# TED 一个最简单的方式戒掉坏习惯

题目： A simple way to break a bad habit

作者：Judson Brewer

When I was first learning to meditate, the instruction was to simply pay attention to my breath, and when my mind wandered, to bring it back. Sounded simple enough. Yet I'd sit on these silent retreats, sweating through T-shirts in the middle of winter. I'd take naps every chance I got because it was really hard work. Actually, it was exhausting. The instruction was simple enough but I was missing something really important.

当我第一次学习冥想的时候， 得到的指示就是， 简单地注意自己的呼吸， 而当我的心思开始游走了， 就把它拉回来。听起来很简单。 但当我在静坐冥想时， 即使在冬天也会让我汗流浃背。 我抓到机会就会小睡片刻， 因为真的很辛苦。 实际上，是精疲力竭了。 指示是很简单， 但我错过了很多重要之地方。

So why is it so hard to pay attention? Well, studies show that even when we're really trying to pay attention to something -- like maybe this talk -- at some point, about half of us will drift off into a daydream, or have this urge to check our Twitter feed.So what's going on here? It turns out that we're fighting one of the most evolutionarily-conserved learning processes currently known in science, one that's conserved back to the most basic nervous systems known to man.

那为什么专注会这么困难呢？ 根据研究指出， 就算是我们尝试着专注于一些事情 -- 就好像这个演讲 -- 到某个时间点， 我们当中会有一半的人， 都会恍惚进入神游状态， 或是会有一股冲动， 想去查看一下推特的内容。这到底是怎么回事呢？ 原来我们与之抗争的，是一种最近被科学界发现的 --「演化保守的学习过程」， 它会被保存在人类所知的最基本神经系统里面。

---

**meditate**
v.冥想

**sweat**
v.流汗

**exhausting**
adj.筋疲力尽的

**drift off into**
潜入

**evolutionarily-conserved**
演化保守的

This reward-based learning process is called positive and negative reinforcement, and basically goes like this. We see some food that looks good, our brain says, "Calories! ... Survival!" We eat the food, we taste it -- it tastes good. And especially with sugar, our bodies send a signal to our brain that says, "Remember what you're eating and where you found it." We lay down this context-dependent memory and learn to repeat the process next time. See food, eat food, feel good, repeat. Trigger, behavior, reward.

这类奖励为本的学习过程， 称之为正强化和负强化， 基本上是这样运行的。 我们看到了看起来好吃的食物， 我们的大脑会说： 「卡路里！...生存！」 然后我们把食物吃下去， 我们尝了味道-- 尝起來不錯。 尤其是有加糖的， 我们的身体就会向大脑发出讯息说， 「要记住你吃的是什么和在哪里找到的。」 我们种下了这「情境关连」的记忆， 且学懂了下次再重覆这个过程。 看到食物、 吃下食物、 感觉很好。 重覆。 触发、 行为、 奖励。

Simple, right? Well, after a while, our creative brains say, "You know what? You can use this for more than just remembering where food is. You know, next time you feel bad, why don't you try eating something good so you'll feel better?" We thank our brains for the great idea, try this and quickly learn that if we eat chocolate or ice cream when we're mad or sad, we feel better.

很简单， 对不对？ 然后过一阵子后， 我们富有创意的脑袋就会说： 「 你知道吗？ 你不只可以利用这个过程 来记住食物在哪里， 而且还可以在下一次你感觉糟糕时， 尝试吃一些好吃的食物， 来让你感觉好一点？ 」 我们要感谢自己的脑袋里 有这么好的点子， 试着做且学得快， 就是当我们生气或是伤心的时候， 如果我们吃下巧克力或雪糕， 我们的感觉就会好一点。

Same process, just a different trigger. Instead of this hunger signal coming from our stomach, this emotional signal -- feeling sad -- triggers that urge to eat.

同样的过程， 只是用不一样的触发方式 来代替原本我们胃里的饥饿讯息， 这种情感上的讯息--感到伤心-- 触发了想吃的冲动。

reinforcement
n.强化

context-dependent
情景关联

chocolate
n.巧克力

Maybe in our teenage years, we were a nerd at school, and we see those rebel kids outside smoking and we think, "Hey, I want to be cool." So we start smoking. The Marlboro Man wasn't a dork, and that was no accident. See cool, smoke to be cool, feel good. Repeat. Trigger, behavior, reward. And each time we do this, we learn to repeat the process and it becomes a habit. So later, feeling stressed out triggers that urge to smoke a cigarette or to eat something sweet.

