

Part 41 Daisen

Geneva, Switzerland, 27 August 2018

By now the Grooters were more confident on how to find answers they were seeking. So, they all focused on the question: “How can we get clarity on the true needs of humans?” and repeated that question several times a day until they got an answer.

Which they did about ten days later. For some reason, Verity had been surfing around Japanese websites, and had been watching a few Japanese movies... and something had jumped out of the screen two or three times:

大山

“*Daisen, big mountain,*” wonder what that’s about.

She looked it up, and indeed, there was actually a mountain called Daisen, on the north coast of Honshu, on the other side from Okayama. She decided to discuss it with the other Grooters.

“It feels like a hunch worth investigating,” said Boss.

“Yes, but I don’t know anything more,” admitted Verity.

They all looked up Daisen on the Internet, then Webbo said: “It looks like a magnificent place, maybe we should go and check it out?”

“Yes,” said Richie, “some temples have been around for over a thousand years, maybe they contain pieces of knowledge that could help us?”

“Do you want me to teleport and scout the place?” asked Leo.

“Yes, please do that, just to get a feel for it, I mean we can see quite a lot online already,” said Boss.

“Sure, just give me an hour or two.”

That being said, Leo went up to his room, changed to his often-used backpacker teleporting outfit... and found a wormhole to Japan. Two hours later, he was back.

“What’s your verdict, Leo?” asked Modella.

“The place is absolutely magical. I don’t know what exactly we would be looking for, but I kind of feel that we must check out that place more in detail.”

“Great,” said Richie, “I’ll call my pilots, we should be able to fly out tomorrow morning.”

“Thanks, Richie,” said the other Grooters.

The morning after, they boarded *Lady Globalia* at Geneva Cointrin for a non-stop flight to Yonago Kitaro airport.

As they were flying over the Siberian vastness, their itinerary reminded Richie of a documentary he had watched of the Graf Zeppelin round-the-world flight in August 1929, when it had flown non-stop between Friedrichshafen in Southern Germany and Tokyo. 89 years ago, already. “The history of flight,” he thought, “what an amazing adventure... and there was more to come.”

“Are you daydreaming, Richie,” asked Modella.

“I guess you can say that I am,” he responded honestly and told her about the Graf Zeppelin journey.

Daisen, Japan, 29 August 2018

As *Lady Globalia* approached Yonago, they could clearly see Mount Daisen, culminating over the whole coastal region at 1709m above sea level, only about 15km from the sea of Japan and Yonago city centre.

They took a big taxi to the Daisen resort village, at the foot of the mountain of the same name. As it was almost the end of the summer holidays in Japan, there were several accommodation options, but Verity had chosen the aptly named Daisen Utopia hotel.

Indeed, weren't all the Grooters' Dream Worlds some form of utopia? Verity wanted to believe in utopia, whatever all negative naysayers were thinking.

Once they had all checked into the hotel, Webbo asked: “And now what?”

“Now sushi,” said Modella.

“OK, let's start with some tasty Japanese food, then we can brainstorm our next step at the same time,” said Boss.

For convenience's sake, they ate in the hotel, then decided to hike up the mountain to rid themselves from their jet lag.

It was one of the nicest hikes they had ever done, taking them through paved paths and *torii*, past old temples, and through lush forests, until they gained altitude and from the summit they could see the ocean and the whole region around them.

“What a wonderful sight,” said Modella, “definitely worth the climb.

“Yes,” said Webbo, “even if we don't find any clues here, it would still have been worth the trip.”

“I agree,” said Boss, “but let's remain positive.”

Then they walked back down to the village. And as they again came past one of the many temples, Verity noticed the handbag of a tourist guide... with a circle and a star on it!

Now she was very confused. She thought they had finished their Dream World travels with the Professor's machine. How was this possible?

She walked up to the young woman and said:

“*Konnichiwa*, I noticed the circle with the star on your handbag.”

“Yes,” responded the woman, “I bought it in a design shop in Kyoto, you like it?”

“OK,” thought Verity, “this must just be a coincidence, that woman does not seem to know anything.” But then she reminded herself that when coincidences seem almost too good to be true, they usually mean something. So, she asked her:

“I am here with a group of friends from overseas, can we hire you as guide tomorrow? We'd like to learn more about the temples and the history of Daisen.”

“You're lucky, I'm available tomorrow, had another group cancel earlier today.”

“*Arigato*,” said Verity.

“By the way, my name is Azusa.” She gave Verity her business card.

“Nice to meet you, Azusa, and I'm Verity. We are staying at the Daisen Utopia hotel.”

“Great, shall I come there at 9AM tomorrow?”

