

We live in a \_\_\_\_\_ society, and \_\_\_\_\_ land on top \_\_\_\_\_ believe that they \_\_\_\_\_ their success on their own. For example, students who \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ universities often come to believe that their success was their own doing, and those who failed \_\_\_\_\_ for their lack of effort. Similarly, when people hear the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ of child \_\_\_\_\_, they often \_\_\_\_\_ criticize the parents \_\_\_\_\_, and never consider the possibility that they might be in the \_\_\_\_\_ if something \_\_\_\_\_ different in their lives. However, when one is successful \_\_\_\_\_ something, it is mostly \_\_\_\_\_ good luck. If one \_\_\_\_\_ life, it is, again, \_\_\_\_\_ good fortune. But the more we think that our success and failure is \_\_\_\_\_ doing, the harder it is to learn \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

We live in a fiercely competitive society, and those who land on top want to believe that they have earned their success on their own. For example, students who are admitted to prestigious universities often come to believe that their success was their own doing, and those who failed are to blame for their lack of effort. Similarly, when people hear the news of a case of child abuse, they often harshly criticize the parents for being immoral, and never consider the possibility that they might be in the same position if something had been different in their lives. However, when one is successful at something, it is mostly due to good luck. If one has behaved morally throughout life, it is, again, a matter of good fortune. But the more we think that our success and failure is solely our own doing, the harder it is to learn gratitude and humility.

competitive	競争的な、競争力がある	immoral	不道德な
earn	稼ぐ、獲得する	gratitude	感謝の気持ち
prestigious	名声のある、一流の	humility	謙虚さ
abuse	虐待		

We want to believe that success is not something we \_\_\_\_\_, but something we \_\_\_\_\_ hard work and talent. However, this \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ the idea of effort, what we call “talent” \_\_\_\_\_ three \_\_\_\_\_. The first is about the \_\_\_\_\_; what we happen to be born with. The second one is \_\_\_\_\_ that discover and \_\_\_\_\_ potential, especially during \_\_\_\_\_ large part of our nervous system is \_\_\_\_\_. Lastly, we have to live in a society that \_\_\_\_\_ we happen to have. Shohei Ohtani is a great athlete who makes 4 billion yen playing baseball. \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ effort and athletic gifts, he has been lucky \_\_\_\_\_ a society \_\_\_\_\_ baseball is \_\_\_\_\_ popular and people pay a lot of money to watch games. If he had lived in 17-century Holland where artists, not baseball players, \_\_\_\_\_, he \_\_\_\_\_ that much. A talent that we think of is \_\_\_\_\_ these three elements. If you \_\_\_\_\_ those \_\_\_\_\_ on your own, you can \_\_\_\_\_ for your talents \_\_\_\_\_, you \_\_\_\_\_ success.

We want to believe that success is not something we inherit, but something we earn by hard work and talent. However, this ideal is flawed. Putting aside the idea of effort, what we call “talent” consists of three elements. The first is about the genetic lottery; what we happen to be born with. The second one is environmental factors that discover and nurture our potential, especially during infancy when a large part of our nervous system is formed. Lastly, we have to live in a society that prizes the talents we happen to have. Shohei Ohtani is a great athlete who makes 4 billion yen playing baseball. Except for his tremendous effort and athletic gifts, he has been lucky to live in a society where baseball is hugely popular and people pay a lot of money to watch games. If he had lived in 17-century Holland where artists, not baseball players, were in high demand, he would not have been valued that much. A talent that we think of is composed of these three elements. If you have picked those factors on your own, you can claim credit for your talents and thus, you deserve success.

inherit	固有の、生まれつきの	tremendous	とてつもない
flawed	欠点、誤りがある	compose	構成する、～から成る
nurture	育む	credit	称賛、名誉
nervous system	神経系	deserve	～に値する、ふさわしい

\_\_\_\_\_ talents are \_\_\_\_\_ luck, what about effort? \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ argue that people who have become successful by working hard are responsible for the success and \_\_\_\_\_ for their \_\_\_\_\_. This is true \_\_\_\_\_ . Effort \_\_\_\_\_. No one, however gifted, succeeds without working hard to \_\_\_\_\_ .

Nevertheless, there is also an \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ here. If you have been successful because of your effort, what \_\_\_\_\_ possible for you to work hard? In other words, why could you choose \_\_\_\_\_ rather than walk away when you faced difficulties? Why were you able to expect yourself to succeed after hard work, instead of failing? \_\_\_\_\_ to people around you who expected and \_\_\_\_\_ you to succeed? Isn't that thanks to the home environment that gave you \_\_\_\_\_ in the face of new challenges? Isn't that because you happened to have small successes in childhood which gave you \_\_\_\_\_ self confidence?

Our choices make \_\_\_\_\_ , but those choices are largely influenced by \_\_\_\_\_ factors \_\_\_\_\_. The problem is that those who \_\_\_\_\_ a competitive society tend to lose the humility to appreciate what \_\_\_\_\_ to them.

Given that talents are due to luck, what about effort? Defenders of meritocracy argue that people who have become successful by working hard are responsible for the success and worthy of praise for their diligence. This is true up to a point. Effort matters. No one, however gifted, succeeds without working hard to cultivate his or her talent.

