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It has been a year since I opened the Monozukuri Juku (Makersâ?? School). During this time, I have tried, in my own way, to talk with people, observe, and reflect carefully. Here I would like to summarize what I have felt and thought.

Human behavior can be broadly classified into four patterns:

1. Doing serious (meaningful, important, valuable) things seriously
2. Doing serious things unseriously
3. Doing unserious (worthless, meaningless) things seriously
4. Doing unserious things unseriously

Of these four, the most desirable is, of course, **1**.
The next best is **4**, followed by **2**, and the most troublesome, in my view, is **3**.

If we look back calmly, donâ??t we often fall into this â??3â?•? In other words, we end up spending serious effort and time on actions that are inherently of no value, or of no benefit to anyone. The problem is made worse when such actions appear, on the surface, to be respectable initiatives.

Even when people say, “for the sake of the children’s future,” I feel that in reality, children are rarely the main actors in society.

For example, the claim that “we should build more daycare centers.” This is certainly a pressing issue for working parents. But has the discussion ever been held from the perspective of, “Do children themselves want to spend time in daycare?” or “What kind of place feels safe and fun for children?” In most cases, adult convenience seems to come first.

The same is true for community revitalization meetings and events. Most participants are middle-aged or elderly, and the content is often little more than an extension of a social gathering. There is little in the way of new challenges or essential debate. Instead, what stands out is an attitude of “just do what can be done now” and “let’s wrap this up safely.” Many small projects rely on subsidies or grants, and can hardly be called self-sustaining initiatives.

In the end, all of this reflects **adult convenience and self-satisfaction.**

Desire and Pride Do Not Fade

As people age, physical strength and intellectual ability inevitably decline. Yet pride and desire—especially the desire for money—rarely fade. In fact, these may become more visible with age.

Say it's a bargain, or it's profitable, or it's fun, and people quickly gather. But say it's for the children's future, or You can take on new challenges, and the response is lukewarm. When something does not serve their own interest, many adults are indifferent or even fail to keep promises. If this is the reality of today's adults, it is deeply disappointing.

Hollowed-Out Community Revitalization

I am personally concerned that most of the community revitalization measures promoted by local governments are destined to fail.

Near our school stands a stone monument engraved with Takudo Toyosato (Open the path, enrich the homeland). Surely this embodies the determination of our predecessors: that developing transportation networks to support the flow of goods and people is essential for regional prosperity.

But what is the reality today? Roads are poorly maintained, bus services are limited, and even if you return by the last train, you cannot find a taxi. If our predecessors could see the current state, they would surely be disheartened.

Society Is Changing

I have lived for more than sixty years, but I have never seen society change as rapidly as it is now. We truly live in turbulent times.

- I won't get married because it's not cost-effective.
- I won't have children.
- I'm worried about the future because AI will take away jobs.

These are things I could never have imagined in my youth. And yet, even amid such change, education remains outdated, and adults seem strangely carefree. They still cling to obsolete values while trying to talk about the next generation.

For example, if AI and robots become even more advanced, the current path—cram schools, exams, prestigious universities, jobs in big corporations or government—may no longer be the right career path.

Of Course the Population Doesn't Grow

No obstetrics clinics.
No schools.
Poor transportation.
No jobs.

In regions like these, how can the population possibly grow? Before lamenting that “people don’t come” or “young people don’t stay,” adults should seriously reflect on what is fundamentally missing.

The Wrong Approach to Problem-Solving

There are two major approaches to problem-solving:

1. **Restoration** (returning to the original state)
2. **Changing the paradigm**

The restoration approach means thinking about how things were before the problem arose. Changing the paradigm means abandoning the very way of thinking that led to the problem in the first place. Problems arise because we have thought in ways that create them, and we must accept that.

Since it is difficult to turn back time, restoration may be impractical. But paradigm change is easier because it only requires changing the people involved. All it takes is to stop saying, “let’s have the same group decide as usual.” It also requires admitting, “we were wrong.” That can be hard, but if we can simply say, “Sorry, I was wrong,” the way forward opens.

In Conclusion

Adults are not thinking about children nearly as much as you might believe.

It is today’s children who will build the future.

The role of adults should be to create a society where children can dream, feel safe, and take on challenges.

If we fail in that responsibility, and instead allow adult self-satisfaction and desire to come first, then true **hope** will never grow in our society.

I strongly feel that we must start by committing ourselves, as adults, to seriously pursuing what is truly **meaningful**.

We want to nurture as many people as possible who can learn, think, decide, and act for themselves in this turbulent era. For that, we must be willing to embrace bold change and endure trials.

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Author

kazuo-tsubaki

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