

# The Power of Mistakes

ISO Gazette



ISO  
Gazette

by International  
School of Oradea



***In his famous quote, "The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing", states Henry Ford. I genuinely think that the way how we define mistakes is directly relevant to their use in our lives and in our learning.***

***One can see the mistakes as an opportunity to receive feedback regarding our strengths and areas for improvement, which grows progression. For others, the same mistakes can be seen as a dead-end failure, which causes regression and stops progression.***

***Our school's aim of providing a supportive environment for the students to achieve the learning core value surrounding around essential use of mistakes in our community. All our dialogues with our stakeholders have this flexibility to admit when things do not go as planned, and then the focus turns to how we can learn from what did not go well.***

***Once this is indeed achieved, I believe then we can discuss the power of mistakes otherwise it remains a considerable threat in all our lives as something which we always try to avoid. This creates enormous pressure on anyone and results in perfectionism which mainly causes the aim of a person/institution/community to be seen as perfect rather than to become better in what they do and to learn from their mistakes.***

***Mistakes also show me the existence of effort and commitment. For one who rarely takes initiative and responsibility, it is very difficult to commit mistakes.***

***This is what we have done with our school's development plan this year. We have discussed in teams what did not work well last year and ways how to improve it this time. That is how we involved more of our stakeholders in the planning process and increased the resources we use to collect and monitor data on our students' progress.***

***It is now this time of the year when the annual reviews are to take place and to start the new year with a list of new aims and objectives. I hope this time, we pay some extra attention to the mistakes we have made in 2022 and see how we can turn them into a resource for our 2023 plans. Otherwise, we shall remember what Henry Ford said; then, they will remain an actual mistake.***

