Section B

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The Star Quality of New Zealand's Great Barrier Island

A) I was glad I had such terrible jetlag. Wide awake at 3:30 am with our nine-year-old daughter on our lodge balcony, I stared for hours at the most incredible night sky I've ever seen before the dawn slowly started to rub out the stars on the horizon and the multiple shooting stars faded away.

B) We were going to my wife's big family reunion in Auckland, New Zealand, but when we found out that Great Barrier Island, just off the coast, had been recently awarded Dark Sky Sanctuary status—a typically remote area that has an "exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights"—we thought it would be the perfect place to relax before our busy schedule. It's the first island and only the fourth location in the world to achieve this status.

C) After a 28-hour flight with two travel-sick children, our hearts sank when we saw the tiny twin engine 10-seater that was to take us the 90km across the Hauraki Gulf to Great Barrier Island. But we needn't have worried. Whether it was the gravity force of the plane climbing or the noise of the engine, it put our three-year-old daughter instantly to sleep until we bumped down on the grass at Claris Airport. Our first empty sick bag against all the odds…Things were looking up.

D) Great Barrier Island has no public facilities and the 950 people living there (though only about half permanently) rely on solar and wind energy, and bottled gas for cooking. There are no streetlights. There are no cash machines or banks. The police force comprises a husband and wife, and there's one postman. It's not just the lack of light but the lack of noise that's so delightful on this unique and gorgeous scene. It was first discovered by East Polynesians about 700 years ago and the Maori name for the island is Aotea. Captain Cook gave the island its European name, because it acts as a barrier between the Pacific and the Hauraki Gulf.

E) The climate here is subtropical(亚热带的) like Auckland's. The island boasts a beautiful wilderness with dense forests, glorious, unspoilt sandy beaches and plenty of bays and a few mountainous areas where there are good walking tracks among the wetlands and valleys. You can birdwatch, dive, surf and boat. The best beaches are on the eastern side of the island where the surf is better, too. The sheltered western side is where you'll find the best diving and boating. Lots of people come here for the fantastic fishing spots around the island. Like a lot of spots in New Zealand, there are whale-watching trips and you might just catch sight of sharks.

F) It's rare to find an island that really does feel undiscovered—but this is it. When one of my wife's relations, who comes here regularly, found out that we'd been there, he whispered to us, only half-joking: "Shh—don't tell anyone!" The locals are a relaxed and friendly bunch—a lot of them told us that it's like what Waiheke Island (now in effect a suburb of Auckland) was in the 1970s when it was a commune of artists and people wanting to escape the city.

G) Our guide for some of our stay was the inestimable Hilde Hoven, a Dark Sky ambassador who runs Good Heavens with Deborah Kilgallon and Orla Cumisky. They bring their Dobsonian telescope and beanbags (it's hard work staring up wide-eyed in wonder without neck support) and, our elder daughter was glad to hear, hot chocolate to wherever you are on the island. "It's odd but when the light readings were done," said Hilde, explaining how the island was awarded its special status, "they found there was more light pollution on the northern side coming from Fiji, which is about 3,000km away, than Auckland to the south. It's pretty dark!"

H) Beginning their astronomical PowerPoint demonstration using a green laser pointer, Hilde and Orla showed us the Messier 4 spherical cluster(星团) with white dwarf stars(白矮星), Saturn and its rings, the Southern Cross and the Milky Way, which stretched across the sky. Our daughter was especially taken with Hilde's narrating of the Maori myth of Māui's fish hook to explain the shape of Scorpius. In the fable, Māui hauled the North Island of New Zealand from the bottom of the ocean with his hook.

I) We stayed at Mount St Paul's Estate, a luxurious lodge run by the friendly Chris and Teara, both from Canada. Teara used to be a chef at the Langham in Auckland and so dinner, eaten around a huge circular table (made of one of the most ancient trees in the world), was every bit as mouth-watering as you'd expect. Eating pancakes on the balcony overlooking the unspoilt white sandy beach was a great way to start the day.

J) Another highlight was an hour-long walk to Kaitoke hot pools in the centre of the island, through wetlands and a forest, where we whiled away a good hour sitting in the pools shaded from the heat by layers of delicate umbrella-like plants.

K) We also loved visiting the potter(陶艺家) Sarah Harrison, who showed us round her studio at Shoal Bay harbour, and her many pots and jugs, plates and bowls and colourful mosaics(马赛克). In her work, she also uses a lot of materials found on the beach. Our elder daughter loved the gorgeous hidden pool at Medlands beach where the water is separated from the sea in a private rock pool. Other high points were the ancient pōhutukawa trees and the incredible views of Okiwi Basin and Whangapoua beach from the top of Windy Canyon, just a 10-minute hike through a narrow valley up some steep wooden steps on the eastern side of the island.

L) Apparently the island council turned down famous musician Paul McCartney's application to buy a property at Great Barrier Island because of the unwelcome attention he would have brought. You can see why he wanted to come here; equally, the island knows exactly what kind of star watching it prefers.

36. The author's daughter slept throughout the last leg of their flight to Great Barrier Island.

37. The lodge where the author stayed provided very delicious food.

38. Many people are attracted to Great Barrier Island because of the incredible fishing sites around it.

39. A well-known artist failed to purchase a house on Great Barrier Island.

40. Unable to fall asleep after a long flight, the author was pleased to enjoy the most gorgeous view of the night sky in his life.

41. Great Barrier Island is compared to another island which attracted a lot of artists and people who wished to stay away from city life half a century ago.

42. One most memorable part of the author's visit to Great Barrier Island was a one-hour walk to its centre's hot springs.

43. Great Barrier Island has officially been recognized for its extraordinary starry nights.

44. Great Barrier Island is not connected to any public power supply lines.

45. It is strange that light pollution on Great Barrier Island mainly comes from a faraway island to the north.

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Exercise and Dementia

A) If this doesn't encourage you to squeeze in a workout today, nothing will: a new study from Sweden shows that women who were highly fit in mid-life were nearly 90% less likely to get dementia(失智) decades later.

B) After initial exercise tests in middle age, researchers followed the women for 44 years. Both groups lived just as long, but those who could ride an exercise bike at a fast rate for 6 minutes in the initial test had a much lower risk of dementia later on than those who couldn't complete the workout.

C) The study, published Wednesday in the journal Neurology, couldn't prove that exercise prevented dementia, and the findings aren't a surprise—it's long been known there's a correlation between exercise and decreased dementia risk—but the results were particularly dramatic. About 5% of the women with the highest peak workload—those who were able to bike the hardest over those 6 minutes—developed dementia, compared to 25% of those with medium fitness and 45% who weren't fit enough to finish the test, the study found. Overall, women who were highly fit compared to those who were moderately fit decreased their risk of dementia by 88%. The few highly fit women who did develop dementia became symptomatic at age 90 on average, 11 years later than the moderately fit.

D) "I'm very surprised that the finding was so strong," said Ingmar Skoog, the paper's senior author and a psychiatry(精神病学) professor at The University of Gothenburg in Sweden. "It really shows the importance of exercise."

E) Dementia, as defined in medical dictionaries, is a broad term that describes a loss of thinking ability, memory, attention, logical reasoning, and other mental abilities. These changes are severe enough to interfere with social or occupational functioning. Dementia isn't a disease. Instead, it's a group of symptoms caused by other conditions. It happens when the parts of your brain used for learning, memory, decision making, and language are damaged or diseased. About 5%-8% of adults over age 65 have some form of dementia. This percentage doubles every 5 years after 65. As many as half of people in their 80s have some form of dementia.

F) Dementia is not temporary confusion or forgetfulness that might result from an infection that heals without treatment. It can also come from an underlying(潜在的) illness or side effects of medications. Dementia typically gets worse over time. People with dementia have problems with thinking and remembering that affect their ability to manage their daily life.

G) Dementia is typically associated with declines in cognitive function. Yet researchers have found an association between dementia and declines in hearing and other basic sensory functions.

H) Though the study mentioned above was fairly small (only 191 women took the initial fitness test, which means it's hard to maintain statistical significance while breaking the group down into sub-categories of more or less fit), it does give us hope that dementia can be prevented or delayed through exercise in one's middle age.

I) Alzheimer's(阿尔茨海默症) and other dementias are believed to begin 15-20 years before symptoms even appear, so it makes sense that exercising in mid-life would affect the risk, Skoog said. Exercise alone is not likely to prevent Alzheimer's, but the study shows people are not helpless in the face of one of the most feared, costliest and common diseases of old age, he added. And the same activities that help prevent Alzheimer's—including avoiding smoking, getting adequate exercise and sleep and eating a healthy diet—also prevent heart disease, he said, making them even more worthwhile. "You can do something yourself to decrease your odds," Skoog said.

J) Maintaining a healthy lifestyle in mid-life, decades before disease sets in, makes sense, said David Knopman, a fellow of the American Academy of Neurology, who was not involved in the study. "I suspect it's a dose," said Knopman, also associate director of the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. "Starting in late life is better than not starting at all, but starting in mid-life seems to offer a larger benefit."

K) Although it is not entirely clear why exercise helps put off or prevent Alzheimer's, Knopman said it's likely that exercise maintains good blood flow to the brain. "When the brain is healthier from a vascular(血管的) point of view, it can absorb more Alzheimer's pathogen(病原体) before people become symptomatic," he said.

L) The message isn't that everyone needs to run marathons in middle age, Knopman said, but a healthy lifestyle pays off.

M) This type of study can't say exactly what kind of exercise is best, or how much is needed—only a study that has a placebo(安慰剂) group and tracks people going forward can do that, said Keith Fargo, director of scientific programs and outreach at the non-profit Alzheimer's Association. "The literature has not yet settled on an amount or type of exercise that is going to be key, although the bulk of literature has suggested that aerobic(有氧的) exercise is what you need to be doing," he said. That doesn't mean you have to compete in marathons but "more than a 10-min dog walk" would be a good idea, Fargo said.

N) Several lifestyle studies are getting underway soon, including one backed by the Alzheimer's Association called the US POINTER study, which will offer at-risk adults, ages 60-79, a series of lifestyle interventions(干预) to see if they impact Alzheimer's risk. That and other Alzheimer's-related studies are always looking for volunteers to participate, he said.

O) In the next three to five years, these studies should allow researchers to provide clearer recommendations for exercise and other lifestyle modifications that might reduce Alzheimer's risk, such as sleep, diet and social activities, Fargo said. But it's already quite clear that exercising at any point in life is better for your brain than not exercising at all, Fargo added.

P) "If you don't want to have dementia when you're 80, the time to start getting fit is now," he said. "It may not necessarily give you a longer life, but there's a compelling body of work that it will give you more good years."

36. It is typical for dementia to worsen with the passage of time.

37. According to Knopman, the study gives the message that a healthy lifestyle is beneficial, but not that all the middle-aged need heavy exercise.

38. The results of a new study will encourage middle-aged women to find time exercising however busy they are.

39. Hopefully, one can postpone or prevent dementia by exercising in their mid-life.

40. In a few years, researchers should be able to offer clearer advice on exercise and other lifestyle changes for reducing the incidence of Alzheimer's.

41. Dementia refers to a loss of multiple mental abilities such as memory and logical reasoning.

42. One researcher believes that exercise may keep the brain well supplied with blood.

43. Medical literature has not concluded as to what exercise or how much exercise is crucial, although it generally agrees that people should do aerobic exercise.

44. It has long been common knowledge that exercise correlates with reduced risk of dementia.

45. Activities helpful in the prevention of Alzheimer's also prevent heart disease.

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Giving a better phone interview

A) These days, phone interviews are an unavoidable part of the job interview process, and for good reason: They save time and effort. But that doesn't mean that phone calls require zero energy on the part of the candidate. Many companies treat phone screening as the official first round of the hiring process. That means candidates are expected to go into them prepared with as much information as possible about the company, position, and their own skills and strengths.

B) A big mistake people often make is talking about their personal lives. Don't talk about your personal life unless you're directly asked a question about what you like to do in your off-hours. "The point of a phone interview is to focus on getting to know a candidate's professional experience and goals," says Mckenzie Roark, campus talent specialist at Lithko Contracting. "A recruiter is trying to see if they are the best fit for a role, and learning about their personal life doesn't help. For example, when asked where you see yourself in five years, we don't want to know that you hope to be married or that you want to buy a new house. That is nice, but that isn't relative to anything professional."

