



CCIS *Communiqué* **NOTES**

Vol. 1, Number 4

Saturday, December 1, 2018

English is the lingua franca that makes the Friday Morning Coffee possible. With people from almost every language family that's not surprising, and the best way that they can communicate is in their common language: English. They come with a full range of fluency from people just beginning to learn English to those who speak English more accurately and properly than natural-born Americans. We also have our cousins from Australia and Canada who have adopted the Mother Tongue to their own environment just as we have. But enough.

Friday Morning Coffee is the place to practice your English and to learn how people from other cultures adapt to America. The week before Thanksgiving in the Assembly Room at the I-Center different aspects of the annual celebration were on display from a large diorama to lots and lots of pumpkin pie. On the floor in a corner toddlers arranged towns of their own design, and at 11:00 o'clock on sunny days they go with their mothers to the lawn outside to sing. In inclement weather there is a smaller room in the I-Center building. In the center of the Assembly room on this day is the Conversation Table which is covered with individual sheets of paper expressing people's thankfulness for something important to them. The conversation table is a place where shy newcomers can ask questions and begin conversations with others. Circulating through the Assembly Room are some CCIS volunteers and Friday Morning veterans who are willing to help newcomers learn about the I-Center, CCIS programs, and the community.

John Heron, Editor

Friday Morning Coffee and EIA

Mayumi Yoda is a Japanese spouse who has been here since the beginning of the school year. Her husband is a visiting scholar in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and a professor at a university in Japan. He has been here since March, which is when the Japanese school year begins.

Mayumi earned her bachelor's degree in literature from a German university. When you ask the proverbial American question, "What do you do?" Mayumi proudly tells you that she is a psychologist. You can see it in the twinkle that comes to her eye whenever she mentions it. She has created her



own firm which offers personal services to companies who are concerned that with all the competing demands on their employees, their employees become distracted and less focused on the problem at hand. Japan like the United States is looking for personal techniques to counteract society's distractions. Having worked with Thích Nhất Hạnh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk and Peace Activist, who is one of the leading spokespersons in the development of Mindfulness, Mayumi was well prepared to organize and facilitate workshops for their employees.

A good introduction to Mindfulness is to look at and ponder the quotations that have been written by practitioners. Since people throughout history have written ideas that fit well with Mindfulness those thoughts have also been gathered into Mindfulness collections. Here's one by Marcus Aurelius, a 2nd century Roman emperor and philosopher:

“Do every act of your life as though it were the last act of your life.”

These have become popular, and you will find them online and printed on everything from books to tee-shirts and coffee mugs. Here are three by Thích Nhất Hạnh:

“Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor.”

“The most precious gift we can offer others is our presence. When mindfulness embraces those we love, they will bloom like flowers.”

“Drink your tea slowly and reverently, as if it is the axis on which the world earth revolves – slowly, evenly, without rushing toward the future; live the actual moment. Only this moment is life.”

That may seem to be a strange place to land for a Japanese student of German literature, but Mayumi is not untypical of the spouses who come to Stanford with their spouses. They tend to be curious about the world around them and willing to explore. Needless to say, Mayumi has taken advantage of many of CCIS programs including Friday Morning Coffee, Homestay, and EIA. The people at the Friday Morning Coffee are just a bit this side of awesome.

Friday Morning Coffee, Thanksgiving Recognition, November 16



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Is published by

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