## Spanese Proverbs> Tetsu wa atsui uchi ni ute ("Strike while the iron is hot") Iron is a hard substance, but when it is heated you can change its shape if You apply some force

you apply some force.

It is generally said that young people are flexible in their way of thinking, but we become more set in our ways as we grow older. For this reason, this

proverb tells us that studying hard and challenging ourselves to do difficult

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<日本のことわざ> 一鉄は熱いうちに打て一
鉄は硬いものですが、熱すると軟らかくなり、
から、くれ
力 を加えると 形 を変えることができます。
 一般的に人間は若い頃にはものの考え方に
まれせい
柔軟性がありますが、年を取ると「頭が硬く」
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(融通が利かなく) なると言われます。そのこと

things when we are young will be of benefit in our later lives.

However, while people may say that having a lot of different experiences when you are young will provide you with valuable resources for your later life, it is frequently the case that difficult or disappointing experiences will leave you feeling frustrated.

However, the ability to get over and brush off these experiences is another characteristic of youth. That's why, when you're young, you should consider all experiences as opportunities to learn, and not give up, even if things often don't turn out as you might have preferred.

The word "hot" in "Strike while the iron is hot" does not only refer to temperature. It also refers to states of interest or heightened emotion in phrases such as "hot feelings" or "a hot gaze." The proverb also implies the idea of acting as soon as something comes to your attention or as soon as a problem arises, and of not letting a chance slip by.

A phrase that has come to be used recently is "Narita kesshin" ("a resolve formed at Narita Airport"). This refers to Japanese people taking up the study of English as soon as they get back from an overseas trip. This can be seen as an example of putting the proverb "Strike while the iron is hot" into practice.

おかい気の色々な経験がその後の人生の大きな ただい頃の色々な経験がその後の人生の大きな 糧となると言われても、経験を積んでいる途中の 者にとってはつらいことや納得がいかずに落胆することも多いでしょう。

しかし、それを乗り越え、はねのけていけるのもまた若さなのです。ですから、若いうちは何事も勉強と思いたくさん「打たれる」ことを厭わないでほしいと思います。

「鉄は熱いうちに打て」の「熱い」という言葉には、温度が高いという意味だけではなく、「熱い気持ち」「熱い眼差し」など、関心を持っている状態や感情が高まっている状態を表す意味もあり、「物事はそれが注目されていたり問題になっている時にこそすぐさま処置を講じろ」「機を逃すな」という趣旨もこのことわざにはあります。

最近の言葉で、英語が苦手な日本人が海外旅行に出掛け、帰ってきた途端に英会話を習い始めることを「成田決心」と言ったりしますが、これはまさに「鉄は熱いうちに打て」ということわざを実践していると言えるかもしれません。

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