

Shmanners 465: Kayaking

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[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: And you're listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: How are you today?

Teresa: I'm doing okay, you know? Summer is in, like, full swing.

Travis: Are we in the dog days of summer now?

Teresa: We're—the dog—the dog days? Is that what it is?

Travis: Is it?

Teresa: No. Wait, yes. It is. That's what she's saying.

Travis: Yeah. Well, no.

Teresa: In that song.

Travis: I mean, Florence and her machine didn't make that up.

Teresa: I know.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But did you say dark days?

Travis: No, I said dog days!

Teresa: Oh, okay. I was confused. I thought you said dark days.

Travis: Well, now you've got me—it's not important.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: None of that is important. It's hot. It's raining.

Teresa: It's summer!

Travis: It's summer.

Teresa: Y'all.

Travis: So, today we're talking about a very, uh, I would say summery outdoor activity. I mean—

Teresa: You would think that, and you would be wrong.

Travis: Aww, man!

Teresa: It's okay. [laughs]

Travis: Well, that seems like it could be a subtitle of the show.

Teresa: [laughs] Yeah.

Travis: What are we talking about?

Teresa: Kayaking!

Travis: Kayaks. Kayak, a great palindrome.

Teresa: Is it really?

Travis: Kayak, yeah. K-A-Y-A-K.

Teresa: Oh, yep. Mm-hmm, yep, yep.

Travis: Uhh, I just notice these kinds of things! Wordplay.

Teresa: Sir, have you ever been in a kayak? Manned a kayak?

Travis: No? So, I—I've been, I would say, of the spectrum of kayaking on either side of them.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: Where I did, like, a little—I think they called them ducks. But they were, like, uh, you know, you were just kind of strapped in by your knees, kind of kneeling on the thing.

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: More than, like, in a kayak. And I've done whitewater rafting. But I didn't do just a kayak.

Teresa: Oh, okay. I have.

Travis: Okay, cool, man! Tell me about it.

Teresa: So, so, when I was in, I think, middle school, my parents signed me and my older sister up for what was called watercraft camp.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Where we got to experience learning to kayak, and sailboat, and rowboat, and canoe. Um, which obviously you have—

Travis: Was this—this wasn't the same as Explorers, right? That you were in.

Teresa: No, no.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: There's—there's different amounts of people that you can have on each one of these. These were, um—the sailboat was my favorite. It's called a sunfish. It's a one-person little sailboat. And the great thing about it is, it's more like a dinghy, right? Because it is—it's full of air, basically. So it's, like, sealed off, the plastic is. And so you have the little spot that you sit in, right? And then the rest of the boat, the vessel, is pretty much hollow. So when it capsizes, it wants to be right side up, right? It doesn't want to be upside down.

Travis: So it just keeps rolling.

Teresa: Well, no. You have to—

Travis: And you get caught in it like a tumbler.

Teresa: You have to roll it yourself.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: But you can easily get out as it's capsizing, and then push it back over. It's a little different with a kayak, though. And we did—

Travis: I think this—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Yeah, I think this is one of the reasons I haven't done it. 'Cause I've also canoed.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: But I think I've never been good at being underwater without holding my nose.

Teresa: Ohh.

Travis: It's just not a skill I've developed. And the idea of being in a kayak, it rolling over, and now I'm just upside-down with my head bouncing on the riverbed, which is how I assume it would happen.

Teresa: [laughs] No. But—

Travis: Hitting every rock. And, like, the panic that would set in in that moment.

Teresa: You do have to practice rolling the kayak.

Travis: Okay.

Travis: Or, you know what else I could do?

Teresa: What?

Travis: Not get in one.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: I'm just saying, it's an option. I would say those are the two options to keep, like—to avoid capsizing in a kayak. One: get good at turning it back over. Two: don't get in it.

Teresa: As far as rolling over a boat, I think that a canoe is the hardest, because it creates an air bubble underneath that you can hang out in, which is fun, until you want to get back in the boat, and then you have to break the seal on the one—so you have to work with the person with you to break the seal on the one side so that you can turn it right side up.

Travis: Yes, but that's not my concern. Flipping the boat back over is my concern. Me not being trapped in the boat upside-down I think would be the thing.