也許在我們年輕的時候，曾经也是个书呆子，我们看到这些叛逆的小子 在外面抽烟，我们就在想，＂嘿！我也想要耍酷＂于是我们开始抽烟。所以万宝路的男人看起来不呆，这并不意外。看到别人耍酷，抽烟耍酷，感觉良好，重覆。触发、行为、奖励。每一次我们这样做，我们学会了去重覆这个过程，並养成了习惯。所以之後，感觉有压力的时候，就会触发欲望去抽烟 或是去吃一些甜的东西。

Now, with these same brain processes, we've gone from learning to survive to literally killing ourselves with these habits. Obesity and smoking are among the leading preventable causes of morbidity and mortality in the world.

这些相同的大脑过程，让我们经历了从学习到生存，到简直是用这些习惯 在残害着我们自己的过程。肥胖和抽烟 是全世界数一数二會引發 病殘及死亡的可预防疾病。

So back to my breath. What if instead of fighting our brains, or trying to force ourselves to pay attention, we instead tapped into this natural, reward-based learning process ... but added a twist? What if instead we just got really curious about what was happening in our momentary experience?

所以，回到我的呼吸。假设我们不要再跟脑袋去抗争，也不要再强逼自己去专注，而是借助这个天然的、以奖励为本的学习过程......然后稍微改变扭转一下？假如我们变得很好奇，想了解自己的瞬间体验 到底是怎样一回事?

| nerd | n.书呆子 |
| rebel | adj.叛逆的 |
| dork | n.呆子 |
| obesity | n.肥胖 |
| preventable | adj.可预防的 |
| morbidity | n.病态 |
| mortality | n.死亡率 |
| tap into | 利用 |

I'll give you an example. In my lab, we studied whether mindfulness training could help people quit smoking. Now, just like trying to force myself to pay attention to my breath, they could try to force themselves to quit smoking. And the majority of them had tried this before and failed -- on average, six times.

我给各位一个例子。 在我的实验室， 我们研究冥想的训练 是不是可以帮助人们戒掉抽烟。 其实，就像尝试着强迫自己 去专注于呼吸一样， 他们也可以尝试着去强迫自己戒烟。 他们大部份人之前都尝试过了， 但都失败-- 平均来说，尝试过六次。

Now, with mindfulness training, we dropped the bit about forcing and instead focused on being curious. In fact, we even told them to smoke. What? Yeah, we said, "Go ahead and smoke, just be really curious about what it's like when you do."

现在，用冥想的训练方法， 我们把强迫的那部份去掉， 取而代之的是专注于好奇。 事实上，我们甚至告诉他们去抽烟。 什么？是呀， 我们说，" 去抽烟就对了， 只是在抽烟的时候，真心的去好奇一下抽烟到底是怎么回事。 "

And what did they notice? Well here's an example from one of our smokers. She said, "Mindful smoking: smells like stinky cheese and tastes like chemicals, YUCK!" Now, she knew, cognitively that smoking was bad for her, that's why she joined our program. What she discovered just by being curiously aware when she smoked was that smoking tastes like shit.

结果他们觉察到了什么？ 让我们来看看其中的一位抽烟者怎么说。她说，「 专注地抽烟： 烟的味道闻起来就像发臭的奶酪， 尝起来则像化学制品， 超恶心！」 其实在认知上，她知道，抽烟会危害她，正因如此，她参加我们的计划。 她发现，在抽烟的时候， 只要好奇地去体会， 就会察觉到烟的味道像大便。

mindfulness
n.冥想

stinky
adj.发臭的

chemicals
n.化学品

Now, she moved from knowledge to wisdom. She moved from knowing in her head that smoking was bad for her to knowing it in her bones, and the spell of smoking was broken. She started to become disenchanted with her behavior.

