

Idiom by Lon Yan

不勝其煩

bu2 sheng4 qi2 fan2

Living near a busy road will increase of risk of dementia. This is the finding of a study published recently in medical journal The Lancet.

The study was done by the public health authorities in Ontario, Canada, and those being tracked were people living in that province, where, any person from Hong Kong will ask: "Traffic? What traffic?"

How close Hong Kong city dwellers are living to traffic needs no further illustration than to point out in some cases, you can say "hi" to people in the car passing a flyover in front of the living room windows, and they can "hi" you back.

And if "near-road exposure" is a problem there, everyone in Hong Kong should probably have lost their mind already, but we haven't, and we are even one of the longest living people in the world, which

says something about how resilient we are health-wise.

Regardless, incessant traffic noises and bad air pollution do really give you the feeling of "不勝其煩" (*bu2 sheng4 qi2 fan2*).

"不勝" (*bu2 sheng4*) means "cannot bear or stand," "其" (*qi2*) "his," "her," "that person's," and "煩" (*fan2*) "to bother," "to be annoyed." Literally, "不勝其煩" (*bu2 sheng4 qi2 fan2*) is "cannot bear to be annoyed," "annoyance that is hard to bear."

The idiom means "to be pestered (打擾; 煩擾) unbearably," "to be pestered beyond endurance."

No matter how much you love children, spending hours on end with a two-year-old can make you feel "不勝其煩" (*bu2 sheng4 qi2 fan2*), so will people who have the habit of nagging.

Terms containing the character "煩" (*fan2*) include:

煩擾 (*fan2 rao3*) – to bother; to disturb; to feel disturbed

煩躁 (*fan2 zao4*) – fidgety; annoyed and impatient

煩惱 (*fan2 nao3*) – vexation; worry; trouble

麻煩 (*ma2 fan2*) – troublesome