Teresa: Ohh, okay.

Travis: 'Cause once the canoe goes over and I'm just out of it, at worst I've lost my canoe, right? It's like, "Well, I loved that canoe, but it's gone now."

Teresa: [laughs] Right. Well, so we'll learn a little bit more about kayaking. Let's start with the past, okay?

A kayak, for those who don't know, is a small boat meant to be piloted by one person. They are very narrow, and smaller than most sea craft, typically only one or two-person vessels, right? And—

Travis: There are tandem kayaks?

Teresa: There are.

Travis: How romantic.

Teresa: But it's a very small opening for a person to fit into. Like, when I think about the kayak that I had experience with, you—there was barely room for my butt, right? And I was, like, a 15-year-old kid. It's a small, small thing.

Um, they're controlled by a single double-ended paddle, which is used to navigate through the water. Today they're usually made out of fiberglass, and are meant to be pretty lightweight, so a person could carry their own kayak to a body of water.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, and like you said, you probably associate kayaks with, like, summer camping trips, right? And days at the lake.

Travis: Okay, don't give me that much credit. I think I associate them with the outdoors, and the only time I feel pressured to go outdoors is the summer.

Teresa: Oh, okay. But—

Travis: You can get away with not going outdoors the rest of the time and everyone understands. Like, if it's winter and you're like, "Oh, it's too cold." Everyone's like, "Oh, I get it." Or, like, it's autumn and you're like, "Oh, too—ooh, chilly and spooky! There's too many ghosts outside." And they're like, "Oh, I get it." And it's spring, it's raining. "Ooh, can't go outside. It's raining."
"Oh, I get it."

Then it's summer and it's nice, and you go, "I don't want to go outside." And they're like, "What?! Come on! It's beautiful!" And I'm like, "Aw, man."

Teresa: Well, the reason that I said that you were mistaken earlier is because kayaks actually originate in the frozen waters of the Arctic Circle.

Travis: Yeah, you know what? Now, that makes sense to me on a lot of levels. I get it. I just... [sighs] I wasn't thinking! Forgive me!

Teresa: That's okay.

Travis: Okay, great.

Teresa: The original models would have been made out of wood, or whalebone skeleton frames, depending upon what you had available, and then, like, seal or other animal skin stretched over it to make it buoyant, right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And historians can trace this type of boat back at least 4000 years, and it's probably older than that.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: The oldest kayaks in the world are currently exhibited at the State Museum of Ethnology in Munich, from 18—sorry, from 1577. Which is obviously not as old as kayaks are.

Travis: They gotta be older.

Teresa: They're much older.

Travis: I'm gonna go find an older one. I'll be right back.

Teresa: Okay. [laughs quietly] Um, we know for certain that the original boats were created by indigenous tribal nations. We've got Inuit and Yupik and Aleut, I believe is how these are pronounced.

Um, and these communities are very different from each other, right? Depending upon which tribal nation, you could use a kayak on an inland lake or a river, or even, like, coastal waters of the North Atlantic or the Bering Sea. Um, and you know, this wasn't a relaxing activity? I think that's pretty obvious. These were working boats.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Right?

Teresa: It was—it even translates loosely to man's boat or hunter's boat.

Travis: Well, when you—when I think about a kayak, right? That makes complete sense to me. Because it seems like it requires skill and, like, some strength to it, some ability that keeps it from, like, rolling over. Right? Like the difference between driving a car versus riding a motorcycle, right?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Like, there is an added level of it's not really—because it's so slim and built for kind of speed and movement, it's not really wanted to keep itself upright, if you aren't balanced.

Teresa: Well, I mean, and there are different things that kayaks are made for, right? There is the kind that is made for, like, speed and movement, but there's also a kind of, like, stalking kayak that has a much flatter bottom. We'll get to that.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: So, you would have made your own kayak at this point. And, I mean, now they're prefab with fiberglass, right?

Travis: Sure. I don't know how to make fiberglass.

Teresa: [laughs] I don't either.

Travis: Let alone make a kayak out of it.

