

AY2024 September Commencement ceremony, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology  
(Undergraduate School, Advanced Onboard Training Course for Marine Science and Technology,  
Advanced Onboard Training Course for Mercantile Marine, Graduate School)

President's Address

Faculty graduates, students who have completed the Advanced Onboard Training Course for Marine Science and Technology and the Advanced Onboard Training Course for Mercantile Marine, students who have completed the Graduate School Master's Course and Doctoral Course, and a person who has gained a doctorate by submitting a dissertation, congratulations today. I hope you will steadily move forward at your own pace with confidence, taking pride in what you have learned at the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology.

At the same time, I regret to announce that I received news of the death of a student of the Advanced Onboard Training Course for Mercantile Marine just before today's commencement ceremony. Losing a young person full of dreams and hopes just prior to the beginning of a new phase of life is a very saddening event for our university and also a big loss for society. I would like to ask those of you who have completed the Advanced Onboard Training Course for Mercantile Marine to take over part of his devotion to the ocean and work hard in the marine and maritime world.

You, who have graduated and completed the Courses today, will meet new colleagues and peers in a new environment and aim to achieve new goals and missions joining forces with them. At present, however, we are facing rising energy and commodity prices due to the effects of international conflicts and environmental issues, and today's society is very stressful for many of us. I now hope that you will each work hard as a member of society, but this does not require you to sacrifice yourself for society. When you feel at a dead end or feel helpless, stop and analyze your situation calmly and pay careful attention to protecting your mental health.

Two years ago, I had the opportunity to listen to a sermon by Tetsujo Otani, Head of Administrator of Yakushiji Temple in Nara Prefecture. The content of the sermon was very interesting, and I felt an affinity for him as he comes from Koto City, Tokyo, so I bought his book titled "*Joushi no susume*" on the way home. *Joushi*, which literally means "thinking quietly," means to stop and think carefully, setting aside your own interests and likes and dislikes. In our daily lives, we have to endure somehow and continue to make efforts. We expect our efforts to be fairly evaluated, but in the real world, this is not always the case, and we are often disappointed. If this continues, we not only get frustrated, but also start thinking that the society that does not fairly evaluate us is wrong and get caught in a negative spiral.

According to the book of Tetsujo Otani, five devils live in our mind.

*Ton*: The mind that wants to have things, the mind that wants us to be fairly evaluated

*Jin*: The mind that gets angry when things do not turn out as we expect

*Jouko*: The mind that gets cocky when we are flattered

*Konjin*: The mind that makes us feel sorry for ourselves

*Gi*: The mind that has doubts, the mind that does not accept

These devils have surely been living in my mind without getting weak since long ago. I believe you also have these devils within your mind. So that you will not get swayed by the five devils, Tetsujo Otani recommends the following:

“Stop and think carefully when you cannot decide”

“Stop and think carefully when you feel at a loss”

“Stop and think carefully when you are having a difficult time”

“Stop and think carefully when you get angry”

If you practice *Joushi*, or stopping to think carefully, and calm yourself down, remove worldly thoughts and stabilize your mental condition, you will gain the positive effect of obtaining deeper thought and awareness. If you are interested, please try it.

Now, shifting our focus back to the world, United Nations General Assembly meetings are currently being held, and the Summit of the Future was held on Sunday and Monday this week. There is now almost no progress in terms of the Paris Agreement adopted at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) and the SDGs initiatives adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in 2015. In the face of this situation, the Summit of the Future was held with the aim of sharing the sense of crisis among international society and moving ahead toward the solution of global environmental issues again. Initiatives toward the solution of the issues are not progressing not only due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, but also due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and expanding conflicts between Israel and Hamas/Hezbollah. It is also said that this is due to the fact that the Security Council is becoming dysfunctional because of the confrontations between major powers and the overuse by the five permanent members of their veto power. At any rate, it seems that when many people gather to build organizations and nations, the power of the five devils in the people’s minds becomes enormous. I think it will take a considerable time to improve the current chaotic state of the world. But as you well know, we can afford no further delay in the resolution of global environmental issues.

I think most of you who have graduated from our university and completed our courses today will engage in work that is not directly related to global environmental issues. However, as you are a member of society, all of you will engage in the solution of critical global issues going forward. You are graduates and those who completed the courses of the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, whose motto is “Voices from the Ocean (Knowing the ocean, protecting the ocean, and utilizing the ocean).” I would like to ask you to bear in mind that you are a member of the group of researchers and engineers who understand the ocean best. And, I would also like to ask you to fully utilize the knowledge you have gained and the skills that you have learned at our university in your respective positions. You may possibly face incredible difficulties in the future. On that occasion, I hope you will practice “*Joushi* (stopping and thinking carefully)” and overcome the difficulties taking care to maintain a good physical, mental and social state, that is to say, well-being.

Finally, our university will continue to support you as you work in society. If you have something you want to consult someone about, please don’t hesitate to contact your supervisors and the TUMSAT Fellowship Association. We at the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology are always fully prepared to assist you.

September 27, 2024

Toshio Iseki, President, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology