



How to Make Gratitude Feel Less Like a Chore

不要让感恩成为一种负担

Date: Jan. 9, 2023

558 Words

“**Count your blessings**” is an age-old **bromide**. But now, **rigorous** research confirms it: Practicing gratitude cures much of what **ails** us. It helps us feel more positive, **cope** better **with adversity**, and even stay physically healthier. What's more, it creates an upward **spiral**—more gratitude increases our satisfaction with life, and more satisfaction with life increases our gratitude.

“知足常乐”这句话早已变成了陈词滥调。但现在，严谨的研究证实了这一点：感恩可以治愈我们的许多烦恼。它能让我们感觉更积极，更好地应对逆境，甚至让身体更健康。而且，感恩创造了一个向上的螺旋——我们越感恩，就对生活越满意，而对生活越满意，我们就会越感恩。

Gratitude acts as a kind of course correction, easing us away from the dark paths **to** which our minds **gravitate**. All of us, **to a greater or lesser extent**, have what's called a negativity bias. We pay more attention to what is negative about any situation than to what is positive, and we have better memory for negative events and feelings than for positive ones. The experience of a beautiful meal can be **spoiled** by a single persistent fly, a supervisor's extensive praise can be **drowned out** by one criticism, and the memories of a great vacation can be **overshadowed** by a marital **squabble** on the last day. This tendency to focus on what is wrong can impact how we make decisions, and how motivated we are to take risks.

感恩能起到一种方向矫正的作用，让我们远离吸引心灵的黑暗之

count your blessings 知足，想想你有多幸运

bromide ['broomaid] *n.* 老套的安慰话，陈词滥调

rigorous ['rɪɡərəs] *adj.* 谨慎的，细致的；严格的 | The work failed to meet their rigorous standards. 工作没有达到他们的严格标准。

ail [eɪl] *v.* 使苦恼，困扰；使患病，使不适 | They discussed the problems ailing the steel industry. 他们讨论了困扰钢铁工业的问题。

cope with 处理，应付 | My computer can cope with huge amounts of data. 我的电脑能够处理大量数据。

adversity [əd'vɜ:rsəti] *n.* 困境，逆境 | He showed courage in adversity. 他在逆境中表现出了勇气。

spiral ['spairəl] *n.* 螺旋（形）；螺旋式过程（持续恶化或改善） *v.* 螺旋式上升（或下降） | The company is in a downward spiral. 这家公司越来越不景气。

gravitate to/toward 被吸引到，受吸引而转向 | Many young people gravitate to the cities in search of work. 许多年轻人被吸引到城里找工作。

路。我们所有人或多或少都有所谓的“消极偏见”。我们更关注所有情况的消极方面而不是积极方面，我们更能记住消极的事件和情绪而不是积极的。一只烦人的苍蝇可能会破坏一顿美餐，主管的一个批评可能会盖过他许多的赞扬，假期最后一天的夫妻争吵可能会给整个美好假期的记忆蒙上一层阴影。这种关注错误的倾向会影响我们做决定的方式，以及我们承担风险的动力。

Why would our minds do this to us? One theory is that our minds evolved to help us survive and **reproduce**, not to make us happy. As Daniel Kahneman points out in his 2011 book, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, “This **asymmetry** between the power of positive and negative expectations or experiences has an evolutionary history. Organisms that treat threats as more urgent than opportunities have a better chance to survive and reproduce.” Those ancestors who were better at thinking about what could go wrong were more likely to **pass on** their genes. However, this advantage may leave us less able to appreciate all that is wonderful in the world.

为什么大脑会这样对待我们？有一种理论认为，我们的大脑进化的目的是帮助我们生存和繁衍，而不是让我们感到快乐。正如丹尼尔·卡尼曼在其 2011 年的著作《思考，快与慢》中指出的那样，“积极的和消极的预期或体验之间的力量不对称是有进化史的。把威胁看得比机遇更要紧的生物有更大的机会生存和繁衍。”那些更善于思考什么问题可能会出现祖先更有可能将他们的基因传递下去。然而，这种优势可能会使我们难以感激世界上所有美好的事物。

How does gratitude act as a **corrective**? By deliberately turning our attention to what we're grateful for, we **unhook** from this emotional negativity. For example, when college students seeking mental health counseling were asked to write letters of gratitude once a week for three weeks and then were followed up three months later, they reported better mental health (less anxiety and depression) compared

