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Leaders

Aug 2nd 2022 | 902words | ★★★★★ >

Strategic confusion

Nancy Pelosi's trip to Taiwan highlights America's incoherent strategy

The Biden administration's policy is a mess



Press Association

One way to view Nancy Pelosi's trip to Taiwan is as a bold assertion of principle. China has taken to bullying countries that maintain even the most innocent ties with the island, which it claims. Lithuania, population 2.6m, has felt China's wrath for simply allowing Taiwan to open an office with an official-sounding name in Vilnius, its capital. Ms Pelosi, the speaker of America's House of Representatives, has been threatened, too. China says its army "will not sit idly by" if she visits Taiwan—something she has every right to do, and that Newt Gingrich, her predecessor as speaker, did in 1997. Perhaps her trip will inspire others to

stand up to the bully.

Another view, though, is that the trip is a symptom of America's incoherent approach to China—the country's single most important opponent in the long run. If so, a trip designed to convey strength risks instead showing up the Biden administration's confusion and lack of purpose.

One problem is Ms Pelosi's timing. To be sure, there are moments when America must confront China to make clear that it will assert its interests, press its rights and defend its values. But such moments are often fraught with the risk of escalation. America should choose them carefully.

This is a sensitive period for China's leader, Xi Jinping, who faces big domestic challenges while preparing for a Communist Party congress at which he is expected to secure a third five-year term as the party's leader, violating recent norms. Mr Xi has nurtured an aggressive form of nationalism and linked "reunification" with Taiwan to his goal of "national rejuvenation". Now is a dangerous time to test his resolve just for the sake of it.

Another problem is Ms Pelosi's apparent lack of co-ordination with Joe Biden. When asked about her plans, the president cited military officials who thought the trip was "not a good idea right now". Once it was leaked, he faced only bad options: bless Ms Pelosi's travels and risk a confrontation with China; or prevent her from going, caving in to Chinese threats (and opening himself up to Republican criticism). True, Congress is a separate branch from the executive, but Taiwan policy is too important for turf wars. In the end Ms Pelosi has made Mr Biden look irresolute and lacking in authority.

Worst, Ms Pelosi's trip risks exposing how unsure the administration is of its Taiwan policy. If, heaven forbid, the visit escalates into an international security crisis, the fault will lie with China. But the situation will also test Mr Biden and his team, who are already dealing with the war in Ukraine. Are they prepared?

Mr Biden has vowed more than once to defend Taiwan from invasion, disregarding a long-

held position of “strategic ambiguity” under which past presidents purposely avoided definite commitments. Some in Washington support this new clarity, especially as China grows more confident—and more capable of defeating America in a fight over Taiwan. But after each promise the president’s aides walk it back, turning strategic ambiguity into strategic confusion.

America is right to want to defend Taiwan from invasion. The country is a pro-Western democracy of 24m people that plays an important role in the global economy, producing the world’s finest computer chips. It is also a pillar of the American-led order in the region. But declaring that intention does little to deter China, which already assumes America would protect the island. If anything, the drawing of a clear line tells Mr Xi how far he can go, encouraging the “grey zone” tactics China uses to harass Taiwan. It has, for example, flown ever-larger numbers of warplanes near Taiwanese airspace several times this year. Rather than grandstanding, Mr Biden should focus on preventing an invasion by improving Taiwan’s military capability.

This starts by asking his generals to have a frank discussion with their Taiwanese counterparts. Taiwan needs to do more to combat corruption and waste in its armed forces, and to improve training and recruitment. Its top brass have been loth to give up some of their expensive kit and instead embrace a “porcupine” strategy, by which Taiwan would use smaller, more mobile and concealable weapons to wage asymmetric war.

America should make it clear that it is willing to help. It could, for example, upgrade its training mission in Taiwan, offer it Israel-style military aid to buy American weapons, and create financial incentives for it to choose more asymmetric options. The next time America conducts exercises with its other Asian allies it should invite Taiwan to observe (or join). They should all follow America and Japan in developing plans for the next big crisis.

That need not come this week. The Biden administration rightly notes that Ms Pelosi’s trip does nothing to change the status quo. Ms Pelosi should try to do some good while she is there, by warning against both China forcefully occupying Taiwan and Taiwan embracing independence. At the same time, she should voice energetic support for her Taiwanese

hosts.

