

今オープンジャッジの江星さんがトーストマスターで書いたスピーチ

What Do I Live for?

“What do I live for!?!?” Ramen! You may answer like this if you know I am a ramen-addicted. But my point is different. Hello, Toastmasters!

Last October, I was sitting on my chair and was gazing at my computer. Suddenly, miserable sorrow came up into my mind and I finally yelled this phrase in my office at 1:30 “AM.” Nobody was in the office, nobody was walking in the street and nobody asked, “What happened, Kenta?” after my sudden scream. Only there was pin-drop silence.

“Why I need to do this?” “Why my bosses force me to stay in office quite a long time?” “I will quit this job!” I was irritated and was thinking about these things every day. After finishing jobs in the midnight, I rushed into convenience stores, bought hundreds of cans of beer and gulped them down from ones to the next in order to heal myself. “What do I live for?” No answers came out. Am I born to be a slave?

2 months later, my family, relatives and I gathered in Nagasaki Prefecture where my grandmother used to live. She was just lying in a coffin and looked like as if she was just sleeping. However, she would no longer wake up, say good morning, eat delicious food, be happy, be sad and be angry because she had completed her roles in this world and had started her new journey. Yes, my grandmother passed away.

In Japan, whole bodies will be cremated, in other words, burned. Needless to say, my grandmother's was as well. She was surrounded by her daughters, sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and went into the cremator. After 2 hours, she came out from the cremator with leaving only her bones. I picked up her bones and put them into the funeral urn, picked up and put, and picked up and put. I was

deeply sorrowed and, at the same time, recognized that this was the very end of people's life.

To be honest with you, this was not the first time for me to say eternal good-bye to the beloved person, but this eternal farewell gave me totally different meaning in my life: There is an obvious end in one's life.

“What do I live for?” Since my grandmother's death, I once again asked this question to myself in a mirror every morning and reviewed my 28-year life before going to bed. Do I live to eat? To drink? To work? To date with many girls? Or does life originally require us to have some purposes?

Come to think of my late grandmother, I don't think she had aspired for some specific and strong achievements as famous politicians or entrepreneurs did in the past. Actually, her anterior half of life was full of vicissitudes. She lost her parents at the age of 12 and experienced World War II, but her life after the war proceeded almost same as yours. She got married, took care of her husband, raised 7 children, made meals for family members and worked as a farmer.

Do you think such life is too normal, boring and changeless? Yes, it may be so. She didn't accomplish diplomatic normalization with neighboring countries, she didn't publish bestseller books nor did she create iPhones. However, she succeeded in ending her life with satisfaction. Why? That's maybe because she helped people around her.

One day, Mr. G, one of my bosses, called me and said, “I knew that you worked hard and you were irritated. But your contribution made all things well. I'm counting on you.” Though last October was quite tough, my performance seems to have helped Mr. G and my company. I was convinced that current job may be one of the necessary elements in my life.

“What do I live for?” I still have no confident answers, but all I need to do now is to help people around me as my grandmother did. I live to help my co-workers, family, friends, Toastmasters, a girlfriend if I have and you. What do you live for?