



Quotable Quotes

More than a year ago I wrote in one of these weekly stories about the experience of watching one of my daughters use an instant messaging program on her computer. She was very 'fluent' in the particular language used for that type of communication - the clipped shorthand words, and the many abbreviations; the kind of thing that looks like this: "r u OK?"

Well, I guess I'm OK, but I have never been able to bring myself to use that kind of language, even on those infrequent occasions when I also use an IM program. I'll type the message out in full normal English, "Are you all right?" Luckily, I am a pretty good touch typist, so I am able to keep up my end of the conversations, even when the others are using abbreviations!

So although using IM hasn't become a major part of my daily routine, I do now feel basically comfortable with it, and no longer mentally 'panic' when messages suddenly appear on my computer screen. I can handle it.

But communications technology isn't standing still of course, far from it, and the other day I was pushed into taking another step 'forward'. My daughter Fumi is spending a few months in Sydney Australia, on a student exchange program arranged by her university in Vancouver. Now and then she gives me a call on the telephone system that we have installed on our computers (that's another thing I have to write about soon!), so I'm able to hear news of her recent activities. The other day though, when I asked her if she could send me some pictures, so that I could see what her neighbourhood looked like, she simply said "Oh, you can see plenty of pictures on my Facebook page, go check it out!"

Facebook ... In case you aren't familiar with this sort of thing, Facebook is what they call a 'social networking service', an internet website which you 'join', and to which you subsequently post personal information: who you are, and what you are doing. You then become 'friends' with other people on the system - linking to their information pages - and thus develop personal networks. Fumi is a member of this particular system, and uses it to communicate with her friends, and to share photographs with them. To see her photos, I would have to become a member.

So I went to their website and signed up. These things are free, of course, and a few minutes after registering, and then being invited by Fumi to become her 'friend', I was able to see the photographs of the Sydney beach directly in front of her apartment window. Beautiful!

But what I learned next was much more interesting than the photographs. Now that Fumi and I were Facebook 'friends', I was able to read all the information that she has posted on her page of the system. She has listed such things as her hobbies, her favourite books and movies, and lists of the music she was enjoying. As you can imagine, I recognized almost none of these items, which I guess is not too surprising, but then something I saw did surprise me. Everybody's page has a section of favourite quotes, and right near the top of Fumi's list I saw this one: *"The secret of success: be good at something, be enthusiastic about it, and communicate that enthusiasm to others."*

Now how heartwarming is that ... to find that near the top of the list of your daughter's 'words to live by', is something from ... her dear old dad!

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