



### I want to Be a Wonderful Grandma

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From Botswana

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*Namib Desert*

My grandmother, who has dementia, forgets things from just a few minutes ago, but often tells stories from the past. "Yoshio (my father) was raised on goat's milk, so he smelled like a goat when he was a baby," she says, "In winter, we brought branches to school to keep warm."

When I went back home and was lazily lying on the futon, she suddenly got angry and said, "Your ancestors are displeased with you." I hurriedly got up. The way my grandmother notices things is uniquely hers. Her stories often make me stop and think.

I've been noting down my grandmother's words and stories in a notebook for about five years now. How much longer will I be able to listen to her stories? I've spent less time with her as I've been living in Tokyo or abroad, but her presence has undoubtedly had a significant impact on my outlook on life.

Talking with my grandmother, who lived through the war, I feel that her way of thinking about "living" is different from those of our time. I learned about vegetables, flowers, the importance of water, traditional tales, and dialects all from her.

When I was in the first grade of elementary school, my mother had to undergo surgery, and my father went to Osaka where my mother was hospitalized. For some reason, my younger brother was also hospitalized, so I spent a few days with my grandmother, and then I caught a cold and had to stay home from school.

My grandmother took care of me for about a week, but as soon as my mother returned home, my fever dropped, and I got better.

My grandmother later talked about it with a laugh, saying, "I guess there's no beating your mother," which made my heart ache.

I loved my grandmother just as much.



*With a Himba woman I met in Namibia*

My mother passed away when I was 10 years old. Since then, my grandmother has raised me in her place, and I am very grateful for that. No matter how good my grades were or how much society progressed, for my grandmother, it would be enough as long as I was healthy.

Thinking about my ancestors sometimes soothes my heart, makes me kinder to people, and helps me accept myself. I truly feel that peace is something you create within your heart.

I think the world I live in today is built on the sacrifices of my ancestors. So, I want to cherish the fact that I can live today and be grateful for the peace that allows me to look forward to tomorrow with happiness, and I want to shine my life brightly.

And I, too, want to become a wonderful grandmother in the future.



*Entering Kenya. So far, I have visited 50 countries around the world, including Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and North and South America.*

#### ◆ Profile

2016: Entered Kochi University

2017: Took a leave of absence, visited 36 countries as a backpacker

2018: Studied abroad at Kazakhstan National University

2021: Graduated from Kochi University / Joined DIP KK

2023: Working holiday in Australia

2024: Dispatched to Botswana as a JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteer