



TC Spotlight

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You can totally change somebody's mindset by saying "I love watching you play baseball" instead of "I'm so happy that you won!"

- **Hometown: San Diego**
- **BA in Physical Geography, San Diego State University, 2000**
- **MA in Social and Organizational Psychology, Teacher's College Columbia University, 2012**
- **Currently a member of the United States Coast Guard, Yokota Air Base, Japan**

What's your TC story? I was selected to attend TC - via the Coast Guard and the Army - as part of the Eisenhower Leadership Development Program, where mid-career Army officers go on afterwards to teach leadership at West Point. After TC, I taught leadership and organizational behavior - both experientially and in a classroom - at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. During that time, I read quite a bit about experiential learning and really got to put it in practice while sailing with cadets during their summer sailing cruise throughout New England - my career highlight that I wrote about here: http://www.windcheckmagazine.com/teaching_life_and_leadership_lessons_through_sailing_the_coast_guard_academy_coastal_sailing_program There's no magic to it, though; it is quite simple: for the most powerful developmental/learning experiences, all you have to do is put students in intense, challenging, real (or realistic) situations or roles and then ask them questions about it: "What did you learn?" "What does this mean?" "How will you be different?" It was awesome. I thought I couldn't have a better job until I got transferred to Japan where I've lived in Tokyo for the last couple of years. In my current job, I visit foreign ports to provide

guidance on security implementation. I've been able to teach workshops in some really cool places: Bali, Thailand, Maldives, Fiji, etc. More importantly, perhaps, is my volunteer job as youth baseball coach. I put my TC education to use and instead of celebrating winning, we have a "Character of the Week" viking helmet that we give to kids for showing traits like determination, courage, persistence, kindness, patience, encouragement, etc. My life in Japan, and travelling around Asia, has been epic. In July, my wife, two kids and I are moving from Tokyo to Washington DC. We are looking forward to it, but we will always have special memories of our time in Japan.

How did you get on the TC Japan committee? When I first moved to Tokyo in 2015, I saw that there was a TC Day event, so I went. I met some great folks and stayed in touch; a year later, an outgoing member encouraged me to join the committee and it has ended up that serving with TC Japan has really been a highlight of my time here. If there are any other random TCNYers out there living in Tokyo, I highly recommend getting involved with this inspiring bunch of teachers; you'll love them for their genuine

desire to master their craft and continue learning from each other. It's been an absolute pleasure to make some friends through TC Japan.

Tell us about TC Day 2017? Last summer, we hosted 37 TC Japaners at Yokota Air Base where we planned a day with the theme of "Peace Education." I loved the irony of studying about peace through language right in the middle of a military base. We visited a C-130 airplane and heard stories from Setsuko about growing up in the Fussa area right after the war. I think it's great that TC Alumni celebrate once a year not with football and beer, but instead with - more learning. In my humble opinion, it was a very special and memorable event for those who came.

Favorite thing about Japan? I enjoy walking and wandering and then eating and drinking; my favorites are the hidden alleys in places like Ebisu Yokocho or Kichijoji Harmonica. Also, I love the bowling and the baseball. My boys both attended Japanese kindergarten and we really loved seeing the Japanese way of young learning. Fuji Youchien was incredible.



What did you learn at TC that ensured you would never be the same again?

The importance of inspiring people with interest and challenge rather than controlling them with rewards and punishment. I also learned the importance of being very intentional in the words we use. You can totally change somebody's mindset by saying "I love watching you play baseball" instead of "I'm so happy that you won!"

What class has had a lasting effect on you?

I went to the Tavistock Group Relations Conference in NYC as part of the Group Dynamics course. It was 3 days, 12 hours a day of being placed in (or choosing) different groups - large and small. It was the most bizarre and terrifyingly enlightening educational experience I've ever had. I left with some serious observations about who I am in a group and who I am as an individual. If you see a Tavistock conference coming your way (or if you can travel to NY or London to do one), try to go. The Japanese group consciousness contrasted with rugged American individualism will make it a real mind-trip.

Share a recent classroom success?

I invented a new module on the psychology and motivation of routine work (ie, security guards) and I intend to do more research and writing on this subject.

What is the secret to your success?

Curiosity and openness to experience: then reading, writing and thinking. I've been super inspired by the likes of Carol Dweck, Edward Deci, Zimbardo, Milgram, Csikszentmihalyi and now just recently Alfie Kohn has been blowing my mind. If

you want a great book about experiential learning check out "The Role of the Instructor in the Outward Bound Educational Process."

What would you do if you could take a one-year sabbatical? I really do hope to take my wife and kids on the road for a year to do what they now call "Worldschooling" (like homeschooling but doing it while travelling around the world). We would just bounce around and stay in interesting places for a few weeks at a time while learning about history/art/culture/science/politics/language from the real stuff.

What advice do you have for others starting at TC now? Wow, enjoy the life-changing experience and education of a lifetime. Read everything. There is no more honorable profession than teacher. Feel free to look me up in DC.

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