C) It might be tempting to cross something off your to-do list while on a phone interview, but recruiters and hiring managers can easily tell if your attention is elsewhere. Many interviewers are annoyed to see people who decide to multitask while on the phone interview. There are candidates who wash dishes, go for walks, or do grocery shopping during the interview. Needless to say, this doesn't reflect well on your level of interest in the position you're interviewing for.

D) The question regarding pay is also best avoided. To be frank, it's simply too early in the process for you to be the one who brings up salary expectations. "Chances are if a candidate is participating in a phone interview, this is the first time they have talked with the company, and the first call isn't the appropriate time to talk about 'what's in it for you,'" says Justina Strnad, the Talent Acquisition Manager for Shiftgig. "Trust me, if you are a great candidate and make it to the next step, the hiring team is going to be very transparent about what's in it for you later on."

E) "After wrapping up a phone interview, it is typical that the interviewer will ask the candidate if they have any questions. I can't stress this enough: ALWAYS ask questions," says Roark. "If we have had a great phone interview and then we wrap up and they don't have any questions for me, it pretty much ruins the whole interview. It tells me that the candidate is uninterested in the role, which in reality might not be the case at all," she notes. But surely, if you're interested in a job, you can think of something to ask your interviewer.

F) It seems basic, but surprisingly, a lot of people are late to phone interviews. "About a quarter of the people with whom I schedule phone interviews aren't on time," says Sophie Cikovsky, who handles U.S. recruiting for Infinite Global. "While this bothers me personally, it's also indicative of someone who isn't very detail-oriented," she explains. "In order to identify this early in the hiring process, I started asking all candidates a few years ago to call me as opposed to calling them at an agreed-upon time. That way, if I hear from them at 1:13 p.m. or 12:49 p.m. instead of our planned 1:00 p.m. interview time, I have an early indicator that they might not be a great fit."

G) "Make sure you test your headset and connection before dialing in," recommends Roark. "There is nothing more frustrating for a recruiter who has a structured interview guide in place having to repeatedly ask the

same question over and over because they could not understand your answer due to dropped signals." Test-call a friend beforehand, or even call yourself from a landline if necessary; it will take less than a minute.

H) You might be eager to get your point across or talk about your experience, but interrupting the interviewer is awkward and rude. "Interviewing can be stressful, and sometimes that stress manifests itself in speaking too fast, speaking too loud, talking over the interviewer, or attempting to answer the interviewer's question before they have actually finished asking the question," says Chris Dardis, a recruiting expert. "Don't do this." There's a big difference between being assertive(自信的) and being aggressive, and interviewers can always recognize it.

I) It's tough not to say things like "um," "uh," and "like" in everyday speech, but these verbal habits become much more pronounced when speaking on the phone, says Dardis. "In face-to-face interviews, they're not as noticeable, because there are other things like your hair, suit, or body language to distract people." But in a phone interview, the only thing you have to go on is what you say and how you say it. "That's why it's so important to eliminate these words from your speech when doing a phone interview."

J) Not knowing anything about the company or job you're interviewing for is way more obvious than you'd think. "Many people think that they don't have to put as much effort into researching the role or the company," says Steve Pritchard, an HR consultant. And if you have your laptop in front of you during the interview to do a few quick searches, they won't know the difference, right? Not exactly. "Seasoned interviewers will know whether an interviewee is researching while on the phone. The interviewer can often even hear the typing as they ask the question," he adds.

K) "The key to success during a phone interview is clear and concise answers," says Dardis. "People's attention spans tend to be shorter over the phone. You don't want your future employer to lose interest in the conversation." He recommends practicing answers to questions you know will be asked ahead of time in order to be clear on what you're going to say. That way, you can prevent talking in an aimless manner.

36. Interviewees are advised not to ask questions about pay during a phone interview.
37. Experienced interviewers will know if an applicant is searching for information online while talking on the phone.
38. Many employers regard the phone interview as the first step of the official recruiting process.
39. Applicants who don't ask questions at the end of an interview most probably ruin their chance of getting the position.
40. The interviewee should test their phone connection before they call the interviewer.
41. It is annoying to the interviewer to find the applicant doing other tasks while being interviewed.
42. To pass a phone interview, the most important thing is to answer questions clearly and concisely.
43. If you fail to call the interviewer on time, they might not see you as a suitable candidate.
44. Applicants should avoid talking about their personal lives if the interviewer has only asked about their professional background and goals.
45. It is impolite for an interviewee to interrupt the interviewer in the phone conversation.

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The battle over bike lanes needs a mindset shift

A) Five years ago, the city of Queens, New York, announced that it would be putting bike lanes onto a stretch of Skillman Ave — and removing 116 parking spots. Cyclists loved the plan, but local business owners got very angry. Taking out those parking spots, as they argued at protests and in letters to the city council, would ruin stores and restaurants along Skillman. "Parking here is already a nightmare," one shouted at a protest rally.

B) But the bike lanes were a done deal, and soon they were in place. Early this year, Jesse Coburn — an investigative writer with Streetsblog New York — wondered whether those predictions of economic collapse came true. So he asked the city's Department of Finance to give him a few years' worth of sales figures for that stretch of Skillman Ave. How had the businesses on that street fared?

C) Quite well, it turns out. In the year after the bike lanes arrived, businesses on Skillman saw sales rise by 12 percent, compared to 3 percent for Queens in general. What's more, that section of road saw new businesses open, while Queens overall had a net loss.

D) The thing is, the actual merchants along Skillman? They didn't believe it. When Coburn spoke to them and described what he'd found, only a few store owners admitted the lanes had helped. Many still insisted the lanes were killing their part of the city. And emotions ran hot: Someone scattered tacks (大头钉) on the bike lane.

E) This little story turns out to be a fascinating glimpse at the challenges cities face as they try to update their urban infrastructure — to clean up the air, reduce greenhouse emissions, and speed up travel by making towns more bike-friendly. There's a rising amount of data showing that installing bike lanes and making streets more pedestrian-friendly boosts the economic fortunes of a place. Removing cars and parking spots works. But the folks who run local businesses simply aren't convinced, even when their own street performs. Given that sort of mess, can political fights over bike lanes ever end?

F) In 2013, researchers at New York City's Department of Transportation studied seven stretches of road that had installed bike lanes or created pedestrian-friendly areas. The city analyzed the data for businesses along those routes and found that by the third year sales grew faster on five of the streets than in the district overall, on average — up to five times faster, in fact.

G) Beyond New York, a survey of research from 23 cities found that bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly design didn't hurt local retail and food stores. ("Fears of disastrous consequences for local businesses are unfounded," the researchers concluded.) More recent work has shown roughly the same.

H) The truth is that in fairly dense areas, bikes are more efficient at moving people around. You might lose one car driver's business — but you gain shoppers who now can arrive more easily on bikes. "Cyclists and pedestrians are consumers too," notes Professor Susan Handy. Plus, streets redesigned for bikes and pedestrians tend to become more pleasant places to hang around, so "in a lot of cases, that's created much nicer environments that are really good for those businesses."

I) Mom-and-pop shops are usually pretty quick at recognizing situations that will help their bottom lines. So why the blind spot here? Perhaps it's that attention focuses on horror stories — and some merchants do get hit when bike lanes come in.

J) I spoke to Cindy Hughes, a hairdresser (理发师) in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She said business fell by at least 40 percent when the city removed nearby parking to put in a bike lane. The majority of her customers drive, with many coming from nearby towns. Only a very few have shifted to cycling, and even those almost certainly won't cycle in Boston's snowy winters. So while Hughes supports bike lanes — "cyclists deserve to be safe" — she sees the parking loss as an existential risk. "Look, 90 percent of my customers drive," she told me. "For our business, the bike lanes are way worse than Covid was."

K) For others, the pushback is cultural, says Henry Grabar, a writer for the Slate Magazine. Small business owners are frequently drivers who commute from other parts of the city by car, Grabar points out. They're also often longtime locals. "They tend to be people with deep roots in the city, who have hung around since before the neighborhood became what it is today," he adds. Driving around town in a car is so normal to them that cycling seems weird and unusual — despite its boost from Covid, when bike sales exploded by 75 percent.

L) Psychology beats all! Who knew, right? The fierce divide between store owners and bike-lane advocates seems similar to our larger culture wars over climate change. If we've learned anything about culture wars, it's that data isn't much good at changing minds.

M) When Janette Sadik-Khan was the head of New York City's Transportation Department back in the early 2000s, she oversaw a rollout (推出) of bike lanes — and got angry blowback from residents and business owners who claimed there weren't enough cyclists to justify installing lanes. Now, she notes ironically, the lanes are so full of activity that opponents have turned to claiming the problem is the opposite: There are too many cyclists getting in the way of cars.

N) Maybe bike lanes will always be charged with emotion, until enough of the public is finally concerned about climate change — and it seems reckless (鲁莽的) to not have them.

O) Crises, after all, have a way of opening people's eyes to possibilities. During Covid, restaurants and cafes lost so much business that cities nationwide began allowing them to build curbside seating areas where people could sit, safely, in the open air. It greatly reduced parking — but because, well, shop owners didn't see any way around it. Customers loved the outdoor seating so much that cities are making it permanent: A New York City study of several streets closed during Covid found storeowners making more than before, and diners enjoying the outdoor lifestyle. If data won't change minds, customers might.

36. An increasing amount of data indicates that installing bike lanes raises local business revenues.
37. According to a magazine writer, some small business owners' resistance to bike lanes arises from cultural factors.
38. A stretch of Skillman Ave witnessed not only a big increase in sales but also the opening of new businesses.
39. When people have no way out in crises, they are more likely to embrace changes.
40. According to one survey, city design with bike lanes and pedestrian space did not negatively impact local businesses.
41. Despite increased business activity on Skillman Ave, many store owners insisted the bike lanes were destroying their area.
42. In a war of culture, data does not help much in changing people's minds.
43. A businesswoman said her business dropped sharply when parking space gave way to a bike lane, because most of her customers came by car.
44. Local business owners on Skillman Ave argued that their businesses would be ruined when parking spots were replaced by bike lanes.
45. People may find it more pleasant to wander around streets redesigned for cycling and walking.

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Can playing video games help you get a better job?

A) The gaming industry is larger than films and music combined, yet few of us are likely to list our achievements in playing computer games as work experience in our resume. But why not? Businesses are waking up to the skills gamers can bring to the workplace.

B) One start-up is convinced that the skills learned by playing games — hard-won through years of training and battle — can be applied to real-life work situations. And Game Academy reckons its belief is backed up by hard data. Do you enjoy unusual puzzle games like Portal, or tower defence games like Defense Grid? The team has found that IT workers play those more than average. But if you prefer Civilization, Total War, or X-Com, where strategy and resource management are key, then you might have more in common with managers.

C) Game Academy's idea is simple: analyse gamers' habits from their online gaming profile, and offer courses in valuable skills that reflect their aptitudes — skills they can practise and refine in-game. And there is already a growing acceptance that gaming skills are transferable.

D) Even the military is hiring gamers. "The ability to absorb information, react swiftly and coordinate actions whilst remaining calm under pressure are often attributes of people that are good at gaming," according to a Royal Air Force spokesperson. Those skills are part of what the Royal Air Force is looking for "in a variety of roles". "Skills acquired through gaming can be very relevant to certain areas."

E) "There are plenty of soft skills that gamers can utilise in a professional setting, such as teamwork, problem solving and strategic planning," says Ryan Gardner, a regional director with Hays recruitment. But does that really mean your top 100 ranking in Overwatch should go down in your resume? "It's about how you either make it relevant to the job you are applying for, or how it makes you more interesting as a potential employee," Mr. Gardner says.

F) Two years ago, a Glasgow University study made headlines for suggesting gaming could make students more successful. But "the research hasn't really changed minds, at least not yet," says one of the authors of the study, Dr. Matthew Barr. He's now writing a book on the topic. "For now, I think the negative reputation around games means that telling someone you're a determined gamer is more likely to harm your chances of getting a job. But if someone can explain how they've led a team in an online game, for example, they may be able to persuade an employer that this is useful," says Dr Barr.

