

"Let's talk about 'Mikan', tangerines!", my teacher said. "Tangerines?", I asked. "Yes", she said, "Tell me anything you know about tangerines." Hmm. Why is she asking me such a question?", I wondered. Then I said, "Okay. It's orange; it's sweet and sour; it's juicy..." Then my sister said, "A farmer's hard work!" "BINGO!" my teacher said. "Now, when you imagine the producer's hard work, how do you feel about being able to have tangerines every year?", she asked again. I said, "I feel a sense of appreciation." "Okay, that's what we're talking about!" she said. This tricky short conversation was a very simple test of whether I knew what I wanted to talk about today. Because today, I would like to talk about the importance of having a positive attitude of seeing things from many different directions.

Last spring, I traveled abroad for the first time in my life. My friends and I found some good peanut butter so we decided to take it home. As we were going through the security gate at the airport, the man opened my bag and grabbed my peanut butter. He said, "Miss, you cannot have this." And he took my peanut butter. At the same time, my friends came through the security gate from the other end. And, guess what? They came through with their peanut butter. I instantly thought, "Oh, that's not fair! How unlucky I was for bumping into a mean guy!" Just then, my teacher came to me and said, "What if someone with a bad intention was hiding something dangerous in a jar and the security guard didn't take it?" "Hmmm..." I felt very ashamed of myself for not knowing any better than just looking at it from my side. Then my irritation toward the security person turned into appreciation for protecting us from possible danger.

However, there is a case like this as well. When the Ebola virus attacked Africa last year, many doctors from all over the world went to Africa to help the patients. But some people who did not have a good understanding of what the doctors were doing threw rocks at the doctors. Some people lost their lives from not getting the treatment, because those people believed in a rumor that the doctors were spreading the virus. Some doctors even got killed because of the violence. If those people had made just a little effort to understand the doctors' actions and not believe the rumor, I suppose more lives could have been saved.

Well, these are only a few simple cases which I have mentioned today. But things like this are happening everywhere in our daily lives. Some cases are very complicated, some are simple. The key to receiving some benefit from these experiences is to be humble, and to have a positive attitude to see things from various points of view. All it takes is a little effort. And with this little effort, you can turn many things into something very special. It could be the quality of your life, new kinds of understanding, and even a deep appreciation of one single tangerine.