



Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant

Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural Communication Institution (ICI) affiliated with Kanda University of International Studies had been holding "ICI Summer Seminars" from 1991 to 2003. This seminar aimed for faculty development of intercultural communication and opened a gate for faculties of other universities. The planner of this seminar was Dr. Teruyuki Kume, deputy director of ICI, and his role model was a program of intercultural communication called "SIIC" held at Stanford University. The founder of SIIC was Clifford H. Clarke. He established the Intercultural Communication Workshop in the U.S. and also showed his ability as an intercultural consultant in the business field for companies both in the U.S. and Japan. This is an interview of Clarke, who has been devoting his entire life to building bridges between Japanese and Americans.

My grandfather sailed by ship to Japan alone in December 1898. I am not sure what motivated my grandfather to choose Japan as his missionary assignment with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. His wife-to-be, joined him a year later and they married in Yokohama in November 1899. They moved down to Kyushu to start a mission in Kumamoto where they built the Kumamoto Baptist Church.



During their time in Kumamoto, my grandmother became very concerned that Japanese women had limited opportunities to study in higher education. Higher education in those days was mostly for boys. So while on furlough in Georgia, she raised the first funds to be used for the building of a university for young women in Kyushu, much like Nijjima Jo and the Doshisha University founding story. She wanted the school to be in her hometown of Kumamoto, but the Mission Board decided to build Seinan Jo Gakuin in Kokura, Kyushu.

My father was the fourth of six children, born in 1911 in Kumamoto. He was sent to live in the U.S. when he was twelve years old. Soon after my grandfather's death in 1943, my father chose to resign from his 11-year business career in order to study from 1943 to 1945 at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in preparation for his service in Japan in his father's footsteps. Once he graduated in August of 1945, right after the peace treaty was signed on the USS Missouri, we began our journey to Japan.

We crossed the country by car to board a ship to Honolulu in October 1945. I was born in 1940, and I remember my fifth birthday was on that boat. We lived in Hawaii for three years. It was too soon after the war, so we could not go to Japan yet. My parents led in the organization of the Waimea Baptist Church in Waimea, Kauai. In Hawaii my parents also began to improve their Japanese language abilities. Fortunately, at that time the residents of Waimea were mostly Japanese and Japanese was spoken in the grocery store. We were the only "Hakujin" in town. I was learning skills of communicating interculturally with Japanese friends in the community. In August 1948, we were finally allowed to continue our journey by ship to Japan.(1/9)



Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant
Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding

**I was learning skills of communicating
interculturally
with Japanese friends in the community.**

Following language school in Tokyo, we were finally assigned in 1951 to the city of Kyoto in order for my parents to begin their mission work there. Our residence in Kyoto was just below Daimonjiyama. My father began his work and soon founded the Kyoto Baptist Church in 1952. He soon found the property for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to open the Japan Baptist Hospital in Kyoto in Kitashirakawa. And in 1955 my father began to build another church in Otsu.

In my childhood, I rode my bicycle downtown to Kawaramachi, and the Teramachi shopping street. There was a record store there and I became friends with the Japanese kids whose father owned the store. I loved to listen to music and collected hundreds of records. It was very natural to have conversations with this one boy of my age who helped me with my Japanese. It seemed while growing up in Kyoto that I was equally engaged with Japanese and American friends.



Missionary kids are relatively permanent in a country until they go to college, but army kids, came and went every one or two years with their parents on military assignments. As my sister, brother and I were comparatively long-term students in the school, we got to know the Japanese community and Japanese friends. Thereby, we were able to somewhat develop our Japanese language abilities without formal language training, which the Kyoto American School did not offer. The school began asking me to engage with the local community in many kinds of communications when necessary, even on the problems that occasionally developed.

From 12 or 13 years old, it became natural for me to build bridges between Japanese and American people. That was my "karma," or as my father would call it, my "mission." So until 17 years old, I was involved in intercultural mediation roles for the school. All through high school I was learning skills of communicating interculturally with Japanese friends in the community.

When I went back to the U.S. and attended Wake Forest University in 1958, I was influenced by growing up in Japan with missionary parents and chose to major in Comparative Religions and Philosophies of the world. I wrote in the yearly album for all students to see that my hometown was "Tokyo, Japan," because that is where my parents lived. American college students would ask me if that was in China because they knew nothing about Asian geography. The ignorance of American college students at that time about anything outside of the United States was very offensive to me. Of course, I was equally ignorant about things in America. (2/9)



Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant

Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding

It was only natural for me that this kind of professional career would be perfect for someone with my background.

