

2011 SE Mark: YOU, Piece#1

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Topic: My experience about people who I met on 3.11

Genre: A personal narrative

The Strongest Earthquake Gave Me “Shaking and Shocking” Impressions

Author’s note:

Through my experience, I communicated with many people and met some immoral people. In case of emergency, people may often tend to be self-centeredness. However, I want to be kind and in cooperation with other people in any case of emergency. Through my piece, I want you to “re-experience” my experience on 3.11. To read, and to feel, please. What can we do to the people? Are there no possibilities for us to become immoral people like them??

On 3.11 14:46, we had a pretty strong earthquake. At that time, I was on a train. I waited for the train leaving Nakano Station where I changed from the Chuo-line to the Tozai-line. At first, I did not think it was an earthquake. I thought it was a shaking which somebody made to ride on a train. However, the shaking was becoming stronger and stronger. I felt it was not a slight one. I was scared by the shaking, so I went out from the train. It was an very strong and long earthquake. Objects suspended from the ceiling shook very strongly and at any moment they seemed to fall. From vending machines, strong noise occurred. I turned my head. The train was shaking as if a ship faced big waves. Instinctively, I searched a safe place. “Safe place...where??” I couldn’t. There were no safe spaces. “If the objects fall? If the vending machines fall on the floor?” I managed to catch a bar and squatted down. I was cautious of objects around me.

After the 1st big earthquake, the JR’s staffs evacuated the people, who were in the station, including me! I could not believe what they mean. “If people are evacuated from this station,

many people will wait around the station. It is very dangerous!!! Why do JR staffs do this?" After I was evacuated, there were 2nd and 3rd very strong aftershocks when I walked under many heavy and big signboards.



I could not get enough information. "What happened? What should I do?" I searched for information by using my cell phone. However, I could not get information in detail. I did not know about the fear not being able to get any information. More and more people came to the station, but could not enter it. The JR staffs did not give us any information. Eventually, they pulled down the shutters.

After walking around the station for four hours, I went to the Nakano Sun Plaza. I sat on a stair. Two elderly women started talking to me. We talked a lot not only about some information of the earthquake, which I got by using my mobile phone, but also about our family, her (one of them) experiences of the evacuation to *Iwaki*, *Ibaraki* in WW II , etc. She was afraid of the safety of her relatives in *Iwaki*. We did not know about the nuclear power plant accidents at that time, so we talked about only earthquakes' and tsunami's damages. She said, "Your parents are probably concerned for your safety, now. All parents always tend to worry about their children." After talking a lot, I found that I calmed down thanks to them. They gave me some bread even though we met each other for the first time. They said, "You are a student. We want to help you." I felt a real meaning of gentility. I said, "Thanks to you, now I can calm down." They replied to me "Thanks to you, we can calm down and get some information about the earthquakes."

After I had talked with them for four hours, a public servant came. We went to a junior high school to stay the night, but the map, which the servant gave us, to the school was very hard to understand for them. Therefore I led them to the school. They said, "Thanks to you, I can go there. Thank you so much." However, I thought if the women did not start talking to me, I would have become more nervous or crazy.

When we arrived at the school, a teacher of the school said, “Originally you cannot use here because you are not residents of Nakano ward, ha-ha, so you should thank us!!” However, if we are residents of here, we can go home!! I was very shocked by the man’s words. **Was he a human, really?** After that, I helped to prepare the emergency evacuation site. I carried many simplified boards for laying on the floor and many futons.

When I prepared, I saw 3 immoral people. One was a man who had a girl friend. He helped preparing with the woman, and enjoyed preparing with her while he enjoyed talking with her. Suddenly, he quit preparing though we had many things to do! Why? This was because the woman disappeared from the front of him, to go to an other place to prepare. He went to get the simplified board and futon, and slept, soon. Irritated me. The 2nd person is an elderly man. While some people worked to prepare, he egoistically said, ”I want to eat or drink something hot!! Give me something, soon!!” No work, no dinner. Also, He was not my customer. Who was he? He was only a person who could not go home due to the earthquake. Even if you wanted to become angry, you should not have been angry to us. Well..., I did never eat and drink anything on the night. The 3rd person is some employees of some companies. When I prepared, they quickly got many futons and slept soon. They do not have any feeling to help to other people. They were “customers”. They thought only about themselves. I thought that **on emergency time people probably tend to show their true self, after this experience.**

After preparation, I lied down. I looked up at the unfamiliar ceiling. Sometimes suddenly I was shaken by many strong earthquakes through the night. I could not sleep. I wanted to meet my family. Anxiety. Humans need some other people’s help. I actually realized that **family is very, very, very important for me!**



Morning. I went back home by train without knowing the full tragedy of this earthquake. From a train, I could see the very beautiful sun. After I opened my house's door, I really calmed down. I did "daily" things, such as taking a bath and eating a breakfast, and faced "non-daily" things such as newspapers with terrible photos and TV program showing terrible images. However, I felt my parents' love and went to bed...