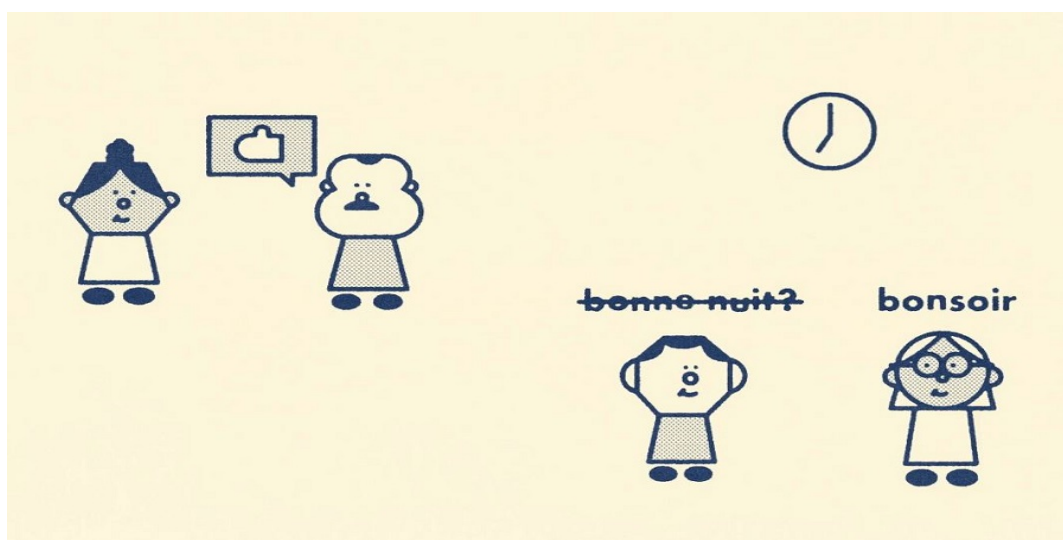




## How to overcome your mistakes

### 如何克服错误?

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In a 2019 study, over 400 participants were enlisted to learn a mysterious, invented language. Individuals were asked about three pairs of runes— for example, which of these two characters represents an animal? Then, after a brief break, they were asked about the same rune pairs with questions flipped, as in, which of these two runes represents a non-living object? But this game had a secret— The subjects' answers in round one determined the runes' meanings in round two. In the first round, participants either had all their answers marked as correct no matter what, or they were forced to fail every question. This meant that at the break, every participant had the same amount of information, and in round two they were playing for real. But despite this even playing field, the successful participants from round one rose to the top of the ranks, while those cast as failures kept, well, failing.

2019年的一项研究中，招募了400多人学习一种新发明的神秘语言。共三对符文，要求每人回答问题——例如，这俩字中哪个代表动物？接下来，短暂休息之后，还是同一组符文，但问题会反过来，比如这组，哪个代表非生物物体？但该游戏有个秘密：受试者第一轮的答案决定了第二轮中符文的含义。在第一轮中，不论答案是什么，要么判全对，要么被告知全答错。这意味着在休息时，每位参与者掌握同等信息量，且第二轮中，他们都认真答题。但是，尽管竞争环境平等，第一轮的赢家还是升至榜首，而那些第一轮的输家却一直答错。

People often describe failure as a teachable moment—a necessary stumble on our way to improvement. But learning from our mistakes isn't always easy, especially when those failures are demoralizing, overwhelming, or just downright confusing. So what exactly prevents us from turning our mistakes into mastery?

人们经常把失败描述为学习的机会——它是我们进步路上必然的绊脚石。但从错误中吸取教训并非易事，尤其是当这些失败令人沮丧、崩溃或完全令人困惑时。那么，究竟是什么阻止了我们将错误转化为精通呢？

Perhaps the most obvious hurdle to learning from failure is how painful it can be. People generally want to think of themselves as capable and competent, and experiencing failure threatens that self-image. In a survey following a replication of the rune study, participants in the failure group indicated much lower levels of self-confidence after participating. It's tempting to dismiss this pain as a temporary setback. But some studies have found that when people feel demoralized or incompetent, their brains often stop processing new information. This suggests that if a threat to your self-esteem is large enough, it can undermine your ability to learn.

