

Growing Up in the Japanese Deaf, Hearing, and American Worlds: A Journey of Identity, Language, and Culture

From the moment I was born in Tokyo, Japan, I was immersed in a world of diversity and complexity. My parents are both Deaf, and I was raised primarily in the Japanese Deaf community. However, as I grew older, I also began to engage with the hearing world, both in Japan and in the United States.



My Journey Through Four Worlds: Growing Up in the Japanese, Deaf, Hearing, and American Worlds

by Justin M. Monehen

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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Navigating these different worlds has been a challenging but rewarding experience. I have had to learn how to communicate in multiple languages, adapt to different cultural norms, and negotiate my own sense of identity.

The Japanese Deaf Community

The Japanese Deaf community is a vibrant and close-knit one. Deaf people in Japan have a long history of self-reliance and activism, and they have

built a strong network of organizations and institutions to support each other.

I was fortunate to grow up in this community. I attended a Deaf school, where I learned Japanese Sign Language (JSL) and was surrounded by other Deaf children. I also participated in many Deaf cultural activities, such as festivals, sports events, and theater performances.

The Japanese Deaf community has had a profound impact on my life. It has taught me the importance of community, resilience, and self-acceptance. I am proud to be a part of this community, and I am grateful for the support and guidance I have received from its members.

The Hearing World

As I grew older, I began to spend more time in the hearing world. I attended a mainstream high school, where I was one of only a few Deaf students. I also began to take English classes, and I eventually moved to the United States to attend college.

Navigating the hearing world has been a different experience for me than navigating the Deaf world. In the hearing world, I am often seen as an outsider, and I have had to learn how to advocate for myself and my needs.

Despite the challenges, I have also found many opportunities in the hearing world. I have met many interesting people, learned new things, and expanded my horizons.

My Identity

Growing up in multiple cultural and linguistic worlds has shaped my identity in a profound way. I am a Deaf person, but I am also a Japanese person and an American person. I am fluent in both JSL and English, and I am comfortable in both Deaf and hearing cultures.

My identity is complex and multifaceted, and it is something that I am still exploring. I am grateful for the experiences I have had in all three of the worlds I have grown up in, and I am proud of the person I have become.

Challenges and Rewards

Growing up in multiple worlds has not always been easy. I have faced challenges in both the Deaf and hearing worlds, and I have sometimes felt like I didn't belong in either one.

However, I have also experienced many rewards. I have learned about different cultures and languages, I have met interesting people, and I have had the opportunity to explore my own identity.

I believe that my experiences have made me a more open-minded and compassionate person. I am grateful for the challenges and rewards I have faced, and I would not trade my upbringing for anything.

Growing up in the Japanese Deaf, hearing, and American worlds has been a journey of self-discovery and growth. I am proud of the person I have become, and I am excited for the future.

I hope that my story will inspire others who are growing up in multiple worlds. Embrace your differences, and never give up on your dreams.



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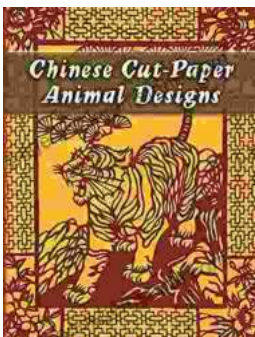
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