Teresa: So, let me give you the proportions, okay? So, the length would usually be three times the span of the person's outstretched arms.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: The width of the cockpit of the boat would be the width of the builder's hips, plus two fists. So, one fist on either side.

Travis: Not very big.

Teresa: Not very big at all. Just a little bit of wiggle room. And then the depth of the cockpit is your fist plus your outstretched thumb.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: So, like a thumbs up.

Travis: So, very shallow.

Teresa: That's how deep it is. Yes, very shallow.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: And you would make this to fit your own body's specifications, right? You could also use—so, you have your paddler, right? The person who's moving the boat. They could also wear a garment stretched over the rim of the kayak and sealed with drawstrings at the wrists, right? With a hood on, too, that would raise the cockpit of the boat just a little bit. And it's an important feature, because we have been talking about rolling the kayak, right? And when you're in super, super cold water, you don't want to be wet in the water.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And so it enables you to roll the kayak back up if you capsize, and it also keeps you tethered to the boat, right? You're physically attached to the boat.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: And, like—

Travis: Combining man and machine into a cyborg boat. A cyboat, if you will.

Teresa: A cy—I'll give it to you, even though there's no, like, cy, because it's not, like—it's an analog thing.

Travis: I mean, okay. But it's a tool, how about that?

Teresa: Okay, yes.

Travis: Okay, great.

Teresa: Yes, it's a tool. Um, and historically—

Travis: So it's more of a rowboat?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: 'Cause, like, robot, but—okay.

Teresa: Yes, robot. Rowboat. Get it. Get it. Um, so like I said, depending upon which indigenous community we are tracing back the kayak to, there are a couple of different types, depending upon where you're you're gonna use it and the weather. Um, so if you're using it in Greenland, which would be called a West Greenland kayak, the wind and the current is very strong, so they have to be able to cut through the water quickly.

So it's very harpoon-like, with a high front deck and a low stern, and kind of a V shape at the bottom, right? So a deeper vessel. Whereas in West Greenland, the coast is filled with ice, and the sea is quite calm, right? So this is when you need a boat with a low profile so that you can sneak up on your prey. You don't have to go super fast, right?

Travis: So when you say stalking boat, right? This is like hunting—okay, great

Teresa: So, the boat has—it's almost level from bow to stern, and has sloped sides, so the coverage is almost flat on the bottom, and it barely rocks, right? So you don't want to make waves. You don't want to, like, cut into the water much, because the seal will see you coming.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Um, and so, like, each style has its kind of, like, pros and cons, and strengths and weaknesses. But everyone can agree that historically, the significance is related to the community that first used them, right? So they would pass down their knowledge, and you'd learn how to build this for yourself, and it would be kind of your livelihood, right?

And a lot of indigenous populations still use kayaks to hunt, because it's, you know—it doesn't get any better than that. They're pretty much perfect as they are.

Travis: I think that there's a lot—we find this a lot as we look at like, um, kind of technologies like this that have been around for longer than, like, 400 years. Where it's like, the design was so inherently suited to the

purpose that it's like, yeah, there's not really a lot to iterate on after that. Because, like, it wasn't like a technology that someone was developing in the 1800s to try to sell, and be the flashiest, or the biggest, or the best, or whatever. It was like, no, we're developing a thing so that it works perfectly for what we want it to do. It's easy to replicate and, like, easy to teach someone how to make their own and everything. So it's, like, exactly suited to its purpose.

Teresa: Right. And useful, right? Enter the Europeans.

Travis: Aww, man. Okay, wait. Before we do that, how about a word from another Max Fun show?

[theme music plays]

[music plays]

Kumail: Are you a celebrity? Are you searching for meaning, connection, and a little levity these days? Hi, I'm Kumail Nanjiani. Actor, writer, and yes, a celebrity too. And I've got four words for you: Bullseye with Jesse Thorn.

Are you tired of junkets? Red carpets? Sick of the endless spicy snacks you have to eat? Do you want to connect with someone who gets your work, that'll laugh with you a little? Join me, Andre 3000, Tom Hanks, Tina Fey, and many more, and become a guest on Bullseye with Jesse Thorn, from NPR and Maximum Fun.