G) Playing games casually is unlikely to help your career prospects. But part of Game Academy's suggestion is to transform casual gamers into "conscious" ones, applying critical thinking to developing their skills. "We see gameplay as a resource of talent," says co-founder David Barrie. "Why can't we put in our resume our gaming victories and achievements?" he asks. "If they say they want leadership — why can't I point to my years of leading World of Warcraft raids?"

H) There are already plenty of gamers out there who know that their hobby has made them who they are. Earlier this year, Matthew Ricci told gaming site Kotaku: "If you're playing EVE Online you basically already have an MBA." Often made fun of in gaming circles as a "spreadsheet simulator (电子表格模拟器)", the economy of the fictional EVE universe is driven by real market principles. If you want to build a new spaceship, the raw material has to be mined by another player. Manufacturing costs come into effect, and commodities fluctuate in price based on demand and the distance to haul the commodity.

I) Mr. Ricci, who had always dreamed of being the boss of his own company, ran an in-game corporation comprising hundreds of players. Eventually, he realised he could transfer his skills to real-life business — instead of doing it for free. He restructured Zentech, once a taxation vehicle for his father's business, and it is now in its fourth year helping international brands enter the Canadian market. EVE teaches skills like creativity, leadership, organisation, and conflict resolution, he maintains. He credits his success to his family, his strong desire to run his own business- and "a damn good company in Iceland that made a damn good game".

J) Digital entrepreneur and business consultant Mia Bennett says: "In more traditional settings, gaming is still imagined to be the pursuit of teenage boys — a waste of time." But there are some links to skills like "decision-making, the ability to anticipate and future planning," she says. "It also helps with meta-skills — learning how to learn, experimentation, and creative thinking."

K) Twelve years into his career, Mark Long, a radiotherapy physicist with the NHS in Surrey, doesn't get as much gaming time as he used to. "I would love to say that my gaming skills allow me to destroy cancer using linear accelerators like photon (光子) blasters, but that's not quite the reality." Instead, he credits old-school games like Palace of Magic with exposing him to computers. Every new gaming upgrade improved his knowledge of how they worked. Gaming also encouraged a competitive spirit — and that, he believes, translates. "When creating treatment plans, the aim is to optimise the radiation dose to the tumour and restrict it as much as possible to healthy surrounding tissues and organs," he says. It's about "repeating the process, but each time doing something slightly different to improve the result". Not unlike achieving a high score or a perfect run. "Most videogames are essentially puzzles to solve," he says. "And problem-solving is a big part of my job."

L) Over at Game Academy, Mr. Barrie is aware they still have a mountain to climb. "The employer community will need the science," he says, but confesses he only became a true believer when he started asking players about their biggest in-game achievements. "The scale and scope of their answers were amazing," he says. "But ask them the same about their work, and they don't know." "The engagement and powerful skills that people get playing a game — why can't work be like that?" he asks.

36. Certain gaming skills meet the requirements of the armed forces in Britain.
37. One veteran player has applied his gaming skills to his real-world business and owes his success partly to a game company.
38. According to a researcher, bad reputation about games will probably limit a gamer's chances of landing a job.
39. Businesses are beginning to realise gaining skills are applicable to their employees' work.
40. A physicist admits gaming has contributed to his computer knowledge and skills of solving problems.
41. Game Academy proposes to help gamers develop their skills using critical thinking.
42. One who enjoys playing games that require management skills to win might possess more qualities of a manager.
43. In more conventional views, gaming is a time-wasting activity pursued by young boys.
44. It is suggested that gaming skills be included in a resume if they enhance a job applicant's appeal.
45. Many gamers know their passion for playing games has shaped their identity.

Section B

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Looking for a job after 45

A) Ageism and long-term unemployment are most damaging for those in the second half of their careers. Changing careers is hard. Getting back into work after you've been laid off is even harder. Those over 45 make up the bulk of the long-term unemployed, in America and elsewhere. Hiring managers admit they are reluctant to hire those over 40 or 45, arguing they probably won't be a good "fit," their experience won't be relevant to the workplace, and they'll be unable or unwilling to learn new skills.

B) But the one thing that can really make a difference? More education and training. These are the results from a new study by Generation, a nonprofit founded by former McKinsey consultants. They've just published a global survey on midcareer employment, based on surveys of over 5,000 workers and managers in seven countries.

C) "Older midcareer workers...make up the bulk of the long-term unemployed in many countries," Generation's analysts write in their report. Those over 45 comprise over 40% of the long-term unemployed, for example. And if you're out of work past the age of 45, there's nearly a two in three chance you'll be out of work for over a year, they find. "Midcareer individuals are finding it harder to get jobs," they write. "People age 45+ face persistent and rising pressure in the global job market. They are unemployed for much longer than the average, and their age is indeed one of the greatest barriers to their finding a job."

D) A substantial part of this, they report, is "widespread ageism" on the part of hiring managers. Although such managers admit that post-45 hires turn out on average to be just as good as or better than younger workers, they still don't want to hire them. "Hiring managers have a strong perception bias against 45+ job candidates — they believe that members of this age group have poor skills and low adaptability," Generation's analysts report.

E) The survey results are remarkable. Hiring managers are three times as likely to rate job applicants age 35-44 as a better "fit" than those over 45. They rate the post-45 job seekers lower on average on all three measures — even experience — than those ages 18 to 34. This is true even though nearly nine managers in 10 also said their post-45 workers were as good as or better than younger employees in the same jobs.

F) Their biggest fears about hiring those over 45? Managers said they worry that older hires will be reluctant to try new technologies, and will be unable to learn new skills. Besides, the majority of hiring managers are under 45 — and seem reluctant to hire people older than themselves.

G) But here's the good news. Older workers who've actively engaged in more education and training relevant to their jobs turn this pretty much on its head. Three-quarters of hiring managers said they'd be more likely to hire an over-45 who had relevant education, training or credentials (文凭). Among those over 45 who'd successfully switched careers, 74% said training helped them get their new job.

H) "Midcareer switchers overwhelmingly say that training enabled them to shift to a new career path," the analysts write. And when they asked over-45 candidates about their attitudes, they found that "those who are excited by training are unemployed for less time, receive more job offers, and are more satisfied by the job offers they receive."

I) Hiring managers said training was three times more likely to get them to hire applicants over age 45 than, say, government subsidies (补贴). What training are we talking about? Obviously it depends on the job. And, yes, managers are most likely to be impressed by industry qualifications you get in school. These things cost money, and time. But these aren't the only things helpful. Those who had successfully changed careers after 45 told Generation that education and training had been a big help — and that included in-person, on-the-job training, "'informal learning," and online courses — with or without certification.

J) If they think we're too old to learn new skills after we're 45, just learning some new skills may have an effect on its own. There's a downside to this. The people least interested in retraining are more likely to come from historically disadvantaged communities, more likely to have low incomes, and are more likely to have the least schooling after getting their high-school diploma or earlier. On average, post-45 job switchers with higher incomes participate in 2.5 training programs each. Those with lower incomes: 0.9 programs on average.

K) Many years ago, I wrote about a study which found that employers are much more likely to hire a college graduate who has some work experience in the industry than a college graduate who took the "right" degree. A bank is more likely to hire a literature graduate who spent their summers working in their local bank than a finance or economics graduate who spent their summers surfing or traveling around Italy. They've learned through long experience. The person who worked in the bank is more likely ready, willing and able to be part of the team and do the job from day 1.

L) We can rail against "ageism" all we like. It gets us nowhere. And it's easy to forget that employers, like everyone else, are under time pressure and are just trying to solve problems. Any and all "training," including inexpensive and informal training, is going to help resolve their worries about hiring someone over 45. And it has never been easier or cheaper to gain instruction in new skills, thanks to the internet. Online schools like Udemy and Lynda.com offer sweet deals at sign-up. And courses on YouTube are free.

M) Bottom line? Yes, it really can be difficult getting a new job after age 45, let alone changing careers. One of the best things we can do to help ourselves is to go online and learn new, relevant skills. Sadly, the people who most need the help are least likely to take it — which raises a challenge for society as a whole. Not only do we not want to see lives go to waste, but we all benefit if more people are working and fewer are unemployed

36. Hiring managers believe unemployed workers over 45 lack good skills and are less adaptable.
37. Switching to a new career is difficult and getting reemployed after a layoff is even tougher.
38. People from poor neighborhoods tend to have the least interest in retraining.
39. Hiring managers who are not yet 45 years old seem unwilling to hire people their senior.
40. Some analysts find age 45+ jobless workers are most likely to be unemployed for more than a year.
41. People who had succeeded in career change after 45 told a nonprofit organization they owed a great deal to the education and training they had received.
42. Older workers who actively pursue more education and training have a good chance of being hired.
43. A new study finds that more education and training helps midcareer individuals find a new job.
44. Owing to the internet, it is now more convenient than ever to receive training in new skills.
45. People over 45 stimulated by training suffer shorter periods of unemployment, get more job offers and have greater satisfaction in them

Section B

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Getting young minds into design

A) Recently, a leading design federation in the UK warned that the UK could face a creative skills shortage, after the latest figures revealed a drop of almost 10 percent in students studying Design and Technology. These figures showed that the number of pupils that sat exams in Design and Technology fell 10 percent from 204,788 to 185,279 last year.

B) Chief executive John Kampfner of the Creative Industries Federation thinks that this drop in figures has worrying implications for the skills pipeline in Britain's hugely successful arts and creative industries. He said, "We already have skills shortages in many jobs such as animation (动画制作) and special effects." He added: "Engineering, which requires a similar mix of creative and technical skills, also has recruitment problems."

C) Many other designers and architects have expressed concern over the future supply of home-grown talent for UK firms, and industry bodies have pointed out that there has been a lack of roots-level support. However, if these designers had visited the Design Museum shop in London earlier this year their fears may have been eased. With £10 to spend, they could have bought a fascinating children's toy called "Dazzle Racer". An automotive cylinder(圆柱体), it included a wind-up, elastic (有弹性的)-band-powered mechanism, minimal parts, all 100 percent recycled and lots of stickers. It was good fun, simple, eye-catching and very original.

D) Well you'd expect the Design Museum to commission and make some interesting items, but this one was different. Designed by a group of six Year 9 and Year 10 boys from Finchley Catholic High School, the toy was the winning entry in the museum's 2015 Design Ventura competition, which brings the business of design to life for students aged 13 to 16 by challenging them to develop a new creative, sustainable and commercially feasible product for the Design Museum shop and attracts hundreds of entries nationwide.

E) "We did Design Ventura in my previous school," says Liam Hourican, Finchley Catholic High School's design technology curriculum leader. "Then when I changed schools four years ago, I introduced it here because it helps to develop so many skills."

F) The theme for last year's competition was "Move", and Hourican began with three groups working in lunch breaks and after school before selecting the group with the most innovative idea. Each participating school may submit just one proposal. "It's the taking part and doing the work which is important," he says. "And I never dreamt we'd win."

G) Catherine Ritman Smith, head of learning at the Design Museum, is expecting around 10,000 participants aged 13 to 16 to take part this year and says that the project — funded by Deutsche Bank as part of its youth engagement programme Born To Be — is the biggest event in the museum's calendar. "We started Design Ventura with around 800 young people in 2010 and it has grown steadily since," she says. "Teachers like it because the skills are all transferable and it helps to validate the value of design as a subject," she explains, telling me that nearly 600 schools have taken part so far.

H) So how does the competition work? A single-word theme is announced in the summer. This year it is "Change". Schools work with groups to produce imaginative design ideas for a product in simple materials that could sell for £10 in the Design Museum Shop. Participating schools then register by November and eventually submit their design idea. Along the way there is training and support for teachers and tutoring for students from designers. An additional bonus is when the winners see their design on sale in the spring of the following year.

I) Hourican and his pupils have happy memories of spending a whole day at the museum, having been selected as one of 10 shortlisted schools to present their idea to a panel of judges, including designer Jasper Conran. Then they worked with the Kin Design Studio in Shoreditch, met designers at their school and attended a lunch with Deutsche Bank employees. The students helped to make decisions and there were plenty of discussions — they changed the product's name, for example.

J) "One of the really useful things about this competition," says Hourican, "is that there's a commercial element because the product is going on sale for real and the boys had to learn about budgeting and marketing, as well as designing their game." Profits go to charity. "The winning team chooses where it wants the profits to go," says Ritman Smith. "The Finchley Catholic High School product raised about £1,000 for Great Ormond Street Hospital." Winning entries in past years have included a make-your-own cloth kit called Dove Bunting and a threefold, wallet-sized travel game with goals at each end, called Badoiiing.

