

The Spring Office Shuffle

I will be out of the office Thursday, April 25- Thursday, May 2nd, returning to the office Tuesday, May 7th. Emma has graciously agreed to come in instead and will be here from 9am to 2pm. If you are curious to hear what I'm up to, there is a bit of an Ascension connection (always)...

I'm headed to Tokyo! Many of you know that Jim has been going to China a lot in the last year for work, and while hanging out in a hotel in a bleak factory setting was not enticing enough for me to tag along, I got my travel fix in the form of a cheap direct flight to Tokyo. So I'm heading back to Japan after fifteen years, along with a couple girlfriends who immediately agreed to join me. They are going under the false pretense that I have retained any Japanese (and let's be honest, my Japanese was rudimentary at best back then although I could have a pretty decent conversation about lesson planning...) and that my amazing sense of direction will not desert me even when the sky, crowded out by building after building, shows no signs of east or west.

Sure, I considered taking my family for a hot second. But they still have a while to build up the stamina that a trip like this takes. They need to be able to eat whatever is in front of them, even if it has an eye staring at them. They need to be able to meander around all day shopping and gallery browsing and culture binging and people watching- all without whining which would be difficult given their longest shopping trip recently maybe lasted an hour plus in Target, ending with me hyperventilating in the hair product section.

So, yes, even I had to get in shape. Sure, Colin O'Brady might have recently trained to cross Antarctica solo by working out with his hands in buckets of ice, but navigating a complex transit system and finding places in a country that doesn't have much in the way of address organization... in a language I only somewhat confidently know two of the three alphabets, WHILE being crazily jetlagged by the sixteen hour time difference? Let's just say thank goodness for language apps and Google maps offline which didn't exist when I taught English all those years ago. I have parks to visit in the afternoon to recover, not to mention the soothing hot springs that still exist even in the urban jungle of Tokyo.

To say I'm excited is an understatement all the while recognizing that yes, Tokyo can be, well, a little over-stimulating. Which is just fine with me as it reminds me that I get to return to my sweet cocoon of family, friends, and our Ascension community. So, I'll come home- well, if the plane can lift off with all the souvenirs I plan to bring back with me.