***I wish all our community a Happy New Year.***



## **DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**

**Mr. Ahmet Dundar**



# ***Student council: Oops! And all about it***

*Tudor Belbe, with the huge help of Celia Chiriac*



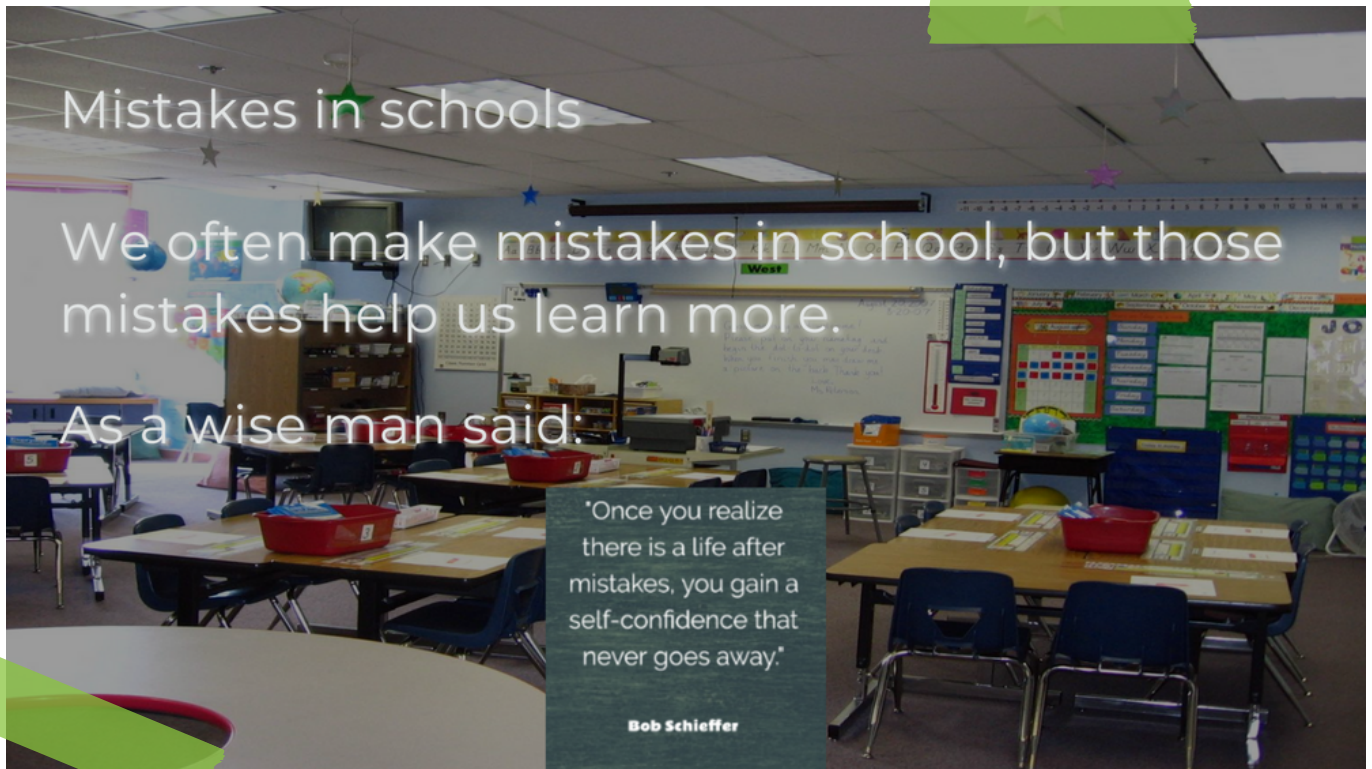
Mistakes  
OOPS!  
and all about it



What are mistakes?

Mistakes are things that we can learn from.  
They help us get better at things like: Maths,  
English and other subjects.

mitsakes





As Confucius once said

There's nothing wrong with committing a blunder as long as we don't repeat it

To make a mistake is human, what you do after you've made a mistake is more important

**By Tudor Belbe**

*Year 6*

# ***Early Years: little accidents? Learning from mistakes maybe?***

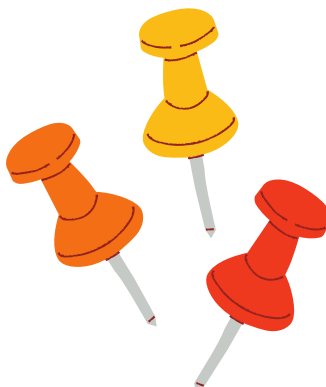
***Ms. Salomeea Achim, Nursery teacher***

In our Nursery classroom, we help children learn from mistakes. But are we always as supportive of our early educators when they make a mistake? Mistakes trigger negative emotions. We feel ashamed or embarrassed when we make them. We get mad at others when they make them. Yet, if we're honest we find that our best learning often happens after a mistake! Learning doesn't come from when we are made to feel worse with harsh punishment, but rather when we get help understanding our mistakes and their consequences, and get support on how to make the necessary corrections. Then we can move on with a lighter step and sense of growth.

And, to make everything more clear, I will make it through an example. In our Nursery classroom we have a rule: "No running! Walk nicely!". I suppose you can already imagine

how many times we tell them to stop running. Imagine them having fun or being excited and suddenly running! One day, a child fell and bumped his head. Tears as big as the crocodiles were coming out of his eyes.

I told that child so many times no to run in the classroom but guess what, he learnt only after he fell and bumped his head. That was maybe more clearer for him, a lot more explicit, it was real life and it hurt. Do you think he is running in the classroom anymore?... Nope, you guessed it wrong :) He is still, but very very rarely because he learnt the lesson out of his own experience.