Because of my loneliness and homesickness for Japan, immediately after graduating I returned to Japan from 1962 to 1963. I studied at International Christian University and later transferred to Sophia University, and worked at Hotel Okura. At that time, a Water Safety Instructor's certificate allowed me to manage the pool at the Okura and to teach swimming, as well as being a "lifeguard." In the pool, I had twelve Japanese employees and learned about Japanese organizational behavior from my boss, the Jinji Bucho.

After the swimming pool closed for the season, I created and edited the new hotel magazine about Japan for tourists, the "Okura Lantern." I also escorted a lot of people from overseas on short tours around the hotel. I met some movie stars like Charlton Heston, Yul Brynner. Also I taught swimming to Shirley MacLaine's daughter.



After wonderful days at Hotel Okura, I returned to the U.S. for graduate school in 1963. I was influenced by my Christian faith so I went to the seminary to study. While at Duke University, a Methodist Divinity School, I got an internship to serve in Campus ministry for American students at the Baptist Student Center at the University of North Carolina. That experience taught me again that I could not relate to the issues and problems that American university students experienced. I just could not empathize with their concerns and worries.

At that time, I met a Foreign Student Advisor of the University of North Carolina and he introduced me to his program. His office provided services to foreign students on US campuses, including orientation to the campus, housing assistance, financial aid advice, academic advising, career advising, personal counseling, and international student programming of social activities. The office also had references and advice for US students who planned to study abroad. A few foreign student advisors initiated the development of an international theme house where 50% of the residents were from abroad and 50% were local students. They held International Fairs where students and faculty come together to learn about foods, dress, and dances of many nations' cultures. It was only natural for me that this kind of working environment or professional career would be perfect for someone with my background. And I began to think, "I need a change. This is for me."

When I graduated in 1966 with my Master's, I was hired at Cornell University as Assistant Director of the International Student Office in the role of the Foreign Student Advisor. I entered my 11-year career in the International Educational Exchange field.

(3/9)



The workshop enabled both local and foreign students learn together and respect each other.

As Foreign Students Adviser I had two main roles. One role was to counsel or advise students on a one-to-one basis. "I'm living in a dorm and hate my roommate", or "This faculty member won't communicate with me, I have not been able to make an appointment." In my undergraduate studies at Wake Forest University I had experienced all of those problems so my empathy for their concerns was very high.

The other role was to help student associations to design the program activities for international exchange. Programs were usually aimed at engaging local and foreign students, host families, and faculty to achieve more genuine communication across cultures whereby they could learn more about themselves and each other, thereby enriching the social, residential, and academic experiences on campus. I also helped students to get financial resources from the university and work.

Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant

Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding



In 1967, I created the Intercultural Communication Workshop, "ICW." The aim of the ICW was to facilitate a deeper engagement between local and foreign students through which they could learn together about their own and each other's cultures. Many foreign students study on campuses in other countries without ever having a significant relationship of friendship with a local national that may last a lifetime. The universities at that time and now should always be encouraging deeper relationships through intercultural interactions, which would enable a higher quality of educational, residential, and personal experiences among cultures on campus. Such relationships may not ever develop if there is no support for them to be facilitated with a positive effort such as an ICW. Usually deeper personal friendships developed through the ICW through respectful intercultural interactions.

My colleagues and I trained many dozens of Foreign Student Advisors all around the country to be facilitators of ICWs. Many dozens of institutions sponsored events attended by thousands of students. The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) sponsored many of the training programs for ICW facilitators. NAFSA also engaged me for three years (1969-1971) as the first consultant for NAFSA in developing intercultural communication programs on campuses across America. I visited 22 different universities in those three years, ending at Stanford University.(4/9)



Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant

Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding

Designed the SIIC for the professional development of various fields by incorporating the principles and skills of Intercultural Communication.

When I was about to leave Stanford, the director of the Bechtel International Center invited me to move there into a full time position as his associate. I worked for six years at Stanford University in foreign student counseling, intercultural communication program development and developing an international student residence. I also began teaching one theory and one training course in intercultural communication, which both continued for eight years.

While at Stanford I founded the Stanford Institute for Intercultural Communication (SIIC) in 1975, which I directed for ten years. I designed the SIIC for the professional development of people who were working in various fields or careers wherein they wished to incorporate the principles and skills of Intercultural Communication. People came from all over the world each summer for deeply engaging workshops that were held on weekly bases for multiple industries, such as, education, counseling, business, health care, etc.



