



Czech Technical University, 2011

# LEARNING & CHANGING

**March 16, 2015**

José Cruz: Have you ever seen a kid - like if you've ever had the chance to teach a kid from first year, "kid" I mean student - (Mm-hmm) uh, a student here at the university, grow uh, from 18 years old, until maybe about third year or fourth year and have them display like a real change over those four years. Have you ever noticed a phenomenon like that?

Danny Minn: Well, in general **you know** we- we can see it. They come in as freshmen. Uh most of my classes are uh uh with first year students (Mm-hmm) and they - you just see that they're - just **appearance-wise** right? They're - a lot of them dye their hair and have these interesting haircuts (yeah) and fashion and then by the third and fourth year they're - you know, become robots with the uh job-hunting.

José: but is that, but is that of personal volition? (No) The dyed hair in first year (yeah) and the crazy clothes, yeah you finally **want to** shed that horrible woolen military style uniform that they were forcing you to wear at uh at high school and suddenly you get to wear your own clothes, yeah that was volition. But to change into you know some of these - putting all their hair back and dressing like a crow (Mm-hmm) Uh the- they all look like penguins to me you know, because they're all wearing that - the same shirt with the same black suit when they go off to um to uh, hunt for jobs here in Japan. I don't know if that's volition.

Danny: No, that uh. They're on this uh train, this locomotive. And hehe they they're just riding it.

José: Um, and that's Japan, but thinking about America, you spent most of your university years in America right? (Yeah) So how would you put that into perspective, you know, "Japanese kids are **this**, Japanese kids have to deal with **this**, and so their uh- their line of thinking is **this**," Is it different in America, you think?

Danny: Oh definitely, Uh, I mean uh, it's it's quite famous, right and well known that uh Japanese kids, uh have to study so hard all through high school just to get into university (Mm-hmm) right? And they didn't have maybe enough free time (Mm-hmm) And then once they get into university, they have these three or four years of this freedom, so I can I can kind of understand why they do what they do, (Mm-hmm) but at- in American universities it's not like that at all.

José: It's the reverse I would say.

Danny: Right right. You don't declare your major until your second or third year, or whenever you want. Or you can change your major, (Mm-hmm) right? So...

José: Oh you're talking about American kids now?

Danny: Right. (OK) American universities. (Mm-hmm) So that time period is seen as this uh time to find yourself.

José: It's seen as a time to find yourself, but at the same time you have to find yourself through- wi- wi- without ignoring or **being diligent** about your studies. (Mm-hmm) **Because** if you spend all your time trying to find yourself and you keep getting "C"s that's going to chase your grade point average all the way down the hole and you're not **going to** realize it until, you know it's too late I would say. (Hmm) I mean that's the talk that I got. Uhh It's that, Yeah you know, you don't have to declare your major but you're far better off to declare it as soon as you can. To spend as much time as you need to figure out what you want to do in your life but do it as soon as you can (Mm-hmm) or else it's going to hurt you. You're going to have to spend another year at university to make up the credits or to make up the GPA.

Danny: And that's what a lot of American students do. Not- (yeah yup) probably most students don't graduate in four years, they take five or six years...

José: Well to be honest I didn't (yeah yeah) I graduated in four and a half years (Mm-hmm) But I was taking my time too, I wasn't taking the full five-class-a-week workload. (Mm-hmm) I was doing the minimal um full-time status workload which was four classes a week. Helped me do, you know, um focus more on my studies and allowed me to do two part time jobs, so I could pay for everything, (Right) so it took a little extra time. (Yeah) I actually liked university.

Word count	Time	Words/Min.
780	4:34	170.80

Pointers:

**you know:** Danny says this very quickly, so it's hard to hear. (0:22)

**appearance-wise:** hyphenating "**wise**" to another word makes the meaning "**in terms of**". (0:35)

**want to:** pronounced "**WANNA**" (1:02)

**this:** to mean, "**such-and-such**" (2:05)

**being diligent:** José should have said "**NOT** being diligent" (3:19)

**Because:** pronounced "**KUHZ**" (3:21)

**going to:** pronounced "**GUHNA**" (3:25)

Discussion:

Are you a very different person now than you were five years ago? In what way do you think you will change in five years from now?

How is university seen in your country? What is your image of it personally?

What time in your life did you change most?

VOA ARTICLE: "UNDERSTANDING THE MISUNDERSTOOD TEENAGE BRAIN"  
<http://bit.ly/2e9p7Oe>

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