K) It costs the schools nothing to participate in Design Ventura; the professional designers provide their services for free. Among them are architect Asif Khan, a Design Museum trustee who has worked as designer-in-residence at the museum, helping emerging architects. He has recently been commissioned to design the new Museum of London building in Smithfield.

L) Another is television presenter and interior designer Naomi Cleaver, who is one of the competition's judges. "I'm very keen to encourage young people," she says, observing that design brings together other subjects such as literature, art, history, geography and science. "Now that design education is limited in the curriculum, I'm all in favour of competitions such as Design Ventura, which helps to bring the standard curriculum to life," says Cleaver. "And the judging day is terrific fun. Some of these students are very imaginative. One group presented their idea in the form of a puppet show and we see some marvelous demonstration models. "I'm always impressed by the levels of confidence and the support the students get from their teachers."

M) Ritman Smith adds: "Design technology has become a tricky subject to make a case for, and we've heard of departments closing in some schools. We find that if pupils take part in Design Ventura in Year Nine it can be the trigger which leads them to opt for it at General Certificate of Secondary Education, so we are helping to keep alive something which is crucial to industry and entrepreneurship."

36. During the course of preparing for Design Ventura, teachers receive training and support while students get tutoring from designers.

37. A visit to the Design Museum shop in London can reduce the designers' fears about the future supply of talents educated in Britain.

38. One of Design Ventura's judges says the competition adds vigour to the standard curriculum in schools.

39. Enrollment in Design and Technology decreased by nearly ten percent last year in the UK.

40. Participation of ninth graders in Design Ventura can motivate them to choose design technology as their subject.

41. Design Ventura is welcomed by teachers because it helps to prove the worth of design as a school subject.

42. The schools don't have to pay anything to take part in the Design Ventura competition.

43. Participants in Design Ventura are challenged to create sustainable and marketable products.

44. Students benefit from Design Ventura because they can learn about budgeting and marketing in addition to game design.

45. According to an officer of the Creative Industries Federation, there is difficulty now in recruiting engineers in the UK.

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Is juicing actually good for you?

A) Freshly juiced fruit has become a basic dietary item — especially for busy, health-conscious consumers who can save time on making (and perhaps even chewing) their food without missing out on nutrients. Fruit juice also has been linked to claims that it can help you both lose weight and stay healthy. All of which, of course, has made it highly profitable. The global fruit and vegetable juices market was valued at $154 billion in 2016 and is expected to grow.

B) But is juicing really as healthy as we think? Most foods containing fructose—a naturally occurring sugar found in all fruits and fruit juices — don't seem to have harmful effects as long as they're not contributing to excess daily calories. This is because the fibre found in whole fruits is intact, and the sugar is contained within the fruit's cells. It takes our digestive system a while to break these cells down and for fructose to enter the bloodstream.

C) But this is not the case with fruit juice. Unlike whole fruit, fruit juice has most of the fibre removed. This is why the fructose in fruit juices counts as 'free sugars' — which also include honey and the sugars added to foods. It's recommended by the World Health Organisation that adults have no more than 30g of added sugar, the equivalent of 150ml of fruit juice, per day. The problem is that, with the fibre removed, fruit juice's fructose is absorbed more quickly. Sudden increases in blood sugar cause the release of insulin (胰岛素) to bring it back down to a stable level. Over time, this mechanism can wear out increasing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. In 2013, researchers analysed the health data of 100,000 people collected between 1986 and 2009 and found that fruit juice consumption was linked with increased risk of type 2 diabetes. Another study found a relationship between fruit juice and type 2 diabetes after following the diets and diabetes status of more than 70,000 nurses over 18 years. The researchers explain that the possible reason for this may partly have been the lack of the other components found in whole fruit, like fibre.

D) Juices containing vegetables can provide more nutrients and less sugar than juices made up of just fruit — but they still lack valuable fibre. Diets high in fibre have been linked to a lower risk of developing heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and diabetes, and it's recommended adults consume 30g per day.

E) Aside from the link to type 2 diabetes, many studies agree that fruit juice is harmful if it contributes to an excess in calories. In an analysis of 155 studies, John Sievenpiper, associate professor at the University of Toronto's Department of Nutritional Sciences, set out to understand if the associations between sugary soft drinks and health — including risk of diabetes and heart disease — were applicable to the food and drink we generally consume as part of a healthy diet. He compared studies looking into the effects of fructose-containing sugars with control diets free from or lower in these sugars. His aim? To isolate the effects of consuming too many calories from the effects of foods containing different sugars.

F) He found negative effects on blood sugar and insulin levels when food provided excess calories from sugars, including fruit juice. However, when the calories weren't in excess overall, there were some advantages to consuming whole fruit — and even fruit juice. Sievenpiper concludes that the recommended 150ml of fruit juice per day, which is an average serving, is reasonable. The paper concluded that foods containing fructose may have some small benefits for long-term blood sugar control when they don't lead to over-consumption of calories. But when they do lead to too many calories, they risk raising blood sugar and insulin levels.

G) So while we know that fruit juice can cause diabetes if it's part of a diet that has more calories overall, it's less clear how juice affects the long-term health of those who aren't overweight. But we have a higher risk of consuming more than the recommended daily number of calories (around 2,000 for women and 2,500 for men) on the days we drink juice, according to research. Numerous studies have shown that drinking fruit juice doesn't make us consume any less of other foods throughout the day.

H) As it is easy to consume large amounts of fruit juice quite quickly, extra calories are taken in. And extra calories can contribute to weight gain. One way we can improve the effects of fruit juice on our health is making sure we select ripe fruit to retain as much of its goodness as possible, according to Roger Clemens, professor of pharmaceutical (药物的) sciences at the University of Southern California.

I) Another reason for fruit juice's recent popularity is the argument that it can help to remove poisonous or harmful substances from the body. However, "the whole concept of a juice diet helping to remove poisonous or harmful substances from the body is completely false," says Clemens. "We consume compounds every day that may be poisonous and our bodies do a wonderful job of removing and eliminating anything harmful from our bodies."

J) And juice isn't a cure-all for getting your nutrients, either. "There are a lot of nutrients contained in the parts of the fruits, such as in apple skins, that are excluded when you juice them," says Heather Ferris, a professor of medicine. "You end up with sugary water with some vitamins."

K) Plus, she adds, it's not an ideal way to reach the advised 'five a day'. "People try to get five servings of fruit and vegetables per day and don't realise this isn't just about getting vitamins," she says. "It's also about reducing the amount of grain carbs (碳水化合物) and protein and fats in our diet, and increasing fibre." So while fruit juice is better than no fruit at all, there are limits. It particularly comes with risks when we consume more than 150ml of free sugars per day, or when it puts us over our recommended calorie intake. It provides us with vitamins — but fruit juice is far from a quick fix.

36. Fruit juice is different from whole fruit in that it contains much less fibre.

37. Some people believe a juice diet helps to rid our body of harmful or poisonous substances.

38. A lot of research comes to the same conclusion that fruit juice does harm to the human body when it leads to surplus calories:

39. The claimed health benefits of fruit and vegetable juices have rendered the industry very profitable.

40. To increase the benefits of fruit juice to our health, we'd better choose ripe fruit to make juice.

41. Diets containing large amounts of fibre reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other health hazards.

42. According to a research paper, drinking fruit juice is beneficial on condition that it is consumed in reasonable amounts.

43. One expert claims that juicing wastes a lot of nutrients contained in fruits.

44. It takes some time for fruit's cells to be digested and for fructose to be absorbed.

45. A lot of research has demonstrated that drinking fruit juice does not reduce our daily consumption of other foods.

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"Phantom" Traffic Jams Are Real—And Scientists Know How to Stop Them

A) Traffic jams are a common problem of most big cities, either in developed or in developing countries, but one kind of traffic jams in particular can be especially frustrating. These are generally known as "phantom" traffic jams, in which dense traffic crawls to a halt for no apparent reason at all.

B) "When caught in such a traffic jam, it is common for drivers to assume that there must be an accident, or construction or something," said Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) computer science professor Berthold Horn. "And then you drive and drive and drive... and there isn't anything there."

C) The exact cause of these phantom traffic jams has long remained a mystery. But now, new research has found the cause and researchers may have come up with a solution for this frustrating traffic pattern: maintaining equal spacing between cars on the road, rather than driving so closely behind another vehicle that a collision (碰撞) is likely if that vehicle brakes suddenly.

D) Horn said phantom traffic jams are an emergent property of the flow of vehicles down a highway. A phantom jam begins when a car in dense traffic slows down even slightly, which causes the car behind that vehicle to slow even more — and the slowing action spreads backward through the lane of traffic like a wave, getting worse the farther it spreads, Eventually, the cars far behind are forced to stop completely or risk hitting the slower vehicles ahead — and so the traffic grinds to a halt over nothing, Horn said.

E) Horn has been working on the problem of phantom traffic jams for years, and he has come up with a solution: By splitting the difference between the cars in front and the cars behind, the spacing of cars in a stream of traffic can act as a damper (抑制) on phantom traffic jams. That is, it can prevent the slow-down effect from being amplified (增强) by the cars that follow behind, he said. In essence, each driver would constantly make adjustments to keep their car roughly halfway between the car in front and the car behind.

F) Horn calls this method of vehicle spacing bilateral (双边的) control and he said it could be achieved with relatively simple modifications to the adaptive cruise control that many new cars already have. Adaptive cruise control is a driver assistance technology that sets a maximum speed for vehicles and automatically slows the speed of the car when traffic is sensed in front of the vehicle. The technology is also known as autonomous cruise control. Such modifications, Horn said, could help fight phantom jams within a few years, maybe decades before an alternative solution, such as networked self-driving cars, becomes a reality on the roads.

G) Traffic jams are caused by a number of factors, such as roads that are poorly designed or over-capacity, localized factors like city traffic-lighting patterns, and events like accidents and construction. But phantom traffic jams can make all those problems worse, Horn said. And the researchers in the new study have calculated that solving phantom jams could save at least some of the estimated $121 billion per year that traffic jams are estimated to cost the U.S. economy, Horn told Live Science.

H) New research by Horn and MIT postdoctoral associate Liang Wang, published in the journal IEEE Transactions on Intelligent Transportation Systems, shows how bilateral control can fight the problem. The researchers made computer models of real-world traffic conditions, showing how a typical U.S. freeway could benefit from cars using bilateral control. That would be in place when human drivers fail to slow down, thus avoiding tailgating (紧跟) the car in front, Horn said. "Under reasonable conditions today, you might get 1,800 cars per lane per hour throughput (the volume of traffic passing through)," he added. "But with bilateral control you could almost double that."

I) The main alternative to increasing traffic throughput per lane has been to build more lanes and more highways, and putting in new roads is very expensive, he said. “If we can increase the throughput on major highways, even if it’s only by 50 percent that would be a big deal,” Horn said.

J) With the help of engineering students at high schools in Maine, Horn and Wang have also built a robot simulation (模拟) that shows how bilateral control can suppress phantom traffic jams. Increasing the spacing of vehicles dampens the effect of slowdowns by cars in front of a given car, so that the slowing is not worsened until it becomes a phantom jam, the researchers said.

K) A video from the project shows a train of autonomous robots running along a track without bilateral control: they eventually back up in phantom jams. But when the robots are switched over to bilateral control (by flashing the lights in the room), each autonomous robot tries to keep itself halfway between the robot in front and the one behind; the phantom jams disappear as a result, Horn said.

L) Since starting his research on phantom traffic jams, Horn has learned that schools of fish and flocks of birds and bats use similar spacing strategies to avoid hitting each other while swimming or flying in densely packed groups. In particular, studies of millions of bats emerging at dusk from caves in Southeast Asia showed that each bat used a form of bilateral control to reduce the likelihood of collisions with other bats in the densely packed swarm (一大群), Hom said.

M) Unlike bats, birds and fish, however, humans have difficulty judging distances behind them. To address that weakness, Horn is now working with the car company Toyota to enable a form of bilateral control via modifications to existing adaptive cruise control systems, which use forward-facing sensors to judge the distance to the vehicle ahead. The bilateral control approach would include adding rear-facing sensors to determine the distance to the vehicle following a car.