也许从失败中吸取教训最明显的障碍是失败的痛苦。人们通常希望认为自己有能力且有竞争力，而经历失败会威胁到这种自我形象。在符文研究重复实验后的调查中，失败组的参与者在参与后表现出更低的自信水平。人们很容易将这种痛苦视为暂时挫折，但一些研究发现，当感到沮丧或无能时，大脑通常会停止处理新信息。这表明，如果失败伤害自尊心巨大，就会削弱你的学习能力。

However, your tolerance for failure also depends on your relationship with the task at hand. In a study from 2011, researchers surveyed a group of American students enrolled in introductory and advanced French courses. These students completed a questionnaire asking what kind of teacher they preferred—

但是，对失败的容忍度也取决于你与手头任务的关系。在2011年的一项研究中，研究人员对一组报名参加法语入门课和高级课程的美国学生进行了调查。这些学生填写了一份问卷，回答他们更喜欢哪种老师——

one who emphasized their strengths and successes, or one who highlighted their mistakes and corrected their weaknesses. In general, responses showed that while beginner students sought positive reinforcement, advanced students were more eager for critical feedback. Researchers have theorized a handful of explanations for these results. Having just started out, beginners are still determining if they enjoy learning French and if they want to continue studying, so they might crave praise as a way to stay motivated. On the other hand, the advanced students are already invested, so they may want to improve their skills as efficiently as possible. The process of gaining expertise also comes with its fair share of failure, so the advanced students may have built a higher tolerance for making mistakes.

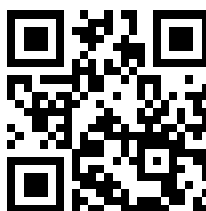
是强调学生长处和成功的老师，还是强调学生的错误并纠正其弱点的老师。总的来说，反馈表明，初学者寻求积极的强化，而级别高的学生更渴望获得批判性反馈。研究人员对这些结果提出了一些理论解释。刚刚起步的初学者，仍在考虑是否喜欢学法语，以及是否想继续学习，所以他们可能渴望得到表扬来保持动力。另一方面，高级别学生已经付出了，因此他们可能希望尽可能高效地提高自己的技能。获得专业知识的过程也伴随着众多失败，因此，高级别学生对犯错的容忍度可能更高。

But whether you're an expert or a novice, it's usually much more straightforward to learn from your successes than your failures. For example, imagine getting your grade back on an exam. If you aced it, you could reasonably assume you made good choices around when, what, and how much to study, and you can replicate those decisions for the next test. But if you failed, it could be for any number of reasons. Maybe you didn't study enough, maybe you studied the wrong information, or maybe you did everything right and the test covered things you shouldn't have been expected to know. In cases like this, it's unclear exactly what went wrong, making it difficult to learn how to improve.

但是，无论你是专家还是新手，通常从成功中吸取教训比从失败中吸取教训要简单得多。例如，想象一下在考试中提高成绩。如果你成功了，你可以合理地假设你在学习时间、内容和学习量方面做出了不错的选择，你可以在下一次测试中复制这些决定。但如果你失败了，原因可能有很多。也许你学习不够刻苦，也许你学习了错误的信息，或者你把所有事情都做对了，但考试内容超出了范围。在这种情况下，究竟哪里出了问题还不清楚，这使得学习如何改进变得困难。

Wanting to learn from our failures is completely natural, and there's a lot to gain by being resilient and cultivating a growth mindset. But fixating on your failures can make it easy to forget all your successes. And building on what you're doing right can be more effective than focusing on what you did wrong.

想要从失败中吸取教训是完全自然的，保持韧性和培养成长心态可以带来很多好处。但是，专注于你的失败会让你很容易忘记所有的成功。在做对的事情的基础上再接再厉，可能比专注于自己做错了什么更有效。



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