China will respond, possibly with military action that could include sending warplanes over Taiwan or even firing missiles into waters off the island, as well as economic and diplomatic measures to isolate it further. The Chinese response could play out over weeks and months, if not years. Over that time, the real test of America's commitment will not be headline-grabbing visits but whether it helps Taiwan become more resilient. ■

Opinion

31 Jul 2022 | 524 words | ★★☆☆☆ >

Fishing: marine protection should mean what it says

By allowing destructive dredging and bottom-trawling, ministers are undermining wider efforts to protect the oceans



A protest in Glasgow against 'highly destructive dredging or bottom-trawling equipment – which Greenpeace likens to “bulldozing” the seabed’.

Damage to the world’s oceans generally takes place out of sight, meaning it can be even harder to build momentum behind policymaking than it is to tackle other forms of harm to wildlife. But shocking data gathered by marine conservation NGOs, revealing that 90% of Britain’s marine protected areas (MPAs) are still being fished using the most destructive methods, should serve as a wake-up call. The UK government is officially signed up to a target of protecting 30% of our territorial waters by 2030. So far, action is lagging a long way behind words.

With a desperately needed global oceans treaty due to be negotiated in August , the UK government should live up to its pledges. If nations are unwilling to protect the marine environment in their own waters, the chance of reaching agreement over international ones could slip away. The level of protection provided by the designation of MPAs has been exposed as too minimal to be meaningful. Last year, just 10% were not fished using highly destructive dredging or bottom-trawling equipment – which Greenpeace likens to “bulldozing” the seabed.

Awareness of the importance of the oceans in regulating the climate, by storing what is known as blue carbon, as well as the urgency of managing the world’s fisheries sustainably, has risen sharply. But so has the scale of destructive industrial fishing, and the threat posed by deep-sea mining. The UK has presented itself as a model to follow on marine conservation – as it was on climate change laws. Protected zones are meant to aid species and ecosystem recovery. In some cases, the creation of off-limits nursery areas has been shown to help fishers too. A recent book by the marine biologist Fiona Gell explains how the Isle of Man government worked with the local fishing industry in developing its marine conservation plans.

The 2020 Fisheries Act gave UK ministers powers to ban bottom-trawling in protected areas. But so far bans have been introduced in only four – a minuscule proportion of the total. The creation of five highly protected areas – effectively no-take zones where all fishing is banned – was recently mooted for sites including one off the coast of Lindisfarne in Northumberland and another in the Channel. Separately, Scotland is now committed to fully or highly protected areas across 10% of its waters. But the regulation of the existing protected areas must also be toughened up.

Already, the EU has stolen a march on the UK with a vote in its parliament to ban a technique known as “fly shooting”, which uses lead-weighted ropes to capture entire shoals of fish, from French waters in the Channel – a vote that must now be considered by the European Commission and member states. Notably, this was at the instigation of small-scale fishers

who struggle to compete with industrial factory ships. Enforcement is essential, as well as regulation. Rules are no use if there is no means of stopping them from being broken. NGOs continue to do essential work in exposing what is going on. Governments urgently need to catch up. An end to dredging licences in the UK's existing protected areas is not a big ask. ■



Family

Aug 4th 2022 | 872 words | ★★☆☆☆ >

How to Embrace Doing Nothing

Absolute **idleness** is both harder and more rewarding than it seems.

n. 闲散



- 1 In the midst of financial news that seems to get **grimmer** by the day, one **story** of a man trying to escape **caught my eye**. **Andrew Formica**, the 51-year-old CEO of a \$68 billion investment firm, abruptly quit his job. He did not have another job waiting—or anything else, it seems. When **pressed** about his plans, he said, “I just want to go sit at the beach and do nothing.”
 a. 令人不快的
 n. (新闻) 报道
 引起某人注意
 木星基金管理公司的CEO
 v. 催促，敦促
- 2 Easy, right? Not for a lot of us, it isn't. Besides the fact that you need to have a good deal of financial security to quit working, “it is **awfully** hard work doing nothing,” as **Algernon** said in Oscar Wilde's **The Importance of Being Earnest**. I can **relate to** this. I work long hours and
 阿尔杰农
 不可儿戏
 ad. 非常，极其
 能够理解并同情；了解；体恤

