



## Peninsula Chinese Business Association

美國華聯商會

*Leading because we care*

March 1, 2022

Dear Members and Friends,

Recently I read a book about money psychology. In one chapter, the author described the relationship of “Luck and Risk” like siblings. This is an intriguing topic, and I want to dig into the rationale. Before I share author Morgan Housel’s points, let’s read a story from him.

There is a private school just outside of Seattle named Lakeside. In 1968, Lakeside leased the Teletype Model 30 computers and hooked them up to the General Electric mainframe terminal for time-sharing (invented in 1965). Back then, most university graduate schools did not have the privilege to access computers readily. Eighth-grade students from Lakeside, on the other hand, could access them daily.

13-year-olds Paul and Bill were classmates. They were big computer fans who often spent leisure time letting their creativity run wild. The computer program wasn’t part of Lakeside’s primary curriculum; it was just an independent study program. The young men enjoyed it so much and were often stuck in front of the devices after school, late at night, and on weekends. Very soon, they became experts.

One night, Bill showed Paul a Fortune magazine and asked: “What do you think it’s like to run a Fortune 500 company?” Paul replied, “I have no idea.” Bill said, “Maybe we’ll have our own computer company someday.”

Yes! You are correct. They are Bill Gates and Paul Allen, the founder and co-founder of Microsoft.

Let’s do a simple possibility evaluation: In 1968, there were about 303 million high school students in the world (according to the UN). Approximately 18 million of them lived in the United States. Around 270,000 of them lived in Washington State. Slightly over 100,000 lived in Seattle. Only about 300 attended Lakeside School.

Begin with 303 million and end with 300. One in a million students were able to access a computer. Lucky Bill Gates happened to be one of them. But this is not the end of the story.

A third young man named Kent Evans was part of the gang. Kent was Bill's best friend and one of the best students in the class. In computer skills, Kent was as good as Bill and Paul. The trio shared business minds and endless ambition. They had common dreams and committed to doing it together. But why wasn't Kent one of Microsoft's founders? He died in a mountaineering accident before he graduated high school.

Gates experienced a one-in-a-million chance by being a student at Lakeside. Evans experienced a one-in-a-million chance by never finishing what he and Gates set out to achieve. They all lived through the same gravity force, the same magnitude, in the same environment, breathing the air but moving in opposite directions. Bill's life was like spinning in the wheel of fortune, and Evans ended up on the other side of live roulette.

Luck and risk are life's outcomes guided by uncatchable energies other than human effort. Moreover, one does not exist without the other. If you recognize that luck brought you success, you must also believe in risk, luck's sibling, which can turn your story upside down.

As per Morgan Housel's conclusion, "If you give luck and risk their proper respect, you realize that when judging people's success, both your own and others, it's never as good or as bad as it seems." Furthermore, as much as we realize luck plays an essential role in success, risk defines that we should give ourselves compassion and be empathetic when judging failures.

Best Regards,

*Johnny DaRosa*

Johnny DaRosa

President

[johnnydarosa@post.harvard.edu](mailto:johnnydarosa@post.harvard.edu)