[music and ad end]

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Allan: Walkin' About is the podcast about walking. It's a walk-umentary series where I, Allan McLeod, and a fun, friendly guest go for a walkabout. You'll learn about interesting people, and places, and have the kind of conversations you can only have on foot. We've got guests like Lauren Lapkus.

Lauren: I figured something out about this map, like how to read it.
[laughs]

Allan: Betsy Sodaro.

Betty: I had no clue! That's awesome, and nuts.

Allan: Jon Gabrus.

Jon: This is, like, great first date for, like, broke 20-somethings, you know?

Allan: And more! Check out Walkin' About with Allan McLeod on Maximum Fun.

[music and ad end]

Travis: So then the Europeans show up and, I assume, muck about.

Teresa: I mean, certainly. Um, in 1860, a sportsman named John McGregor introduced the idea of canoeing and kayaking to Europe, not as a hunting method, but as a recreational pastime.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: He is the one who founded the British Royal Canoe Club in 1866, and became its first captain, of course. 'Cause when you found the club, you get to be in charge, I guess.

Travis: I would say one of the main reasons people found their own clubs, yeah.

Teresa: [laughs] To be in charge. And then he would go on—

Travis: I think it would be wild to be like, "Yes, I will go to all the trouble to start this club, but I don't want to be a part of it. Thank you very much. I just—I think the club should exist."

Teresa: "I don't care for the weight of responsibility." [laughs]

Travis: "No, I think the club should exist, but I—ooh, I don't know, man."

Teresa: [laughs] And he'd go on to found the first American canoe association in 1880 as well. But, kayaking didn't really take off until Johann Klepper entered the scene in 1907.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: He was one of the very first people to mass produce kayaks for sports.

Travis: Sure. Making money off 'em.

Teresa: Certainly. He called it a fold boat or a folding kayak, or sometimes referred to as a flat boat in Germany. So it's a collapsible wooden frame, covered by rubberized canvas to keep it waterproof. And in 1929, Klepper and company were making 90 kayaks a day.

Travis: That's a lot of kayaks!

Teresa: That's a lot. And, turns out, Europeans love tiny watercraft, I guess. By the middle of the 1930s—

Travis: If there's one thing I know about Europeans...

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: ... it's that they love tiny watercraft.

Teresa: I did know that as one thing that I would know about them.

Travis: Oh, then you haven't been watching enough British TV. Every show, there's a kayak scene in every show.

Teresa: Um, by the middle of the 30s, it was estimated that half a million of these fold boats were being enjoyed all throughout Europe. And in 1936, kayaking was added to the Olympic docket in Berlin.

Travis: Okay. So kayaks are—

Teresa: [simultaneously] Took off in the United—oh.

Travis: Kayaks are really booming.

Teresa: Really booming. The United States got in on the game in the 1940s.

Travis: Sure, of course they did.

Teresa: With the first national whitewater championship held in Maine on the Rapid River, which had... rapids.

Travis: That does track. Unless it was ironic, you know what I mean?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Like calling a big guy Tiny.

Teresa: And I think it's interesting to mention that one of the winners crossed the finish line clinging to his overturned fold boat. So he basically finished upside-down.

Travis: I bet there was a big conversation amongst, like, judges and officials after that. Like, "I think—well, there's no rule against—uh, okay. Yeah, no, he wi—I guess he wins. If he wants to win that way, he wins."

Teresa: Yeah. People in general at this point were losing the plot a little bit, and started to, like, add things to keep them from, like, toppling over. Like little—

Travis: At that point, just use another boat! Right? Like, if you can't do it... okay.

Teresa: This is where you see that you have those little, like, outfits of, um, what are—I think they're sponsons, or, like, flatoons, or whatever it is,

right? Where it has kind of like the legs, and then the roundish floats on either side, right?

Travis: Yeah, I know what you're talking about. Pontoons, right?

Teresa: Sure, something like that. Um, because the art of rolling the kayak back over seems to have been, uh... not really worked into the sport, at this time. So people started adding things onto the kayaks.

Um, the boats themselves were pretty tough, and could stand up to a decent amount of wear and tear, especially when the fiberglass boats are introduced in the 50s. Um, and so today, most kayaks are roto-molded with polyethylene, polyethylene resin.