- have sometimes planned to go away and do nothing just for a week or two. But when I try, I find I am **utterly** incompetent: Idle **chitchat** drives me crazy; I get the **jimmy legs** 30 minutes **into** a movie; sitting on a beach is a form of torture. Whenever I make an effort to rest, my mind always wanders back to the work I am **fleeing**.
- 3 As difficult as it may be, Formica has the right idea. **For the sake of** happiness, strivers and **hard-driving** work machines of any income level need to learn to stop. If you are in this category, nothing should be **high** on your to-do list.
- 4 Aristotle defined work as useful activity. Recreation, in his view, was something we did merely to take a break from work—so we could get back to work afterward. Leisure, for him, was different still: **an end in itself**, the **pinnacle** of human life—almost **divine**. The 20th-century philosopher Josef Pieper agreed, calling leisure the “basis of culture.”
- 5 For many years, leisure was thought to be the **golden** promise of prosperity. The economist **John Maynard Keynes** predicted in 1930 that his grandchildren would be able to work about three hours a day. For Keynes, hard work was not an end in itself, but a means to something more enjoyable: peace and relaxation, **free from worldly cares**. His prediction assumes that leisure comes naturally, without practice, effort, or experience. But as I can **attest**, this assumption fails for many people. Perhaps that’s why Keynes conceded that despite the world’s growing prosperity, “there is no country and no people ... who can look forward to the age of leisure and of abundance without a dread. For we have been trained too long to strive and not to enjoy.”
- 6 Even when, in 2020, many of us were **handed** a golden opportunity to decrease the number of hours we spend working or commuting, most of us didn’t take it. In fact, among **knowledge workers**, the average workday increased by 48.5 minutes during the early months of the pandemic. For me, the increase didn’t just come from **repurposing** my commute: I found my work **seeping** into my evenings and weekends, like **radon** gas. When my home became my office, the boundaries separating my job from my life **evaporated**, and I could not escape from work. I wanted more leisure, and it was right in front of me **for the**

taking, but it still felt weirdly inaccessible.

for the taking: 供人(自由)拿取

- 7 Part of the reason many people resist leisure, no doubt, is that we have been taught to monetize our time. As Americans have heard throughout our lives, time is money. We may work to have leisure time, but actually spending that earned time feels like forgoing wages. No wonder we're so tempted to turn back to work: We are simultaneously Bob Cratchit and Ebenezer Scrooge.

v. 使货币化

v. 弃绝, 放弃

埃比尼泽·斯克鲁奇

鲍勃·克莱切特

- 8 Choosing leisure over work, even when you've already worked plenty, might make you feel guilty. In 1932, the philosopher Bertrand Russell, a notorious workaholic, described "a conscience which has kept me working hard." He acknowledged that this conscience was faulty, however, and proposed a campaign "to induce good young men to do nothing." (There was no evidence that he ever followed this campaign himself; nor, to my knowledge, did anyone else.)

prep. 优先于

n. 工作狂

据我所知

- 9 If you're not too busy feeling guilty, leisure might leave you downright bored. Our brain chemistry is tuned for constant entertainment, and as a result, idleness is extremely uncomfortable. In a 2014 study, researchers left people in a room alone for six to 15 minutes with nothing to do and found that the participants turned to almost any available activity, including administering painful electric shocks to themselves. Even pain—even, gasp, Twitter—is better than being alone with your thoughts.

ad. 完全地

v. 调整, 使协调, 使适合

v. 给与, 施用(药物等)

n. 深呼吸, 喘息

- 10 Despite the difficulties, learning to do nothing is good for us. Letting the mind roam free during unstructured and undemanding tasks can make us better at creative problem-solving. Unconscious thought during idleness can produce ideas that are more original: Descartes reportedly invented his revolutionary coordinate system in bed, watching a fly on the ceiling; Einstein formulated his general theory of relativity while daydreaming. Being a little bored might also refresh us: A researcher writing in *Frontiers in Psychology* in 2014 argued that boredom can induce us to see our ordinary activities as meaningful and significant. And although no studies specifically show this, I strongly suspect that doing nothing, if we can do it well, makes us happier too. ■