I was very excited that so many people from Japan were interested in studying intercultural communication in these summer institutes. Teruyuki Kume was one of those. It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up with his work in the development of intercultural communication in Japan.

I changed my position at Stanford in 1977 to enter my Ph.D. program in the Stanford School of Education. I was 37 years old. Three years after I entered my Ph.D. program, my friend at P&G (Procter & Gamble Company) visited me. P&G is a worldwide major company that produces consumer goods such as soap and toothpaste.

My friend was responsible for recruiting foreign students on campuses around the country. He visited my campuses (Cornell and Stanford) twice a year to find qualified foreign students to work for his company in their own countries. Every time he had interviews with foreign students, he invited me to dinner to get my perspective on each of his candidates. In 1980 at one of these dinners this friend told me a story about his company's plans in Japan.(5/9)



**To build an intercultural organization,
that was truly synergistic, truly bicultural.**

"You know, we are opening up a plant in Japan, an Omutsu (diaper) manufacturing plant near Kobe, in Minami Futami. We are very concerned because we have been in Japan for 11 years and have not made any profit yet. We are throwing money into Japan without a return. We have an enormous cultural problem at our General Offices in Osaka. So we know that in starting a plant in Kobe, we will need to have a professional consultant, for strategic advice as well as for tactical guidance. We can't think of anyone who could help us with that more than you."

I was just surprised and said "Why me?" He said the following.

"In the years we have been working with you recruiting students, you gave us assessments of every one of our candidates. And I want you to know that in every single case except one, in ten years of recommendations on hundreds of students from Cornell and Stanford, you were right on target. We hired those students you recommended and they all worked out beautifully, except in just one case. If you have that kind of insight to intercultural assignment for working across cultures, we want you to help us."

Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke
Intercultural Communication Consultant
Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding





Subsequently, I wrote a proposal for \$550,000 and they ultimately agreed for a two-year full-time contract in May 1980. I established a company "Clarke Consulting Group" and hired ten Japanese and Americans to work with me to build the first large-scale, long-term program on intercultural management training and consulting with 18 Japanese and 18 Americans of P&G plus their families.

My staff and I became intercultural consultants, trainers, mediators, and facilitators of team development to build an intercultural organization that was truly synergistic, truly bicultural and would operate effectively and productively with high client satisfaction. We became primarily "facilitators" and "coaches" rather than trainers or teachers. Everyone was learning to be intercultural within the task of building the organization. We discovered "answers" together through a lot of hard work of facilitating communication in every task.(6/9)



I wanted them to find both satisfaction and effectiveness in their performance in their bicultural companies.

Our goal was to go beyond any mono-cultural model of business operations and apply intercultural communication skills that reflected the values of both cultures equally to the process of developing a new binational management style within synergistic organizational characteristics. After two years, the company evaluated our work and said:

"This plant in our paper diaper industry all over the world is our top, No.1 achievement. We had the highest productivity, the highest quality, the best safety record, and the lowest scrap (waste). We also started up the plant to sell products 18 months ahead of schedule and sent all but one expatriates home two years ahead of schedule, thereby saving both 18 months of start-up costs and the costs of 11 expatriates with families living in Japan."

They had given us \$550,000 for two years and we saved them \$18,000,000 which is nearly 34 times their investment.

Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant
Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding



At the end of the contract, P&G wanted me to continue working on contracts with them for what became 18 years with new intercultural consulting projects and new intercultural training programs every year. So our company grew and grew from 10 staff members to 60 in 15 years. Other clients requested our services because of P&G's "Kuchikomi" throughout businesses in Japan and the U.S. We worked hard and gained over 300 clients in the U.S. and Japan throughout the eighties and nineties, including Motorola, IBM, DuPont, Fuji Xerox, Honda, Hitachi and so on. One of our strengths was in assisting clients to merge their headquarters' and subsidiary's corporate cultures based on our direct experiences in creating multiple successful models. We also understood the potential failures and how to prevent them.

While I was working for companies in the business field, I always had the same mission ever since I was twelve years old. I never changed my mission. I always felt that it was my job to bring peace between the people of these two countries who were working or studying together. Because I felt that I understood and appreciated both sides, I wanted both to find excitement in discovering the other, and satisfaction and effectiveness in their performance in their bicultural companies and earlier in their international educational exchange programs. That is why I continued my work.(7/9)



The differences between you and others can help you be a better person.

I am thinking about five attitudes that helped me grow up into the person that I am today. I would like to share these five attitudes with the people who are learning Intercultural Communication at the academic institutions of Sano Educational Foundation.

First is, "Never give up." Certainly, you are going to hit a lot of stumbling blocks, a lot of speed bumps. When I was ten years old, fifteen Japanese boys surrounded me and threw rocks at me. They yelled, "Yankee, Go Home! Yankee, Go Home!" And when I was thirty-three, a Japanese student stabbed my father 19 times with the expressed intention of killing him. From these experiences some may think that I have reasons to hate Japan. But, I never gave up searching for my path toward a career in intercultural communications between Japan and the USA.

Second is, "Find your passion." It is critical for your identity to develop and express yourself in service to others with a caring and loving heart. It is really exciting to explore differences in how people think and live. Those differences can help you be a better person. So, open your heart. If you are open to learning and loving people from other cultures, you will explore and appreciate cultural differences. Then you will be continually expanding your own personal excitement about your new capability to reach across cultures and to be engaged with the world.

Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke
Intercultural Communication Consultant
Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding



Third is, "Don't be a turtle." The turtle's head and arms come back into the shell when encountering something new. Protecting yourself against change would not be learning or growing, although it may help you live a very long life, like the turtle. Prepare like a caterpillar to come out of your young form into a new beautiful mature butterfly.

My friend, Muneo Yoshikawa taught Japanese language and culture at the University of Hawaii for over 30 years. He speaks of a concept to "Go into the Kata, Practice the Kata, Master the Kata, then you can put your own "Chi" into the Kata, and come out of the Kata with a new Katachi."

How do you think a new school of Cha or a new school of Hana evolves? Why do leaders begin new institutions or schools? It is because they master the Kata and apply their own Chi and build their new Katachi, from which others then wish to learn. So, don't hesitate to build your own Katachi.(8/9)



Vol.5 Clifford H. Clarke Intercultural Communication Consultant

Building Bridges between Japanese and Americans

Pioneers of Education
for Intercultural Understanding

Observe the benefits your existence brings to others and appreciate what you may find your passion to be.

Fourth is, "Enjoy flexibility," by thinking "I can try that," rather than saying, "Oh, I already have my own way of doing that." Inflexibility that practices only one Kata for learning is damaging for personal growth and development in a global society. Apply everything you learn to yourself, and think about what it means to you, how you can use it, and what new "you" could you create by adopting more ways to be you, which will make you more ready for the changes in the future global society. You can never lose yourself by changing. You just become more of yourself by expanding your horizons. Test your flexibility and stretch into the uncomfortable and you will grow faster and be more prepared for the world. You can direct who you will become.



Fifth is, "Engage with curiosity." The essence of learning intercultural communications is having curiosity about everything and flexibility in the willingness to adopt something new, a new thought, a new behavior, like speaking English. Learning to be effective in a global society is not just learning things in one's head but also by demonstrating new ways of thinking and acting based on one's learning. Curiosity can expand one's whole personality. Creativity comes through having curiosity about everything that is new and different from what you expected. To be successful you must first hold back your first judgment about others' thoughts and behaviors and explore their deeper meanings.

Finding your dream starts with dreaming about your potential, your interests, and your society's needs. But, just an idea does not develop passion. You must try it out for a while and see how you feel in each new role. Volunteer! Find an internship! It's a great way to try out new things. Observe the benefits your existence brings to others and appreciate what you may find..... it may become your passion.(9/9)

Clifford H. Clarke

Clarke was born in 1940 in the U.S., came to Japan in 1948 and grew up until 17 years old in Kyoto. After receiving his Master's at Duke University, he started his career in the International Educational Exchange field and established the Intercultural Communication Workshop, "ICW" (1967) at Cornell and the Stanford Institute for Intercultural Communication "SIIC" (1976) at Stanford University, while working on his Ph.D. program in Education, where he finished all but the dissertation, "ABD." In 1980, he established Clarke Consulting Group, which consulted over 300 companies in both the U.S. and Japan for 20 years and contributed to solving the issues of intercultural communication in organizations. At present, living in Kyoto, Japan, he aims to contribute to global educational and global businesses in Japan. He is married to a Japanese woman from Toyama, Japan, who now teaches at a university in Kyoto.