Travis: That's what I was gonna guess, yeah.

Teresa: Yeah. Oh, oh, hmm.

Travis: Oh, that's just what I would use.

Teresa: Oh, of course it is. Right. Um, so they are tough and precise in the water, but also lightweight. One person could carry them. Um, and in 2021, over 18 million Americans reported that they went kayaking at least once during that year. 71% of those were recreational kayakers, and it seems that people really like floating on the water.

Travis: 1% of those were sleep kayakers.

Teresa: Oh, you think so?

Travis: They woke up and they were like, "What? Ugh, again?"

Teresa: "Oh, no. How did I get here?" Um, here are some really interesting kayaking adventures I would like to regale you with.

Travis: Please.

Teresa: Uh, Freya Hoffamiser... Hoffmeister. There it is. Who describes herself as "the goddess of love to the sea."

Travis: Oh, my! Okay. Huh!

Teresa: Set records around Iceland and New Zealand's South Island in 2007, and Australia in 2009.

Travis: She kayaked over land.

Teresa: Well—

Travis: She was the first one to kayak through dirt!

Teresa: No, but between 2011 and 2015, she completely circumnavigated South America.

Travis: Okay?

Teresa: That's 27,000 kilometers, spanning 13 countries.

Travis: Not in one go, though, right?

Teresa: From the Panama Canal to Cape Horn.

Travis: She wasn't in a kayak for, like, four years straight, right?

Teresa: No, she would, uh, beach and camp.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But she did withstand some pretty high winds, and she was trapped on an island at Cape Horn for a little while, with the wind at 120 knots. She, like, took breaks, because she also had to return to Germany to run her ice cream shops. [laughs quietly]

Travis: Yeah, of course! You know? Yeah.

Teresa: So that's pretty awesome.

Travis: Listen, we'd all love to take a kayak and kayak around South America. But, you know, we have—what's your ice cream shop that's holding you back? You know what I mean?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: That's what this show's about, is asking our listeners to look at their lives and say, what's your ice cream shop? What's stopping you from metaphorically kayaking around South America? Think about it, folks.

Teresa: Ed Gillet in 1987 did not have a metaphorical ice cream shop. He paddled 2000 miles, *nonstop*... from Monterey, California to Hawaii. It took him 64 days, and he navigated by using a sextant and compass.

Travis: He probably did do some sleep kayaking, though.

Teresa: Probably did.

Travis: Over 64 days?

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: He wasn't paddling straight for 64 days. I bet he took some breaks and napped in there.

Teresa: Yes. Uh, he brought his own food with him, as would be necessary. But he ran out of food on day 60. Um, and everyone pretty much assumed that he was lost at sea, until he paddled up onto the shores of Maui on day 64!

Travis: Can I just say, there's a lot of ocean, there?

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Betwixt California and Hawaii. And having to, at some point, be like, "Well, time to nod off and get my eight hours," or whatever, while

sitting just in open ocean. I would be like, "And this is when the whale comes. This is when I get chomped."

Teresa: I don't think that you sleep for eight hours at a time on a kayak. I think it's more a couple hours at a time.

Travis: [simultaneously] Like, 12? Oh, okay.

Teresa: Um, and then—

Travis: I don't know, the boat rocks you to sleep. Mother Ocean, just gently.

Teresa: Ed and his kayak appeared only six days later on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson.

Travis: Sounds right.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Uh, yeah. So, those are some pretty cool kayaking stories.

Travis: You're a cool kayaking story.

Teresa: Aww, thanks. So, let's go over some tips and tricks!

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: That if you want to take your own recreational kayak out, I don't know, with some brewskis...

Travis: Here's a little life hack for you guys.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: If you ever decide to paddle your kayak from Monterey, California to Hawaii, make your kayak out of, like, bread? And then you can eat it if you run out of food.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: It has to be really—it has to be really stale bread, mind you—

Teresa: [simultaneously] Don't make a kayak out of bread.

Travis: —'cause you're gonna be on the water. But...

Teresa: Um, but, do make sure that you wear your safety gear. A life preserver must be worn at all times. And it's probably a good idea to wear a helmet, because if you do roll over, you don't want to, like you said, hit your head on the bottom.