v. 漫游, 漫步

a. 不费神的; 不费力的

笛卡尔

a. 首创的; 独创的

n. 坐标



Britain

Jul 27th 2022 | 542 words | ★★☆☆☆ >

Rings cycle

The legacy of the London Olympics

A lack of cheap housing but a boost for a poor part of the capital



Ten years ago, the London Olympics kicked off in style. David Beckham piloted a speedboat down the Thames, Paul McCartney sang “Hey Jude” and the queen appeared to parachute into the stadium with James Bond. The opening ceremony, and the sport that followed, created lots of happy memories. But what legacy did the games leave for Stratford, the deprived bit of east London in which they were held?

Regeneration was central to London’s bid to host the games, approved in 2005. The city would buy up former industrial land that lined the waterways in the Lower Lea valley, and

build a 560-acre Olympic park on it. After the games the stadium, aquatic centre, velodrome and indoor sports centre would be repurposed for permanent use. Converted athletes' quarters and other new construction would create lots of housing, with the aim that half of it would be affordable via methods such as social housing or shared-ownership schemes. London's games would, the bid claimed, be a "model of social inclusion". That hasn't quite come to pass.

Boris Johnson, mayor of London between 2008 and 2016, lowered the affordable-housing targets and ditched plans for continental-style apartments in favour of Georgian-style townhouses that made less efficient use of space. Since 2012 the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), a public agency within the mayor's office, has had the job of implementing plans for the park. On the land for which the LLDC has planning permission, just 22% of the housing completed since 2014 is affordable accommodation, according to an analysis by the London Assembly in 2021. In 2018 Sadiq Khan, Mr Johnson's successor, recommitted to the 50% target for future developments.

The area has been more successful at luring young professionals. Landscaped marshland winds between the buildings that once made up the athletes' village; a health-food restaurant doles out smoothies. The park extends into four boroughs: Newham, Waltham Forest, Hackney and Tower Hamlets. House prices in all of them have grown faster than the average for the capital: in Newham, which has the most overlap with the park, average house prices have risen from 51% of the London figure in 2012 to 79% today.

Businesses have also moved in. The former Olympic press centre is now a technology and innovation campus. The LLDC has secured tenants including the BBC, University College London and the V&A museum for a future culture and education quarter. Just outside the park a half-built business district and the Westfield shopping centre—both developed privately but in tandem with Olympic plans—have high occupancy rates.

People are visiting the park, too. Before the pandemic about 6m people visited every year; an analysis in 2017 found that 19% of them lived within 2.5 miles of it. The Olympic stadium,

now known as the London Stadium and leased to West Ham United football club, is a sorrier story. Before the pandemic, it was racking up a £29m (\$35m) annual deficit. The LLDC now wants to reduce the stadium's annual losses to £8m-10m by selling naming rights and pruning costs, but it will continue to be a drain on taxpayers. The games fell short on their promises for affordable housing but did boost a neglected corner of the capital. That merits a podium place, but not gold. ■



Culture

Jul 27th 2022 | 759 words | ★★☆☆☆

Out of house and home

(be) out of : 没有, 缺少

Amid a housing crisis, Chinese readers **turn** **to** a novel of 1937

turn to sth./sb.: 求助于, 求教于

骆驼祥子

Some **boycotting mortgage** payments on unfinished apartments are citing “**Rickshaw**

v. 抵制, 排斥, 拒绝参加 n. 抵押贷款, 按揭

Boy”

- 1 Published in 1937, “Rickshaw Boy” tells the story of Xiangzi, a young man trying to **eke out** **a living** in Beijing. At the beginning of the novel, he is kind and determined. He has no money and no real **prospects**, but reckons that with hard work he will be able to buy a **rickshaw** and build a life for himself. The cart would “guarantee his freedom and independence”, Xiangzi thinks. “Owning a rickshaw meant never having to suffer **mistreatment** or **do the bidding** of people who **rented them out**.” **rent** sth. (out): 出租(房屋、房间等)
do somebody's bidding: 服从某人的要求(命令)
- eke out a living/existence**: 勉强度日
n. 将来成功的机会, 前途
n. 人力车, 黄包车
n. (尤指身体上的)虐待

