

In the beginning, when all of you technical intern trainees just arrived in Japan, each day probably went by in a blur of excitement and concentration of learning the ropes of training. However, when you eventually settle down and take a look around you, you may realize that you still have not adapted to your new environment, or you may become acutely aware of the remote distance between you and your family, so much that you feel intense loneliness and longing to go home. This feeling is called homesickness. Your thoughts may be distracted by work during the daytime, but the anxiety and stress tends to increase at night and especially during the weekends. This is probably the first emotional crisis that you will experience in Japan.

Homesickness usually passes with time, but in rare instances the strong sense of loneliness may cause you to lose your appetite and motivation and bring on such symptoms as headaches, lethargy, and nausea.

### <How to overcome homesickness>

#### ① Acknowledge your feelings of homesickness and confide in someone who is willing to listen.

The important thing is not to suppress your emotions and attempt to force yourself to overcome your homesickness. Pour out your thoughts and feelings to a close colleague or your lifestyle advisor, and better yet, call or mail your family and friends at home. This is sure to lighten your heart.

#### ② Spend time outside your room, or take on a hobby such as a handicraft or cooking.

When your mind begins to relax a bit more, concentrate your thoughts on things that you enjoy. This might free your mind and even help you discover new pleasures.

#### ③ Take homesickness in stride.

Accept the fact that it naturally takes time for anyone to adapt to a foreign lifestyle where the language and environment are completely different from what you are familiar with, and rather see those differences as something you can only experience right now. Three years will go by before you know it. Everything you experience, even homesickness, will play an important part in your personal growth.

If, even after trying the above, your symptoms of homesickness do not improve, you might want to consider consulting with a mental health doctor.

技能実習生が日本に来て最初の頃は、物珍しさと仕事を覚える緊張感で毎日が夢中で過ぎていきます。しかしやがて慣れてきて周りのことを見直す余裕が出てくる頃、環境にまだ馴染めていない自分に気づいたり遠く離れた家族のことが気になり、寂しさと帰りたい気持ちが異常なほど強くなることがあります。これがホームシックです。昼間は仕事等で気持ちが紛れるものの、夜や特に休日になるとこの気持ちは一層強くなります。技能実習生が入国後初めて体験する心の危機です。

一般的には時間の経過とともに解消されますが、稀に強い孤独感から食欲や意欲が大きく減退し、頭痛やだるさ、吐き気などの症状がでるようになることもあります。

### <ホームシックの克服法>

#### ① 素直に自分の気持ちを認め、つらい気持ちを聞いて貰う

ホームシックを克服するには、無理に気持ちを押し込めないことが大切です。仲の良い同僚や生活指導員の方に愚痴や寂しい気持ちを聞いてもらいましょう。母国の家族や友人との電話やメールはもっと効果的。心が軽くなるでしょう。

#### ② 外出したり、手芸や料理など趣味を楽しむ

気持ちに余裕が出来たら自分の好きなことに気持ちを集中させてみましょう。気が紛れるだけでなく、新しい楽しみを発見することがあるかもしれません。

#### ③ 開き直ることも大切

外国での生活は言葉も環境も違い、慣れるのに時間がかかるのは当然のこと、仕方がないことと開き直り、むしろその違いは今しか体験できないと考えてみましょう。3年はあつという間に過ぎてしまいます。こうした経験も技能実習生活を送る皆さんにとって大きな成長に必ずつながる事と思います。

これらの方法を試してもなお症状が改善しない場合には、心療内科等の受診を考えてみましょう。