Travis: Yeah. And a harpoon gun for big fish swimmin' at you.

Teresa: No. Um—

Travis: Trying to steal your kayak. Fish want nothing more than to steal your kayak, because that will bring them one step closer to being able to get up on land and attack us. So, prepare to defend yourself from a big fish that's trying to steal your kayak.

Teresa: Thank—thanks for that.

Travis: "[singing] The more you know!"

Teresa: There is a kayaking saying that one dresses for water, not for weather. Um, because, like I said, the propensity for the kayak to roll over, you probably will get wet. Um, so, you know, what if you're in a mountain stream and the water is just above freezing?

Travis: Hmm.

Teresa: You want to be dressed for that, not for the sunny day that you're navigating through. So that's why you'll often see kayakers in full wetsuits, even if it's a sunny day, right? Um, so—

Travis: And I assume when we say, like you said, dress for the weather.

Teresa: No, dress for—

Travis: No, the water, not the weather. It's not like, "Oh, the water's cold, so I'm gonna wear a bunch of sweaters."

Teresa: No...

Travis: You're gonna wear, like, wetsuits and stuff like that. Okay, great.

Teresa: Right, exactly. Um, know before you go, so read up on the place that you're gonna be planning to, you know—and be honest with yourself about your abilities. Right?

Travis: That's why I don't do it. [laughs]

Teresa: [laughs] Right. Uh—

Travis: That's the most brutally honest I can be about my abilities: they're at about zero.

Teresa: Here are some questions you might want to ask yourself. Is there a specific section of the river you can't kayak in? Are there any obstacles you should know about? Can you actually whitewater raft, or does it just sound fun? Right?

Travis: Yes, these are all good questions.

Teresa: So make sure that you understand what you are getting into before you go—oh, here's where she wrote it. I love this. You will to. Ka-brewing.

Travis: Ka-brewing! Oh, like drinking and kayaking.

Teresa: [simultaneously] Ka-brewing, drinking and kayaking. Ka-brewing.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Thanks, Alexx.

Travis: Also, be aware that heavy rainfall, or really rainfall, does impact, like, water levels, how fast the water's moving, all those kinds of things.

Teresa: Absolutely. And, because it is considered a watercraft, you probably will have to launch your boat at a boat ramp, okay? Um, which means there will likely be other boaters who want to launch as well, so make sure the that you stay in line.

Um, also, the boat ramp itself is not the place to prepare your kayak. Be prepared, and then get in line.

Travis: And take a running start!

Teresa: [laughs quietly]

Travis: Really get in there. Get some speed goin' right off the bat.

Teresa: I mean, you might.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: Once you launch, also make sure that you're ready to get out of the way, because people will be behind you, probably. And, you know, the car that brought you should drive off after that, obviously. Um, so, you know, keep things moving. Be efficient. Um, also—

Travis: Be efficient, not a fish.

Teresa: Not—yes.

[pause]

Travis: I don't trust fish.

Teresa: [through laughter] Oh, okay.

Travis: That's why I have this fish jail in my office that I keep 'em trapped in.

Teresa: Mmm.

Travis: They're all criminals. [laughs quietly]

Teresa: It's all—it's all making sense to me now. Um, make sure that you, you know, don't be too proud. Ask for help when you need it. Like, hopefully you won't be the only person out kayaking. You won't be alone for miles around. So ask for help if you need it. And, you know, everyone can keep each other safe that way, right? If you see someone struggling and you have more experience, offer them a hand, of course. You know, we don't want anybody to be, like, the recipient of a lecture or whatever. But, like, be a good neighbor, on land and at sea.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: There are also water buoys and markers that you should know of. Make sure that you read and abide by them. Think of them like road signs for the river, so don't ignore those things, right? Um, and if you are unsure, there's usually staff at a lake. Um, unless it's, like, a private property type thing, right? So you might need to talk to them about where you can launch your kayak and, you know, what the water conditions are, animal sightings, weather updates, all kinds of stuff, right?