- 2 By the end of the tale, he is **a changed person**. Each time he has bought—or **come close to buying**—a rickshaw, his dream has been taken from him. His loved ones have died. He has become selfish and cruel. Lao She, the author, intended the novel to be a **critique** of **individualism**; the character's fate might not have been so **dire**, the story suggests, had he organised with other rickshaw-pullers and worked as part of a **collective**. Yet “Rickshaw Boy” seemed to warn readers that you cannot prosper in an unjust society, no matter how hard you **toil**.
- a. 有很大变化的人** **come close to doing sth.: 差点(做某事)**
n. 个人主义 **a. 极其严重的, 可怕的**
n. 评论, 评论文章 **n. 企业集团, 合作农场**
v. 长时间地苦干
- 3 Much has changed since the 1930s. China's GDP has **ballooned**. **Life expectancy** has more than doubled (it was a **paltry** 35 years when Lao wrote the book). In 1949, after a bloody **civil war**, the Communist Party seized power. Yet this month the rickshaw boy returned to the country's consciousness, **invoke**d by angry homeowners. They had studied “Rickshaw Boy” in school to understand how weak China was in a **bygone** era; it has also been **adapted** into a film and an opera (pictured). Now people saw themselves in the story.
- v. 突然增加, 激增** **预期寿命; 预计存在的期限**
a. 太少的, 微不足道的
内战 **v. 提及, 援引**
a. 过去的, 以往的, 过时的 **v. 改编, 改写**
- 4 Tens of thousands of homeowners in China are refusing to pay mortgages on unfinished apartments. Many buy homes before they are built, often **ploughing** their life savings **into** the initial **down-payment**, but developer **defaults** and bankruptcies have **stalled** construction across the country, leading buyers to fear their homes will never be finished. They see no reason to keep paying for homes they cannot live in; some struggle to pay back mortgage loans **on top of** existing rent. “If I pay one yuan for a bottle of water and the store does not give it to me, I can **report** it to the police. If I pay a developer 1.5m yuan for a home and they refuse to build it for me, nothing happens to them,” one furious buyer said. “If I go on the streets I’m called a **rioter**.”
- plough sth. into sth.: 把(大批资金)投入**
n. (分期付款的)首付 **n. 债务违约, 拖欠** **v. 使暂停; 暂停**
除...之外 **v. 举报(罪案)**
n. 暴徒, 暴民
- 5 In Zhengzhou, a city in central China, a group of homebuyers concluded their declaration of a mortgage boycott with a quote from “Rickshaw Boy”. (“Xiangzi’s money was stolen, his rickshaw was **smashed**, he himself was beaten. He was not even allowed to **cry out** in pain, even a **whimper** was a mistake.”) They added that there are now “tens of thousands of rickshaw boys” in China: “We must **throw off** our chains, and let those who steal our money
- v. 破碎, 粉碎** **(由于害怕、震惊等而)大声喊叫**
n. 抽泣, 呜咽声
摆脱(束缚)

and smash our rickshaws know that the rickshaw boy is no longer a sheep to be **slaughtered**.”
v. 屠宰(动物)
 Discussions on social media often contained references to the novel. Between July 11th and July 13th, daily Weibo searches for “Rickshaw Boy” **rocketed** from under 500,000 to nearly 5m. The novel entered Weibo’s “newly popular” list of books.
v. 迅速上升, 猛涨

- 6 A young couple in Zhengzhou post videos of their experience of buying a home to more than 200,000 followers on Douyin (the **sister** app of TikTok in China). Each month they spend 70% of their salaries paying off a loan on an incomplete apartment on the 22nd floor of a 13-storey building. Last week the couple added—then removed—“modern-day rickshaw boy” to their **channel** description. Still **up**, however, is a 30-second clip showing the cover of the novel. “When I first read the book I did not understand it”, the **caption** says. “When I read it now, I am in it.”
- a. 同类型的, 同一批的
倒装句: 1. 避免主语过长, 头重脚轻; 2. 为了突出强调主语
n. (社媒上的)账号, 频道 a. 在运行
n. 说明文字; 字幕