# Science: from mistakes to inventions

Article on INSIDER: '15 Life-Changing Inventions That Were Created By Mistake'

(<https://www.businessinsider.com/these-10-inventions-were-made-by-mistake-2010-11>)

## Penicillin

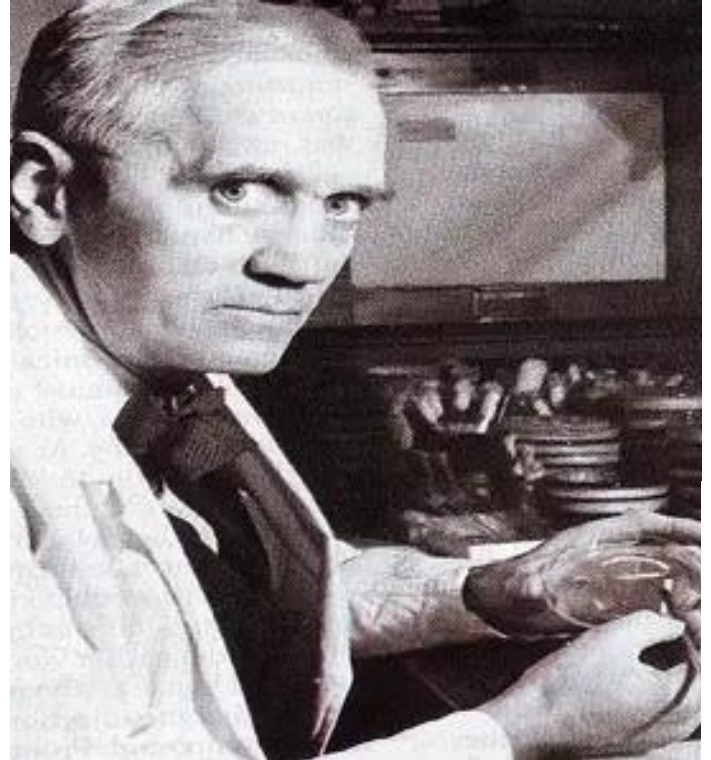
**It is hard to imagine how certain products were invented. It turns out many of society's most well-known inventions were simply mistakes made by scientists on alternative quests.**

### **What he was trying to make:**

Ironically, Fleming was searching for a "wonder drug" that could cure diseases. However, it wasn't until Fleming threw away his experiments that he found what he was looking for.

### **How it was created:**

Fleming noticed that a contaminated Petri dish he had discarded contained a mold that was dissolving all the bacteria around it. When he grew the mold by itself, he learned that it contained a powerful antibiotic, penicillin.



### **Inventor**

***Sir Alexander Fleming, a scientist***



### **Inventor**

***George Crum, a chef at the Carey Moon Lake House in Saratoga Springs***

## Potato chips

### **What they were trying to make:**

A plate of fried potato

### **How it was created:**

One day a customer sent back his plate of potatoes many times and kept asking for them to be more fried and thinner.

Crum lost his temper, sliced the potatoes insanely thin and fried them until they were hard as a rock. To the chef's surprise, the customer loved them and wanted more!





# Science: from mistakes to inventions



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## **Inventor**

***John Hopps, an electrical engineer***

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## The Pacemaker

### **What he was trying to make:**

Hopps was conducting research on hypothermia and was trying to use radio frequency heating to restore body temperature.

### **How it was created:**

During his experiment he realized if a heart stopped beating due to cooling, it could be started again by artificial stimulation. This realization led to the pacemaker.



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## **Inventor**

***Percy Spencer, an engineer with the Raytheon Corporation***

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## Microwave ovens

### **What he was trying to make:**

The engineer was conducting a radar-related research project with a new vacuum tube.

### **How it was created:**

Spencer realized that the candy bar in his pocket began to melt during his experiments. He then put popcorn into the machine, and when it started to pop, he knew he had a revolutionary device on his hands.





# Science: from mistakes to inventions



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## **Inventor**

***Constantine Fahlberg, a researcher at Johns Hopkins University***

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## **Saccharin** *(an artificial sweetener)*

### **What he was trying to make:**

Fahlberg was investigating the oxidation of o-toluenesulfonamide, whatever that means!

### **How it was created:**

Fahlberg's discovery happened because he forgot to wash his hands. He had spilled a chemical on his hands in the lab that caused his bread to taste very sweet. The researcher immediately requested a patent and mass-produced his product.

