

Pain Is Temporary

Tempei Seki

Soga Middle School

Lance Armstrong once said, "Pain is temporary. It may last a minute, or an hour, or a day, or a year, but eventually it will subside and something else will take its place. If I quit, however, it lasts forever."

I have learned something special from these few sentences.

My name is Tempei. I lived in Germany for 13 years. To be honest, I wasn't quite a good person in Germany. The first few years in Germany, I was getting bullied, because I was Asian and because I have small eyes. For example, some people called me "chinky eye." Sometimes they even took my things. I hated that country. Because of these acts I became aggressive and violent. Sometimes for no reason. I have to admit, sometimes I got into fights with others. I think violence starts from racism. When I was about 9, I hung out with weird friends and I felt like I was a useless person; a weak person. A few years later, in 2011, my father took me to Japan after the big earthquake tragedy. I went to Minami San-Riku-Cho in Miyagi Prefecture and I saw the washed-away houses. I saw the local people digging around in their crashed houses. I felt weak and useless again. When I went back to Germany, I thought, "How can I become useful for other people? Because when I can help fight against racism, then I can help people, too." Of course, I hated racism. Racism ruined a part of my life. Ok, so after I visited Japan, I wanted to be different. I wanted to be a better person. I wanted to get better grades. I wanted better friends. I wanted a better life. But you can't turn the time back, like in the movie "Back to the Future," you know. I can't restart from the point where I began. But a miracle happened in 2012. My father had to go back to Japan because of his job. When I heard this news, I had a brainwave. I realized that this is a new beginning. But the journey didn't start ordinarily. Believe it or not, we went back to Japan by train. So on the way back, I went through several countries including Poland, Russia, Mongolia and China. During the trip, I noticed how useful and important English was because with English, you can communicate with everyone, no matter where the other person is from. I said to myself, "Hey, wait! If you think about it, then English is not a British language, nor an American language. I think it's an international language." That's when I thought English was the answer for racism, because you can express yourself and say your opinion to everybody in the world.

Now back to Lance Armstrong's words, "Pain is Temporary." For me, studying is a pain, but you know, it's just temporary. I know that I have to study right now, because if I wait too long, the chance will disappear. And this time I won't get a third chance. So I've started to fight against my laziness and my anger. And as you can see, I'm successful right now. People learn from mistakes. People are fighting for "something." I'm fighting for success. I am fighting for a world without racism. I believe in Lance Armstrong's words. I've kept believing in his words. Because of his words, I have never given up. And I think we can make a whole new world in which we can live in peace using English. And remember pain is temporary.

(1st Prize of the 65th Contest, 2013)