

## Having *OSHI* motivates your lives

Let me ask you a question. Do you have your own favorite, in Japanese, "*OSHI*"?

Maybe some of you hear the word "*OSHI*" for the first time. Now this word, which means people or characters you love so much that you want to recommend to someone, is becoming popular around Japan. These days, the word "*Oshikatsu*" is also used to mean activities to enjoy feeling *OSHI* in various ways. Today I want to tell you how motivated your lives become by having *OSHI*.

Having *OSHI* gives you a lot of energy and makes you more positive. According to the online research targeting at young people, which is called LINE research, when high school students were asked what kind of image they had of people who have *OSHI*, the most common answer was that they looked happy, and the second one was that they seemed to lead fulfilling lives. People who benefit from it are not only young people. When NHK conducted a survey which asked what kind of *OSHI* they had last year, more than 45000 people responded it, including from teenagers to elderly people in their seventies. In this survey, a lot of respondents said that they became able to think positively by having *OSHI*.

I also realize through my experience that *OSHI* is the source of inspiration to us and even relieves our stress. Even after the entrance examination, I was suffering from a lot of stress, because I could not go where I like to go in this Covid-19 crisis. I

often took my frustration out on my family and felt guilty every time, but such a stressful life of mine has changed since I happened to see him. His name is Hakata Toshiro, one of the characters of the online game named *Touken Ranbu*. Touken means swords, and Ranbu means fighting like dancing in English. While searching for something I could enjoy at home, I remembered my sister having played *Touken Ranbu* happily while I had been suffering from studying. “Hmm, I have never played an online game, but maybe I find it enjoyable if I try it...” I thought. Then I installed the game and started to play it. In *Touken Ranbu*, Japanese swords become persons and fight against the enemy. A few days after I started the game, I got Hakata Toshiro as my sword by chance. At first, I did not have any special feelings for Hakata, but as I let him fight, my love for him was becoming bigger and bigger. How cute his Hakata dialect is! While he wears glasses, his character is bright and cheerful! It is also pretty of him to like money very much. In addition, his appearance is a little boy but he behaves like a good man. What a sweet gap!

Now Hakata is my *OSHI* completely and I get energy from him every day through *Oshikatsu*. I become happy whenever I see his smile on the screen of my smartphone. I also feel excited with these orange glasses because orange-type color is Hakata’s symbol color. Besides, his courageous personality willing to do hard work is inspiring for me. Seeing his brave attitude, I try not to avoid confronting hardships. Instead of looking at things negatively, now I think that even though it is not easy to go outside in this Covid-19 crisis, I should do what I can do for myself positively by making the best use of things around me. Because Hakata washed out my dissolute mind, I became able to talk with my family cheerfully, without any quarrels.

In addition, it is really fascinating that Oshikatsu does not only improve your human relationships but also broaden them. One day when I was carrying a bag with a can badge of Hakata in a university campus, one classmate spoke to me and said, “Hey, maybe do you like *Touken Ranbu*? I saw Hakata’s badge on your bag.” To my surprise, she was also very fond of *Touken Ranbu*. Although I met her for the first time, we became friends instantly and enjoyed talking of our *OSHI*. Having friends who have the same interests is a good encouragement to your life, and doing *Oshikatsu* is an effective way to make such friends.

It is no exaggeration at all to say that *OSHI* can be the magic leverage for your lives especially in this Covid-19 crisis. Anyone can be your *OSHI*. Characters, pop stars, You Tubers, athletes, historical figures, and so on. Even though you do not have your *OSHI* yet, if you have someone that you like or respect, or you are interested in, first of all I recommend you learn more about him or her. Do they appear on any programs? What kind of clothes do they usually wear? How about their personality? Do they have any symbol color? If you feel closer to them through this process, you may naturally feel like taking them into your lives. You may become more conscious of them in daily lives or even become cheerful when you just think of them. Then you will realize that they are already your *OSHI*.

Having *OSHI* motivates your lives and makes them more enjoyable and valuable. When you find someone you can be absorbed in, you will make sure of it.