“That sounds perfect, *arigato*.”

“See you tomorrow.”

The Grooters walked back to their hotel and had an early night, all very tired from their jet lag and the hike.

The morning after, Azusa showed up on time at the Daisen Utopia. Her English was excellent, which Verity was glad about so she didn't need to translate everything to the other Grooters.

“So, what do you want me to show you?”

Verity, who had studied the map of Daisen in detail, said:

“Maybe we can walk towards the *Ogamiyama Shrine Okunomiya*? That looks like an intriguing place.”

“Yes, it's beautiful, I'll tell you more along the way.”

“*Arigato*,” said the Grooters.

As they walked up the cobble-stoned paths toward the upper temple complex of Daisen, Verity asked Azusa:

“Have you heard of any secret knowledge that may be kept here in Daisen? Maybe something linked to human needs?”

“I read somewhere about some important document that was kept here by the monks. I don’t know more about that, but I suggest we ask one of the monks in the shrine.”

“Sounds like a great idea.”

When they arrived at the shrine, Modella said:

“This is such a magical place, I love it, thanks for taking us here, Verity.”

“You’re welcome.”

As they entered the shrine, the Grooters saw Azusa walking up to one of the monks, chatting for a while. The monk’s face expression was something between worried and enthusiastic. Who were these strangers who knew about their best-kept secret?

Azusa came back to the Grooters and said:

“The monk answered that he may be able to help you. He would like to invite you for a tea to get to know you.”

“Sure,” said Verity.

“I’ll leave you with them, and will wait for you outside.”

“*Arigato.*”

The monk showed the Grooters to a room at the back of the temple. He told Verity he will get some tea and call two elder monks as well.

Fifteen minutes later, the Grooters were sitting having tea with three monks at the *Ogamiyama Shrine Okunomiya*. They looked very interested, and neither Verity nor the other Grooters could tell what their seeming interest was all about.

Then the oldest monk asked them:

“Are you the great ones?”

Verity translated for the others, but none of them was sure what the monk meant by that. He repeated his question:

“Are you the great ones?”

Now, after Verity searched another round in her incredible cerebral database, she made a connection and told the other Grooters.

“Groot means great or big in Dutch. Maybe there is a link to Mount Daisen, the ‘big mountain’, and *Ogamiyama* means the ‘mountain of the great god’.

“Maybe we are?” Modella told the others.

As the Grooters did not respond to their question, the other monk showed them the shrine’s symbol: a hexagon with a flower inside.

Boss told the others: “Looks like they have made the link that there are six of us. But what does that symbol mean?”

Verity decided to be honest with the monks, and said:

“We are not sure if we are the great ones, but we do believe that we have a great mission.”

She told them about their Pact, and the hunt for the crystals.

The monks nodded in approval, intensely listening to what Verity told them. Then the older monk said:

“Thank you for sharing your story. We think you are the great ones.”

“What do you mean by that?” asked Verity.

“A myth has been encoded for centuries in our shrine symbol: it says that one day, The Great Ones will come, and the whole world will flourish.”

And he pointed at the six corners of the hexagon, and at the flower inside.

“And what do you think we need to do now?” asked Verity.

“You will need the ‘*List of Universal Human Needs*’ that we have kept in our shrine for over 800 years.”

“And once we have that list, what do we do with it?”

“You need to build a ‘prototype’ town that is organised in such a way that all the Universal Human Needs of all the residents are met. Then other towns will know how to get organised, and, most importantly, we will be able to settle on other planets without repeating the same errors as on Earth.”

“That sounds like a major challenge.”

“Yes, but you are The Great Ones, we are confident you can do it.”

He stood up, and went to another room, and came back a few minutes later with a rolled document.

With both hands, he handed it over to Verity, who bowed in thanks.

Verity opened the one-page document and saw the title:

人間の普遍的なニーズのリスト

And below the title, was a list of over 80 different needs. Many were obvious, like the need for love, shelter or food. But many others were more subtle needs.

The other Grooters, who had not understood Verity’s and the monk’s conversation, asked her: “What is all this about?”

“It’s the list of needs that we came here for.”

“Really?”

“You’re amazing, Verity,” said Modella, and the others nodded.

Verity turned to the monk again: “*Arigato*, can we take a photo of the list, then you can keep the original here where it belongs?”

“Good idea,” said the monk.

Verity told the Grooters to all take a photo of the list.

“Make sure you get the whole list, it’s a very important document,” said the younger monk.

“How can we thank you?” asked Verity.

“By building a model town to serve as a blueprint that will enable humanity to flourish,” answered the older monk, then added: “there is a very simple rule to understand about this document.”

“What is it?” enquired Verity.

