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Why I am interested in the Japanese culture?

The Japanese culture is interesting to me because of the history of how the Bushido Code played

a role in the Japanese society for many years. How honor, respect, and loyalty not just for ones country

but for one self helped the people over come defeat. Through perseverance even after being devastated

during WW II Japan became a world leading economic power.

As a child watching Karate had become a way to find peace in life. When at ten years old for the

first time I saw a Martial Arts Tournament on television. Setting a goal for myself to one day wear a

black belt admiring the Karate Fighters because of how focused they looked while fighting during a

match. Soon traveling to the library books showed how Karate came from a country called Japan. The

books about Japan were filled with a variety of information such as how Karate was an institution to

help teach people how to protect themselves from invaders. How farmers would not only use the Karate

skills to fight but also teach honor, integrity, and respect for one self. This new information on how the

Japanese lived their lives changed me. As a child I began to fantasize about being Martial Artist. How

people looked at them with respect not because they could fight but because they had the discipline not

to fight.

Reading more about Japan had taught me about the Samurai. Learning how the Samurai lived by

a code called Bushido. The Japanese understanding of the word is predicated on the Samurai’s moral

code stressing frugality, loyalty, martial arts mastery, and honor unto death.

Being a child with low self esteem becoming intrigued by how the Samurai were respected in Japan by

their society. It was interested to read how they carried themselves with honor, respect, and loyalty not

just for themselves but for their country. Being amazed at how reading stories about the Samurai and

how they were respected in their society from the Shogun down to the peasants. At fourteen years old

the code of conduct that the Samurai lived by let me make the decision to keep away from negative

behavior. It made me realize I needed to become similar to the Samurai by having respect and honor for

myself. This helped me stay away from drugs and alcohol unlike many of my friends. Having not decided

to have any such code to follow they did not discipline themselves from negative influences. Many of my

friends ended up in jail or on drugs due in part of not having some form of belief system to help keep

their selves disciplined. Joining a Karate Dojo gave me sense of purpose which kept me busy with classes

3 days a week after school. Practicing Martial Arts allowed me to help build up my low self esteem.

Later in High School History class had taught me how the Japanese during World War II was

defeated by the allies. There city Hiroshima was bombed, it is best known as the first city in history to be

targeted by a nuclear weapon when the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) dropped an atomic

bomb. More than half the bridges in the city were destroyed, along with heavy damage to roads and

railroads, further devastating the city. The Japanese took a great lose and suffered many casualties but

even though they were defeated the Spirit of the Samurai was still imbedded in their society. Reading

more about what happened to the Japanese during World War II made me astonished at the Japanese

spirit. The Japanese went from a war torn country in the 1940’s to becoming one of the leading

industrial nations in the world today. The spirit of the Samurai the Bushido Code had impacted on how

the Japanese worked and it made me realize how hard I would have to work to achieve me dreams.

After graduating from High School and getting accepted to a Vocational College two years later I

completed school with a Technical Degree. Then transferring to a Junior College where three years later

graduating with an official University Degree low self esteem still was a part of me.

Finding myself in debt because of the college tuitions and because of the economy in America

had crashed I was unable to not find a job to help pay back the school bills. During this time in my life I

was getting a divorce. This dark period in my life lead me in to a deep depression. It was as if my soul

had a hole and I could not fill it back up. Continuing to go to the library I came across a book

written by a man who had live in Japan for many years learning Martial Arts. He said the essence of

Martial Arts is not to control others but to learn how to control one self. To help you not just overcome

bad behavior but also bad thoughts such as suicide or depression. I understood then I had to be like the

Japanese, who had been defeated in WWII to only become leaders in an Industrial world to use the

same Bushido Code of thinking again to overcome my depression. After returning to the Karate Dojo,

going to counseling for help, and years of hard work I finally defeated my depression. Therapy showed

how consistently comparing yourself to others creates low self worth. Therefore learning from how the

Samurai focused on their selves not just physically, but mentally in Ancient Japan helped me understand

my own self worth.

Traveling to Japan after studying the Japanese Language would allow me to better communicate

with the individuals there becoming self reliant. Traveling around, tasting the food and seeing how the

real people who are descendants of the Samurai live today. Seeing how the people in Japan carry their

selves with honor and respect. Also having studied the Japanese language would allow me to apply for

positions with different companies in Japan. Being able to speak English fluently and speak Japanese

conversationally would allow employers to see me as an asset. Having the confidence in myself to finally

learn the Japanese language I plan to work towards my goal of traveling to Japan. Much like the Samurai

who I adored as a child I will use the Bushido code as a way of life to never forget honor, respect, and

loyalty.