

Let's be unique, offbeat, and bizarre!

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Have you ever felt that you are different from others or out of place? I often felt so when I was a junior high school student. Even when I tried to believe the same way as others, I felt that something was definitely different about me. In fact, some said to me, "You are somehow... unique!" Someone else said, "Your strange attitude makes me tired."

Since I didn't intend to be offbeat, I felt very sad when I heard these comments. Soon I had a complex about my bizarreness and stopped expressing myself.

I used to like talking with people. But it was so frustrating when I so often said something completely different from what most people said and thought. That's why I didn't want to; or rather chose not to speak opinions that were different from others'. For example, when talking about girls' favorite topics such as TV programs and entertainers, I was very agreeable and kept my true thoughts to myself.

We are all naturally different. But I was afraid to be considered strange.

After finishing junior high school, I decided to enter Tokuyama Kosen simply because nobody who knew me chose to take the same course.

Soon after I entered my school, I realized that there were quite a few strange people around me.

Let's take Hitoshi, for example. He is the most unique person of all. He helped me change my attitude completely.

He was a runner in a relay on the Kosen's field day. I was surprised to see him standing at the starting line. He was wearing a horse mask. When the starting pistol was fired, he dashed and galloped off in front of me at top speed.

After the race, I said to him, "Why are you wearing a horse mask?" "Wearing a horse mask makes me feel I can run fast like a horse. Don't you think so, too? I want to do things differently from others. Maybe my different ways will help me make some new discoveries. Why don't you try it?" he responded with a serious look.

I was moved by his words. I also respected him, since he behaved unusually, yet, with pride. I was relieved by this incident, and I said to myself, "It really is OK to be different from everyone else."

There are a lot of strange teachers as well at my school. Sorry, but it's true! For example, in one class, a professor always brags about her microbubble generator.

One day, she explained that the microbubbles the generator emits are cosmetically good for the skin. So my friend and I asked her to let us use the machine. She said, "If a beautiful girl uses this generator, she will become more beautiful." I said, "What happens if a homely girl uses the machine?" She responded, "She will become homelier. So I can't let you use it."

Wouldn't you say she is pretty bizarre to give such a rude answer to her students without any

hesitation?

Now I have realized that there are a lot of strange students in my school and that I am very ordinary by comparison. So, I'm not afraid of being unique, offbeat and, bizarre anymore.

I'm convinced that my uncommon choice of going to this school will be a great success. And so, guess what? I'm going to take a very rare course again when I finish my study at Kosen. Although most Kosen students usually start to work or continue to study in Japanese universities, I'd like to go to an Iranian university. For scarcely any students will go to universities in the Middle East. By taking such a course, I can also prepare to realize my dream of working for the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

From my experience, if you look around you, you can see people who are much more bizarre than you. Once people see you, they should never forget you because of your personality. You can make your life wonderful thanks to your uniqueness. As my talk ends, I'd like to invite you to be unique, offbeat, and, bizarre together with me. Let's share a rare and creatively beautiful future.

Thank you.