

To Myself in 2020: Don't Give Up

(Original in Japanese)

Satoru Ozaki

(Age 13, Japan)

Setagaya Junior High School attached to Tokyo Gakugei University

This may seem out of the blue, but what do you think the world will be like ten years from now? You probably thought something like this: If things go on the way they are now, global warming will be getting worse, and many areas will be uninhabitable. In Africa and other places, the gap between rich and poor won't have improved at all. But nowadays, it is improving. Compared with how it was in 2020, people are working harder to create a world that feels better to everyone. And they are doing so voluntarily. People show more gratitude to others than they did in the past. I am one of these people. I give thanks to nature, and thanks to the people who make our everyday goods. Now that I think about it, I really think that gratitude has given me humility and joy in living, and that has given me happiness for both myself and others.

What is your present self like? Are you showing enough gratitude to others? Appreciating the normal, everyday things around us leads us to take action for the future. But right now, you're in junior high school, and it's hard for you to do the same things as an adult would do. However, there are still lots of things you can do. For example, you can share your opinions, as you are doing now. There's always a need for new ideas to help solve environmental problems and poverty issues. The posts you have been writing will definitely be helpful in the future. The volunteer activities we are doing now have been aided many times by various ideas.

The conflicts that were taking place in 2020 have now completely disappeared. I suppose this is because everyone has become happier. Nowadays, everyone is given equal opportunities for things like education, and it is a very fair and just world.

Just like Japan in 2020, now everyone in the world can work toward their own goal. And employment in poor regions has gone way up. In developing countries, lots of volunteers worked together to help advance the primary industry. This was done not by just one person, but with the help of everyone. I myself have been calling on everyone to lend a

hand. Especially because you were born in a wealthy country, I think you could be more proactive. The actions you take can save a lot of lives.

Education has changed a lot, too. First of all, the number of children getting an education has increased since 2020. This is because advances in information technology have been put to use in education. In places where education needs improvement for some reason or other, we have introduced online classes. That way, all children can get an education without any trouble. And the expenses are paid almost entirely by donations. As a member of humanity, I, too, have given donations.

As a junior high school student—or rather, as a human being—I hope you will share some of the things you feel at your age. Especially when it comes to education, we can learn a lot from the things children are feeling. You should value the things that you are able to do in your position.

We created a world that is easy for everyone to live in because each individual thought about what they can do and then put that into action. There are lots of things that you, as a junior high school student, can do. You can share your opinions. You can learn about what is actually going on. You must never give up and say that one person can't make a difference. In the end, it is the efforts of each individual that will save the world.