

## Respect Food and Take an Action

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One day, I was watching an eating contest show on TV and at first, I was thinking those people were incredible who were eating a huge amount of food. But just then, a commercial came on. It was about donating money to UNICEF to save the children suffering from hunger. As the commercial went on and the pictures of children with skinny bodies were shown, I started to feel sad. At the same time, I recognized that I was mistaken in my understanding and one question came up: "Why are there eating contests even though many people have trouble eating enough food?" I think this occurs because of the lack of respect for food.

"Zero Hunger" is a phrase we hear a lot these days. It is one of the goals for SDGs and its target is to eradicate hunger and ensure that all people have access to safe and nutritious food all year round by 2030. But the reality is far away from this. In fact, there are 800 million people, which equals one out of every nine people in this world, who are suffering from hunger.

The biggest cause of this is food waste. According to SDGs Support Mechanism, we, Japanese people, are wasting twice as much food as we need to stop hunger each year. When I learned this fact, I was so surprised, simply because if we can improve the food waste in Japan, we can stop world hunger.

Nevertheless, people on variety shows order food just for challenges or to entertain the viewers, and they have influenced the people watching. In fact, YouTubers post the same kind of videos to gain viewers. I feel irritated every time TV shows zoom in at a person's face and show that they are having a hard time finishing a huge-sized or spicy meal. These people look like they are suffering from eating, in contrast to the people suffering from hunger. Also, I just do not understand why the people watching it are excited at the situation. Imagine there is a child in front of you who is suffering from severe starvation. Would you still enjoy watching these kinds of videos? Don't you think it would be greater to share what you have? What could we do for world hunger?

In my opinion, the Japanese government should be stricter regarding food waste. In China, a new law related to leftover food was passed. Traditionally there is a custom of ordering too much to eat when entertaining guests, but this new law in China banned this custom by charging for the disposal of uneaten food at the restaurant. It also banned distributing videos online of eating competitions. Following China, the Japanese government should require restaurants to stop providing challenge-sized portions or extreme-flavored meals to customers. In this way, people will have less opportunities to enjoy eating contests. These contests are equivalent to playing with food and I think it shows disrespect.

What else can an individual do? To start, we can finish every meal we eat, only order the amount we need, and check expiration dates to make sure we do not waste any food. Such small steps can improve the world situation. Everything I just mentioned comes back to the spirit of respect.

When I was little, I was taught that there are seven gods in one grain of rice. It means that food is a gift of the labor of many people and the boon of nature, so it is not right to take food for granted. Eating is essential to survive, and I wish the whole world to be able to provide food to every single person. Our feeling of respect for food will surely make it possible. It is about time we realized how valuable food is and respected food to stop hunger.