- 7 Home ownership has long been **extolled** as part of the “Chinese dream” **and so**, perhaps unsurprisingly, the government is censoring social-media posts about the boycotts. The party might reject comparisons between the 1930s and the present day, too, given that it **stakes much of its claim to** legitimacy on having “stood up” from imperial domination. True, stake (out) a claim to sth.: 公开声明(对..)拥有所有权 the current protesters are not **penniless** orphans. But “Rickshaw Boy” captures the frustration of **thwarted** ambition and the tragedy of living in a society that does not care for its citizens. At the end of the novel, Xiangzi “couldn’t help wondering **what good it did** to try so hard.” ■
- v. 赞美, 颂扬 因此
a. 一文不名的, 一贫如洗的
v. 阻挠, 阻碍 do good: (对某人)有好处, 有用处



Evolution

AUG 1, 2022 | 612 words | ★★☆☆☆ >

Pandas weren't always bamboo fiends

n. 狂热者

Bamboo bears had a different plant-based diet before they moved from Europe to China.

素食

Reconstruction of *Agriarctos nikolovi* from Bulgaria. Velizar Simeonovski, Chicago

- 1 Pandas love bamboo, but they might not have acquired a taste for this bitter, nutty-flavored plant until recently. Paleontologists discovered the fact while studying a newly described relative to giant pandas, named *Agriarctos nikolovi*, which hung out in Europe a few million years ago and sported a smaller set of teeth than their modern family. The findings, published on July 31 in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, suggest the panda species was likely the last to live in Europe.

古生物学家在研究一种新的大熊猫近亲时揭露了这一事实，这一熊猫近亲被称作“*Agriarctos nikolovi*”，几百万年前曾在欧洲出没，牙齿比现在熊猫家族的小。

- 2 The fossil teeth were first **unearthed** in the late 1970s in northwestern Bulgaria in coal **deposits** that **blackened** the **chomper**s. Because **the Bulgarian National Museum of National History** did not clearly list the **specimens** in their catalog of fossilized treasures, they remained untouched in storage until an accidental discovery by staff 40 years later.
 v. 发掘, 掘出, 找到 保加利亚历史博物馆
 n. 矿床, 沉积层 v. 把...变黑 n. 牙齿
- 3 “They had only one label written vaguely by hand,” Nikolai Spassov, a paleontologist and museum professor at Sofia University in California, explained in a **press release**. “It took me many years to figure out what the **locality** was and what its age was. Then it also took me a long time to realize that this was an unknown fossil giant panda.”
 新闻稿
 n. 地区
- 4 The upper **canine** and upper **molar** of the dental sample **trace back to** a species closely related to today’s giant pandas, which only live in southwest China. The **ursids** **roamed** the forested and **swampy** areas of Europe nearly 6 million years ago in the **Miocene epoch**. *A. nikolovi* had smaller teeth than present-day pandas, but bigger ones than other panda species of that time period. The study authors **hypothesize** that through evolution, the mammals’ canines and molars likely grew to protect them from predators. Bigger teeth also require a bigger mouth, suggesting these pandas were similar in size or just slightly smaller to present-day pandas.
 n. 犬齿 n. 幼齿 追溯, 追查
 n. 熊科动物 v. 闲逛, 漫步
 a. 沼泽的; 湿软的 a. (与)中新世(有关)的 n. 时代, 纪元
 v. 假设, 假定
- 5 While this isn’t the first **prehistoric** panda found in Europe, the majority of the other specimens **date back to** around 10 million years ago. **Given** that the fossilized teeth at the Bulgarian National Museum of National History are more recent, it’s probable they belonged to the last panda species on the European continent. Though they are closely related, *A. nikolovi* is more of a **cousin** than a direct descendent of giant pandas. Previous research suggests the oldest direct descendent of the giant panda is a species found in Spain called the ***Kretzoiarctos beatrix***. It existed at least 11.6 million years ago.
 a. 史前的
 自...存在至今, 追溯到...年代 prep. 考虑到, 鉴于
 n. 同源物, 同类物
 克莱特佐伊熊
- 6 **Of further note**, *A. nikolovi* was vegetarian, though bamboo was probably not part of its diet. Today’s giant pandas have strong jaws and large, flat teeth to help **grind up** the leaves, **stem**, and **stalks** of the **sturdy** plant. Bamboo makes up 99 percent of a giant panda’s diet: Adults can eat 26 to 83 pounds of it every day. But *A. nikolovi*’s smaller teeth indicate it probably
 of note: 重要的, 引人注目的 n. 茎, 梗或柄
 磨碎, 碾碎, 把...磨成粉
 n. 茎梗柄 a. (物件)坚实的, 结实的

did not have the strength to chew and **mash up** the plant's tough and **inedible** stalks, and **opted for** softer **greens** for nourishment instead.

