

【REPORT OF LECTURE】 TTCJ October 2017 Night Meeting



- 1 . Date: October 19th,2017
- 2 . Venue: Tengenji Embassy Café,Hiroo,Tokyo
- 3 . Lecturer: Mr. Ruskyle L. Howser
- 4 . Theme: "Laughing through the pain: Tturning your troubles into comedy"
- 5 . Summary of the lecture:

Ruskyle spoke of how to organize and deliver the humorous speech through his championship experiences at some speech contests, such as the 2014 Toastmasters Humorous Speech Contest .

PART 1 :

Ruskyle started his speech asking "Have you ever had a perfect vacation?" He spoke his experience of the worst and exciting vacation in Mexico with his family when he was 10 years old, in 1969. Main stories were as follows:

- ① My sister forgot her expensive movie camera in the bus, and our mother was injured slipping on the street trying to race down to stop the bus. Finally the camera was not found.
- ② We couldn't move to the north from Mazatlan, an ocean resort, by land because a cyclone had destroyed the roads and bridges.
- ③ Luckily, we found the guy who had private plane. But the pilot made a crazy flight without closing the door on my father's side.
- ④ Finally we landed the real tiny airport flying over the damaged roads successfully. Surprisingly, we took the bus together with a yellow-eyed goat after getting to the city. Finally, we took the train to the American border.

He told us "We have been laughing about that vacation for the last fifty years. Because sometimes the worst experiences make the best stories".

PART 2:

We(lecture attendants) talked about our vacation stories each other at each table.

PART 3:

Ruskyle said "As for the trip to Mexico, my parents were not enjoying it, but now they laugh about it. Even terrible things, not truly tragic things, but bad experiences, can seem very funny in time. So what we talked about some ways we can take our experiences and make them

into funnier stories.

There are several techniques, and *first one* is **absurdity**. To be absurd means a kind of crazy, funny, impossible”.

PART 4:

At Ruskyle’s request, Toastmaster Mr. Fujiyama (Peter) who is very talented at absurdity and also a member of TTCJ board members, demonstrated what about “absurd” is. Peter was going to compete in the all Japan Toastmasters Tall Tale Competition on November 4th.

PART 5:

Ruskyle spoke other several ways using the humor in addition to the above mentioned first one ”absurdity”.

1. *Second point*

Exaggeration.is to make everything bigger that really is. For example, he told a story about when he was a young boy growing up in Idaho. The basic story was true, but pretty much everything possible he made even bigger.

2. *Third point*

The third way to comedy is what’s called “**change of direction**”. Famous comedian George Carlin described it. He said “ Humor is just like a train. You get the train cars going down the track one direction, then you crash the train. That’s what you can do in your stories. You get your audience expecting one thing and then switch.”

Ruskyle told his story about his first year of university, in which he used six changes of direction.

3 *Fourth point*:

One more point is “**call backs**”. A” call back” is when something erlier in the story comes back again. It is very powerful for humorous affect, because it’s kind of bringing audience into the humor.

These *four points* • • **absurdity, exaggeration, change of direction, and call backs,**

• • are four very simple ways that we intake our stories. There are techniques that comedians use.

PART 6:

We(lecture attendants) told the same stories in PART 2 to make it funnier each other in each tables.

Ruskyle finished his speech by saying “It’s been my absolute pleasure to be here and I hope some of what I said somehow becomes useful for you “.

《Report by KK》