N) But until those systems become standard, human drivers can help reduce phantom traffic jams simply by not following the car in front so closely. As Horn argues, “There’s absolutely no advantage of tailgating the car in front of you.”

36. The age-long mystery has now been resolved as to how phantom traffic jams are caused.

37. It is possible to nearly double the hourly throughput per lane by adopting bilateral control.

38. According to Horn, drivers making constant adjustments for equal spacing between cars in a flow of traffic can help reduce phantom traffic jams.

39. Before systems for bilateral control are installed, drivers should not follow the car in front too closely so as to reduce phantom traffic jams.

40. Horn said with some simple modifications to the existing equipment in new vehicles, their spacing bilateral control could be accomplished.

41. Drivers caught up in phantom traffic jams are likely to think an accident has happened or some construction is going on.

42. Two sets of sensors would be used to help drivers determine the distances between cars.

43. Solving the problem of phantom jams could save America billions of dollars every year.

44. In a phantom traffic jam, the cars in the same lane slow down one after another, creating a wave-like effect.

45. Horn has found that certain creatures use strategies similar to bilateral control to avoid hitting each other while moving in dense crowds.

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Why it's wrong to look at work-life balance as an achievement

A) Few topics have been so endlessly analysed as work-life balance. The quest to attain this mysterious state has dominated discussion around careers for years—especially for working parents. The concept is often presented as something to achieve, or a goal to reach. And once you've reached it, congratulations: you've made it; you're a successful human being of the 21st century.

B) But the problem is that we often tell ourselves: "I'm going to put in eight hours' worth of work, and then I'm going to put in eight hours' worth of 'me time', which will include my family, my hobbies, my workout, my everything," says Anat Lechner, clinical associate professor of management at New York University. "I don't think it's such a simple formula."

C) And, according to new findings, it may not be. Some researchers are now encouraging us to stop thinking about work-life balance as an achievement that you either hit or don't. Instead, they suggest it may be more of a lifelong process—a continuous, never-ending exercise that requires self-awareness and timely adjustments. Researchers Ioana Lupu and Mayra Ruiz-Castro argue that work-life balance is "a cycle, not an achievement" In their 2020 study, the researchers interviewed nearly 80 employees at two London-based firms—an equal number of men and women between the ages of 30 and 50, all with at least one dependent child—who worked in middle or senior management roles.

D) Although it sounds like the respondents had a lot in common, here's what separated them: about 30% of the men and 50% of the Women reported resisting working long hours. The other respondents, meanwhile, all worked long hours because they thought that's what successful professionals should do.

E) Lupu and Ruiz-Castro looked at those who rejected the long hours and they found that those workers actually had strikingly similar strategies for maintaining their work-life balance. They had a tendency to reflect and question assumptions in the name of self-awareness and regularly took steps to adjust the things standing in their way to work-life balance.

F) Lupu and Ruiz-Castro identified five steps that the respondents in the study who had better work-life balance used in their jobs. First, they paused and reconsidered beliefs such as "I'm a professional, so I should work, work, work", and asked themselves questions like, "What's currently causing me stress?" Second, after identifying the cause, they zeroed in on their resultant emotions. Did they feel angry, sad, energised? Third, they reprioritised, asking "Is working long hours really worth cutting back on family time?", for example. Fourth, they considered their alternatives: is there anything at work that could be changed to accommodate these new priorities? And finally, they implemented changes, like asking their supervisor for greater flexibility, or deciding not to take on every project that comes their way.

G) This five-step process is something anyone can adopt. Going through the steps, and constantly checking in with yourself can help you shift and adapt your professional life to something that will better harmonise with your personal one. "Awareness of your emotional state is essential in order to determine the changes you want to make in your work and in your life," says Lupu.

H) New York University's Lechner agrees that finding that balance is an ongoing pursuit. It's not simply about dividing up the hours in your day between work, the gym, kids and chores. If the underlying emotional sources of stress are still there, then the time you actually spend at home may not be enjoyable. "We come home and even though physically we are there,

mentally we still may be processing things that happened at work. We're not present," she says. What we call "work-life balance" is actually just a substitute to having a sense of fulfillment and contentment.

I) Of course, finding that balance probably shouldn't be something you have to do by yourself. Research by Erin Kelly, professor of work and organisation studies at MIT, shows companies and managers can play a key role in creating a better environment for workers. For her book *Overload: How Good Jobs Went Bad and What to Do about It*, she and co-author Phyllis Moen split more than 1,000 employees at a Fortune 500 company into two groups, one that worked under a management redesign and one that continued working within the existing management structure.

J) Under the management redesign, many steps were taken to ensure better work-life balance and prevent burnout (精疲力竭). Managers were regularly reminded to explicitly support their employees. Workers were allowed to make changes, like cancelling 9 am meetings. All of this was done in the name of increasing job satisfaction and giving workers greater flexibility, and to assure workers that it was something management was committed to. Unsurprisingly, Kelly and Moen found that employees in the redesign group reported less stress and less burnout. They were less likely to quit their jobs; indeed, over the next four years, they were 40% less likely to quit than those who kept working under the old policies.

K) "Work-life balance is understood to be an individual's response, so people think 'it's up to me to manage the craziness of my work life'", says Kelly. But organisations need to examine the demands they're placing on employees. "The root problem is not how the two pieces of work and life come together. It's that we have unrealistic expectations of what we're asked to do on the work side." If your workplace isn't an environment where work-life balance is possible in the first place, any effort you attempt to make toward it on a personal level will be in vain.

L) That's a conversation that appears to be gathering pace. The new prevalence of remote and flexible working models will likely all play important roles in how we balance our professional and personal lives. And if it seems like finding that perfect balance remains difficult to achieve, the experts say that keeping some perspective can help. For millions of people, work is about being able to put food on the table. Talking about work-life balance "is a very privileged conversation", says Lechner. "If we're reflecting, maybe we should also reflect on that."

36. According to a management expert, work-life balance is not as simple as giving equal amounts of time to work and personal life.
37. Research found that those who are given greater flexibility at work are less stressed and more likely to stay in their jobs.
38. Workers who rejected working long hours tended to make regular adjustments in order to achieve work-life balance.
39. Talking about work-life balance is said to be a privilege reserved for the better-off, not for those who barely make a living.
40. Knowing one's emotional state is of utmost importance in deciding what changes to make for a better work-life balance.
41. More female professionals reported being reluctant to work overtime than their male counterparts.
42. Without organisational support, any personal effort to maintain work-life balance will be unsuccessful.
43. The question of how to achieve work-life balance has long been the main subject of discussion among workers.
44. You may not actually experience emotional wellbeing at home if you remain occupied with what happened at work.
45. Some researchers suggest that work-life balance is not a goal to achieve, but a process for life to be adjusted promptly.

Section B

Directions: In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter. Answer the questions by marking the corresponding letter on Answer Sheet 2.

If we care about plastic waste, why won't we stop drinking bottled water?

We have all seen the damage plastic waste is doing around the world, but sales of bottled water have continued to grow.

A) For all the innovation and choice that define the food and drink industries, if you want to make money, you could do a lot worse than fill a bottle with water and sell it. A litre of tap water, the stuff we have cleverly piped into our homes, costs less than half a penny. A litre of bottled water can cost well over a pound, especially for something fancy that has been sucked through a mountain.

B) Yet the bottled water market is livelier than ever. It defies our increasing awareness of the harm plastics do to the environment and a broader, growing sense that something has to change. Sales in the UK were worth a record £558.4 million this past year, an increase of 7%, according to the latest figures from the market analyst Kantar. Separate data from other analysts show that last year the British consumed more than 2.2 billion litres of bottled water, including "take-home" and "on-the-go" products. That's an annual rise in volume of 8.5%.

C) Environmental campaigners are struggling to understand why nations blessed with clean tap water grow only fonder of the bottle. "It's very surprising to me," says Sam Chetan-Walsh, a political adviser at Greenpeace and campaigner against ocean plastic. "Public awareness has never been higher, but the message is not quite reaching all the people it needs to." Where it is heard, the message is causing concern. Plastic water bottles require oceans of fossil fuels to make and ship. Additionally, single-use plastics of all types are polluting our cities and seas. Numerous documentaries have shown how plastic is ultimately killing wildlife.

D) Moves against various plastics have gathered pace, from shopping bags to straws and plastic-lined coffee cups. Chetan-Walsh argues that bottled water is different because the alternatives are so obvious. "If a product that is so nakedly unnecessary can exist then the whole system is failing," he says.

E) Hope is not entirely out of reach. The rate of growth has begun to ease (sales were up 7% in the year, compared with 8% in the previous year).

F) But even if large numbers of people are quitting bottled water because of care for the environment, others are taking it up. The introduction of the "sugar tax" on juices and soda drinks has pushed more people to bottled water, while health awareness has boosted its desirability. Tap water consumption is growing at roughly the same pace (UK consumers still drink almost three times as much tap water as bottled water).

G) So the plastic tide only creeps higher. The industry is quick to point out that all its bottles are recyclable. "But collection rates are, at the most generous estimates, 56%, so the actual recycling rate will be lower than that," Chetan-Walsh says. And while bottles may be recyclable, very few are made of recycled plastic. One water bottle company launched recycled half-litre "eco" bottles alongside its standard bottles. Another has pledged to use only recycled plastic across its range by 2025. Chetan-Walsh believes in a ban on single-use bottles. Bans do exist in some places. Organisers of a famous music festival announced that water bottles will not be sold this summer. San Francisco has banned them from city property and events. Last year, the UK government set out plans to ban single-use plastic from its estate.

H) Water bottlers, unsurprisingly, don't support bans. But they raise concerns about health rather than profit margins. Last month one chief executive of a water bottling company said that bans would "result in greater consumption of sugary drinks, adding to all the health dangers of obesity, diabetes and tooth decay". Kinvara Carey, general manager of an association of the biggest bottled water manufacturers, cites a survey in which people were asked what they would do if bottled water were not available. "Forty-four per cent would buy another drink which is not great, 14% would go without, and 4.5% said they would find a fountain." she says. "The choice is important."

I) What if fountains were more numerous, and tap water more clearly available in cafes, restaurants and elsewhere? Dozens of fountains are being installed in London. There are similar initiatives elsewhere. Before plastic and the marketing that made people think they needed bottled water in the first place, fountains were an urban fixture. Greenpeace, among others, is also pushing for a "deposit return" scheme. This would mean tax on bottled water would be refunded to customers who returned the plastic for recycling.

J) Even if bottled water sales are growing slightly more slowly, the industry is racing to adapt to changing concerns and tastes. Flavoured water is booming: sales of the sparkling variety shot up by 20%, according to the latest analyst data, Meanwhile, international water brands, as well as a range of new companies, are selling high-end reusable bottles. And if you must fill them with tap water, why not add flavouring?

K) As the owner of multiple sugary drink brands and bottled water, PepsiCo is facing challenges on health and environmental fronts. Last year, the company bought SodaStream (a drinks company that sells machines for making tap water bubbly and then consumers add flavours) for $3.2 billion. It also launched a range of fancy bottles that work with tap water and flavour packets. The bottle is reusable. The packets? Not so much, and, yes, they are made of plastic, although the company invites users to post them back for recycling.

L) As is so often the case, clever marketing can beat reason; awareness is rarely enough. "There is always this kind of slip between concern, intent and changed behaviour," says Giles Quick an analyst of bottled water. "The best example is five a day, the recommendation to have at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. Almost everyone is aware of this, but something like 15% of us achieve it." Unless a far-reaching bottle ban does come into force, it will be up to consumers to not only demand change, but to act themselves.

36. Judging from the slowing rate of sales growth, there is still hope to combat bottled water.
37. Bottled water manufacturers base their arguments against bans of plastic bottles on health concerns rather than on profits. 、
38. Sales of bottled water in Britain hit a record high last year even though people are increasingly aware that plastics are environmentally unfriendly.
39. It often happens that people can lack reason when faced with skillful marketing.
40. One city on the west coast of America has banned single-use bottles from its property and events.
41. Manufacturing and shipping of plastic water bottles consume a tremendous amount of fossil fuels.
42. One large beverage company has adapted its operations when confronted with challenges from health and environmental advocates.
43. Bottled water is considerably more expensive than tap water.
44. Fountains could be seen in cities before bottled water became popular
45. More people have taken to bottled water because of their health awareness.

