reaching out to me.

"To reach out to" a person is one way saying to confide in them, or to tell them about very personal or intimate problems.

Don't kid yourself; It doesn't get more personal than this.

"Don't kid yourself" is a way of telling a person to be realistic, or to stop lying to themselves. In this case, "personal" refers to an insult that is directed at one person in particular that hurts their feelings.

Don't fucking bullshit me; You ratted me out. You betrayed me!

"To bullshit" a person is to tell them lies or nonsense. This is crude, and you should be aware that the noun is much more common than the verb. "To rat out" a criminal is to tell the police, or in this case the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), about their criminal activities. "To betray" a person is to turn against them, or perhaps turn them into the police or try to physically hurt them, after once having been a friend or loyal to them.

Never, on my mother's life.

A dramatic and silly way of making a promise.

I had a wire on, but I took it off because I think I know how to help you.

In this case, a "wire" is a tiny electronic device for spying on, or listening to others, or more colloquially, a bug.

He was dressed like a busboy.

The person at a restaurant who helps the waiters and waitresses set the tables and take the dirty dishes back to the kitchen.

Jesus; Poor guy's falling apart.

"Jesus" is a way to express emotion such as frustration. If a person is "falling apart" emotionally, they are becoming very unstable.

Why don't he just pop him already?

In this case, "to pop" means to kill (though this is rare and usually refers to the act of bursting a bubble with a pin).

He's trying to tell you....Holy shit!

A crude and funny way of expressing great fear or other emotion (If something is holy, it is considered blessed by God, or sacred).

Pull yourself together!

One way of telling a very nervous person to calm down.

Time to channel all this nice grief into a murderous rage!

"To channel" anger it to direct it to another place (so that it can be released more constructively). "Grief" is great sadness or sorrow, and "rage" is extreme and even violent anger.

Time to shoot back---here we go, bang bang!

A child's words for the sound a gun makes when shooting.

Pretty fucking ironic, ain't it?

An important but difficult word to define!; In general, a reference to the difference between what one would expect and what actually happens after a series of events (It is ironic that a person who works for years getting the courage to fly on a plane dies in a crash on his first flight).

I was really conflicted about it. Progress right?

If a person is "conflicted" about something, they feel both good and bad or positive and negative about it, all at the same time. "Progress" is the act of moving forward or getting better.

I want to please him when were in bed, but whatever I do, it seems like its never enough.

"To please" a person is to make them happy or to satisfy them.

He wants me to call him 'Big Boy" or he's my "Bucky Bronco" and I'm supposed to ride him hard and put him in the barn wet.

Totally ridiculous words that people associate with horseback riding, though here it used to talk about sexual activity.

I'd get on all fours and bark like a dog. I'd do whatever it takes.

"To get on all fours" is to get down on the ground, on your hands and knees, like an animal. "To bark" is to make the sound a dog makes.

Smoke some joints, drink some wine. Whatever it is to get off each other and be happy.

A "joint" is a marijuana cigarette. "To get off" a person is to give them sexual pleasure, including an orgasm. Very slangy.

I'm going to knock them dead.

In this context, "to knock them dead" is to totally impress them with your ability to communicate or other skills.

Was providing for a family simpler back then, or did he just make it look that way?

"To provide for a family" is to make enough money to take care of them.

Decisions are tougher now. So many ways to invest. Ask a Merrill Lynch financial consultant, who can help with a plan.

If a decision is "tough," it is hard or difficult to make. "To invest" is to put money into a company's stock, property, or other asset that can make money. A "consultant" is an advisor.

We were put on this earth to find a love, a soul-mate, someone with whom we can create joy.

A "soul-mate" is a lover or person with whom you are very close, who often is very similar to you. "Joy" is great happiness.

We anticipate and celebrate...the years of joy they will share together from this day on.

"To anticipate" something is to expect it in the future.

Pick it up from there.

"To pick up" a conversation after it has been interrupted for a while is to resume or continue it from the point where it had been stopped.

Do you want to make a scene?

In this context, a "to make a scene" is to act in a loud, angry or very noticeable way, so that others around will see and hear it.

