

ライフデザイン学部 生活支援学科 生活支援学専攻 教授

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Professor,
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博士(社会福祉学)。聖路加看護大学(現:聖路加国際大学)卒業、東洋大学大学院博士後期課程修了。聖路加国際病院勤務、聖路加看護大学助手、東京都社会福祉協議会介護相談員、社会福祉法人至誠学会東京「緑寿園」、日本社会事業大学教員を経て、2005年から現職。専門は介護福祉学、介護支援方法論、高齢者ケア、Social care。研究テーマは24時間ホームケア。

Hiromi Watanabe has a PhD in social welfare. She graduated from St. Luke's College of Nursing and completed the Doctoral Program at the Course of Social Welfare in the Graduate School of Sociology, Toyo University. After working at St. Luke's International Hospital, as an assistant at St. Luke's College of Nursing, as a long-term care consultant at the Tokyo Council of Social Welfare, at Ryokujien run by the Shiseigakusha Tokyo Incorporated Social Welfare Institution, and as an instructor at Japan College of Social Work, she assumed her current position in 2005. She specializes in long-term care and welfare, long-term care support methodology, elderly care, and social care. Her research theme is 24-hour home care.

Leader in Education

教育の担い手 Special Interview

東洋大学は、 福祉・介護分野のリーダー的存在

本学は社会福祉学分野を学会・教育面でリードしてきた存在です。だからこそ私自身も本学の大学院進学を決断したという経緯があります。そして生活支援学科が設置される際に前任校から本学へ移り、現在、介護福祉士を養成する教育にあたっています。

これまでに卒業した学生の多くは、福祉や介護を学び国家資格を取得し、その分野の専門家としてさまざまな仕事に就いています。中には、若いうちから各組織のリーダーや管理者・管理職になったり、福祉全般で横断的に関わる自治体や「地域包括支援センター」などで活躍する人も少なくありません。私は、年に何度か卒業生たちを交流会やゼミに招いたり、研究成果をまとめるために彼らの職場取材するのですが、そうした時に触れる「若い力」にはいつも頼もしさを感じると同時に、教員として彼らを誇りに思います。

ご存知のように、日本は福祉・介護分野において法整備や制度改革、人材不足といった多くの課題を抱えています。そこで大切なのは「人と向き合い、温かなつながりに喜びを見出す心」を忘れずに働く関係者や卒業生たちの熱意や工夫に他なりません。そういった先輩たちの姿は、本学の在生学生にとって非常に大きな刺激や励みとなり、高い志や情熱を持って巣立っていくという、素晴らしいサイクルを生みだしています。

Toyo University can be viewed as a leader in the welfare and long-term care field

Toyo University has led the field of social welfare studies in terms of research and education. That is why I decided to study at the Graduate School of Toyo University. I transferred from my previous workplace to Toyo University at the same time as the establishment of the Department of Human Care and Support, and I am currently engaged in education of future certified care workers.

After learning welfare and long-term care at the University, many of the alumni of our department have obtained national qualifications and chosen various professional occupations as experts in the relevant fields. A few of them have become leaders, administrators or managers of their organizations since their younger years, have or been playing important roles at local governments, community general support centers or other bodies involved in the whole range of welfare services. Several times a year, I invite some alumni to attend social gatherings or seminars or visit some alumni at their workplaces to collect information necessary for compiling my research findings. The "power of young people" that I feel on such occasions always reassures me and makes me proud of them from the perspective of an instructor.

As you know, Japan faces many challenges to be addressed in the welfare and long-term care field, including the preparation of appropriate legal frameworks, system reforms, and overcoming shortage of workforce. I firmly believe that what is important in such a situation is the enthusiasm and ingenuity of people in the field, including Toyo University alumni, who work without losing their "positive attitudes toward interacting seriously with people and finding joy in warm human relationships." Such alumni have very strongly inspired and encouraged current Toyo University students, who will surely become professionals with high aspiration and passionate enthusiasm after graduation, creating such a wonderful cycle.

状況を多面的に見つめ そこにヒントと希望を見いだす

介護は誰にとっても身近なことです。当たり前でできていた「何か」ができなくなる。その喪失感とショックから本人や家族は慌ててしまうことが多くあると思いますが、学生にはまず「分解して考える」・「本人のできることをふくらませる」という思考法を指導しています。例えば「食べられない」という事実があれば、スプーンを小さくしたら良いのか、どんなものなら食べられるのか、座り方や椅子が問題なのかと、状況を多面的に捉え分解していく。ポイントは、何が「できること」なのかに着目して、その状況や場を調整していくことです。そこにはきっと明るい面が見つけられるはずです。こうしたアプローチは、誰にとっても、超高齢社会を生きるために必要な考え方ではないでしょうか。

昨年、本学では22カ国から研究者を迎え、「Aging & Society」の国際学会を開催しました。その学会でも明らかでしたが、超高齢社会となった日本は、他国に先例のない課題を抱えた「課題先進国」なのです。日本の対応は、近い将来、急速に高齢化が進むとみられる韓国や中国をはじめとした世界各国からも注目されています。果たして日本は「解決先進国」になれるのか。その道のりは非常に厳しいと言えます。しかし、「できること」に注目し、優れた人材を育て、現場の労力を正しく評価できる仕組み作りなどを地道に続けていけば、少しずつ課題を解決し前進できる。そう信じています。

Observe the situation from multiple perspectives and find inspiration and hope there

Long-term care is close to all people. Everyone might become unable to do "something" ordinary they had been able to do. The disappointment and shock that they might feel in such cases often make them and their family members feel upset. What I teach students first of all is to consider the situation by dividing it into elements and to consider how to expand the things that care service users can do. For example, if a care service user cannot eat, you may consider whether a smaller spoon will help the user eat, what the user can eat, or whether problems lie in the user's way of sitting or the chair the user sits on. In this way, it is necessary to observe the situation from multiple perspectives and divide it into elements. The key point is focusing on what the user can do and adjusting the situation and scene to help the user do what he/she can do. If you think in this way, you can find the brighter aspects of the situation. I believe that such approaches are necessary for everyone to live in a super-aged society.

Last year, Toyo University organized an international academic conference on the theme "Aging & Society," inviting researchers from 22 countries. As clearly mentioned during the conference, Japan with its super-aged population is a pioneering country in addressing challenges related to the aging of society, facing many challenges that no other country has yet faced. Japan's response to those challenges has been the focus of attention among many other countries where the aging of the population is likely to progress in the future, such as South Korea and China. Can Japan become a pioneering country in solving those challenges? The road to solutions will be very tough. However, I believe that, if we pay attention to what people in need of care can do, foster excellent human resources, and continue our steady efforts to build a system for appropriately evaluating work in the field, we can solve the challenges little by little and make significant progress.