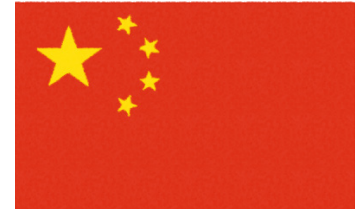


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Series **My Favorite Kyoto**

## My strategies to enjoy time with local communities

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Although I have lived in Denmark and Britain as an international student, I spent most of the time on campus and did not have much contact with the local people. Lacking the connection with the neighbourhood, I felt lost and alienated. “This time I will give it a try.” After half a year, my efforts to increase contact with the locals have been rewarded with countless delightful moments. What I learned from my experience is that even if one is not good at speaking Japanese or is shy and introverted in nature, one can find an approach that suits your character best in enjoying time with the local communities. I would like to share with you my tricks in this article.

First, the most important trick is to relax and take it easy. “Here comes a local. I will make sure to turn this person into my friend.” This way of thinking, unfortunately, does not work well. Your strong will may make the locals choke under pressure. Instead, it is better to find a place where you can spend time with them without being intrusive.

For example, one of the choices is to participate in activities held by local communities. If you are not confident with your Japanese (like I am), I would recommend starting with a hobby. I chose dance and it worked. My friend found a Zumba dance class run by amateur local dancers on ‘Meetup’, an app full of information about local gatherings. “Probably people who are doing Zumba are passionate in nature and therefore less shy.” I thought to myself, and went to the class with my friend. Since I only needed to follow the instructor’s dance steps without



Author

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