## **Fireworks**

### **What he was trying to make:**

According to legend, the cook was simply experimenting in the kitchen.

### **How it was created:**

A cook accidentally mixed together charcoal, sulfur, and saltpeter - common kitchen items 2000 years ago. When the mixture was compressed in a bamboo tube (why the cook did that we have no idea), it exploded.



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## **Inventor**

***An unknown cook in China***

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## **Ink-Jet printers**

### **How it was created:**

After resting his hot iron on his pen by accident, ink was ejected from the pens point a few moments later. This principle led to the creation of the inkjet printer.

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## **Inventor**

***A Canon engineer***

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# Science: from mistakes to inventions



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## **Inventor**

***Spencer Silver, a researcher in 3M Laboratories***

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## Post-it notes

### **What he was trying to make:**

A strong adhesive

### **How it was created:**

While working away, Silver created an adhesive that was actually weaker than what already existed. It stuck to objects but could be pulled off easily without leaving a mark. Years later a colleague spread the substance on little pieces of paper to mark his place in his choir hymn book, and the idea was born.

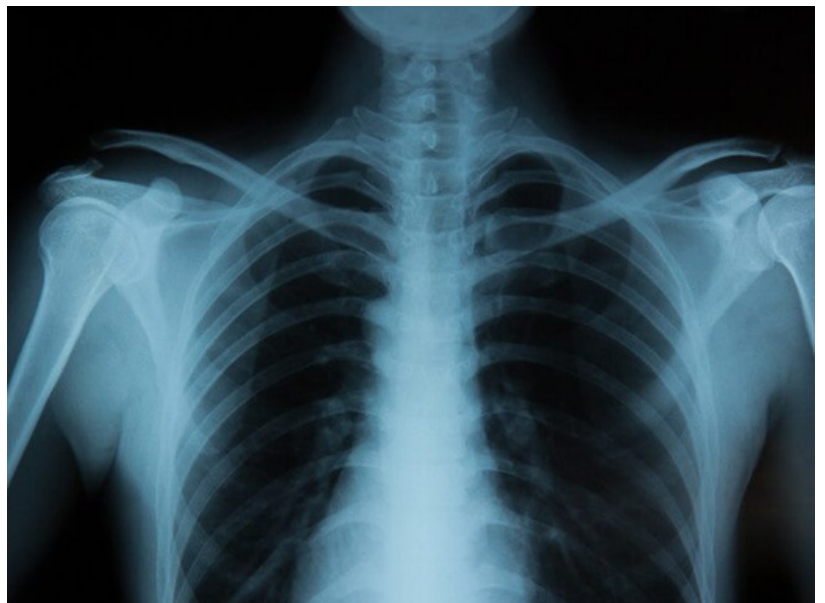
## X-Rays

### **What he was trying to make:**

The engineer was conducting a radar-related research project with a new vacuum tube.

### **How it was created:**

Spencer realized that the candy bar in his pocket began to melt during his experiments. He then put popcorn into the machine, and when it started to pop, he knew he had a revolutionary device on his hands.



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## **Inventor**

***Wilhem Roentgen, an eccentric physicist***

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# Guitar Club: chaos or music?

Mr. Ziad Younis



*[The Following is a completely fictitious interview of the guitar teacher, Mr Zee, by an interviewer spawned from his own imagination.]*

*Interviewer: Hello Zee!*

*Zee: Mister Zee.*

*I: Yes, Sorry. Hello, Mister Zee.*

*Z: [laughs courageously] Please, just call me Zee.*

*I: Oh, jolly good!*

*Z: Mister jolly good.*

*I: Yes, well... Teachers who work in classrooms neighboring your guitar club have described the noise emitted from your students as "loud," "like six monkeys using a louder monkey to kill seven even louder monkeys" and "pure chaotic chaos, and also very loud."*

