

The Most Precious Word

What is your precious word? The word I like the best is "Thank you." The word has a special power. It always makes us happy both when we say and when we are told.

I have a regrettable memory about my grandmother. She passed away when I was eight. She taught me how to play "Ohajiki" marbles and "Karuta" card game. These are Japanese traditional games which stir a vague nostalgia in us. She also taught me names of the flowers growing naturally around the house. At that time, I always felt I was loved by her. Nevertheless, I didn't have the habit of saying "Thank you." to her. In those days, I must be a girl of few words. I nodded to her instead of saying something. Looking back, I regret that I didn't tell her my words of gratitude. We should say "Thank you." when we have the chance. Because time passes by soon while regret remains in our hearts forever.

"Thank you." is "Arigato" in Japanese. Originally, "Arigato" means "rare and precious" or "hard to find". The opposite word of "Arigato" is "Atarimae", obvious or ordinary in English. Just recently, I realized "Atarimae" in its essence, has many things hidden to be grateful about. In other words, what we find ordinary in our lives are actually rare and precious events. We should appreciate our daily lives and must not forget the heart of gratitude however obvious and ordinary they are. Moreover, when we say "Thank you." to someone, we get closer to the person. We can make friends with many people and make them happy by saying "Thank you" as often as we can.

I am living a comfortable life in Japan, but there are many children who are born to difficult lives. Many of them cannot even have proper meals. Eating three proper meals a day is an ordinary routine in Japan, but in other parts of the world, it's rare and precious. We must not forget to appreciate our day to day happiness by not forgetting to say "Itadakimasu" and "Gochisosamadesita" before and after our meals.

Many people have helped me since I was born. So, I have been able to live. And I will still be helped by many people from now on. Therefore, whenever somebody lend me a helping hand I would make it sure to express my gratitude in words and in my actions. Because I made it a promise to myself.

最も大切な言葉

皆さんの好きな言葉は何ですか？ 私は「ありがとう」という言葉が一番好きです。この言葉には特別の力があります。言っても言われても幸せな気持ちになれます。私の祖母はとても私を可愛がってくれました。祖母からはおはじきやカルタなど懐かしい古い遊びをたくさん教わりました。でも幼い私は、言葉に出して祖母に感謝の気持ちを伝えることをしませんでした。今でもそのことを残念に思います。私たちは言うべき時に感謝の言葉を伝えるべきです。なぜなら時はすぐに過ぎ去り、悔いだけがいつまでも心に残るからです。「有り難う」は文字通り、めったにない貴重なことという意味です。私は最近、その反対の「当たり前」という言葉にも感謝の意味が込められていることを悟りました。言い換えれば、日常的にあって当然のことこそが、めったにない貴重なことではないのでしょうか。私たちは日本で快適な生活をしています。でも世界には、食事をとることがめったにない貴重なことである場所もあります。私は生まれて以来ずっと多くの人に助けられて生きてきました。そしてこれからも助けられていくことでしょう。誰かが私に助けの手を差しのべてくれたとき、私は言葉と行動とで私の感謝の気持ちを伝えることを忘れずにいたいと思います。「ありがとう」の気持ちを忘れずに過ごすことを自分自身に約束したのですから。