

A bridge of thought 2; appreciation to both of the cultures

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I found what I am learning here through listening to the discussion on Process Model.

I sensed that I am missing something here ... I was not sure why people keep discussing again and again about something unseen, stays implicit. It was obvious to me through my life in Tokyo. Yes, we live with something unseen, cannot be said, but felt. Usually, the most important thing cannot be seen.

Then I knew it was not so obvious in the daily life in Western culture. It was hard to believe. If you have to make sense to everything you say, and cannot talk about things unclear like a felt sense, that must be very hard to live.

As well as in other countries, we learn in schools, and in universities in Japan. Our ancestors brought the education system from Germany and many other European countries in 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

I thought we share Western academic tradition. You can see our modern city based on “science”. We use Macbookair, iphones...go to Starbucks...and so on.

Then I realized that, maybe, our ancestors had selected what to import from the western culture. They could have imported what makes our lives useful, and took it just on surface. If so, that could be a way of preserving our country, our culture and our way of living. We could lose it, but it is saved by kind of ...pretending like a Western country.

I used to stay in England, for 1 year and a half, when I was 14 years old. It was 1992, (the bubble era). I went to the boarding school and stayed there in the weekdays. My parents lived in London so I went home in weekend.

There was a lot to learn, including English. People said things in very straight way and I had to explain more about myself. I had to talk a lot in class, while almost no one talked in Japan. In someway, I saw people from

Asia sharing this feeling.

But I enjoyed the life there. I felt free in this assertive and diverse Western culture. I could say what I felt. It was OK to say even if it was different from what others felt. I liked it.

But the experience has been held, frozen in myself since I came back to Japan. I could communicate that way only in English, not in Japanese. I was 16 and it was difficult for me to understand the reason. Sometimes an English word came up and I could not find a proper Japanese word that fits to what I really wanted to say. I once tried, but it was different. People also took it differently. I had to re-adjust myself into Japanese communication style. Caring, knowing each other without words. I had to stay silent about what others don't feel the same. That was confusing.

Teachers say we have to learn western culture, (but in Japanese attitude). It is important to admire what Western people say... and I felt that is not western. I wanted to say what I felt, and discuss it in Western way. And it was outside of our tradition.

Do we really want to understand Western culture?

The big question just stayed in my mind for 20 years until I meet Process Model 14 class.

Now it started to unfold.

By learning Focusing, I knew how to be assertive in Japanese. In Focusing,

We are allowed to show respect on difference between people.

I read and listen to the discussion of Process Model to understand how Western people treat the implicit. That is, for me, to understand Western way of thinking, the underlined context. It is doubled. I wish if I can understand what Gene wants to say in that way.

What is said in the philosophy of implicit is very close to what I felt uneasy in Japanese communication style.

But by seeing it through Process Model, I find the difficulty so precious. It makes me very proud of our culture. We do not need to pretend to be Western! I can appreciate the difficulty of caring people without words. Although I am not good at it, and sometimes choose to say what I feel, in a gentle focusing way. And

through this 20 years, I am gradually learning the Japanese way of communication. I am proud of it, too.

It is a simple thing. When you say or act something, imagine how you would feel if you are other people in the room. And respect others and prevent from annoying others. Try to make things go smooth and comfortable. That is simple, but very intricate.

So, I do not want to be westernized any more. I want to be a Japanese, a new Japanese, confidently take in what I feel good. Also, I want to be able to communicate with other cultures, in experiential way.

I saw a film “Madam in New York”, it was a story of a lady from India. I like that story and I think there is a similarity in what we face.

I really appreciate Gene that I could find a new meaning in my life. And I also appreciate Western academic