

“Pre-need planning” becomes “Golden Anniversary”

I am writing this draft now with some exiting sentiment. This April was our 45th wedding anniversary. In five years we shall reach our golden anniversary. We shall, at that occasion, probably be having many pleasant talks with our friends to whom we are indebted and from whom we have received a lot of assistance.

If both, wife and husband are in good health and in good harmony, they will have a chance to reach their 50th anniversary. But whether they celebrate it or not will depend on the will or the way of thinking of the couple and their financial situation.



We are determined to maintain our health, work diligently to save money and dream to celebrate this anniversary.

In these years, funeral have become diversified in Japan. One of these, I see, is Pre-need planning. Toward this word, however, people still have some kind of negative sentiment. Under such circumstance, I happened to find a wonderful alternative that appeared in a book recently published.

The title of the book is “Life becomes interesting from age 65.” The author, Mikio Kawamura, was born in 1935. He graduated from Hitotsubashi University. He had worked for Mitsubishi Shouji Company for 36 years. After retiring from the company, he became a professor for Tama-University. The contents of the book are positive, productive and innovative. Let me cite some of them here:

- The content of this book are advices from me who has just completed 77 years and to share them with junior fellows of life around 65 years old.
- It was said that men’s average healthy life expectancy is 70.42 and that of women 73.62. This makes me think over as how to live the rest of my life, for 20 or 30 more years. In the era when people live until 100 years old, this is an important question for everyone.
- We, as seniors, have strong “weapons”. We have weapons to maintain our concept of values, style of action, without being influenced by the order of the day. We should have pride and keep a firm conviction in everything.
- If you have work to do, you will be able to live full of vigor until the last moment of life. It is not only to get income but to get self satisfaction, that is “Being impressed by something itself is the remuneration for me”. You may consider donating to society the difference between the amount of money you wish to receive and the amount you actually receive.
- Have a creative way of thinking. How about calling it out to the society, “Why don’t you join me?” or “Why don’t you cling to my finger?”

- The most important factor that sustains seniors is “to have a reason to live”. Those who have such a reason or goal are advancing vividly toward future with conviction.
- If I invite my friends and relatives writing “Pre-need planning”, they may not dare to come. So I sent an inviting letter like this. “This is to express my sincere appreciation to you, my dear friend, at the occasion of my seventieth years of age.” On the very day, I had the most pleasant and satisfactory day in my life. It was a great pleasure for me to have been able to have a talk with my friends while I am living with healthy and good condition. More than anything, I was able to have most satisfied experience in my life.



-----I agree with what Mr. Kawamura asserts. Frankly speaking, I put the last part of this article on my blog page. Many people have accessed the page even after 2 months. So I assume that many people may have concerns, too, about this issue.

Honestly, if a leading person in a family dies at old age, his families have to worry about preparing for funeral arrangements, informing his friends and relatives of his death and decide the date and time of the memorial with a priest. The family members won't have time actually to lament over his death. Meanwhile, the deceased would prefer, I imagine, talking with his friends while in good health than being visited after his death. Obviously, he would not be able to talk with the visitors after he was dead.

Under such circumstance, I had had some interests about “Pre-need planning” until some time ago. I recently envision having, instead a "Gathering party to express my sincere gratitude to those to whom I have much indebted”. Just as Mr. Kawamura, I once planned to have the gathering at Kijyu, at 77 years of age. It was changed, however, to the next year. Because next year we will celebrate our “Golden Anniversary”, we feel it would be better for my wife and I to express our gratitude. The following year will be the year of the Tokyo Olympics. I intend to participate in it as a volunteer interpreter(English and Spanish). This means that my life condition and eagerness will be at their peaks.

As we wish to express our gratitude to the visitors, we are willing to cover the cost of the event ourselves, although voluntary contributions will be welcome. While at the time of my actual death, I wish my family will commemorate my life with only immediate family members. I have begun to think that this way of thinking would be more reasonable.

For example, we would for our anniversary reserve an enchanting hotel near my house, and hang a sign in the front of the party hall: “A Gathering to express our gratitude to you”, and a sign, “Thanks to your cordial support we could pave our way” in the back of the hall. At the reception party, I would like to warm up the party by giving a performance with my children and grandchildren who are pretty good at



playing music. In addition to our words of thanks, I am planning to present every visitors a book, “Complete works of Takeshi Shimizu” edited with materials and pictures that appeared in my website. Then the day will become, I believe, the most pleasant and meaningful day in my life.

Furthermore, I have a dream to live 10 years more, until 2030, the year of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Soka Gakkai, to contribute to the happiness of many people and to world peace. And I plan to die next year at the age of 90 with good health. This constitutes PPK—Pin Pin Korori— having lived vigorously and die promptly without suffering or illness. We have a word also NPO—Nagaikisite Poccuri Ojyousuru—Live long and die suddenly without any kind of suffering.

This will be the last chapter of the life of Don Quixote of Tokyo who has chased “The impossible dream”. I would like to recommend others, too, to experience this kind of life. It will be my great pleasure if anyone of the readers of this article would sympathize with my ideas. Thank you.