和朋友一起定目标：我们互相监督的一年

初二开学那阵子，我忽然意识到一个问题：我每次开学都下决心，可下完决心没几天就忘。光想我要努力，没有用，因为努力这两个字没法检查。朋友陈默也碰到同样的事，他英语一直不及格，年年说要补，年年没动。开学第二周，我们商量出一个办法：一起定目标，而且定的必须是能检查的目标。

我们定目标那天晚上，在草稿纸上写写画画，规则定了三条。第一条，目标要具体到数字。我不能写数学进步，要写数学进前二十名；他不能写英语提高，要写英语下次及格。第二条，目标要拆到每周。我把数学拆成每周弄透一类错题，他把英语拆成每天背十五个单词、每周写两篇短文。第三条，每周日晚上视频对账，谁没完成，下周罚给对方讲三道题。三条规则定下来，目标忽然就从口号变成了任务。

头一个月最难。我周三晚上想偷懒，单词他那边也想断。我们约过一条：想放弃的当天，必须跟对方说一声为什么。结果我发现，说出来之后大多数的理由都不成立，就是懒。他有一次连续三天没背单词，视频里他支支吾吾，说打游戏忘了。我没骂他，我把我们定的那张表在镜头前举起来，他自己笑了，第二天补了四十个单词，比欠的还多。

互相监督还有个意外的好处：为了对账，你得真的弄明白自己学了什么。每周日检查他的单词，我得看着中文说英文，他得反过来考我。有几次我故意挑长得像的词考他，他被我考倒，回去就把那几个词抄了五遍。检查别人比自己学还费脑子，可两个人的底子都扎实了。他的英语期中考了及格线上面十二分，我的数学从三十名开外进了前二十。

现在回头看，这一年我学到的最重要一课是：目标不是许愿，是设计。许愿靠一时的热血，设计靠具体的数字、每周的步子、定好的检查。人和人不一样，有的人能自己管自己，我不行，我需要一个人每周日问我一句这周怎么样。这不丢人。承认自己需要监督，本身就是了解自己的一部分。

这份心得最后写一句实在话：和朋友一起定目标，最要紧的不是两个人比谁完成得好，而是谁没完成的时候，另一个人不嘲笑、不放弃，把表举起来提醒他一下。我们下个学期还会接着定，目标已经想好了，他的物理，我的语文。学习这条路长，路上有人对账，就不容易走丢。

Setting Goals with My Friend: A Year of Mutual Supervision

Around the start of the eighth grade year, I suddenly noticed a pattern in myself. Every semester I made up my mind to study hard, and every semester I forgot that resolution within a few days. Pure determination is useless, because the words study hard cannot be checked. My friend Chen Mo had the same problem. His English had been failing for years. Every year he said he would fix it, and every year nothing happened. In the second week of the new term, we worked out a method together: set goals together, and make sure every goal can be checked.

That evening when we set our goals, we wrote and crossed things out on draft paper, and we agreed on three rules. Rule one: a goal must be specific down to a number. I could not write improve my math. I had to write get into the top twenty in math. He could not write improve my English. He had to write pass the next English exam. Rule two: a goal must be broken down week by week. I split my math goal into mastering one type of wrong problem each week. He split his English goal into memorizing fifteen new words every day and writing two short passages each week. Rule three: every Sunday evening we would video call and check each other's progress, and whoever failed would have to explain three problems to the other person the following week. Once these three rules were written down, our goals suddenly changed from slogans into tasks.

The first month was the hardest. On Wednesday nights I wanted to slack off, and on his side he wanted to break his word list. We had made one more agreement: on any day you feel like quitting, you must tell the other person why. What I discovered was that after saying the reason out loud, most reasons did not survive. They were just laziness. Once he missed three days of vocabulary in a row. On the video call he mumbled and admitted he had been playing games and forgot. I did not scold him. I simply held our goal sheet up in front of the camera, and he laughed at himself. The next day he made up forty words, more than what he owed.

Mutual supervision brought an unexpected bonus: to check someone else, you have to genuinely understand what you have learned. Every Sunday, when I checked his vocabulary, I would read the Chinese and say the English, and then he would test me in reverse. Several times I deliberately picked words that looked similar to trap him. When I caught him out, he went back and copied those words five times. Checking another person is harder work than studying alone, but the foundations of both of us became solid. In the midterm exam his English finished twelve points above the passing line, and my math climbed from outside the top thirty into the top twenty.

Looking back now, the most important lesson of this year is this: a goal is not a wish, it is a design. A wish runs on temporary excitement, but a design runs on concrete numbers, weekly steps, and scheduled checks. People are different. Some people can govern themselves. I cannot. I need someone to ask me one question every Sunday: how did this week go? There is no shame in that. Admitting that you need supervision is itself part of understanding yourself.

I will end this reflection with one honest sentence. When you set goals with a friend, the point is not for the two of you to compete over who finishes better. The point is that when one of you fails, the other neither mocks nor gives up, but simply holds up the sheet and reminds him. We will keep doing this next term. Our goals are already decided: his physics, my Chinese. The road of studying is long, and if someone checks the map with you along the way, it is much harder to get lost.