

Take actions to save animals

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In 2019, 5,635 dogs and 27,108 cats were killed in Japan. Why? Because of disasters? Because of pandemics? No. It is because of euthanasia.

Today, I would like to talk about euthanasia of pets. According to Ministry of the environment, thousands of dogs and cats are being killed every year. Actually, from 1974, about 8,078,000 dogs and about 5,639,000 cats have been killed in total. Some pets are taken to the shelter by their owners and others are stray dogs and cats. After the animals are taken to the shelter, they are pushed into cages and wait until new owners come. However, there is a time limit. Though it depends on each shelter, the period of consignment is about a week. If they cannot find new owners, they are killed, suffocated by carbon dioxide gas.

When the time limit comes, all the dogs and cats are pushed into a specialized shelter called 'Dream Box'. The box is made of stainless and has no windows. It is far from what people imagine 'dream' to be. When all the dogs and cats have come into the box, carbon dioxide gas starts to be injected. The dogs and the cats notice that something is wrong and start barking and crying. But, no one comes to their rescue. There are no doors to escape from, no voice to call them. Just the scream of other dogs and cats. This continues for 15 minutes. Even if they suffer in agony, they cannot die easily. Whatever they say, whatever they do, whatever they wish, their future is only to be killed. In fact, a lot of scars made by suffering dogs and cats can be found in 'dream

box’.

This is what humans are doing. First of all, why do they have to be killed? Did they cheat humans? Or, did they kill humans? Of course, No. They are brought to the shelter because of human ego. I saw a website which says that some people bring their pets to the shelter saying that “I don’t need him because he has become older. He was cute when he was young, but he is not cute now”. Others say that “I didn’t make my dog undergo spay, so, they now have too many babies. I can’t bring them up.” Can you believe it? This is what the actual owners are saying. Pets are doing no wrong. They are at the mercy of their owners’ convenience, even though owners have the responsibility to protect them.

In spite of the peaceful society of Japan, thousands of dogs and cats are killed because of human ego.

However, there are some changes. Do you know animal protection group? They are NPOs, which aim to save pets. This spring, I started to work as a volunteer at one of the NPO groups, so I would like to talk about my experiences. Their main activity is to come to claim the dogs and cats from animal protection centers managed by the government. And then, the dogs and cats are going to be fed in NPO’s shelters. They sometimes take them to the hospitals or provide rehabilitations to release their physical and mental pain. While taking care of them, Animal protection groups try to find new owners who visit the shelters or contact them on the Internet. Besides, even if the animals cannot find new owners, they won’t be killed. They can stay at the shelter until

they die. All the volunteers seem to try hard to make all the animals there happy. I feel honored to be a member of such a wonderful group, and hope that all the animals can find new owners.

Despite all the effort of the members, there are still problems. It is that few actions are taken to stop human ego. Though the NPOs are trying their best to find new owners the number of pets brought to the shelters is increasing year by year because people are still thrown away their pets. And this trend will be accelerated by the pet boom under the stay-home custom caused by coronavirus. Therefore, I believe there should be stricter rules made by the government. For example, they should make new rules on the management of animals for owners, pet shops, and breeders from how large the cages should be to how babies should be treated and more detailed points. Also, we can insert microchips into animals' bodies so that the government can supervise and raise the consciousness of all the owners.

However, this is not enough. Now, we abandon as much as 100 lives every day. At the shelter, I saw a crying female dog thrown away by a breeder after it was diagnosed skin disease. These lives cannot meet their new owners by themselves. Many lives need help. This is an emergency, so not only the government, but we must not overlook this situation.

So, what can we do?

I would like to tell you some actions. First, please go to the shelters, especially

when you think of having pets. Most shelters hold pet adaptation fairs, and you can check the websites before visiting. You can meet lots of dogs and cats waiting there to be your family. Even if you are not planning to have pets, please think a little about the euthanasia, in the first place. By learning about it, you can know the real situation, and how serious it is. And then, you can start donation, sharing information to your friends, and many things. Everyone here needs to act, because we cannot go to the next step until everyone notice the seriousness of the present situation. The future I hope is that everyone regards going to the shelters as a natural way to have pets, and no dogs and cats are euthanized. Any of your actions can save animals' lives, and change the evil trend. Innocent dogs and cats are waiting for your visit.