



# Let's Cheer Up! Relay Talk

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## ■How long have you been in Japan?

I have lived in Japan for almost 20 years.

## ■How are you doing these days?

I am an outdoors type of person, so staying home weeks have been difficult for me. At that time, I drove to vacant beaches, big quiet parks, etc. to relax.

Also, I've been trying to find something fun at home for my kid. I tried cooking sweets once, but it didn't go very well. I singed the cupboard...!

## ■You studied in Japan as a “Ryugakusei,” didn't you? Could you share some memories with us?

I was a self-supporting student, so I had to work. You know, restaurants are good place to work because they serve staff meals! You can also practice Japanese through communication with guests. When I worked at a bakery, they sometimes gave me failed products. It was nice and delicious, but I gained weight fast...



## ■Did you make friends with Japanese students?

I didn't join any club activities, but I frequently checked the events held by the international section of the university and participated as much as I could. Normally my day was occupied with study and work, but I sometimes had lunch at cafeterias with friends I met at those events. Although I have not thought much about how to make Japanese friends, I think I have actively talked to them. I know making conversation is not so easy for international students, but it's important to have the courage to take a step forward. It's true in many aspects of life, right?

Also, it is essential to respect your friends no matter how different their culture/manners are from yours. I believe all the exchange/interaction experiences will be of your help in any relationships in the future.

I lived in a dormitory where most of the facilities were shared with other students such as kitchen, shower, etc. Our communal living, at first, had a lot of troubles as you can imagine; dirty kitchen, missing private stuff, etc.

One day, I was cooking *tangbing*, sugar rice cakes, at the kitchen. Some spotted me and said, “Oh, it looks yummy!” Looking back today, it was a breakthrough. On that day, many residents gathered, cooked and ate together. We were able to become friends!

“Are you interested in different cultures?” I feel when people from different cultures gather at one place they will be interested in one another and might create a strong bond!



## ■ You have job-hunting experiences in Japan. Do you have any advice?

It is surprising how rapidly Shu-katsu system is changing. For instance, many job fairs are held online now. Anyone can access so-called “White Companies” no matter where you live. It might become an advantage for someone, but at the same time it might increase competitions.

At the face-to-face interviews all the things matter including postures, manners, atmosphere and more. On the other hand, in the online interviews, it seems more focused on what you speak and how you can make a good impact in a short period of time. It is important to emphasize your strong points and frame your weaknesses in a positive way. If you are not sure about your strength, I'd recommend you ask your friends, seniors and the university staffs. They might show you different perspectives.



## ■ Could you send a message to international students?

I like the phrase “Turn Crisis into Opportunity.” I think that many of us feel something from this in the current difficult circumstances. Let us stop complaining about the unfamiliar situations and living a stressful life. I think we should look calmly and deeply at the state; what has changed and what is changing? It is important that each of us finds ways of relieve stress and anxiety.



In closing, I would like to send a four-character idiom, “<sup>てきしやせいぞん</sup>適者生存 (Survival of the Fittest).” Well, what would you say? I would say, “it is not true that only strong people can survive. All of us can survive unless we are afraid of changes!”

If you have any feedback, please feel free to write to us at [isc2020.talk@tgmail.com](mailto:isc2020.talk@tgmail.com)!

(‘AT → @)

If you LOVE talking and writing, here is a good place to share:) .....Who will be our next “runner” ?!

Thanks and stay safe!

