

Challenging Myself in the New World

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Hello, my name is Yutaro Nishimura. Eleanor Roosevelt said “Do one thing every day that scares you.” She served as the First Lady of the United States of America while her husband, Franklin D Roosevelt, was president. She was a very active First Lady who promoted many progressive policies. I am sure most people are scared of trying new things, and of failure. I would like to talk about the current reality of Japanese youth, the need for courage, and the importance of failure.

We students are at a time when we are choosing a career. If you get a job, you will go for a job interview. Companies always want to hire people who can come up with creative ideas and are not afraid to try something new, but since companies tend to hire new graduates, many students do not push themselves to try new things, such as studying abroad, because it interferes with job hunting. According to the World Values Survey, most Japanese youths answered that they have not been creative and adventurous people. Japan’s result was the lowest out of 59 countries. This information shows that many Japanese youths usually do not venture to try new things, but people who have the chance to try new things will be able to use their experiences to be creative in their work and lives.

However, I was lucky to be able to study abroad last year. I found the quote “Nothing ventured, nothing gained” while in New Zealand. I screamed “That’s right!” I do not want to forget this and become shy or lazy. Indeed, this proverb has a great and powerful meaning. I became a super active person. However, after I came back to Japan, my heart was dead because of social pressure created by COVID19 to not go out... but, now, I must remember my experiences. The first day I was in New Zealand, I was scared of talking with English speakers, because I thought people would think I could not speak English. One day, I was so nervous about going to an improvisation

workshop, but the actors were so kind and happy to talk with me. At times when I was not doing well, like when I was homesick, and I wanted to quit challenging myself, I continued to try to join clubs such as Karate, Kendo, Dance, Athletics, and so on. Gradually, my negative feelings disappeared and it became fun to talk in English. All my wonderful time spent in New Zealand was made by having the courage to take the first small steps.

The antonym of success is not failure. If you try something new, usually you will fail. You can learn how to deal with failure by failing, and what you learn from those experiences gives you the power to go to the next level. Let me share an example. Jack Ma is the founder of Alibaba, which operates the world's largest online shopping site. He failed elementary school exams, middle school entrance exams, and university entrance exams many times. In both the KFC exam and the police exam, he failed. He applied for Harvard 10 times, but he was rejected all 10 times. He launched more than 40 companies before the success of Alibaba, all of them failed. He said "The most useful thing in life is the experience of failure."

As people get older, they have many things to take care of, so they refrain from taking risks. Young people have more opportunities to be creative with their ideas and adventures. Young people have always changed the world. In fact, I hope everyone can be creative, not only young people. Do not be afraid to try something new, do not be afraid to fail. You will never succeed unless you act. Fail with me! There is no failure in life.