

MEMBERS ONLY

2017



MAY 05

INNER CIRCLE

THIS MONTH

A RADICALLY DIFFERENT WAY TO
BREAK YOUR ROUTINE & MASTER
LANGUAGE ALONG THE WAY

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I Took a Little Time Off...



Welcome to the Inner Circle, listeners.

Last time, you learned...

- why an imperfect start can help you succeed in the long run
- why you should focus on what you're good at
- and how I applied all of this towards sharpening my Chinese listening skills

Last time, my monthly goal was to master 60 dialogues as part of my listening practice. To be honest, I finished 30, and then I got fed up and tired of my routine.

So, I took a break. You might be shocked that I took a little time off, but there's a powerful lesson here. What is it?

Let's get into this month's Inner Circle.

A RADICALLY DIFFERENT WAY TO BREAK YOUR ROUTINE & MASTER LANGUAGE ALONG THE WAY

You'll learn...

1. The Importance of a Taking a Break
2. A Radically Different Way to Break Your Routine
3. How to Make Language Progress While Having Fun

Let's jump into the first part.



1

The Importance of a Taking a Break



Let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture.

There's a reason why many cultures have a set rest period for one or two days of the week. Why people go on vacation. Why we take days off. Life is busy. We have things to do. We get tired. We need time to recharge our batteries.

And let's be honest. Language learning is a lot of work. It's non-stop dedication to a goal. Actually, it's one of MANY goals that also require work in our lives.

It's only fair that you get some rest and take a break from work.

With that in mind – I was drilling listening almost all month long. Just listening. On top of being tired, I was getting bored with the routine. And if you lose your enthusiasm, that's pretty dangerous.

That's how you end up quitting.

That's why you should take a break.

Here's what I did recently. I had fun.



2

A Radically Different a Way to Break Your Routine

I spent the last week watching shows. There's one I like; Rick and Morty.

It's fun to watch. It's even more fun in your target language. I watched it in Chinese. I watched it in Japanese. It's also fun watching it with a native speaker and seeing how they react.

So, I was still kind of listening to Chinese, but not at the academic level that would be on an exam. I was watching cartoons and shows.

This is what I mean by a radically different approach. You do something completely different to break an old, tiring routine, make learning fun again...

...and most importantly, keep going with the language.

There are two ways you can go about this.



A. You can stay within the same skill. For example, if you like reading and want to keep focusing on reading, then put the textbook down and try...

- a. a novel
- b. a comic book
- c. online articles
- d. social media comments in that target language



B. Or, you can completely change it up. If you're focusing on reading, then...

- a. move over to speaking
- b. try listening to songs or audio lessons
- c. try just watching shows in your target language

Why is this powerful?

The big takeaway here is that if you break away from a routine that you're used to, you get to relax with something enjoyable, don't burn out, and keep going.

Here's another example:

I spent all that time working on listening...but let's be honest: I love speaking more than I love taking tests.

So, I scheduled some lessons. Skype lessons and in-person lessons, all just so I could talk with someone.

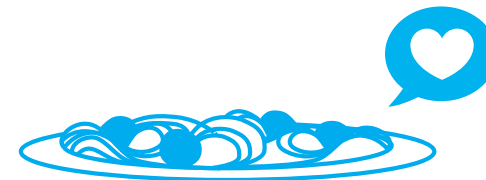
I went with my Chinese teacher to a Chinese restaurant... and we spoke. About the food. About the tastes. We talked about other restaurants. I sent 5 minute recordings about my day to my Premium *PLUS* teacher. It felt good. It didn't feel like pure brute-force work.

When you build your routine and focus on hitting goals, you can lose sight of what you **ACTUALLY** enjoy and what got you learning in the first place. That's what happened to me this past month.

As you read, you might be asking:

"But can you truly learn by ONLY doing what you enjoy and what's 'fun'?"

Let's get into the third part.



3

How to Make Language Progress While Having Fun



I want to start off with a quick story.

I knew this one guy who was learning Japanese years ago. He wasn't good. And one day, he went and bought a Japanese novel. I saw him carrying it around, and knowing novels were above his level, and I asked him out of curiosity, *"Why are you carrying that around?"*

He told me, he's reading it to learn Japanese AND because he likes reading. At that time, my Japanese was already at business level but I never had to read a novel to learn Japanese. I didn't say anything, but in my mind, I was thinking *"This guy's crazy... good luck!"*

Half a year later, he understood every page of the book and was reading without a problem. I was blown away.