Section B

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Stop thinking and start doing

A) Most people have a dream in life, a vision of who or what they'd like to be in the future. At a minimum, everyone has interests and values that determine what they want out of their lives. Even so, trying to set achievable goals that you'll work for over the course of many years can be extremely challenging. It can be hard to know where to even begin, and the things you hope to achieve may seem impossible. But if you're well prepared you may be able to set goals for your life that are just as fulfilling to work toward as to achieve.

B) We all have goals that we want to achieve in our lives. These goals may include learning a new language, eating healthier and losing weight becoming a better parent, saving more money, and so on. It can be easy to assume that the gap between where you are now and where you want to be in the future is caused by a lack of knowledge. This is why we buy courses on how to start a business or how to lose weight fast or how to learn a new language in three months. We assume that if we knew about a better strategy, then we would get better results. We believe that a new result requires new knowledge.

C) What I'm starting to realize, however, is that new knowledge does not necessarily drive new results. In fact, learning something new can actually be a waste of time if your goal is to make progress and not simply gain additional knowledge.

D) It all comes down to the difference between learning and practicing. Thomas Sterner, in his book The Practicing Mind, explains the key difference between practicing and learning. He says: "When we practice something, we are involved in the deliberate repetition of a process with the intention of reaching a specific goal." Here the words "deliberate" and "intention" are key, because they define the difference between actively practicing something and passively learning it.

E) Learning something new and practicing something new may seem very similar but these two methods can have profoundly different results. Here are some additional ways to think about the difference. Let's say your goal is to get stronger and more fit. You can research the best instructions on weight lifting technique, but the only way to build strength is to practice lifting weights. Let's say your goal is to grow your startup. You can learn about the best way to make a sales pitch, but the only way to actually land customers is to practice making sales calls. Let's say your goal is to write a book. You can talk to a best-selling author about writing, but the only way to become a better writer is to practice publishing consistently.

F) Passive learning creates knowledge. Active practice creates skill. Let's consider a couple more reasons to prioritize active practice over passive learning. First, passive learning can be a stick that supports inaction. In many cases, learning is actually a way to avoid taking action on the goals and interests that we say are important to us. For example, let's say you want to learn a foreign language. Reading a book on how to learn a foreign language quickly allows you to feel like you are making progress ("Hey, I'm figuring out the best way to do this!"). Of course, you're not actually practicing the action that would deliver your desired outcome (speaking the foreign language).

G) In situations like this one, we often claim that we are preparing or researching the best method, but these rationalizations allow us to feel like we are moving forward when we are merely spinning our wheels. We make the mistake of being in motion rather than taking action. Learning is valuable until it becomes a form of procrastination (拖延).

H) Another point to consider is that practice is learning, but learning is not practice. Passive learning is not a form of practice because although you gain new knowledge, you are not discovering how to apply that knowledge. Active practice, meanwhile, is one of the greatest forms of learning because the mistakes you make while practicing reveal important insights.

I) Even more importantly, practice is the only way to make a meaningful contribution with your knowledge. You can watch an online course about how to build a business or read an article about a terrible disaster in a developing nation, but that knowledge is unproductive unless you actually launch your business or donate to those in need. Learning by itself can be valuable for you but if you want to be valuable to others, then you have to express your knowledge in some way.

J) The last important point to consider is that practice focuses your energy on the process. Thomas Sterner once said, “Progress is a natural result of staying focused on the process of doing anything.” The state of your life right now is a result of the habits and beliefs that you have been practicing each day, When you realize this and begin to direct your focus toward practicing better habits day-in and day-out, continual progress will be the logical outcome. It is not the things we learn nor the dreams we visualize that determine our results, but rather the habits that we practice each day. Fall in love with boredom and focus your energy on the process, not the product.

K) What does this all mean? Is passive learning useless? Of course not. In many cases, learning for the sake of learning can be a beautiful thing. Not to mention that soaking up new information can help you make more informed decisions when you do decide to take action. That said, the main point of this article is that learning by itself does not lead to progress. We often hide behind information and use learning as an excuse to delay the more difficult and more important choice of actually doing something. Spend less time passively learning and more time actively practicing. Stop thinking and start doing.

36. Acquisition of new knowledge may not guarantee the progress that you aim to make.
37. Your current situation in life is built on the beliefs and habits you have been practicing daily.
38. Knowing the best way to learn a foreign language will not enable you to speak it without actual practice.
39. People may find it demanding to create a goal which will take a long time to achieve.
40. Learning and practicing seem to be very much alike, but the two processes can lead to quite different outcomes.
41. Absorbing new information is helpful in making better decisions prior to action.
42. Sometimes we may feel like we are making progress by doing some research or making preparations, but actually we are staying at the starting point.
43. We are inclined to think that a lack of knowledge prevents us from advancing to a better future.
44. Learning can benefit you by itself but only practice can turn what you learn into meaningful contributions.
45. Practice involves repeating a process intentionally to attain a particular objective.

Section B

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Why Do Americans Work So Much?

A) How will we all keep busy when we only have to work 15 hours a week? That was the question that worried the British economist John Maynard Keynes when he wrote his short essay "Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren" in 1930. Over the next century, he predicted, the economy would become so productive that people would barely need to work at all. For a while, it looked like Keynes was right. In 1930 the average working week was 47 hours in the United States. But by 1970, the number of hours Americans worked on average had fallen to slightly less than 39.

B) But then something changed. Instead of continuing to decline, the duration of the working week remained stable. It has stayed at just below 40 hours for nearly five decades. So what happened? Why are people working just as much today as in 1970?

C) There would be no mystery in this if Keynes had been wrong about the power of technology to increase the economy's productivity, which he thought would lead to a standard of living "between four and eight times as high as it is today." But Keynes got that right: Technology has made the economy massively more productive. According to Benjamin M. Friedman, an economist at Harvard, the U.S. economy is right on track to reach Keynes's eightfold (八倍) multiple by 2029. That is a century after the last data Keynes would have had access to.

D) In a new paper, Friedman tries to figure out why that increased productivity has not translated into increased leisure time. Perhaps people just never feel materially satisfied, always wanting more money to buy the next new thing. This is a theory that appeals to many economists. "This argument is, at best, far from sufficient," he writes. If that were the case, why did the duration of the working week decline in the first place?

E) Another theory Friedman considers is that, in an era of ever fewer settings that provide effective opportunities for personal connections and relationships, people may place more value on the socializing that happens at work. There is support for this theory. Many people today consider colleagues as friends. But Friedman argues that the evidence for this theory is far from conclusive. Many workers report that they would like to spend more time with family, rather than at work Furthermore, this theory cannot explain the change in trend in the U.S. working week in the 1970s.

F) A third possibility proves more convincing for Friedman. That is, American inequality means that the gains of increasing productivity are not widely shared by everyone. In other words, most Americans are too poor to work less. Unlike the other two explanations Friedman considers, this one fits chronologically (按年代). Inequality declined in America during the period following World War II, along with the duration of the working week. But since the early 1970s it has risen dramatically.

G) Keynes's prediction of a shorter working week rests on the idea that the standard of living would continue rising for everyone. But Friedman says that this is not what has happened. Although Keynes's eight-fold figure holds up for the economy as a whole, it is not at all the case for the median(中位数的) American worker. For them, output by 2029 is likely to be around 3.5 times what it was when Keynes was writing. This is a bit below his four-to eight-fold predicted range.

H) This can be seen in the median workers income over this time period complete with a shift in 1973 that fits in precisely with when the working week stopped shrinking. According to Friedman, between 1947 and 1973, the average hourly wage

for normal workers (those who were not in management roles) in private industries other than agriculture nearly doubled in terms of what their money could buy. But by 2013 the average hourly wage for ordinary workers had fallen 5 percent from the 1973 level in terms of actual purchasing Power. Thus, though American incomes may have gone up since 1973, the amount that American workers can actually buy with their money has gone down. For most Americans, then, the magic of increasing productivity stopped working around 1973.Thus, they had to keep working just as much in order to maintain their standard of living.

I) What Keynes predicted was a very optimistic version of what economists call technological unemployment. This is the idea that less labor will be necessary because machines can do so much. In Keynes's vision, the resulting unemployment would be distributed more or less evenly across society in the form of increased leisure. But Friedman says that, for Americans, reality is much darker. Americans now have a labor market in which millions of people — those with fewer skills and less education — are seeking whatever poorly paid work they can get. This is confirmed by a recent poll that found that, for half of hourly workers, their top concern is not that they work too much but that they work too little. This is most likely not because they like their jobs so much. Rather, we can assume it is because they need the money.

J) This explanation leaves an important question. If the very rich — the workers who have reaped above-average gains from the increased productivity since Keynes's time — can afford to work less, why do they continue to work so much? (Indeed, research has shown that the highest earners in America tend to work the most.) Friedman believes that for many top earners, work is a labor of love. They are doing work they care about and are interested in, and doing more of it is not necessarily a burden. For them, it may even be a pleasure. These top earners derive meaning from their jobs and work is an important part of how they think of themselves. And, of course, they are compensated for it at a level that makes it worth their while.

K) Friedman concludes that the prosperity (繁荣) Keynes predicted is here. After all, the economy as a whole has grown even more brilliantly than he expected. But for most Americans, that prosperity is nowhere to be seen. And, as a result, neither are those shorter working weeks.

36.Some people view socializing at the workplace as a chance to develop personal relationships.

37.As ordinary American workers' average hourly pay had decreased despite increasing productivity, they had to work just as many hours as before to keep their living standards.

38.American workers' average weekly working time has not changed for nearly half a century.

39.Friedman believes inequality in the U.S. largely explains why increasing productivity has not resulted in reduced working hours.

40.Many economists assume people's thirst for material things has prevented them from enjoying more leisure time.

41.An economist's prediction about a shorter average working week seemed to be correct for a time in the 20th century.

42.In the U.S. labor market. the primary concern of people with less schooling and fewer skills is to secure any employment even if it is low-paid.

43.Keynes was right in predicting that technology would make the economy much more productive.

44.Many of the highest earners have a keen interest in and love for what they are doing.

45.According to Keynes, there would be a shorter working week with everyone's standard of living continuing to rise.

Section B

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How to better work towards long-term goals

A) Hal Hershfield, a psychologist at the UCLA Anderson School of Management, wanted to know why people weren't saving for retirement. Across the board, people are living longer. Logically, they'll need more money to live comfortably in their post-work years. And yet, savings rates in the U.S. have gone down in recent decades, not up.

B) To help explain this seemingly irrational behavior, Hershfield and his team scanned the brains of study participants while asking them to what degree various traits (特征) — like “honorable” or “funny” — applied to their current self, their future self, a current other, or a future other. As participants answered, Hershfield's team recorded which parts of their brains lit up. Unsurprisingly, people’s brains were most active when thinking about their current selves and least active when thinking about a current other. But the team found that participants' brain activity while considering their future selves more closely resembled their brain activity while thinking about a current other rather than the current self.

C) Put in practical terms, when thinking of yourself in a month or a year or a decade, your brain registers that person in ways similar to how it would register Taylor Swift or the mailman. Understood in that way, saving for retirement is the equivalent of giving money away to someone else entirely.

D) In light of Hershfield’s study, one simple question arises: Is it possible to make our present selves give a damn about our future selves? The answers are anything but simple.

E) Seen through the lens of the present self versus the future self. our self-defeating actions — like choosing to watch television rather than go to the gym — suddenly make perfect sense. We get to enjoy the very concrete, immediate benefits of our actions while someone else (namely: our future selves) suffers the hypothetical (假设的) far-off consequences. As a result, the decisions we make for our present selves often look very different from our decisions for our future selves. We believe that tomorrow will be different. We believe that we will be different tomorrow, but in doing so, we prioritize our current mood over the consequences of our inaction for the future self.

F) Understanding our procrastination (拖延) through the lens of the present and future selves, we're left with three possible solutions: The first is to force your future self to do whatever your present self doesn't want to do. The second is to convince your present self that your future self is, in fact, still you. If the central problem is that we think of our future selves as other people, it follows that trying to identify more closely with our future selves will encourage us to make better long-term decisions.