a. 不能吃的
把(某物, 尤指已煮熟的食物)捣成泥状, 捣烂
选择, 挑选
n. 绿色蔬菜

- 7 “The likely competition with other species, especially **carnivores** and presumably other bears, explains the closer **food specialization** of [modern] giant pandas to vegetable food in humid forest conditions,” Spassov said in the press release.
- 8 So how did *A. nikolovi* go extinct? Climate change, and specifically the drying up of the **Mediterranean basin**, might have affected the entire ecosystem of plants the mammals **thrived on**. While this idea is still under investigation, paleontologists speculate that similar environmental conditions could have propelled other closely related panda species like *Kretzoiarctos beatrix* to move out of Europe and into Asia 8 million years ago. From there, ancient pandas would evolve into the **Ailuropoda**, making up the playful bamboo lovers we know today. ■
- 食物专门化
n. 食肉动物
地中海盆地
兴旺, 欣欣向荣
大熊猫的学名

TIME

扫码听音频



新英文课堂



Health

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How **Ambient** Stress May Be Hurting Your Mental Health

a. 周围环境的；周围的

Feeling Off? It Could Be 'Ambient' Stress

感到不舒服



- 1 Americans' mental health **tanked** during the first year of the pandemic. More than 36% of U.S. adults experienced symptoms of anxiety or depression in August 2020, according to the U.S. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**. By January 2021, the number was above 40%.
v. 表现得很糟糕
美国疾病控制与预防中心
- 2 It's not hard to see why. A novel and scary virus was spreading without vaccines to slow it.

Cities and states were in various degrees of lockdown for much of 2020, with many people **forgoing** special **occasions** and visits with friends and family. Isolation and fear were widespread, and people had **every** reason to feel acutely stressed.

v. 放弃, 弃绝

n. 特别的事情(或仪式、庆典)

det. [用于强调]所有可能的, 极度的

- 3 But even as lockdowns **lifted**, people got vaccinated, and life resumed more of its normal rhythms, many people continued to feel...off. In an **American Psychological Association** survey published in October 2021, 75% of people said they'd recently experienced consequences of stress, including headaches, sleep issues, fatigue, and feeling **overwhelmed**.
- 4 Now, more than two years **into** the pandemic, many people still haven't **bounced back**. One reason could be "ambient stress"—or "stress that's running in the background, below the level of consciousness," says New York-**based** clinical psychologist Laurie Ferguson, who is director of education development at the **Global Healthy Living Foundation**, a **nonprofit** that **supports** people with chronic illnesses.

v. 解除, 撤销

美国心理协会

a. (强烈的影响而)使不知所措

prep. 进入(时期)

恢复健康(或信心等)

a. 办公地点在...的; 以...为总部的

全球健康生活基金会

n. 非营利性机构

v. 帮助, 援助

"There's something **amiss**, but we're not **registering** it all the time," Ferguson says. "We're always just a little bit off balance. We kind of function at a level like everything's fine and things are normal, when in fact, they're not."

a. 不对, 不正常

v. 受到注意; 注意到, 记住

环境与行为期刊

- 5 In a 1983 article published in the journal **Environment and Behavior**, researcher Joan Campbell described ambient **stressors** as those that are chronic and negative, cannot be **substantively** changed by an individual, usually do not cause **immediate** threats to life (but can be damaging over time), and are **perceptible** but often unnoticed. "**Over the long run**," Campbell wrote, these stressors could affect "motivation, emotions, attention, [physical] health, and behavior."
- 6 Campbell cited examples like pollution and traffic noise, but it's also an **apt** description of this stage of the pandemic. In March 2020, the pandemic was an **in-your-face** stressor—one that, at least for many people, felt urgent and **all-consuming**. Two years later, most people have adapted, to some degree. Most people are vaccinated, the news isn't broadcasting the