“That whenever there is any kind of problem in a society, be it mental or physical disease, addictions and drugs, relationship dramas, crime, racism, jealousy or any other unwanted things, then it is because one or often several of the needs on this *List* have not been met.”

“Is it as simple as that?”

“Yes, it’s like when a machine is not working, there are a limited number of reasons why the machine doesn’t work, so you just have to go through a protocol and check the possible places where something may have gone wrong. And this *List of Universal Human Needs* is your protocol to debug any dysfunctional society.”

“*Arigato*,” said Verity, “we will make sure we inform you when it has been built, it may take a few years.”

“Remember that every item on the list is there for a reason. Some overlap a little, and all are the kinds of needs all humans share, irrespective of culture. Then there may be additional other culture-specific needs.”

“We’ll keep that in mind,” said the Asian Grooters.

“And one more thing,” said the younger monk, “although we all need all the items on the list, some people have stronger needs in some areas. For example, one person may need more physical movement, another may need a bigger house. And one may need more companionship, one more independence. As for sexual needs, don’t compare yourself with your neighbour.”

“*Arigato* again,” said Verity, laughing at the monk’s last sentence, while at the same time thinking how sad the whole gossip business was.

“Good luck, great big Grooters!” said all the monks at the same time, and they all bowed.

♪ *Big in Japan – Alphaville*

As they exited the shrine, Verity went to hug Azusa and thanked her for bringing them to the shrine. She gave her a big tip, and said they may call her again if they decided to stay longer in Daisen.

When the Grooters got back to their hotel, Verity translated the whole list to her friends.

“This reminds me of something,” said Boss.

“What?” wondered Modella.

“Steamaru’s card game, although it’s a slightly different perspective.”

“And there are only twelve cards, whereas this new list has eighty items.”

“What were those twelve cards again?” asked Webbo.

“*Land, house, food, clothes, relationships, love, health, life goal, arts, money, knowledge, time,*” replied Boss, “but Tamara clearly stated that it was a game that simplified reality. For example, I think I have an *entrepreneur card* that could benefit others.”

“You definitely have,” confirmed the others.

“So, this *List of Universal Human Needs* goes further into detail?” asked Modella.

“Yes, especially for relationships and life meaning,” said Verity.

Indeed, confirmed the others, looking at the translated list.

“And this big list focuses on universal needs, not needs that are due to ways a specific culture is organised. For example, money is not used in all societies, it’s only a chosen social construct, not a universal need,” said Richie.

“The problem is that this social construct had not been unanimously chosen by everyone, so most people have to endure it, despite knowing deep inside of themselves that there must be better ways to organise a society,” said Leo.

“Yes, which leads to society having to create other unchosen ‘needs’ like police, lawyers, doctors, cars, marriages, insurances, and plenty of other things that would probably never have been necessary in a society where everyone have their universal needs met,” continued Richie.

“So, you think all these things are just there to compensate for a poorly organised society?” asked Webbo.

“I’m almost sure about that,” said Richie.

“I noted an interesting thing on this list,” said Leo.

“What is it?” asked Verity.

“*Shared reality* is one of the eighty *Universal Human Needs*. That reminds me of my definition for a dimension that I shared with you in my little *Dimensionomics* lecture: a

dimension is a place in space and time where living beings can communicate with each other.”

“And by the way, *communication* is also on the list,” said Modella.

“I’d say we want to aim for quality communication,” said Webbo, “in a mutually intelligible language, both regular language, and also body language and male/female languages.”

“Every profession has their own lingo, too...” added Leo.

“Yes,” confirmed Boss, “and one challenge for entrepreneurs is to gather people with complementary skills, meaning different professions, and have them learn to talk to each other so that they understand each other and can work together harmoniously.”

“And how do you achieve that?” asked Verity.

“You have to have clear goals that everyone understands and agrees upon. Once you got that, it’s fairly smooth sailing.”

Then Verity added: “The monks actually said this list of *Universal Human Needs* should be used as some kind of debugging protocol to solve problems in any society. And they wanted us to build a model town, built on the awareness of this list.”

“A model town?” said Modella, “that’s exactly what I have in mind. So, I think this list can make sure that I don’t make any design mistakes.”

“Let us spend a few more days here to hike and discover this wonderful region,” said Boss, “and maybe we’ll find additional inspiration. I’d say we deserve a small vacation, don’t you think? Then we’ll fly back to Geneva and start modelling Modella’s model town. How does that sound?”

“Sounds like a great idea,” said Verity, “this is such a magnificent place. I’ll call Azusa, I’m sure she has more secrets places she can show us.”

The other Grooters nodded enthusiastically.