

# CROSSROADS

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter June, 2015

## AFRAID OF "NOTHING"..? ?

**Irrational fears: Phobias.** Most of us have at least one in some form or other.



We should feature this friendly looking fellow in page 3's "Pet's Corner", he's so "cute"!

The dictionary defines a **phobia** as: persistent, irrational fear of a specific object, activity, or situation that leads to a compelling desire to avoid it despite the knowledge that it is almost certainly not dangerous.

Some of the more common phobias include: a fear of spiders (arachnophobia), a fear of mice (musophobia), a fear of small places (claustrophobia) and a fear of heights (acrophobia).

In general, most phobias are completely harmless and don't effect our day-to-day lives in any great way. However, for some people, phobias, especially sociable phobias, can be completely debilitating. Sufferers will often go to great lengths to avoid meeting new people, answer telephone calls or attend parties or social gatherings of more than a few people in order to avoid being judged or embarrassed.

Social phobias, more than any other phobia, are often more prevalent in some cultures than others. A social phobia very common in Japan is the phenomenon of *anthropophobia* (in interpersonal relation phobia). Sufferers of this culture-bound syndrome are likely to be extremely embarrassed about their appearance, body condition and bodily functions to the point where they withdraw themselves from society. The treatment of this affliction seems like it would probably exacerbate the problem rather than alleviate it. *Morita Therapy* requires the patient to be isolated, have enforced bed-rest and also take part in hard manual labour.

Most simple phobias begin to develop during childhood. The trigger might have been an unpleasant experience that festered over time. Other phobias may be acquired. That is to say, we witness another person's fear of something and take on that fear ourselves.

The cause of more complex phobias such as social phobias is hard to pin down. Experts believe it is likely a result of a combination of life experiences, brain chemistry and genetics.

While simple phobias are easily overcome by avoiding situations where a fear is likely to be triggered, other phobias require the kind of extensive treatment that may include drug & psychological intervention.

But, no matter what your own personal fear is, rest assured that there is almost certainly, not too far away, someone who suffers from a phobia infinitely more irrational than your own.

*Article by Mark*

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### Net News

**NET LESSONS:** Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons through the net!*

You can find an extensive list of phobias at this site. Which one sound like you? <http://www.fearof.net/>

# Some Thoughts for the Month



**Joshua Says:** The theme of this month's Newsletter is "Phobias", and I wonder if this applies to many Japanese people, not our students, or course, when it comes to speaking English. So many people here want to speak English but can't muster up enough courage to actually get started learning. Is this a type of phobia? As I've said in this space before, English is everyone's language and everyone has a right to claim it as their own. It should be second nature for people all over the world to embrace learning English. What's there to be afraid of?

**Junko Says:** A research presentation about the symbiotic relationship between Sea Anemone and the Orange Clown Fish came 4<sup>th</sup> in the Zoological Sciences section of the International Science and Engineering Fair 2015. But who do you think the presenters were? They were 2 students of Nagahama High School in Ehime! What they realized about themselves through this experience is that they are not only excellent researchers, but also very good English speakers. This made them very happy.... and serves as an inspiration to everyone.



**Mark Says** This month's newsletter topic reminds me of a recent class where a student brought in a snakeskin from her garden to show her classmates. To my surprise, a few of the students appeared to be repulsed by the object. As for my personal phobias, I do not like heights, but my greatest phobia must be . . . natto<sup>phobia</sup>!! You can learn about it here [ <https://goo.gl/vWVd9R> ]

**Aaron Says:** Energy is a topic that I enjoy studying, and recently it has become rather important in Japan. After the Tohoku earthquake, almost all nuclear reactors were taken offline in Japan. This year, many of those reactors were put back online, and that has a few Japanese people angry. The most pressing question is, *why* are these people angry about the use of nuclear energy...



**Danielle dit;** : Le mois de juin, c'est la fin de l'année scolaire en France. Ca veut dire que c'est la période des examens pour beaucoup d'étudiants. Les lycéens passent le baccalauréat, un examen national nécessaire pour étudier à l'université ou dans les écoles donc beaucoup d'entre eux sont stressés à cette période comme le sont les étudiants japonais au moment des examens d'entrée à l'université.

**ACROSS**

- 2 most frequent or common
- 6 action intended to improve a situation
- 8 a cause of great suffering or distress
- 10 manage successfully
- 11 an extreme fear of something
- 14 indications of some kind of disease
- 15 weakening strength or vitality
- 16 provide relief from pain

**DOWN**

- 1 a remarkable, even unbelievable happening
- 3 large in scope
- 4 complicated
- 5 without bounds or end
- 7 make worse
- 9 not reasonable or logical
- 12 stay or keep away from
- 13 an act that starts an event

## Play A Game!

The crossword puzzle grid is partially filled with cartoon illustrations. The grid has 15 numbered squares. The illustrations include a boy with a spider, a girl with a black cat, a boy with a spiderweb, a girl with a spider, a boy with a tree, a girl with a tree, a boy with a tree, and a girl with a tree.

(print version [here](#))

