

## Age is Just a Number

Do you think I look young? Thank you. I'm definitely young. But I also don't have anything against the elderly. I really appreciate them.

Almost three years ago, I wanted to start learning English again because I had not used English at all for over 20 years! I had completely forgotten what I had learned at school. I remembered that I had liked English in my younger days, so it was regrettable to lose what I had learned. Then I made up my mind to start again. But at that time I was concerned about my age as I was starting to become old.

In April of 2017, I dared to join an English conversation class. Before my first class, I imagined that the other members would be younger than me. But I was really surprised that most of them were older than me. But they looked active, passionate, and cheerful. They were talking in English very well. Why? How? Have they been keeping up their English skills for all these years? I was shocked because I was not able to speak English at all and what was worse, I couldn't catch what they were saying. I felt like crying and regretted the fact that I had not used English for a long time. But the more I went, the more energy I got. I found out they had many different interests besides English. One of the members likes running and completed a full marathon. Another member plays the ukulele and performs it in public. And another one will start learning how to sing opera. All of them are over seventy but it feels like they're younger! They enjoy talking about their hobbies in English. It gets me inspired.

Ino Tadataka, who is a great famous surveyor in Edo period, started studying astronomy when he was fifty years old! And then traveled around Japan for fifteen years in order to make a Japanese map. My main point is when he started! Fifty years old in Edo period! Amazing!

I will become \*\*\* this year. \*\*\* years old in Reiwa period. I can do more with my life too. My first step is trying this speech contest.

I appreciate the elderly. Thanks to them, I enjoy learning English. Thanks to them, I'm standing here. I can't imagine attempting an English speech contest previously.

I will keep learning English and improve. I'm motivated to try new things and grow from these experiences. I will do my best to be active and passionate like them in the future as well.

Today is my mother-in-law's birthday. She becomes seventy seven years old. She always supports me. I want to give her a good birthday present, which is, to finish this speech strong and with a smile.

Thank you for listening.