*Z: Mm.*

*I: Does it ever get loud in there?*

*Z: Yes. That's on purpose.*

*I: And what about the chaos?*

*Z: Well, I'm sure you know that the word 'chaos' is a portmanteau of the Greek prefix 'chaso' - meaning Legeo or 'mind-sight' - and the term 'aeos' - meaning, as we all know, a spriggett or wansommer from the Muses.\**

*[\*Disclaimer: none of this is true]*

*I: Of course. And how does that relate to your club?*

*Z: It is natural that education emphasizes order and rules - students need to develop routines and discipline which will be invaluable in future education and life. But a truly rewarding life cannot revolve around order alone - when this happens, people become robotic and life becomes void of novelty and dull. We need to learn how to channel our inner chaos in a productive way.*



# Guitar Club: chaos or music?

**Mr. Ziad Younis**

*Creativity and exploration are fundamental to an enriching life, both professionally and spiritually. Therefore school should provide opportunities to explore things spontaneously, at which point they will search out the rules to give form to their original ideas. Then students will associate school with the vibrancy of their inner world and they will be able to find the line between order and chaos in which creativity resides.*

*I: Do they make a lot of mistakes along the way?*

*Z: [Laughs heroically] Often we do not realize what we have done is a mistake until long after we have done it. The same is true for the opposite of mistakes for which, as far as I know, there is no word. As such, nothing is a mistake on its own and we will never know what was the good news and what was the bad. Students should learn to engage with, and comfortable among, the things we call mistakes.*

*I: That is very wise, Mister Zee, and you are super-cool. How do these things manifest themselves in your club?*

*Z: The club is a place where quiet kids make very loud noises. Students regularly pair off into corners to write lyrics to self-penned songs on scraps of paper using the backs of guitars as writing desks. Kids who struggle to stay still in normal classes spend an hour practicing a single chord. Some are learning a little and some are learning a lot, and everyone seems to be having fun. I think these are good things.*

*I: Would you say that, in the process of running a guitar club, you have gained a newfound appreciation of the wonders of a child's imagination and, in a kooky kinda way, you have learnt as much from your students as they have from you?*

*Z: ... [what do you think Mr. Zee answered?]*

*I: Ah. Well, has it enabled you to experience the joy of music in a whole new way?*

*Z: I'm not even sure I like music anymore...*

*I: If you could sum guitar club up in one word, what would it be?*

*Z: ... [what do you think Mr. Zee answered?]*

*I: Thank you for your time.*





# **Parenting: Why mistakes are opportunities?**

**Ms. Raluca Igna**

*The ISO's in-house psychologist*

Being a parent means also having moments of disconnection and struggle with our children. Sometimes it happens when we are being triggered, exhausted or struggling ourselves and sometimes when facing situations that feel scary or dangerous. In any of the cases we might overreact or respond in a way we don't really like it.



The art of repairing with our children is an important experience for them. Repairing, in the form of apologizing gives them the idea that mistakes are ok, it happens to everyone, even parents, and allows them the experience of reconsidering a previous choice.

**Examples of apologies could be related to these topics:**

1. *'I'm sorry I responded so harsh'* - no matter why we responded so tough, our children deserve to see that we can own our behavior and that it isn't their fault when we cannot cope.

2. *'I'm sorry I haven't been fully present for you'* -sometimes we are engaged in too many activities, sometimes we are distracted or tired, it happens, but when we realize we haven't been present with our children, we have to tell them that it wasn't because of our lack of desire and that we regret it. Then, we have to show them that we are being present.

3. *`I`m sorry I tried to fix it instead of being with you in your pain`* - it is difficult to see our children struggle or in pain, but we are not helping them if we come into rescue or fix things for them in every difficult situation. Not every situation is a threatening situation and they are much more empowered to find out how to handle different situations if we just empathize, listen and stay with them in their pain instead of trying to fix things for them.