G) In a follow-up study, Hershfield wanted to explore ways to bridge the disconnect between the present and future selves and encourage people to save more for retirement. He and his team took photos of study participants, and then used image processing to visually age their faces. Participants were then placed in a virtual reality setting where they could look into a mirror and see their aged selves looking back at them. Participants who saw their aged selves said they would save 30% more of their salary for retirement than the control group.

H) Whatever your long-term goals may be—getting in better shape, launching your own business, writing a book — thinking about your deadline in terms of days rather than months or years can help you wrap your mind around how close the future really is.

I) The third solution is to forget about your future self and use your present self's love of instant gratification (满足感) to your advantage. While the two tactics (手段) above can be effective in making better long-term choices, in the end, you're still struggling against human nature. Our brains are hardwired for instant gratification. Instead of fighting your present self's need for immediate rewards, why not use it to your advantage? When most of us set goals, we focus on long-term results We want to see — e.g. losing weight, getting a promotion, retiring in comfort, etc. While those visions of our future selves can be inspiring, when it comes to actually doing the day-to-day work, it may be more effective to reframe activities in terms of their immediate, or at least very near-term rewards.

J) Take writing this article, for instance. It's easy for me to imagine how amazing it will feel at the end of the workday to have this article done. This isn't just my opinion. Research partners Kaitlin Woolley of Cornell University and Ayelet Fishbach of the University of Chicago have made a career out of studying the differences between the goals that people achieve and the ones that fall to the wayside.

K) "In one study, we asked people online about the goals they set at the beginning of the year. Most people set goals to achieve delayed, long-term benefits, such as career advancement, debt repayment, or improved health. We asked these individuals how enjoyable it was to pursue their goal, as well as how important their goal was. We also asked whether they were still working on their goals two months after setting them. We found that enjoyment predicted people's goal persistence two months after setting the goal far more than how important they rated their goal to be." Woolley said.

L) This pattern held true across a wide variety of goals from exercising to studying to eating healthier foods. For example, people ate 50% more of a healthy food when directed to focus on the good taste rather than the long-term health benefits. Other studies have shown a greater uptake of exercise in people who were told to think of the enjoyment of doing the exercise now rather than future health gains.

M) These findings suggest that when it comes to achieving your goals, enjoying the process itself is more important than wanting the long-term benefits. In other words, present self trumps (战胜) future self. Who says instant gratification has to be a bad thing? By all means, set ambitious long-term goals for your future self, but when it comes to actually following through day-to-day, make sure your present self knows what's in it for her too.

36.Our brains are genetically determined to satisfy immediate desires.

37.Taken in a practical way, saving for post-work years is like giving money away to others.

38.Research found that, as regards achievement of one's goals, it is important to focus more on enjoying the process than the long-term benefits.

39.Regarding our future selves as still being ourselves will help us make better long-term decisions.

40.Savings rates in America have dropped in recent decades even though people's life expectancy has increased.

41.Researchers found that enjoyment rather than importance enabled people to persist in their goals.

42.When making decisions, we give priority to our current frame of mind without thinking much of the consequences.

43 People ate more of a healthy food when they focused on its good taste instead of its long-term benefits.

44.As was expected, when people thought of their present selves, their brains were observed to become more active.

45.Researchers found that participants who saw the images of their aged selves would save more for their later years than those who didn't.

Section B

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No escape as "snow day" becomes "e-learning day"

A) Certain institutions, such as schools are likely to close when bad weather, such as snow, flooding, or extreme heat or cold, causes travel difficulties, power outages (断供) or otherwise endangers public safety. When snowy weather arrives in the US, it means the chance of school children benefiting from the long-standing tradition of the "snow day", when schools are forced to close and students get an unexpected day off.

B) The criterion for a snow day is primarily the inability of school buses to operate safely on their routes and danger to children who walk to school. Often, the school remains officially open even though buses do not run and classes are canceled. Severe weather that causes cancellation or delay is more likely in regions that are less able to handle the situation. Snow days are less common in more northern areas of the United States that are used to heavy winter snowfall because municipalities are well equipped to clear roads and remove snow. In areas less accustomed to snow, even small snowfalls of an inch or two may render roads unsafe.

C) Snow days are a familiar theme in American film and TV shows, with children getting the good news and then running outside for some seasonal snowman-building and snowball throwing, against a background of joyful pop music. But the tradition is now over for pupils in several US states such as South Carolina, Nevada, Georgia and Indiana. This academic year, many school boards have introduced policies which require students to work from home if the school is shut by snow or extreme weather. They are known as "e-learning days", which certainly sounds less fun than a snow day.

D) Teachers are also losing their snow days and instead will be expected to be on hand to take a virtual register and answer students' questions online. A pilot programme in a school district in Anderson County, South Carolina, has supplied students with electronic tablets loaded with assignments to complete in the event of a school closure. If it is successful, it could be rolled out across the state.

E) But some parents object to the new policy if the vigorous debate on the Facebook page of Anderson County school district is anything to go by. "When it snows, let the kids enjoy it." said one commenter. Another said the decision would "ruin school even more", and someone else called snow days "a fun part of childhood". But supporters of the policy say it means children will miss fewer days of school. It will also bring to an end a less popular US high school tradition: the "make-up day" which requires students in many states to make up the time lost due to weather by working during school holidays.

F) Students in North Carolina already have several make-up days scheduled because of school closures during Hurricane Florence, which struck in September. Tom Wilson, the superintendent (主管) of Anderson County school district said the change away from snow days makes practical and financial sense. He said technology has changed every profession, so it makes sense to use it to "eliminate" make-up days. Adam Baker of the Department of Education in Indiana said e-learning days were proving a "great success". He said most Indiana schools already use digital devices during lessons, so it was an "easy decision" to extend this to days when schools are closed. He denies the decision is depriving children of the chance to enjoy the snow. "Students are still able to enjoy snow days and outside time," he said. "Many have PE and science assignments

that have them out enjoying the weather." But local school superintendents in Ohio are resisting proposals to adopt e-learning days. They fear that students without internet access at home will be disadvantaged by the policy, and superintendent Tom Roth is concerned that e-learning days will offer a lower quality of education.

G) There are also so-called "blizzard bags", with assignments that children take home ahead of an expected snow closure. But Mr. Roth says it is not sufficient as a replacement. "I think we still need the class time to give our kids the education that they deserve." he said. "You can't get that with a blizzard bag or doing the work from home like that. It's not going to be as effective."

H) There is a long-running debate on whether missing days of school affects attainment. In England. there has been a focus on tackling absenteeism (旷课) from school. The Department for Education (DFE) published research in 2016 arguing that missing any days at school could have a negative impact on results. Even a few days lost in a year could be enough to miss out on getting a good exam grade, the DFE's research concluded. This differed from the findings of a study from Harvard University in the US, which concluded that missing a few occasional days because of the weather did not damage learning.

I) The Harvard study examined seven years of school results data and could not find any impact from snow closures. What caused more disruption was when schools tried to stay open in bad weather even though many staff and pupils were absent. But weather can make a difference to school results, according to another piece of Harvard research published last summer. It's hot weather that has the negative impact. The results of 10 million school students were examined over 13 years and researchers found a "significant" link between years with extremely hot weather and lower results.

J) It's obvious that students should go to school every day to get the most out of education. In cases of extreme weather, students don't always have that option. However, research shows that authorised absences from school such as during extreme weather are less problematic for students than absences that are not authorised. This is because unauthorised absences tend to reflect patterns and behaviours of student disengagement or the possible negative attitudes of parents towards education that students adopt and carry with them through schooling. The level of impact on students' educational performance is all to do with the length of time that a student is absent from school and how regularly this occurs.

36.There is opposition to the practice of giving children assignments to take home before extreme weather forces a school closure.
37.New policies adopted by many US schools require students to do online learning at home in case of a school closure.
38.According to some research, extreme hot weather negatively affects students' performance.
39.There is a time-honoured tradition in the US for school kids to stay at home on "snow days".
40.Debates on social media show some parents are opposed to ending the "snow day" tradition.
41.In more northern regions of the US, school is less likely to be affected by snowy weather.
42.Research indicates absences from school with permission do not cause as many problems as those without permission.
43.There is objection to e-learning days owing to fear that students with no access to the Internet at home will suffer.
44.In a pilot programme, students are given electronic devices to do assignments when schools are closed.
45.A long-standing debate is going on over the impact of school absences on students' academic performance.

Section B

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How Climate Change Will Affect What You Eat

A) Earlier this year, scientists warned that one in six animal species could go *extinct* (灭绝的) due to climate change. Could the same thing happen to our crops and other foodstuffs too?

B) It's clear that farmers in many parts of the world are going to find things harder in the coming decades. Last week, *BBC Future* explored one scientist's efforts to help crops cope with the increased probability of droughts. By using the genes from *resurrection* (复活) plants, Jill Farrant of the University of Cape Town is exploring whether she can design crops to survive for much longer periods without water.

C) But if we can't find ways to protect other foods, will they survive climate change? Fortunately, there is some good news on this front. Despite alarmist headlines about "foods that are going extinct," there is no evidence that major food types like beans, chocolate, wine, corn or wheat will cease to exist.

D) But that doesn't mean it's all good news for future food. We will probably have to change where we grow certain crops, as some regions get too hot. The disadvantage, obviously, is that local farmers will suffer under this situation. And some people may struggle to get the same access to certain foods. "Even if overall food production may be unaffected, food security can still be impacted," says Margaret Walsh, a scientist at the US Department of Agriculture's Climate Change Program Office. In other words, even if a certain food is still grown on some corner of the Earth, it doesn't mean that everyone will continue to have the same degree of access as today.

E) Overall, the yields of many foods, from staples to life-enhancing extras such as coffee and chocolate, will likely be impacted by climate change too. How those decreases will be felt will depend on the degree of warming and the crop in question, but in general, "anything over about 30°C is very bad for crops," says Wolfram Schlenker, an associate professor of international and public affairs at Columbia University. For example, statistical studies that he and a colleague built of corn and *soybean* (大豆) production in the US show a steep decline after crossing the 30°C temperature *threshold* (临界点).

F) In the US—the world's largest producer of corn and soybeans—farms can move north to some degree, Schlenker says. But eventually, yields will likely suffer because the soil north of Iowa declines in quality—a legacy of *glacial* (冰川的) expansion. Other studies, including studies of wheat in India and corn in Africa, also found that there is a threshold above which yields sharply decline: crops can adapt and move, but only to a point. "What's common to all studies is the finding that extreme heat is damaging to crop growth, although exact cutoffs vary by crop," Schlenker says. "If predictions for the end of the century are true, though, I think a lot of agricultural areas in the US will see significant hits."

G) Under current conditions, about 4% of the world's croplands experience drought in any given year, but by the end of the century those conditions are forecasted to jump to about 18% per year. Some studies indicate that horticulture crops—generally, everything besides staples—may be impacted most severely, largely because they tend to be confined to a smaller geographic area. Researcher Andrew Jarvis and his colleagues found that 80% of coffee-growing zones in Central America and Brazil could become unsuitable by 2050, for example, while climate change will likely have "great impacts" on *cocoa* (可可粉) production in West Africa. "High quality chocolate will be less available in the future, and if you want it, you'll have to pay a lot more for it," Jarvis says.

H) This means that, for those who can afford it, some foods will simply cost them more in the future. But for poorer people, those same price jumps will likely cause certain foods to go extinct from their diets. "The more you reduce, the shorter the supply, and the higher the price will jump," Schlenker says.

I) Another potential climate change-induced problem is our dependence on commodity crops—wheat, soybeans, corn and rice—which currently provide humanity with 75% of its calories, either directly or indirectly through the animals we raise on those crops. Jarvis and his colleagues also found that, over the past five decades, the world has seen an increasing standardisation of diets; the foods we eat globally today are 36% more similar than they were in 1961. While this can be good news for the world's poorest people who now consume more calories, protein and fat than in the past, *homogeneity* (同一性) and over-dependence on a handful of staples leaves us vulnerable to threats such as drought, disease and pests—all of which are predicted to worsen in many parts of the world as a result of climate change.

J) There are ways we could soften the coming blow to the global food supply, however. Like Farrant's work with resurrection crops, a number of companies, organisations and researchers are aiming to create drought- and temperature-resistant crops through genetic engineering and conventional breeding. For now, the jury is still out as to how successful those endeavours will be. "The people at Monsanto who I've talked to are much more optimistic that they'll be able to engineer heat-tolerant crops," Schlenker says. "On the other hand, scientists at the USDA who I've spoken with are much more cautious."

