

Hello everyone.

I want to send articles about what is happening around me. Please enjoy my article, although my English is not very good.



November 3, 2017. My wife and my wife's mother and I went to the temple near my house. When my wife's father died almost 3 years ago, we decided to build a grave for our family. In Japan, the dead person is cremated and his bones and ashes are put into a grave. Today we visited the grave. The Japanese graves are usually built with vertical stones. On the basement of the grave there is a small hole. The dead bones and ashes are put in the hole of the grave. When we visited the grave, at first we put some water over the top of the grave, and then put some flowers and incense by the tombstone. We have problems in Japan about grave sites. The families which can manage the ancestor's grave are decreasing due to the population decreasing. Also, it is hard for the young generation to keep up with the expensive cost of maintenance fees in the urban city.



November 5, I went to Harajuku station to meet one of my friends from Nicaragua. Her name is Melissa. She is a sister of my Aikido student, Eduardo, in Nicaragua. She came to Okayama University for educational training in the JICA program last week. She came to Tokyo this weekend. She came with another Japanese friend who came from Saitama. She was a JICA overseas junior volunteer, and taught Japanese at U.C.A. We all three went to a *kimono* shop. Melissa bought an old yukata. After the kimono shop, we went to an *anime* shop on Takeshita dori. There were many young people on the street as usual. She was taking a look at all the goods like a child. She was so happy. she went to back Okayama by night express bus from Shinjuku.



My friend, who comes from Nicaragua, told me what surprised her was that when she got on an escalator in Tokyo, everyone moved to the left side in a line. They left the right side line for other walkers. When she was standing on the right line, people looked her with weird face and were waiting for her to move to the left side. To keep open the right side on the escalator is common sense in Japan. We have many temples and shrines in Japan. After visitors go through the gate of the temple, they wash their hands and rinse their mouth with water near the gate. These actions are habitually done to cleanse their bodies in Japan. she was interested in these habits in Japan.



November 9, we went hiking with Hoa san, his wife, Toby, and Kori to Takao san. Those people came from the Davis dojo in Sacramento, California, U.S.A. It took almost 1 hour by super express train on the Keio line from Shinjuku station. It was a sunny day with a pretty blue sky. It was good timing to enjoy the changing colors of autumn leaves. Mt. Fuji could be seen from this mountain. This Mt. Takao features visiting many beautiful temples while climbing the mountain. In this temple I found Tengu statues which were standing in the hanmi style. One is named Ohtengu and the other one is Kotengu. These are guardians of God. Those two help to yield profit and good-luck to the people. This temple is a dojo to learn about Shingon sect Buddhism. Many trainees trained hard to understand Buddhism. Kotengu is also called Karasu tengu. His face looks like a crow. He has a sword and open hand with extended ki and drives out evil. This temple is famous for Reiki too. Reiki is natural energy following in your body. That I heard.

