

Kindness Talks

Where do I need to go? It starts in only 5 minutes! Maybe it is in this building? No, it is closed. How about in the building with the large cafeteria? No, the speech contest is not here either. This is not good. Why does Nanzan University in Nagoya have to be so big?! Oh, here comes a university student.

“Excuse me, do you know where the high school speech contest is?”

“No, sorry.”

I am already late and I have searched through most of this side of campus. Where is it?! I wish it were not Saturday so that there would be more people on campus to help me. Wait, there's another building with someone working inside.

“Can you help me? Where is the high school speech contest?”

“When does it start?”

“It started about 10 minutes ago,” I quickly responded.

“What school do you belong to?”

“I'm not a student. I'm an assistant English teacher at Aichi Mito High School. I have some students I helped who will present today.”

The woman gasped and called some people. After finally

getting the appropriate information, she locked the office and came out with her purse. “It's at the junior college, but this is the university. It's far from here. I'll drive you.”

I did not expect such kindness, especially people going out of their way to help you. I have had other experiences where strangers sacrificed much for me. Of course there are people who would not do anything for me too, but the acts of kindness help to build a strong bond between the giver and the receiver. I have come to realize that this is the most fundamental level of communication for the JET Programme's goal of “grassroots internationalization.”

A conversation can arise from a simple kind gesture. Part of the conversation can be in English to help and improve the Japanese person's English, but part of it can be in Japanese to help the foreigner to Japan. As I was being driven to Nanzan Junior College, the woman and I talked about our interests and past experiences. On a basic level, we simply had a chat. How would you feel sitting in a car with someone in complete silence for the entire duration of the trip? If the driver and I stayed silent, I would have gone crazy and possibly run to eat 10 packets of wasabi and scream. See how crazy it would have

不了情

蓦然回首,与他的相识整整过了八年。八年里,有开心有烦恼;有快乐也有痛苦。曾经青涩害羞的我,对未知充满好奇,每天都开心地期盼着看到他那新鲜的面庞。但渐渐的,我发现他并非容易让人读懂,在台灯下我不知度过了多少个烦恼的夜。当然,乌云也有消散之时,当我通过努力顺利能与他交流时,我就像幼儿园的小朋友得到了小红花一样,心里美滋滋的。可是好花不常开,快乐也总是那么短暂。虽然能顺利交流了,但接下去该如何是好呢?这个难题让我痛苦了许久……。

他到底是谁呢?也许你已经隐约感觉到了。对,他就是“日语”。虽然进入大学攻读日语专业并非是我第一志愿,但这奇妙的缘分让我从心底体会到

了外语的魅力,交流的魅力。

虽然通过书本,电视,网络以及来华的日本友人等媒介对日本有了一些了解,但一直都没有机会和日本零距离接触。我是在学日语的第五个年头,到日本奈良圆了留日的梦。在交换留学的一年中,我尽自己最大的可能,接触日本,了解日本和理解日本。一年中,给我留下印象最深的还是生活在这片国土上的人们。有亲切和蔼的老人,有热心与我探讨文学历史的中年人,有活跃在社团活动中的青年,还有因我而改变对中国看法的孩子们。

一年的交换留学是我人生的宝贵财富,为了让这财富与更多人分享,我申请了JET。心怀一颗感

Justin Moy

been if there was no talking?

On a higher level, the Nanzan University woman and I were representing our own countries and culture. Quick: what are the first few attributes you think of Japanese people? How about Americans (USA)? Before coming to Japan in 2007, I held the same stereotypes many other westerners hold of the Japanese: smart, shy, and nice. By now I have heard plenty of stereotypes of Americans: loud, unreserved, and gun owners (mostly with multiple arms). As you hopefully know, not all Japanese and Americans are like these things. There is more to it. Getting back to the car ride, the woman was certainly not shy. I do not think a shy woman would have even offered to drive me. She also spoke a bit in English, which is not her native language. For me, there have been occasions in the past when I was too shy to speak a foreign language. Kindness can truly help to open up people to try something different like speaking in another language. I do not know about you, but I would not want to speak to a grump.

At the time of this incident, I did not see this as any grassroots internationalization. As I interacted with more people each day, I came to understand how the foreign

presence promotes grassroots internationalization. This is a time when people can easily communicate with others from around the world. I talk to my family every week via the internet using a webcam. I can talk to people I met in other countries using different computer and internet tools such as e-mail or networking sites. However, all of these ways lack the personal touch. It is no joke that JETs and other foreigners are ambassadors of their respective countries in Japan. My presence in Japan does not only affect the friends and acquaintances I have made, but it also affects all the shopkeepers and people who pass me on the street. The saying, “When in Rome, do as Romans do,” does not maximize grassroots internationalization. It should be slightly changed to: “When in Rome, do as Romans do; but continue to let out the Greek in you when appropriate.”

I was driven straight to the entrance of the building where the contest was held. The trip took a little over 10 minutes. This means she took over 20 minutes out of her day to help a complete stranger, one who does not even fully speak her native language. What would you have done if you were her? I surely hope that my acts of kindness open the eyes of everyone I meet as well as teach me more about Japan. Kindness is the universal language that can be built upon. Speak and listen. 英語

Feng Xu

恩的心，在2008年4月9日又踏上了这个离别不久的国度，再续这不了的情缘。

我工作的地方是充满庶民人情味，我一直所向往的大阪。这里的高中工作，不是那么繁重也不是那么轻松，除了日常的教学之外，在社团活动时间我和学生们一起学中文，练跳舞，夏天还一起参加节日祭典摆起饺子摊呢。在充实的工作之外，为了达到走遍日本的目标，每个假期都会到处走走，想去遇见更多的人。

另外，我还开始了“报恩”行动——在奈良国立博物馆做志愿解说员。为了能与各种各样的参观者交流，作为解说员的第一步就是补充自己的历史

文化知识。这的确是一个让我深入学习中日文化历史的好机会。虽然在近代史上中日之间发生了种种，但在奈良博物馆里，我看到了很多见证了中日友好交流的展示品。奈良，丝绸之路的终点站，望着这里的蔚蓝的天空和肃静的庙宇，让我不禁感慨历史的变迁。希望语言交流与心灵的相互理解联动，共同转动历史的齿轮。我想的我和他的不了情从这里开始，也会继续和他一起走下去……。

中国語