关注公众号：拾点外刊 免费下载电子版 附音频

to a greater or lesser extent

或多或少，多多少少 | No medication works in isolation but is affected to a greater or lesser extent by many other factors. 任何药都不能独立起效果，而是或多或少地受到很多其它因素的影响。

spoil [spɔɪl] v. 破坏，糟蹋，毁掉；

溺爱，宠坏 | It's important not to let mistakes spoil your life. 重要的是不要让错误毁了你的生活。

drown out 压过，盖过，淹没 |

She turned up the radio to drown out the noise from next door. 她开大了收音机的音量以压过隔壁房间的吵闹声。

overshadow [ˌoʊvərˈʃædɒʊ] v. 使

扫兴，使蒙上阴影；使黯然失色，使相形见绌 | The threat of war overshadowed the summer of 1939. 战争的威胁给 1939 年的夏天蒙上了阴影。

squabble ['skwɑːbl] n./v. 口角，争

吵 | My sisters were squabbling over what to watch on TV. 我的姐妹正为看哪个电视节目争吵。

reproduce [ˌriːprəˈduːs] v. 繁殖，

生育；复制；再生产 | The turtles return to the coast to reproduce. 海龟回到岸上繁殖。

asymmetry [eɪˈsɪmətri] n. 不对

称，不匀称

pass on 把……遗传给，传染；

将……传给；去世 | One catches the virus and they pass it on to the rest. 一个人感染这种病毒，然后传染给

with their **counterparts** who wrote about stressful experiences. Those who wrote letters thanking others expressed fewer negative emotions than those writing about stressful experiences.

那么感恩如何起到纠正作用呢？通过有意识地将注意力转移到我们所感恩的事情上，我们能够从这种情绪的负面倾向中解脱出来。例如，寻求心理健康咨询的大学生被要求每周写一封感谢信，持续三周，然后在三个月后对他们进行后续调查，与那些描写压力经历的人相比，他们报告的心理健康状况更好（焦虑和抑郁较少）。那些写信感谢他人的人比那些描写压力经历的人表达的负面情绪更少。

When you're having trouble finding something to be grateful for, try a simple exercise known as **counterfactual** thinking. Psychologist Laura Kray and colleagues asked people to imagine what life would have been like if they had not met an important person or experienced a **pivotal** life event. What if you had never met your partner, your best friend, your mentor? These "**what-if**" thought experiments led people to greater awareness of what they were grateful for. This type of imaginative play can lead to a greater appreciation for the people and life situations that we **take for granted** and create a greater sense of meaning for ourselves.

当你找不到值得感恩的事情时，试着做一个简单的练习，名字叫做“反事实思维”。心理学家劳拉·克赖及其同事让人们想象一下，假如他们没有遇到一个重要的人或经历一件关键的人生大事，他们的生活会是什么样子。假如你从未遇到过你的伴侣，你最好的朋友，你的导师呢？这些“假如”思想实验让人们更清楚地意识到他们感激什么。这种富有想象力的游戏可以让我们更好地感激我们认为理所当然的人和生活状况，并为自己创造更大的意义感。

That is, perhaps, the greatest benefit of reaching for gratitude: It can **turn** our usual views of ourselves and the world **upside down**. It can take what's **invisible** in the

其余的人。

corrective [kə'rektɪv] *n.* 起纠正作用的东西，修改，纠正 *adj.* 改正的，纠正的 | I should like to add a corrective to what I have written previously. 我想对我先前写的内容进行补充修改。

unhook [ʌn'hʊk] *v.* 把……从钩子上取下

counterpart ['kaʊntərpɑ:rt] *n.* 职位（或作用）相当的人，对应的事物 | Belgian officials are discussing this with their French counterparts. 比利时官员与法国同级官员正在讨论此事。

counterfactual [ˌkaʊntər'fæktʃuəl] *adj.* 反事实的，虚拟的

pivotal ['pɪvətl] *adj.* 关键性的，核心的 | He played a pivotal role in the negotiations. 他在谈判中起关键作用。

what-if *n.* 假设的事情 | If I thought about all of the what-ifs in my life, I would go crazy. 如果我要考虑到生活中的那么多“假如”，我会发疯的。

take sb./sth. for granted 认为……是理所当然的（而对其不重视） | Losing my job taught me never to take anything for granted. 失业使我认识到决不能认为什么事都是理所当然的。

turn sth. upside down 彻底改变，完全搅乱；把某处翻得乱七八糟 | New approaches to marketing

background and bring it front and center. We take for granted the days when we are not sick or in pain, the nights when we have shelter from the rain, and the mornings we wake up again to life.

这也许就是感恩最大的好处：它能彻底改变我们对自己和世界的惯常看法。它可以把幕后被无视的东西放到台前和中心。那些没有病痛的日子，那些有地方避雨的夜晚，那些醒来还活着的清晨，我们都视作理所当然而不予以珍惜。

turn old practices upside down. 新的营销方式彻底改变了以前的做法。

invisible [ɪnˈvɪzəbl] *adj.* 看不见的，隐形的；无形的 | Using a telescope, Galileo discovered stars that were invisible to the naked eye. 伽利略用望远镜发现了肉眼看不到的恒星。

➤ 脉络梳理

- Para. 1 引出话题：感恩可以治愈烦恼，让我们对生活更满意
- Para. 2-3 介绍感恩起到矫正作用的对象：消极偏见，并分析大脑产生消极偏见的原因
- Para. 4 介绍感恩如何起到矫正作用
- Para. 5 提出建议：以“反事实思维”找到自己感恩的人和事
- Para. 6 介绍感恩的好处：改变对自己和对世界的看法，不再把一切视作理所当然

➤ 长难句拆解

主句
|
Gratitude acts as a kind of course correction,

结果状语 定语从句，修饰 dark paths
| |
easing us away from the dark paths to which our minds gravitate.