n. 导致紧张的事件

ad. 实质性地, 本质性地

a. (作用)直接的

a. 可察觉到的; 看得出的

长期来看

a. 恰当的, 适当的

a. (态度、表演等)赤裸裸的

a. 耗尽时间(或精力)的; 全身心投入的

大多数人接种了疫苗, 新闻不再不休地报道最新新增案例, 生活看起来比2020年更接近2019年。但是, 不管我们是有意还是无意的, 我们的精神仍旧在遭受两年来关于死亡、疾病、剧变和不确定性的不良影响, 以及社交或者工作生活的改变带来的小崩溃。

ad. (一天24小时一周7天不间断的)一直不休地

latest case **counts** **24/7**, and life looks closer to 2019 than 2020. But, whether we're
 n. 数出总数；总数 n. 严重的不良影响
 conscious of it or not, we're still bearing the **psychic toll** of two years of death, disease,
 a. 心灵的，精神的
upheaval, and uncertainty, as well as smaller disruptions like changes to our social or work
 n. (往往会带来问题的)激变，剧变，动乱
 lives, Ferguson says.

- 7 Even ambient stress can have health consequences, as Campbell pointed out. Humans evolved to deal with short-term stressors, but we're not as good at coping with **chronic stress**, explains Laura Grafe, an assistant professor of psychology at Bryn Mawr College. Chronic stress has been linked to **conditions** including high blood pressure, diabetes, sleep issues, and mental health and **cognitive disorders**.
 n. 长期疾病
 认知障碍

Constant stress can also **compound** the effects of other stressors. "Everything else just seems worse with the chronic stress of the pandemic **going on** in the background," Grafe says.
 v. 使加重，使恶化
 发生

- 8 Ambient stress doesn't have to **zap** all the joy from your life, though. In a 2021 study, Grafe and her co-authors examined how pandemic stress and **coping strategies** affected sleep. Her team found that a person's sleep quality wasn't necessarily **dictate** by their overall level of pandemic-related stress, but rather by how well they coped with that stress. That suggests stress, itself, isn't necessarily the problem—it's unmanaged stress.
 v. (突然而猛烈地)毁坏，杀死
 应对策略
 v. 支配，摆布

- 9 When stress becomes **so** routine **that** we stop acknowledging it, we're less likely to manage it effectively. As Cambell wrote in 1983, "coping is most likely to occur when the stressor is still novel." Halfway through 2022, many people have abandoned **soothing** hobbies like bread-baking, yoga, and knitting that they adopted in spring 2020.
 如此...以至于
 a. 使镇定的

- 10 That's why it's important to develop sustainable coping strategies, says Niccole Nelson, a **postdoctoral research associate** in the **University of Notre Dame's** psychology department who has also studied pandemic stress. "There's no single coping strategy that is **inherently** good or bad," Nelson says, but it's often helpful to mentally **reframe** a stressor as less threatening. That's difficult to do with something as serious as the pandemic, but Nelson
 研究助理，助理研究员
 圣母大学，又称诺特丹大学
 a. 博士后的
 ad. 内在地，固有地
 v. 全新地拟定或表达

suggests trying it on a smaller scale: finding ways to appreciate the positive aspects of working from home, for example. (Grafe suggests ^{正念训练}mindfulness exercises and ^{认知行为治疗}cognitive behavioral therapy to cope with stress.)

- 11 Giving your brain new ^{stimulus的复数}stimuli ^{n. 刺激物} can also help during a prolonged period of stress, Ferguson says. Even small changes, like eating something new for breakfast or taking a different route for your daily walk, can ^{v. 使(新事物)开始; 创始}introduce some healthy ^{n. 新奇; 新颖; 新鲜}novelty. Physical activity is also a ^{a. 经过检验而可靠的}tried-and-true stress reduction tactic, she adds.
- 12 Simply noticing and naming your ambient stress can also ^{对...大有帮助, 有用}go a long way, Ferguson says. “Even people who have gone ‘back to normal’ still have that ambient stress running, and they may not realize they’re a little more ^{a. 脾气暴躁的, 易怒的}short-tempered, or they’re a little less hopeful,” she says. “It’s subtle, in many ways, and harder to notice” than ^{a. 具有所有特征的, 全面的}full-blown pandemic stress, but just as important to manage. ■