

My dear friends

Saho Nakagawa

Hello everyone.

Last year, I stood here as I received the best 1st year student award.

Today, I'm back here because I have something to tell you, especially to my friends.

I only have a short time, so I can't go on any tangents, however, I hope you enjoy my speech.

After I entered this university I made a lot of friends.

And this year, now I have made even more friends.

All of my friends are unique, funny, crazy, and beautiful, and also hard workers, diligent, some of them are perfectionists.

But, that's not what I'm here to tell you. Can you guess?

You guys are too humble.

There are two things I want to say today, please listen carefully.

First, don't deny compliments.

When I say "You're such a hard worker!" you guys say "I'm not, you're more hardworking than me."

When I say "You're beautiful!" you say "No, That's not true."

So, let me be clear.

When I give you a compliment, I'm not lying.

If you're my friend, I always tell you the truth.

This is my way of expressing love, so please receive it without hesitation.

Second, and most importantly, do not judge yourself too harshly.

Sometimes when life gets hard, do you ever think: "I'm okay, because there are other people who have it harder than me." or "The reason I get depressed easily is that I'm not resilient enough."

Or, when it comes to difficult relationships, have you ever thought "If I broke up with him, I can't go on living." or "She's so bad, but she's the only one who understands me."

Some of you said it in front of me.

Each time when you say it, I always think... "Come on, don't make me laugh."

Do you seriously think your pain would be lessened by comparing yourself with others?

Or, do you seriously think your problems in life would be solved by dating such a guy?

If you think so, I will ask you a simple question.

If someone told you "You should die", would you do what they told you to do?

Stop underestimating yourself.

Your life is yours, your feelings are yours, and no one can pollute your mind, unless you let them.

Please embrace and express your feelings confidently.

Please don't be scared to be alone, you won't be lonely.

Am I talking too much?

I think this was a harsh dose of reality today, but probably you know I love you and I always hope for your happiness.

Tomorrow is another day. You and I will still be friends.

So, keep standing by me, and I'll stand by you.