4. *`I`m sorry my worry got in your way`* - sometimes our own fears speak too loud, taking forms of warnings, or scary situations or *`what if`s`* and block our children`s curiosity, trials and errors, discoveries. When we realize this, we have to tell them that it is just our own worry and that we believe in them and trust their growing process.

5. *`I`m sorry I didn`t understand what you needed, maybe next time we`ll both do better`* - children cannot always understand or process their emotions so when they suddenly explode about something their sibling did or not wanting the food that they usually like or just nothing goes right that day, it very well might not be about those things. When we realize what is really bothering them: tiredness, something that happened at school, feeling rejected, etc., we can show them that we are interested in what happens with them and that both they and us can investigate and communicate better next time.





# ***From the office: Loving imperfection***

**Ms. Dora Aczel**

*Admissions Officer, ECA Coordinator*

Come, play with me. Close your eyes and think of a world that is perfect, there are no mistakes in it. Imagine how your day would look like.

In the morning, as you cross the street, you smile, because everyone is smiling at you. All the hairs of the people are perfectly done, all the clothes of the people are perfectly fitted, no wrinkles on the shirts, no dust on the shoes, no mistaken steps are made.

You do your job perfectly. The teacher explains clearly, all his words are in the right place, you understand everything, you can even do your test perfectly scored in a perfect timeframe.

On the breaks you are playing with the others. You sing some beautiful songs, even birds will join in, then you play a little football. Everyone has their spot, you pass the ball perfectly, mark goals perfectly. The opposite team as well.

The director - let's call him Mr. Ahmet - is in his office, calmly having a meeting with the admissions officer - let's call her Ms. Dora. The meeting is about how perfectly everything is going. After they tell this sentence to each-other they are savoring a perfectly brewed coffee in a perfect silence, as everything is perfect.

There is nothing to do.

There is nothing to do!  
There is no need for communication, there is no need for learning, there is no need to discuss misunderstandings, conflicts, different perceptions of the world! There is no need to be done anything, no need to talk, no need to debate, no



need to correct, to ask apologies, as you haven't done anything wrong.

Now, open your eyes, the game is over. You are living in the world full with mistakes. You are not

clearly communicating, your hair is everything but perfect, you are not having mood to smile all the time. You do not understand the teacher and you did the test all right, but not perfectly. You do not even

sing all right, birds are rather chirping than singing, the ball at the football game is just not wanting to act as you wish. You scored a goal due to luck.

Mr. Ahmet and Ms. Dora are talking an hour long, about all sorts of cases: what they did, what they did wrong, how problems can be fixed. The coffee is cold already.

And there is so much to do! You have to talk, to discuss, to debate. You have to apologize, to forgive, to empathize, to understand, to be understood. You have to learn from your mistakes, you have to be better. You have to understand the teacher, who is not always explaining clearly. Maybe he does mistakes as well.

You can connect, you have space to connect through yours and others' mistakes.