现在，她从知识升华到智慧。 她从脑袋里开始了解到骨子里去， 明白了抽烟对她有害， 这时抽烟的魔咒就会被破解。 她开始对她的行为觉悟。

disenchanted
v.醒悟

Now, the prefrontal cortex, that youngest part of our brain from an evolutionary perspective, it understands on an intellectual level that we shouldn't smoke. And it tries its hardest to help us change our behavior, to help us stop smoking, to help us stop eating that second, that third, that fourth cookie. We call this cognitive control. We're using cognition to control our behavior. Unfortunately, this is also the first part of our brain that goes offline when we get stressed out, which isn't that helpful.

其实，前额叶皮质， 从进化的角度来看， 那是我们大脑最年轻的部份， 它明白，理智上我们不应该抽烟。 然后它尝试尽最大的努力，去帮助我们改变自己的行为、 帮助我们戒烟、 帮助我们戒掉吃第二块、 第三块、第四块曲奇饼。 我们称之为「认知控制」。 我们用认知去控制自己的行为。 很不幸的是， 当我们过度劳累时， 这也是我们脑袋里， 率先离线的部份， 所以不太能够帮得上忙。

prefrontal cortex
前额叶

perspective
n.角度

cognitive control
认知控制

offline
adj.脱机的

Now, we can all relate to this in our own experience. We're much more likely to do things like yell at our spouse or kids when we're stressed out or tired, even though we know it's not going to be helpful. We just can't help ourselves.

其实我们大家都可以找到 自己类似的经验。 当我们压力过大或是很劳累时， 我们有很大的可能， 会向自己的伴侣或小孩吼叫， 虽然我们知道， 这样的吼叫并没有帮助。 只是我们控制不了自己。

When the prefrontal cortex goes offline, we fall back into our old habits, which is why this disenchantment is so important. Seeing what we get from our habits helps us understand them at a deeper level -- to know it in our bones so we don't have to force ourselves to hold back or restrain ourselves from behavior. We're just less interested in doing it in the first place.

在前额叶皮质处于离线状态时， 我们会坠落回老习惯， 这是为什么觉悟是这么的重要。 明白我们如何养成习惯 可以帮助我们从更深的层次去了解它们-- 让我们从骨子里去明白， 那我们就不需要再强逼自己去憋住 或是去遏止自己的行为。 我们只是在一开始的时候 没兴趣去做这件事。

And this is what mindfulness is all about: Seeing really clearly what we get when we get caught up in our behaviors, becoming disenchanted on a visceral level and from this disenchanted stance, naturally letting go.

这就是冥想： 当我们被自己的行为绊住的时候， 要看清楚我们得到的是什么， 发自内心层次的觉悟， 在觉悟的状态下， 自然地 停止这种行为。

This isn't to say that, poof, magically we quit smoking. But over time, as we learn to see more and more clearly the results of our actions, we let go of old habits and form new ones.

這並不是，神奇的 " 噗 "的一声， 我们就戒烟了。 而是日积月累， 当我们学会 看得愈来愈清楚 我们行为所导致的结果， 我们就会摒除掉老习惯， 而养成了新的习惯。

get caught up
陷入

disenchanted
v.醒悟

visceral
adj.出自内心的

The paradox here is that mindfulness is just about being really interested in getting close and personal with what's actually happening in our bodies and minds from moment to moment. This willingness to turn toward our experience rather than trying to make unpleasant cravings go away as quickly as possible. And this willingness to turn toward our experience is supported by curiosity, which is naturally rewarding.

吊诡的是， 冥想是，打从内心的感到有兴趣， 每时每刻地去仔细体会 到底我们的身体和心智，发生了什么事。 将这种意愿转换成我们的体验 而不是尝试尽快地 把不好的瘾念去除。 而将我们的意愿转换成体验 是源自好奇， 那是先天性的奖励。

What does curiosity feel like? It feels good. And what happens when we get curious? We start to notice that cravings are simply made up of body sensations -- oh, there's tightness, there's tension, there's restlessness -- and that these body sensations come and go. These are bite-size pieces of experiences that we can manage from moment to moment rather than getting clobbered by this huge, scary craving that we choke on.

好奇的感觉是怎样的呢？ 感觉很好。 我们感到好奇的时候会发生什么事情呢？ 我们会开始察觉到，瘾念其实单就是 从身体的感官所造成 -- 噢，那里很紧张，那边有压力 那边烦躁不安-- 这些身体的感觉来来去去。 这些都是我们时时刻刻 都可以处理好的小体验， 而不是被这巨大可怕的 瘾念所击倒。

In other words, when we get curious, we step out of our old, fear-based, reactive habit patterns, and we step into being. We become this inner scientist where we're eagerly awaiting that next data point.