K) Until genetic engineering comes to fruition, other strategies might also help in some places, including applying more fertiliser, implementing better irrigation, using machinery that gets crops out of the field faster or installing storage facilities to delay spoilage. "Many places could benefit a great deal just by using technologies that already exist," Walsh says. "General farm management can go a long way toward easing changes."

L) Finally, diversifying our diet away from heat-sensitive wheat, corn, rice and other crops could also help. "We've seen profound changes in the last decades in what we eat largely as a result of international trade, and I think that trend toward more diversification will continue," Jarvis says. "Depending on a greater number of plant species creates a more vigorous and less risky food system—and one that provides a broader range of nutritional requirements."

36. One consequence of climate change is that some people may not have adequate access to certain foods.
37. People around the world are eating foods more similar than what they used to eat.
38. A recent news report talked about scientific efforts to help crops survive droughts through genetic engineering.
39. It is predicted that climate change will affect the availability and price of quality chocolate.
40. People wonder if certain crops and foodstuffs could disappear like some animal species due to climate change.
41. Although farms in the US can move a bit northward, crop yields may decrease.
42. One possible solution to the food security problem is diversification of diet.
43. It remains unsettled whether the global food supply problem can be solved by creating heat-tolerant crops through genetic engineering.
44. Poor people may have to give up eating certain foods because of their high prices.
45. A number of existing farming technologies could be used to reduce the negative effect of climate change on food production.

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More fathers are taking paternity leave, but mothers are still doing all the work

A) Attitudes towards *paternity leave* (陪产假) have drastically changed in America in the last five years as more fathers feel comfortable taking extended time off, but gender bias persists when it comes to career prospects and the home, according to a new study of working parents.

B) Research by the Boston College Center for Work & Family, which surveyed new parents at four large US companies who were qualified for taking at least six weeks paid parental leave, found that 81% of the 1,240 employees surveyed said the notion of fathers taking leave has become more acceptable.

C) Of those surveyed, 62% of fathers took the maximum amount of time off compared to 93% of mothers, and around three-quarters of workers said their employer was equally supportive of mothers and fathers taking parental leave and over half said leave policies had made workplace culture better.

D) The US is one of only three countries in the world not to offer *statutory* (法定的) paid leave, but increasingly states and companies are starting to take up the issue. So far, eight states and the District of Columbia have their own paid family leave laws.

E) Brad Harrington, executive director of the center and lead author of the study, estimates only 20% to 30% of companies in the US offer paid parental leave. He feels the research findings reflect an obvious change in corporate attitudes to new fathers taking time off.

F) "We did a study on paternity leave five years ago. Compared with those findings, these numbers were shocking to me. I did not expect 80% of people to say the organisation finds dads taking this leave acceptable and three-quarters to say it's equally supportive of women and men taking leave," Harrington said.

G) The previous study found that nearly three-quarters of fathers saw two to four weeks as an appropriate duration for paternity leave and 76% said they would prefer not to take all their time off at once.

H) Since then, there have been a number of legal cases against companies involving paternity leave—including cases against JPMorgan Chase and Estée Lauder—which have helped put pressure on companies to make their parental leave policies gender neutral.

I) However, the study also shows how traditional gender roles endure both at work, where more women than men reported changes in their perceived career potential, and at home—even among workers who claim to have a strong desire for equality.

J) The vast majority of men, 97%, said one of the top reasons to take leave was to share caregiving with their partner. But when they were asked about how caregiving and household tasks were divided, their answers painted a different picture. While about 75% of employees said both genders should give the same amount of care, the majority of men and nearly half of women admitted that in reality the female actually did most of it. A tiny fraction, 2%, of men said they did more of the childcare.

K) Men and women's experiences of the return to work following parental leave were also considerably different. Of the women surveyed, 32% reported a downturn in their job satisfaction, while 14% said it increased. In comparison, 17% of men said their job satisfaction went down and 20% said it went up. Meanwhile, more women reported an increase in their responsibilities and manager expectations after childbirth. Half of the women said they used flexible work arrangements after becoming a parent, while just

27% of men did. Similar percentages of men and women said they enjoyed their careers and that it gave them a sense of achievement, while around half of women and 44% of men said it was a key part of their identity.

L) On the subject of career advancement, 59% of women and 49% of men said leave could be limiting and both genders said they feared it would have an impact on their progress long-term. But on opportunity for promotion, more than double the number of women, 30% compared with 15% of men, believed their chances to be lower after becoming a parent. Despite progress, the struggle for women to reach the highest positions of power is demonstrated in this year's Fortune 500 list, which featured a record 33 female CEOs, but this still represents a tiny fraction of the total.

M) Harrington said culture change depends on companies putting more focus on men and their responsibilities. "By that I mean companies need to give men paternity leave and encourage men to take time off to be with their kids early on in the kids' life. They also need to recognise that men have to make significant adjustments when they become parents. Companies cannot do all these things to enhance women's advancement and then turn around and say, 'Oh, but we don't expect the men to take over for the women at home.'"

N) In May, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Outten & Golden LLP announced a historic class-action $5m settlement with JPMorgan Chase on behalf of male employees who claim they were illegally denied access to paid parental leave. Derek Rotondo, 35, filed the discrimination charge against his company after he was allegedly told by his HR department that mothers were considered primary caregivers. Thus, they were allowed to take 16 weeks of paid parental leave. Fathers, however, could take just two weeks.

O) The father of two from Columbus, Ohio, who still works at the company as an associate and investigator, said he has witnessed a "*domino effect* (多米诺效应)" across companies since the settlement, but that there is still substantial progress to be made towards changing attitudes towards paternity leave.

P) "I do think there's still some way to go...there's still going to be sort of the unstated expectation for new dads to essentially come right back to work, but I think the research is showing that's starting to change." He said equal parental leave is an essential component to creating gender equality in the workplace. "The old standard of women staying home, having babies and cooking doesn't apply and hasn't applied for a long time."

36. In the absence of Federal legislation, some states in the US have passed laws concerning paid family leave.
37. Most fathers admitted that even during their paternity leave they actually did much less childcare than the mother.
38. According to one father, equal parental leave is indispensable to achieving gender equality in the workplace.
39. One survey indicated there is now less objection to paternity leave.
40. Compared to five years ago, according to one researcher, many more people said their organisation gave the same support to men and women taking parental leave.
41. One study finds that even workers who claim to desire gender equality stick to traditional gender roles both at work and at home.
42. The majority of workers surveyed said parental leave policies had improved workplace culture.
43. In spite of progress, the number of women in top positions of big companies remains extremely small.
44. According to one estimate, less than one third of companies in the US provide paid parental leave.
45. A number of lawsuits have pressured companies to formulate gender neutral policies on parental leave.

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Teenagers and social networking

A) As a parent of two boys at primary school, I worry about the issues associated with teenagers and social media. Newspapers are constantly filled with frightening accounts of drug addiction and aggressive behaviour supposedly caused by violent videogames. But even when these accounts touch on real concerns, they do not really reflect the great mass of everyday teenage social behaviour: the online chat, the texting, the surfing, and the emergence of a new teenage sphere that is conducted digitally.

B) New technologies always provoke generational panic, which usually has more to do with adult fears than with the lives of teenagers. In the 1930s, parents worried that radio was gaining "an irresistible hold of their children". In the 80s, the great danger was the Sony *Walkman* (随身听). When you look at today's digital activity, the facts are much more positive than you might expect.

C) Indeed, social scientists who study young people have found that their digital use can be inventive and even beneficial. This is true not just in terms of their social lives, but their education too. So if you use a ton of social media, do you become unable, or unwilling, to engage in face-to-face contact? The evidence suggests not. Research by Amanda Lenhart of the Pew Research Centre, a US think tank, found that the most passionate texters are also the kids most likely to spend time with friends in person. One form of socialising doesn't replace the other. It expands it.

D) "Kids still spend time face to face," Lenhart says. Indeed, as they get older and are given more freedom, they often ease up on social networking. Early on, the web is their "third space", but by the late teens, it's replaced in reaction to greater independence. They have to be on Facebook, to know what's going on among friends and family, but they are *ambivalent* (有矛盾心理的) about it, says Rebecca Eynon, a research fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute, who has interviewed about 200 British teenagers over three years. As they gain experience with living online, they begin to adjust their behaviour, struggling with new communication skills, as they do in the real world.

E) Parents are wrong to worry that kids don't care about privacy. In fact, they spend hours changing Facebook settings or using quick-delete sharing tools, such as Snapchat, to minimise their traces. Or they post a photograph on Instagram, have a pleasant conversation with friends and then delete it so that no traces remain.

F) This is not to say that kids always use good judgment. Like everyone else, they make mistakes—sometimes serious ones. But working out how to behave online is a new social skill. While there's plenty of drama and messiness online, it is not, for most teens, a cycle of non-stop abuse: a Pew study found only 15% of teens said someone had bullied them online in the last 12 months.

G) But surely all this short-form writing is affecting literacy? Certainly, teachers worry. They say that kids use overly casual language and text-speak in writing, and don't have as much patience for long reading and complex arguments. Yet studies of first-year college papers suggest these anxieties may be partly based on misguided *nostalgia* (怀旧). When Stanford University scholar Andrea Lunsford gathered data on the rates of errors in "freshman composition" papers going back to 1917, she found that they were virtually identical to today.

H) But even as error rates stayed stable, student essays have blossomed in size and complexity. They are now six times longer and, unlike older "what I did this summer" essays, they offer arguments supported by evidence. Why? Computers have vastly increased the ability of students to gather information, sample different points of view and write more fluidly.

I) When linguist Naomi Baron studied students' instant messaging even there she found surprisingly rare usage of short forms such as "u" for "you", and as students got older, they began to write in more grammatical sentences. That is because they want to appear more adult, and they know how adults are expected to write. Clearly, teaching teens formal writing is still crucial, but texting probably isn't destroying their ability to learn it.

J) It is probably true that fewer kids are heavy readers compared with two generations ago, when cheap paperbacks boosted rates of reading. But even back then, a minority of people—perhaps 20%—were lifelong heavy readers, and it was cable TV, not the internet, that struck a blow at that culture in the 1980s. Still, 15% or more of kids are found to be deeply bookish. In fact, the online world offers kids remarkable opportunities to become literate and creative because young people can now publish ideas not just to their friends, but to the world. And it turns out that when they write for strangers, their sense of "authentic audience" makes them work harder, push themselves further, and create powerful new communicative forms.

K) Few would deny that too much time online can be harmful. Some of the dangers are emotional: hurting someone from a distance is not the same as hurting them face to face. If we're lucky, the legal environment will change to make teenagers' online lives less likely to haunt them later on. Just last week, California passed a law allowing minors to demand that internet firms erase their digital past and the EU has considered similar legislation.

L) Distraction is also a serious issue. When kids switch from chat to music to homework, they are indeed likely to have trouble doing each task well. And studies show that pupils don't fact-check information online—"smart searching" is a skill schools need to teach urgently. It's also true that too much social networking and game playing can cut into schoolwork and sleep. This is precisely why parents still need to set firm boundaries around it, as with any other distraction.

M) So what's the best way to cope? The same boring old advice that applies to everything in parenting: moderation. Rebecca Eynon argues that it's key to model good behaviour. Parents who stare non-stop at their phones and don't read books are likely to breed kids who will do the same. As ever, we ought to be careful about our own behaviour.

36. Research has found the use of digital technology benefits not only teenagers' social lives but also their studies.
37. It is urgent that schools teach kids how to verify online information.
38. Students now write longer and more complex essays than their counterparts in previous decades while the error rates remain unchanged.
39. Newspaper reports of teenagers give a false picture of their behaviour.
40. Parents are advised to mind their own digital behaviour and set a good example for their kids.
41. Contrary to parents' belief, kids try hard to leave as few traces as possible on the web.
42. Students' ability to learn formal writing is unlikely to be affected by texting.
43. Historically, new technologies have always caused great fears among parents.
44. The reading culture was seriously affected by cable television some four decades ago.
45. Teachers say that kids' writing is too casual, using language characteristic of text messages.