Tic, toc. Hurry up, let's go.

The sounds that the hands of a clock make.

By the power vested in me, I now pronounce you man and wife.

"To vest" power in a person is to officially give or grant it to them, and "to pronounce" something is to officially declare it out loud. These are the words a priest will say when they are marrying two people.

Sorry Mrs. Sobol, duty calls.

A "duty" is a legal or moral obligation, or something that must be done. If "duty calls" that obligation must be carried out or done immediately.

That would be a very good idea, except for one little detail. I'm a fucking moron. I'm known for it.

A "detail" is a small part of something bigger, or a particular fact or piece of information. A "moron" is an excellent word for someone who is very stupid, or more generally, a jerk or idiot.

I am no longer on the payroll; Do you understand?

If a person is on a company payroll, they're being paid by that company.

We've been through this before; You can't shoot me.

"To go through" something is to experience it or survive it.

This is surveillance 6. They're heading East. :: Roger, that.

"Surveillance" is the act of spying on or looking over others.

"Roger" means "understood" when used by two people talking on a two-way radio system, such as a by a pilot or police officer.

If you spill anything on it, I'm going to mess you up.

"To spill" liquid is to accidentally let it fall out of its container.

Here, "to mess up" a person is to physically attack or hurt them.

If he gets nervous and fucks this up, they'll kill him for sure.

"To fuck up" something you're trying to do is to do it badly, perhaps so that it is a complete failure. Crude but common .

This is insane.

A good alternative for crazy.

Let's go over it again. Mr. Vitti has been detained. You're the new consigliere.

"To go over something" is to discuss it. If a person is "detained" they are being prevented from leaving, sometimes by physical force.

A "consigliere" is an Italian word for an important assistant.

I'm a psychiatrist. Believe me, I can be vague.

If a person is being "vague," they talk in very general terms, but they refuse to use details, exact numbers or words.

There's no way I can get away with this. :: Don't fucking whine.

"To get away with" something illegal is to do it without ever being caught or punished. "To whine" is to complain in a high or annoying voice.

Whining is a dead giveaway.

If something is a "dead giveaway," it is a sign that what you are doing is illegal or immoral and others will realize this (If you have a gun going into a bank, that might be a giveaway that you plan to rob it).

Ben speaks for Paul at the great Mafia meeting, until Paul arrives to speak for himself.

Blend in.

A way of telling a person to mix in with others at a party so that they will look like they belong and they're just like everyone else.

I didn't think anybody here was into wearing fucking name-tags.

To be "into doing" something is to enjoy doing it. A "name-tag" is a little piece of paper with your name printed on it, that you pin on your shirt.

All I see is his man Jelly and some sawed off little prick nobody knows.

"To saw" something means to cut it with a saw or blade, moving it back and forth, but as part of an adjective, this is never used. A "prick" is a very vulgar term for a jerk, ass, or creep, or literally, a penis.

Who is this guy? What the fuck is he doing here?

A more vulgar version of "the hell," added to Wh questions to show emotion such as anger or frustration.

Who am I? Who I am? You got to go in deep and pull out...like the movie where they came out of the stomach, and ate the people on the fucking spaceship.

This is Ben's ridiculous (and nervous) way of saying he is an intellectually deep and complicated person who is hard to understand or know.

May they rest in peace.

The religious words that are used to bless people who have just died.

Benny the Groin, Sunny Schnoz, Tommy the Tuba.

Three ridiculous names for gangsters: A "groin" is the area of a man around his sexual organs, a "schnoz" is a Yiddish (Jewish) slang word for a nose, and a "tuba" is a very big musical instrument.

I smoked a Tibet and had a quaalude and suddenly I'm in a fishnet singing show tunes.

A "Tibet" is rarely used slang for a marijuana cigarette. A "quaalude" is a pill that has the effect of an illegal drug like marijuana. "Show tunes" are songs that are popular in Broadway plays.

I am prepared to speak for Mr. Vitti on all matters.

"To speak for" a person is to officially represent them, and in this case, "matters" refers to all topics of interest.

What if I put two bullets in the back of your fucking brain?