换句话说，当我们感到好奇时， 我们就走出旧有的、恐惧为本的、回应式的习惯模式， 我们从而踏进了当下。 我们成为了热切地期待着下一个数据点的 内心科学家。

paradox
n.悖论

craving
n.瘾，渴望

body sensation
身体感官

clobber
v.击败

Now, this might sound too simplistic to affect behavior. But in one study, we found that mindfulness training was twice as good as gold standard therapy at helping people quit smoking. So it actually works.

这听起来，好像没那容易 可以影响行为。 但在一份研究报告里面，我们发现冥想的训练， 在帮助人们戒烟的这事情上， 比黄金标准治疗法好 2 倍 所以冥想真的有效。

And when we studied the brains of experienced meditators, we found that parts of a neural network of self-referential processing called the default mode network were at play. Now, one current hypothesis is that a region of this network, called the posterior cingulate cortex, is activated not necessarily by craving itself but when we get caught up in it, when we get sucked in, and it takes us for a ride.

当我们研究资深冥想者的大脑时， 我们发现了神经网络里面 「自我指认流程」的部分 被称为「预设模式的网络」 正在产生引响。 目前有一个关于这个 网络所在区域的假设， 称为「后扣带回皮质」， 会因为瘾念本身而引发不必要的启动， 但当我们被它牵绊住， 当我们被吸进去的时候， 它就会欺骗我们。

In contrast, when we let go -- step out of the process just by being curiously aware of what's happening -- this same brain region quiets down.

相反来说，如果我们不去有意识地-- 从里走出来， 只是单纯的好奇到底发生什么事情-- 同一区域的大脑就会安静下来。

Now we're testing app and online-based mindfulness training programs that target these core mechanisms and, ironically, use the same technology that's driving us to distraction to help us step out of our unhealthy habit patterns of smoking, of stress eating and other addictive behaviors.

现在我们在测试手机应用程式和 以网路为基础的冥想训练课程， 目标就是这些核心机制， 而讽刺的是，竟是使用 同一种也会让我们分心的科技 来帮助我们脱离自己不健康的习惯模式， 像是吸烟、因压力而狂吃 和其他上瘾的行为。

---

simplistic
adj.简单的

therapy
n.治疗

self-referential
自我指涉的

default
v.预设，默认

posterior cingulate cortex
后扣带回皮质

distraction
n.分心

Now, remember that bit about context-dependent memory? We can deliver these tools to peoples' fingertips in the contexts that matter most. So we can help them tap into their inherent capacity to be curiously aware right when that urge to smoke or stress eat or whatever arises.

现在，还记得刚才提过的情境记忆吗？ 我们可以把这些最重要的 内容工具传递到人们的指尖。 所以我们可以帮助他们 在渴望抽烟、遇压力乱吃或 任何不好的欲望浮现的时候， 利用他们的内心能力 去好奇地意识正确，

So if you don't smoke or stress eat, maybe the next time you feel this urge to check your email when you're bored, or you're trying to distract yourself from work, or maybe to compulsively respond to that text message when you're driving, see if you can tap into this natural capacity, just be curiously aware of what's happening in your body and mind in that moment. It will just be another chance to perpetuate one of our endless and exhaustive habit loops ... or step out of it.

所以如果你不抽烟、 也没有因为压力而狂吃， 也許在下一次你无聊的时候 有股衝動想去检查电邮， 或是你想在工作时间透一下气， 又或在开车时， 有不得不回覆讯息的义务， 看看你是不是可以 借助这先天的能力， 就单纯的好奇 到底那一刻，你的身体和心智 在发生什么事。 这可能提供了一个机会 让你持续保有这个永无止境 和消耗性的恶性循环…… 或是摆脱掉它。

Instead of see text message, compulsively text back, feel a little bit better -- notice the urge, get curious, feel the joy of letting go and repeat.

看见讯息时，不要再--不得不的回覆 反而应该是有蛮好的感觉-- 察觉到冲动， 感到好奇， 感受一下不去做它的快感， 然后重覆。

fingertips
n.指尖

compulsively
adv.强制地

exhaustive
adj.详尽的