

Lecturer's Contribution

RANDOSERU

by Dr. Nur Ilianis Adnan

Recently, when the school term started, the story of 'Smiggle school bag' went viral. Some kids were unhappy when some friends at school were talking about 'Smiggle', and this created tension among those who do not possess the fancy bags. For those who are unfamiliar, 'Smiggle' is a brand for school, lifestyle, and stationery product categories such as bags, lunchboxes, drink bottles, pencil cases, books, writing tools and a lot more! The prices of the 'Smiggle' school bags range between RM100 to RM300. This issue reminds me of the Japanese school bags. I still remember my trip to Japan in 2019. Before going to Japan, I tried googling on nice souvenirs to buy from Japan and I found 'Randoseru'. I was so into this cool school backpack which I planned to use as my laptop bag and was determined to get one from there. Oh well, confidence is everything. The innocence me went to a few shops in Tokyo to find this 'souvenir' without knowing the price of it. It was not easy to find because I was there during the school holiday season and not many shops selling it at that time. Finally, I found it at one of the shops in Odaiba, my eyes were glued to the so called 'fictitious' price tags which eradicated me from having this cute boxy bag. The cheapest on the shelves was RM2000!!! I can buy a designer handbag with that price!! I was flabbergasted. Who on earth would spend that much money just for a school bag?? It was truly mind-boggling!! Do you think a *kedekutist like me would spend a plethora of cash on that? Not in a million years! and so, I left the shop and kissed the 'Randoseru' goodbye. Later that day, I talked to my Japanese friend and told him about this incident. He said, in Japan, usually, most kids are gifted that bag (often by grandparents) as a rite-of-passage when beginning elementary school. Gosh, I wish my grandparents would have done the same. Here is the 'Randoseru' that caught my attention. Now, tell me, how can I not fall in love with it?*



Self-Compassion: Debunking Happiness Myth

by Lee Phei Wei - Registered & Licensed Counsellor (K.B. P.A.) & Seng Hui Zanne

Scrolling through social media, seeing our friends share about their wonderful lives on the platform, and looking back at ourselves where we are probably feeling a mixture of emotions – amongst the mix, there may be a hint of criticism. As we focus on the smiles we see on the screen, we see how we are not doing so right now and believe that this is because we are defective. However, how true is this?

The reality is, we as human beings experience a multitude of emotions just like the weather; sometimes it could be sunny and sometimes rainy, it's ever-changing and won't last forever. We may believe that in order to have a great life, we must and have to get rid of the unpleasant feelings. With how happiness and happy endings are depicted in movies, stories and social media postings, it looks nice on the surface – but looking back to the happiest moment of our lives, how long does the contentment last before we feel some other emotions?

The catch is that we want to notice that we can feel a whole range of emotions, and that is not because we are defective. On the contrary, it's what makes us human and brings the possibility of having a rich and meaningful life.

After reading through this whole article, take a deep breath in, and allow yourself a moment to notice what you are feeling right now. Regardless of whether it's a pleasant or unpleasant emotion, we want to remind ourselves that we are functioning human beings. So let's not criticize ourselves for believing in the myth that we're defective if we're not happy because now we know this is certainly not true.