"Bullets" are the deadly metal pieces that guns shoot.

Do you have to get angry to be heard, to get people to listen to you? Is that your deal?

This is a slangy way of asking "Is that the way you behave in order to get what you want?"

You have a tendency to be angry a lot. :: How can I calm down when this prick won't stop with the questions?

If a person has a "tendency" to do something, they do it fairly often over a period of time.

I want out, but I will respect the oath I made.

In this case, “out” means out of the entire business or lifestyle.
An “oath” is a solemn promise, usually made in front of others.

Whatever I know about anybody else’s business,
I will take to the grave. You have my word.

If you “take a secret to the grave,” you die without having told anyone else about it. If a person “has your word,” they are saying that you can trust them to do what they say they will do.

He betrayed us. He sent his own man down to Miami to try and kill me.

“To betray” a person is to turn against them, or perhaps turn them into the police or try to physically hurt them, after once having been a friend.

Even though it’s my right, I’m not going to take revenge.

“To take revenge” is to hurt or strike back against a person who has hurt you in the past.

You got a problem with aggression. Maybe you weren’t hugged when you were a kid.

“Aggression” is the act of acting angry, violent or hostile to others.
“To hug” a person is to hold them tightly between your arms.

Look inside the inner self and find out who you are.

This is a term from modern psychology that refers to a person’s deepest emotional feelings, that often come from childhood experiences.

I had a breakthrough. I’m in a good place mentally and I’m feeling good about me.

A “breakthrough” is an excellent word for sudden and dramatic progress or improvement. This is Paul, speaking as if her were a psychologist!

As a token of good faith between us, I’ve taken the liberty of writing down a few things and putting them in a self-deposit box in case...

“A token of good faith” is a small gesture or action that someone does to show they are being sincere or honest. A “self-deposit box” is a small box inside a bank, for holding small valuable possessions like gold rings.

...God forbid, something should happen to me, my friends or family.

An interesting way of hoping that something bad won’t happen.

That was remarkable. Some people in therapy never have breakthroughs like you had.

A good alternative to amazing or unbelievable.

You think this is a fucking civil service job?!

A “civil service job” is a job working for the federal government, which usually has good job security.

Are you going to stab me in the back like the piece of shit I always knew you were?

“To stab a person in the back” is to put a knife into their back, or more generally, to turn on them after having been a loyal friend or partner.

Machine guns are a nice touch. A little hostile.

If something is “a nice touch,” it adds a little something that makes it look better (It’s often in the context of decorating or furnishing a room). “Hostile” means angry, resisting or aggressive.

Take a pill, Robocop.

The name of movie character that is part police officer and part robot, which is a machine that acts like a thinking human.

I can’t believe it! You took a bullet for me!

If one person “takes a bullet” for another, they bravely move between that person and another firing a gun, in order to save the other’s life.

You tripped over your unconscious.

“To trip over” something is to almost fall after waking into it without seeing it. In psychology, a person’s “unconscious” are the feelings, thoughts and emotions that they are not even aware that they have.

Mr. Vitti, you have the right to remain silent.

These are the words that every police officer in the United States must say if they arrest a person for possibly having committed a crime.

You got off easy. 18 months is nothing.

In this context, “to get off easy” is to be given a light or even gentle punishment for having committed a serious crime.

We don’t say “cure.” We say you had a “corrective emotional experience.”

A truly silly expression from modern psychology, which seems to be another way of saying a cure or a positive or helpful experience.

Analyze This

Possible Topics for ESL Class Discussion

1. Is psychotherapy practiced in your country?
Is it as popular as in the United States?
2. Is there a Mafia or other type of organized crime in your country?
How powerful is it?
3. Is it possible to be a sensitive gangster?
Do Mafia bosses ever really “get in touch with their feelings?”
4. If you were Ben, would you have treated Paul? Was it Ben’s job to make Paul a “well-adjusted” gangster, or to convince him that his entire life was wrong?
5. With anti-depressant pills, is psychotherapy really needed?
6. Is Jelly a mean and ruthless thug, or just a big cuddly teddy bear?
7. Did you like this movie? Why or why not?