



Swanel

from Mississauga West to Taiwan

Many are expecting a report filled with stories and experiences but for my last BeaverTale I would like to dedicate it to new exchangers; whether you are the next outbounds or you're just thinking about going on exchange. This exchange is none like any other and no matter the stories you hear of how amazing or terrible an exchange can be I believe it is worth the shot because it's really what you make it. Yes, you can have a bad exchange in terms of your interaction with the people present but I believe there is so much you can learn and take for such experience.

By the end of your exchange the most important question I think you will be asked is "what have you learnt, not just about the world but more importantly, yourself?" For me, even now with only a month to go I would say an answer would be premature, just because every day counts and what changes you as a person doesn't happen overnight but instead it happens day in day out, upon the encounters of the simple daily challenges. What we don't realise is that here everything you do is of effort. You have been taken out of your comfort zone and not only have you been placed in a new country but you are now also in a new family; a family that has their own way of doing things a family with their own dysfunction that has nothing to do with your mere existence.

Everything we do in this life is a choice and we can choose to do or not to do, to be or not be, to go or to remain. The easiest choice so far that we have made (as exchangers) was to go on exchange and everything that follows will be a challenge in its own way. Exchange like life is what you make it, and no exchange no matter how similar they seem are never identical.

The greatest test you will encounter on your exchange is one of character. This test will reveal the type of person you truly are and if you don't pay close attention you might miss a lesson or two you could have learnt. Nobody is perfect and no

exchange is perfect, it is vital that you enter into this new life of yours with no expectations, while being grateful for the smallest of deeds because the bottom line is; no one owes you anything nor are they obligated to making your exchange the best experience. That is solely up to you, what they are obligated to do is ensure you are fed and safe and after that everything can be counted as a blessing. Be grateful, enjoy the good times and reflect on the bad ones. Be empathetic and try to understand that is not always about you. Yes this is "your exchange" but it is also someone else's life. Be kind to people and remember everyone brings something different to the table. Be positive, there is always something good to take from a situation. Yes, your host brother said he was going to do something that was really important to you but instead he forgot, you only have a year, let it go, move on maybe it was just not meant to be. This experience in itself is a way to test how you will be in the 'real world'. Just remember that it is unique to each individual and regardless of your challenges whether big or small stay strong and continue your journey it will be worth so much more when you pass the finish line.

My exchange has been great, definitely something I will always cherish. I have met so many amazing people from all over the world it's like a great network of connections and weirdly we are all intertwined some way or the other. Of Course there have been challenges, test and lost but I have come to notice that is not the big obvious things and gestures that matter, rather the small ones that slips through the cracks. Life is short and we lose people along the way so cherish the moments you have now because it all happens so fast. Going forward I am excited for my year end tour before I leave this beautiful amazing county. I know leaving will not be easy because I have created a life here but I guess life goes on.

Thank you Rotary!! Thank you RYE D7080 and 3501. Thank you Rotary club of Mississauga-West and Miaoli SouthEast. Thanks to my host families as well as my family at home. Thank you to all those who volunteered to make this exchange a memorable and amazing experience. Betty Jo, thanks for believing in me!!

It's been a blessing and honor to represent my country, my family and myself!!! With a full life ahead I am proud to say I will forever be an exchanger!

祝你好運,

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