Here's one. Um, don't yell or scream unless there's an emergency. For one, it upsets the wildlife, right? Two, it can make people think there's danger when there's none. And, it kind of is annoying, right? It ruins the—

Travis: Yeah, the kayaks don't like it.

Teresa: [laughs] It ruins the quiet contemplation of being on the water. Right?

Travis: Along those lines, we have mentioned, like, taking some beers out. Make sure you look and find out what the laws are regarding that, 'cause there's plenty of, like, State Park, National Park, and just general laws about

places where you're allowed to bring in alcohol. And one, you want to be safe, and two, it's a real bummer to show up with a bunch of booze that you brought and then be like, "Yeah, you gotta throw all that away."

Teresa: Yeah. Yeah. And you learn the hard way, you can't just take it back to your car.

Travis: I did.

Teresa: You gotta pour it out.

Travis: Yeah. Yeah. While the guy watches you, and a raccoon waits.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "I'm gonna eat that dirt later!"
"Oh, raccoon!"

Teresa: Before we leave, I'm going to quiz you on some boat sign language.

Travis: Okay?

Teresa: Um, so here—I'm going to put my fist on top of my head. What does this mean?

Travis: It means, "A bird just pooped on me."

Teresa: No! It means, "Are you okay," and "Yes." So you ask someone this question, and they answer the same way...

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Right? Um, and then if I go, like...

Travis: Now, that could be a problem, 'cause if it's the same symbol you could get stuck in a loop.

"Are *you* okay?"

"Yes. Are *you* okay?"

"Yes. Are *you* okay?"

Teresa: [laughs] I think that once you establish that you're both okay, you don't have to ask anymore. If I spread my arms out wide or raise my paddle horizontally, what do you think that means?

Travis: Uh... the water is shallow?

Teresa: Hm! You know, I can see how you would think that. But think of it—

Travis: Does it mean victory?

Teresa: Think of it like a slash. That means no, okay? No, or stop.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Um, and then if you use your hand or paddle to point in a direction...

Travis: "I'm going that way."

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: "I'm going that way, let's go that way. This way." Um, if you wave your hands or your paddle, or blow a whistle three times.

Travis: Uh, warning? Caution? Don't—like, watch out?

Teresa: Yes, but for me.

Travis: Emergency.

Teresa: "I need help," yes, yes, yes. Um, and if you need specifically a first aid kit, you can cross your arms in front of your chest or above your head.

Travis: Oh, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Mm-hmm. Um, here's one. If you raise your hands upward and close your fists, open, and out.

Travis: It means, "I'm being chased by a fish. Get outta here."

Teresa: No.

Travis: "Somebody bring a harpoon!"

Teresa: [holding back laughter] It means, "I lost my paddle."

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, that makes sense.

Teresa: Yeah, if you don't have the paddle to hold onto, you raise your arm up.

Travis: You're just, like, going, "I... ugh!" That's a very toddler-like move where it's like, "I need something! Where is it?!"

Teresa: [laughs] Yeah. Well, I mean, I think that it's important that you have that, so hopefully someone can help you find out. So—and there's other signals. Um, go ahead and before you take your trip, look those up and, you know, quiz your friends so that you guys can all talk to each other, and be safe, and have fun.

Travis: Alright, folks. Thank you so much for joining us, and thank you to our editor, Rachel, without whom we would not be able to make this show. Thank you to Alexx, our researcher, without whom we would not be able to

make this show. And thank you to you, for listening. We could make the show without you, but it would be like a kayak without a paddle.

Teresa: Aww.

Travis: We'd be lost! I guess you could paddle with your hands, but it's not as effective. Don't worry about it. Um, thank you to everybody who came out to Anaheim and Sacramento for the My Brother, My Brother, and Me and Adventure Zone shows. It was so fun.

Um, let's see. What else, Teresa? What am I forgetting?

Teresa: Well, we always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found.

Also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners! If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today.

Um, as always, we are taking topic submissions and questions, and if you have—if you specifically have questions about, like, "How to do," I love to do those. Send those in to shmannerscast@gmail.com, and say hi to Alexx, because she reads every single one.

Travis: And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week!

Teresa: No RSVP required.

Travis: You've been listening to Shmanners...

Teresa: Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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