KO Subin

Anyone in here like sports? I hated them! I had always disliked sports. I believe that I developed this mindset because there is always a winner and a loser. In the case of the winner, I would have mixed feelings because winners should not give victorious shouts in front of the losers or otherwise they would feel bad, depressed or become annoyed. In the case of the loser, I would feel frustrated or sad sometimes even angry at the winners. I harbored these feelings as well toward the fans of each player, group or team. Sometimes, fans even get into fights with each other, and they even turn against their own, booing or criticizing them if they don't win. Because of both personal and observed experiences in sports, I had always felt that they were scary, dangerous activities which make people become stressed out, angry and even get into fights with each other. I had never thought sports could make a peaceful world.

However, my thinking about all that changed when the PyeongChang Olympic Games were held in 2018. My family and I were watching the opening ceremony on TV. Olympic athletes from various countries from all over the world were entering the stadium, all smiling and waving their hands to the audience. I was amazed at the scene: people from many different countries, all looking different and speaking different languages were smiling happily and walking into the stadium full of joy. No one seemed to care about each other's differences, neither the athletes, nor the crowd. There were no 'boos' and 'hisses', but rather roaring cheers from the audience, all cheering for each and every country.

What surprised me the most, though, was seeing the North Korean and South Korean athletes entering the stadium together, some holding hands and all marching with a united team flag. Watching that scene I realized that the thing that united all of the athletes from all over the world was sports. The world of sports, which I thought was only scary and dangerous, was making the athletes joyful and happy, uniting them together. That was the moment I realized that sports could bring peace to the world. The memory of that moment is seared into my mind and I will never forget it. How amazing! People with different thinking, tongues and cultural backgrounds brought together by one common bond; sports. That changed my outlook. There is a saying, "Sports do not need words". But the moment I watched the 2018 Olympic Games opening ceremony and the athletes walking together, I finally understood the meaning of these words. Now I know the hidden power of sports.

So, you see, it is true that sports have the power to connect and unite people. The Olympics made me realize that sports are not only about winning or losing. The Olympics was a game changer for me. And it could be a game changer for not only audiences but athletes and a lot more people too. In 2020, the summer Olympic and Paralympic Games will be held here in Japan. I am sure that this will be another step for world peace now that I know the power of sports. And I am very sure that it will be a game changer for you, too.