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Footer Tagline

But here, I want to pause.
To me, *great* should equal *kind*.
The highest form of humanity is kindness.

Note on Terminology: What Is Materialism?

The word materialism has two meanings:

1. **Philosophical term (materialist worldview):** The stance that the world consists of matter.
2. **Everyday meaning (materialistic values):** A mindset that prioritizes measurable things—money, possessions, strength, numbers.

In this essay, I use the second meaning. What can be measured = what is right is an easy trap. It accelerates decision-making, but often cuts away context and relationships.

Things and Between

Money, strength, numbers are all *quantities of things*. They work in the short term and are easy to compare. That's why they look powerful. You can see this in how Gen Z often talks about *kosupa* (cost performance) and *taipa* (time performance).

On the other hand, *aida*—the quality of *between*, such as safety, trust, ease of cooperation—is hard to measure, but lasts longer and can be mutually reinforced.

I do use tools and numbers. But my premise is:
Things are means.
Value lies in *aida*.
Measure if you must, but don't use it as a reason for domination.

Kindness as a Design for Strengthening Aida

Kindness is not indulgence. It means recognizing *who* is struggling, *where*, and *with what*, and adjusting the use of power accordingly. Let's call this a *map of burdens*.

You don't need special tools. For example, in preparing for a school festival: noise until evening, two electrical outlets, heavy transport required. Once you've written that down, you can decide—do cutting work in the morning, set experience booths to three-minute slots, make heavy carrying a job for a cart and two people. Then layer in people's circumstances (not a morning person, first-time participant, good at explaining). The atmosphere softens a little. The same applies in a workshop, a company, or a community.

Why Are We Drawn to Quantities of Things?

It's not inherently bad, but direction matters.

- It looks like a shortcut to security (feels protective).
- It's easy to compare (numbers, appearances).
- Social media amplifies it (flashiness spreads easily).
- Only success shows (support and failures are invisible).
- Illusion of measurable = correct (a materialist bias).

The point is not to use power to suppress, but to turn it into a power to move forward *together*. How we use power is what matters.

SNS as a Self-Consciousness Amplifier

Social media is convenient, but it can distort our sense of greatness. The number of claps is a reference, not a report card. Flashy snippets get amplified, while quiet acts of kindness or collaboration fade away.

My own practice is:

- Pause before posting or commenting.
 - Put more effort into *creating* than just *viewing*.
 - Prefer a word about what was good over just applause.
-

Translate Culture, Don't Just Follow It

We have much to learn from foreign systems and technologies. At the same time, Japan has practices that nurture *aida* (sharing surplus), *maai* (attentive spacing), *wa* (harmony).

My approach is: import → translate → select → design → test → publish. Use things to increase between. Not blind imitation, but translation and choice. Just as Japan's past greats did.

Three Promises of the ZIKUU Makerspace

1. Be willing to fail (try many challenges).

Your own falls foster the ability to notice and empathize with how others stumble. Challenge → reflection → improvement builds quiet courage and persistence.

2. Lend a hand when others are struggling.

Pick up small signs → heavy load, urgent task, reluctance to speak up → and offer help in a way that leaves choice, not forced kindness (Want to do it together for just five minutes?).

Chains of helping increase a sense of safety.

3. Share what you've learned with everyone.

The goal is not your own evaluation, but reducing the next person's mistakes. Record not only successes, but also stumbles, reasons, and collaborators. Trust grows more than numbers do, and *aida* develops.

Summed up: challenge nurtures courage, helping nurtures compassion, sharing nurtures trust. Together, these transform individual strength from a force that suppresses into a force that moves forward together.

Human Strength in the Age of AI

AI excels at optimizing quantities of things, exerting power tens or hundreds of times greater than humans. But our human advantage lies in relational work: reading context with empathy, creating atmosphere, forming consensus, translating across boundaries, assigning meaning. Algorithms may assist, but it's humans who create that final sense of resonance.

In Closing

Power to suppress is fast, but fragile.
Power to move forward together (kindness) takes time, but is resilient.

A truly great person is someone who, when you step into their circle, makes you feel a little more at ease and who can expand that circle.

ZIKUU Makerspace is such a space: an experiment in using things to expand *aida*, while drawing on Japan's cultural heritage.

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