Nevertheless, there is also an element of luck involved here. If you have been successful because of your effort, what made it possible for you to work hard? In other words, why could you choose to stand rather than walk away when you faced difficulties? Why were you able to expect yourself to succeed after hard work, instead of failing? Isn't that due to people around you who expected and supported you to succeed? Isn't that thanks to the home environment that gave you a sense of security in the face of new challenges? Isn't that because you happened to have small successes in childhood which gave you greater self confidence?

Our choices make our lives, but those choices are largely influenced by environmental factors beyond our control. The problem is that those who prevail in a competitive society tend to lose the humility to appreciate what has been given to them.

given	～と仮定すると	security	安心感、油断
meritocracy	能力主義、実力主義	prevail	勝つ
diligence	勤勉さ		

The \_\_\_\_\_ personal responsibility is \_\_\_\_\_ our empathy and kindness. If our success is our own doing, \_\_\_\_\_, those who have failed or \_\_\_\_\_ or some other mistakes \_\_\_\_\_ blame for their own bad choices, so they \_\_\_\_\_ their \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and criticism.

Many people seem to agree with this idea. \_\_\_\_\_ case is \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, social media platforms get \_\_\_\_\_ criticisms of the parents. Of course, child abuse is a violation of human rights and \_\_\_\_\_ never \_\_\_\_\_. However, \_\_\_\_\_ should one \_\_\_\_\_ one's \_\_\_\_\_? Statistics show that over 80 percent of \_\_\_\_\_ parents \_\_\_\_\_ by their own parents in their childhood. It is probably because \_\_\_\_\_ causes \_\_\_\_\_ damage to the developing brain. A study from University of Wisconsin-Madison indicates that people who \_\_\_\_\_ child abuse are more \_\_\_\_\_ to angry faces and less sensitive to smiles. Their painful experiences in their early days negatively \_\_\_\_\_ of social skills in the brain, so they cannot control their \_\_\_\_\_. If you \_\_\_\_\_ the right \_\_\_\_\_, that is mostly because of what \_\_\_\_\_. This realization can inspire a \_\_\_\_\_ humility when you see someone failing or \_\_\_\_\_: "If anything had been different in my life, I \_\_\_\_\_ the same thing."

The excessive conception of personal responsibility is undermining our empathy and kindness. If our success is our own doing, conversely, those who have failed or committed a crime or some other mistakes are to blame for their own bad choices, so they deserve their poverty, misery and criticism.

Many people seem to agree with this idea. When a child abuse case is widely reported, for instance, social media platforms get flooded with harsh criticisms of the parents. Of course, child abuse is a violation of human rights and should never be tolerated. However, to what extent should one be condemned as one's own fault? Statistics show that over 80 percent of abusive parents were mistreated by their own parents in their childhood. It is probably because adversity in infancy causes irreversible damage to the developing brain. A study from University of Wisconsin-Madison indicates that people who went through child abuse are more reactive to angry faces and less sensitive to smiles. Their painful experiences in their early days negatively affect the development of social skills in the brain, so they cannot control their abusive selves.

If you have proceeded down the right path, that is mostly because of what has been given. This realization can inspire a certain humility when you see someone failing or misbehaving: "If anything had been different in my life, I might have done the same thing."

Vocabulary List: No. 21 ~ 29



If our success and failure are \_\_\_\_\_ luck, is our future already \_\_\_\_\_? Do we have no \_\_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_\_ making an effort when there is no such thing \_\_\_\_\_ free will? There is an interesting experiment \_\_\_\_\_ in 2016. The first group of the participants read a passage that \_\_\_\_\_ the existence of free will, and the second group of people didn't read it. Then the experimenters \_\_\_\_\_ brain activities of the \_\_\_\_\_. The result was that people who read the suggestion that there is no free will showed less activity \_\_\_\_\_ the brain related to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ actions. This study implies that, \_\_\_\_\_ free will, our \_\_\_\_\_ matters more than the fact. Whether or not it exists, believing in free will \_\_\_\_\_ to make a difference. When you find yourself in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ the influence of the environment you happen to have, and find a way to \_\_\_\_\_. You should not blame your laziness or weakness; rather, turn your eyes to factors that \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. If you are successful now, it is a great opportunity to develop \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ your good fortune and give back to society. When you see someone failing, you need to have \_\_\_\_\_ kindness \_\_\_\_\_ their \_\_\_\_\_ and the environment that \_\_\_\_\_ their failure. Such humility is the beginning of the way to restore social bonds and respect for one another.

If our success and failure are due to luck, is our future already determined? Do we have no will of our own? What is it all about making an effort when there is no such thing as free will? There is an interesting experiment done in 2016. The first group of the participants read a passage that denies the existence of free will, and the second group of people didn't read it. Then the experimenters measured brain activities of the subjects. The result was that people who read the suggestion that there is no free will showed less activity in the region of the brain related to autonomy and voluntary actions. This study implies that, as for free will, our belief matters more than the fact. Whether or not it exists, believing in free will gives us strength to make a difference. When you find yourself in trouble, acknowledge the influence of the environment you happen to have, and find a way to get past it. You should not blame your laziness or weakness; rather, turn your eyes to factors that ruin your diligence, and strive thoughtfully to negate them. If you are successful now, it is a great opportunity to develop modesty to appreciate your good fortune and give back to society. When you see someone failing, you need to have insightful kindness to ponder their misfortune and the environment that prompted their failure. Such humility is the beginning of the way to restore social bonds and respect for one another.