

JENESYS Programme 2008

Reflection

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“As a form six student, the future pillar of our society, I would like to grab every opportunity to broaden my horizons so as to sharpen my competitive edge.” I remember I wrote this sentence on my JENESYS 2008 application form, on the “expectation” column. People may find this very banal, as every single student will write this kind of things on application forms. But to me, I do really hope that, through this visit, I can know more, see more, and learn more. And now, after the trip, I can proudly say that, my horizons have been broadened, my goal has been achieved!

It was my first time to Japan. Well, I cannot say that I do not know this country, as Hong Kong is deeply affected by the Japanese culture. However, all the things that I know about this country are from movies, comics, cartoons etc, I have no in-person experience. And this program granted me a chance, my virgin tour to this wonderful place. What inspired me the most is definitely the local environmental protection work. From a tiny life-time habit, to a huge recycle factory, I could sense the environmental protection concern of the Japanese people. A city without rubbish bin, a city where everybody use handkerchief instead of paper tissue, a city where air-conditioners are switched to 28 degree Celsius during a hot summer afternoon, I can barely see these in Hong Kong. At first, I did feel shocked about the level of environment protection in Japan. But after the visit to the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institute, I immediately understand why. The key is “education”. The Japanese Government put a lot of effort on educating citizens, not only to the adults, but also they aim at children. The government prepares cartoon, comics to attract children to learn, the theme parks will include environment protection information on their facilities. They want to develop the young generation a habit of protecting the earth, instead of treating it as a dull responsibility. And to my observation, the government won a beautiful game in this issue.

Let me share with you a funny experience during my home-stay visit. It was very hot in Kagoshima that day, and I sweated heavily. So I took out a pack of

Tempo Tissue to clean up myself. This act is totally normal to me, but to Sho, my host buddy, when saw that little blue pack of tissue, he seemed confused and shocked. He asked me, "Is it a pack of cigarettes?" To my surprise, Sho had never seen a pack of tissue before. From the day he was born, he gets used to using handkerchiefs. He did not understand why we have to use paper instead of a piece of cloth. From this, I understand why people always claim Japan a clean and beautiful country. It is because the sense of environmental protection is being deep rooted in their minds, as if it is part of their lives. Everyone likes their environment, everyone is willing to do their best in treasuring their environment. And so it makes Japan a famous international spot of travelling.

When I came back to Hong Kong, I kept on telling my friends how success Japan is in protecting the environment. I did not mean to compare Hong Kong with Japan, I just wanted to raise their awareness on this topic, and change their wasteful lifestyle. However, after they heard what I said, they started complaining the Hong Kong Government for doing nothing to protect our environment. They criticized that Hong Kong should follow suit Japan. Nevertheless, Hong Kong is really not yet on a par with Japan. It is unfair to compare Hong Kong with Japan. First, Hong Kong is just a special administrative region, while Japan is a country. With limited space, and limited resources, Hong Kong cannot build a large scale recycle factory to reduce domestic waste. Even if one is built, it will again arouse another problem, such as how to handling the factory waste. Second, in the means of environment protection, Hong Kong is only a baby, who just learned to walk, but Japan is a well grown adult. It is quite absurd to compare a baby with an adult. Hong Kong needs time to learn, to improve, and the fact is, Hong Kong did improve in the past few years. The launch of the Blue Sky Campaign and the Three Color Recycle Bin program is definitely some proofs of Hong Kong's improvement. Besides, to make Hong Kong a better place to live, it is not just the government's responsibility. As one of the citizens we have to doing something as well. "A new lifestyle, a new Hong Kong" I believe that every revolution starts with a tiny action, so why don't we put our words into action, and pull strength together to create a piece of blue sky for our next generation!

Throughout the whole journey, I have learnt a lot from the Japanese. Of course the environmental protection is just one of the millions. In fact, besides the Japanese culture, I have also learnt a lot from my peers. The thirty three

participants come from different schools, different backgrounds, some are the presidents of student union, some are head prefects, all of them are elites of their schools, carrying with them different abilities. Working with them teaches me the importance of team work, and the willingness to contribute for the program. "Sacrificing enjoyment, enjoying sacrifice." (犧牲享受，享受犧牲) This is what I have learnt from my peers. Sometimes, it is unavoidable to make sacrifice when we want to do something. For example, in this program, someone is good at mixing songs, so she has to sacrifice her time to jam songs for us. But the point is how do we face this sacrifice? If we treat it as a burden, then we will be annoyed, and depressed. On the other way, if we accept it willingly, we may enjoy ourselves in the action. And so willingness is an important factor when working as a team, don't always count what you have done for the team, but what else you can do better. If that so, we can easily get along with our partners, working efficiently, and a successful goal is there waiting for you.

To conclude, the JENESYS 2008 is the greatest exchange program I have participated. I have been to different kinds of exchange tours, but all those are entertaining basis. Only this one provides me with opportunities to learn and explore. Not only my knowledge has been advanced, but also I have learnt to be more mature. Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Japanese Government as well as the Hong Kong EDB for giving me this precious experience. And also I would like to thank all the program helpers, teachers and participants. Without you, I won't be able to learn that much! Thank you!