oops

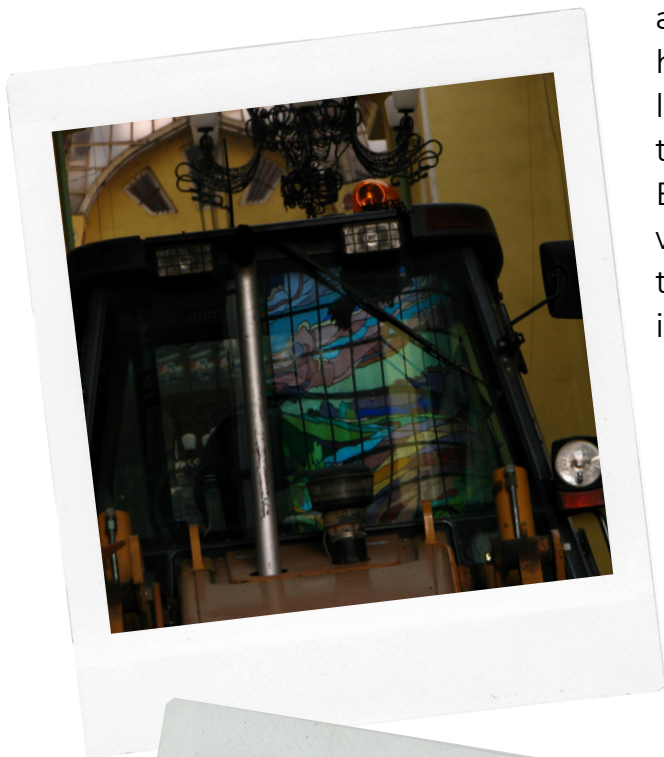


## ***Art: mistaken artworks from the ISO***

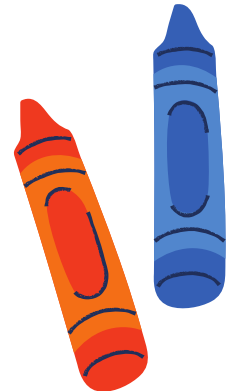
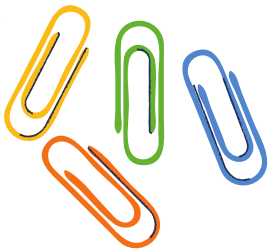
***Ms. Ildikó Laura Kovacs***, *Teaching Assistant*

Sometimes I've found myself photographing an interesting crack, stain or colorful thing that just caught my eye. If you visit Oradea, it is inevitable to see rusty gates with peeling paints or cracked and crumbling house walls and millions of small cracks and potholes on the roads. Art is often hidden in these mistakes. I was surprised to discover the kissing

and hugging couple on the cracked wall of the house. Seeing the man in the hat (I think he looks like Jack Nicholson ) in the scratches on the car. The reflection of the stained glass of the Eagle Palace on the tractor window is simply a wonderful coincidence. If we are going through this gate without a fence, we may find ourselves in Narnia or another fairy tale world. (fig.1-4)



But it also amuses me when I forget to lock the camera in my phone and it takes a lot of amazing pictures without my knowledge. Accidents can happen while painting and drawing. In the photo below, the black paint flowed into the pink paint and a beautiful antlered deer shape emerged from the meeting. You can also find colorful, eye-catching creations on your accidentally painted hands, clothes or down the drain. And when your fresh, finished artwork falls to the floor (picture x) and the paint spreads, it's annoying, but you may even like your work or the imprint of it on the floor even more after the "terrible mistake". (fig 5-9)



After all, art cannot end on the drawing sheet- I'm laughing inside - while I am thinking about the fact that when I was in elementary school, we could only draw the topic on one sheet of paper. If we made a mistake, we often didn't get a new drawing sheet and we were shamed for being clumsy or careless. There was no freedom in the process of creation, there were no sketches. However, great artists make many sketches before creating a masterpiece.





One famous painter, Agnes von Uray, specifically recommends making “bad” drawings, because the fact that you are not afraid to make mistakes and work spontaneously has such a liberating power that your emotions and self-expression appear in the work. Your art piece will become something alive, something creative and fresh. Moreover, according to her, there is no such thing as a bad drawing, just like there is no bad child. “There can be a sweaty or false drawing, false energy, perhaps a lifeless drawing, but often an inaccurate drawing is also accused of being wrong, even though it is often more true than an accurate drawing.”

OOOPS!