He wanted to read in Japanese. Instead of drilling flashcards or memorizing, he just picked up a novel and got straight to it.

So, can you learn by ONLY doing what you enjoy and what's "fun"?

Well, you can learn, BUT you must ask yourself two things:

- A) What's your goal or reason for learning really?
- B) What brings you the most pleasure? Or, what do you enjoy that you can apply to language learning?

Then, you work backwards from there.





WHATEVER YOUR GOAL IS, START APPLYING
YOUR TIME TO THAT GOAL RIGHT AWAY VIA
WHATEVER YOU ENJOY DOING MOST.



- If your goal is to speak with a significant other, try it today – speak. Don't set a plan for someday.
- If your goal is to watch TV shows, watch them. Even if you don't understand everything.
(You'll get there eventually)
- If you like books, read a book.
- If you love science, learn all about science – start off with just learning vocab – in your target language.

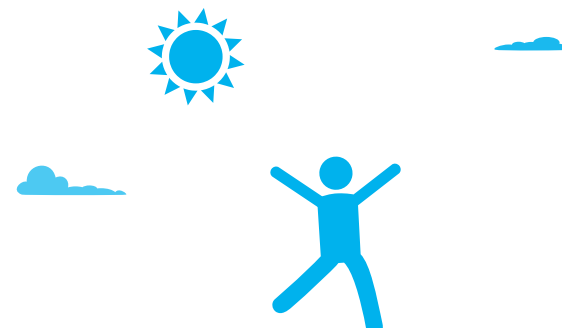
Yes, there's still work involved. You still have to look up words and grammar points along the way, but if you're doing something you enjoy or are working towards a goal that you really care about, it won't be as rough.

Back then, I wanted to tell my friend to drop the book, buy some flashcards, write out all the words and grammar rules and study them religiously.

That's the faster way. But if he hated flashcards, he wouldn't stick to my advice for very long... and it wouldn't work out for him simply because he didn't care for it. He wanted to read.

Don't get me wrong, both methods of learning – the flashcards and reading – work. Most methods can work if you put in enough time (some take longer than others, but it's doable with some drive and creativity). And both require you to work.

- you'll be much more likely to stick with that learning method
- you'll make progress as long as you put in consistent time and effort
- you'll give yourself a nice break from your current routine
- you'll get some rest
- you'll get to actually enjoy the learning process



Now that we took a break and talked about having fun...

Let's keep that in mind and get back to my goals. It's time to get back on track. I got up to 30 out of my promised 60 Chinese dialogues. As such, I'll focus on knocking out the other 30 dialogues and continue with listening. **That's my small, measurable goal for the month.**

The deadline? June 30th.

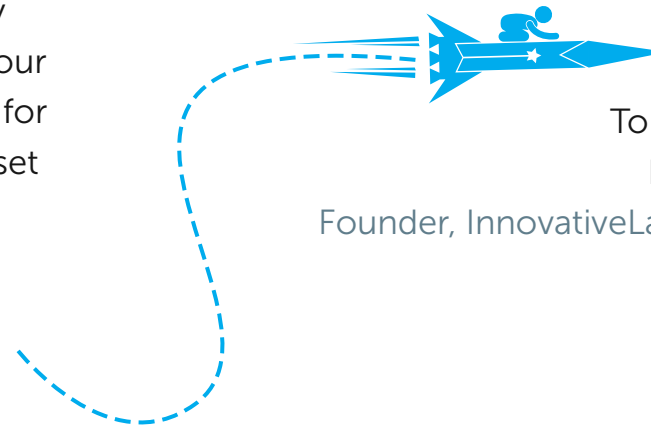
Remember, just because you failed to meet a goal doesn't mean your journey stops here. And do not double up on your work to "punish" yourself and make up for lost time. It's not realistic and will only set you up for more failure.

Aim for something you can honestly do in a month. If I was able to do 30 dialogues last month, doing 30 more is very realistic.

So, listeners, be sure to let me know:

How often do you take a break?
Do you ever switch up your learning to make it fun?
And, what your goals are for the month.

Shoot me an email at
inner.circle@innovativelanguage.com



To your fluency,
Peter Galante
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