

Toyama University of International Studies High School

19th Speech Contest for Junior High School Students

Recitation Assignment

Living with Anxiety

I wake up in the morning and I brush my teeth, wash my face, and eat breakfast. Then I leave the house and go to school.

Then it hits me: did I turn off the stove? I'm pretty sure I did, but I don't really know. I might not have, and my house might burn down! I have to go back home and check. I get back home, and thankfully, it's off. Well, time to head back out.

Then it hits me again: did I lock the door? I'm pretty sure I did, but I don't really know. I might not have, and my house might get robbed! Time to go back home again and check. I get back home, and thankfully, it's locked. Well, it's time to finally head to school!

Then it hits me...

In Japan, the most common mental illnesses are anxiety-related disorders, affecting approximately 10 million adults. Despite this, only 1 in 5 receive treatment because many people fear appearing weak or facing the stigma surrounding mental illness.

The United Kingdom offers a compelling model: a public awareness campaign that normalized conversations about mental health and reframed it as a medical condition rather than a personal problem. As a result, UK residents became significantly more comfortable discussing mental health openly.

Japan can follow this lead: reducing stigma by encouraging honest conversations about anxiety and building low-stress environments. Change won't happen overnight. But the journey must begin with a single step.

Source: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5144586/>