You can even turn your anger into art. Haru, a teenager from Japan, decided to take his anger out on an unsuspecting wall, managed to punch a hole. Rather than attempt to patch over the hole and forget what happened, his parents turned it into an edifying and inspirational creative work. See for yourself: fig.10



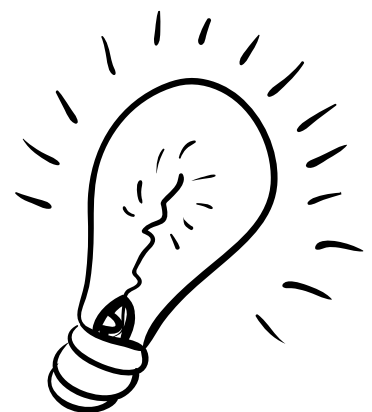
The quote is from Pythagoras. It reads:

**"ANGER BEGINS WITH  
FOLLY, AND ENDS WITH  
REPENTANCE."**



Kintsugi is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. This philosophy helped me look at my mistakes from a different perspective. Just as we can glue an accidentally broken glass with gold dust and get something unique, we can embrace our injuries and falls as well. Objects can break, get dirty, or get damaged, but this is not necessarily a tragedy. Something new is born from it. Fig 11 or 12

It would be boring if all creations were perfect. If not a single plate or glass was broken. If every house wall and every fence were perfectly painted. Perfection is boring.



# ***This is the power of mistakes. We learn from them.***

**Ms Florina Ciobanu**, school secretary of ISO amazing children

Making mistakes is a guarantee in life. You can't avoid them entirely, no matter what you do. Most, if not all, of your mistakes, can be excellent learning opportunities. In fact, learning from failure is often the key to success. By getting things wrong, you'll improve your skills and grow in various ways.

If you're learning, you won't go wrong. "It's important to be willing to make mistakes. The worst thing that can happen is you become memorable." - Sara Blakely, Founder and CEO of Spanx

The first step to achieving growth is admitting when you've done wrong.

Changing your perspective is the second step to the learning process. When we make mistakes, we tend to feel discouraged and vulnerable. That's normal, and that's okay. Only when we are willing to be open-minded to these feelings can we improve and help others do the same.

It can be challenging to maintain a positive outlook, especially when we get caught up in the torrent of daily life. We all have bad days or bad weeks. Don't be afraid to mess up. It is part of building and fine-tuning your mental fitness to become the best version of yourself.

## **DON'T BE AFRAID OR ASHAMED OF YOUR FEAR.**

Because mistakes tend to be viewed as negative, we have a natural fear of them. An even stronger emotion is our sense of pride; and we fear those things that threaten our ego. To admit that something went wrong and take action to correct it calls on us to face those fears. Learning to overcome our fear opens us up for growth.

Facing your fear is a sign of power. Addressing the fear that mistakes can bring and moving forward despite the setbacks demonstrates courage. It takes courage to admit that we didn't get it right the first time and we want to try again with a new approach. Understanding how to be emotionally and mentally courageous is something that many of us struggle with. Mistakes provide us opportunities to show our courage, and courage is a sign of leadership.

Our culture glorifies fearlessness. The traditional image of a leader is one who is smart, tough, and unafraid. But fear, like any emotion, has an evolutionary purpose and upside. Your concern about making mistakes is there to remind you that we're in a challenging situation. A cautious leader has value. This is especially true in times like these.



# SO DON'T GET CAUGHT UP IN RUMINATING: "I SHOULDN'T BE SO FEARFUL."

Many mistakes provide a lesson to be learned. Not only is it a lesson for us, but it provides an opportunity to teach and mentor others what we've learned. Others may be inspired when we are courageous and make our private struggles public. How you see yourself and view your actions is a significant aspect of handling any errors you make. Your mindset is everything. It may seem small, but showing compassion toward yourself does wonders for your self-esteem.

PS: Making mistakes can be annoying and frustrating at times. However, we should also take into consideration that the brain is very sensitive to mistakes and it produces a specific type of electrical activity when we make errors, called the ERN.

This error signal:

- (1) occurs before we are aware of our mistake;
- (2) becomes more powerful as we get older; and
- (3) can predict how well we perform at school or university.

There is still much we do not know about how the brain reacts to mistakes. Doing more research on the ERN might help us solve some of these mysteries as well.

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## ARTICLE

***Ms Florina Ciobanu, secretary***

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