

## 40-Day 2019 Hyojeong Culture and Arts Youth Camp Workshop at Chung Pyung

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The WS was a pure sense of achievement for me. I didn't think I could gain so much from a musical WS. My motivation for wanting to attend: God is an indescribable creator, and with the talents He has given us, it's simply our job to be grateful, share them, and make people happy.

We were 102 participants, of which about 80% were Koreans. With Yujin and myself from Germany, the International group consisted of sisters from the Philippines, Thailand, Africa, Japan and the US. On average, we spent 6–8 hours singing, dancing and acting every day. Before our training began, we meditated for 10 minutes and did stretching exercises. In the evenings we stretched, prayed, recited the 5th family pledge, sang, and reflected. Sundays were our days off. Most Sundays we spent practicing, but we went to Chung Pyung and to the Magnolia Cafe once.

The daily routine was as follows: At 7 o'clock we got up, did HDH in teams, had breakfast and listened to around 3 hours of lectures until lunchtime. There were many different lecturers: First and second generations talked about True Parents' course, Blessing Education, Korean Unification, the meaning of Hyojeong and more. Sometimes we listened to testimonies, or shared in teams instead. Also we had two open mics throughout the workshop.



I was impressed to find out that the musical director is not a member of our movement but has been responsible for the musicals for the last three years. He talked about the musical and True Parents everyday. At first, just about no one knew that he wasn't a member. He spoke with complete understanding and conviction about our movement, especially about True Parents. He always stressed the



importance to understand the script and to always give one's best. At first it seemed cliché, but it's true. For example, if you deeply understand the words and the meaning of songs, you have a different attitude when performing them.

At first it was quite difficult: It was my first 40 day WS and I often had up and downs. The translation did not always work 100%, moreover, we received the English scripts one and a half weeks later than the Korean scripts. Breaking the language barrier was a challenge, despite knowing Korean a bit. My feet, legs and arms hurt and we were bruised from constantly sitting cross-legged and learning the dance moves. We had to memorize many songs and they were all in Korean. The choreography kept changing every day, likewise the music and the dance teams. People got sick and it got to be too much at times.



But the staff, which mainly consisted of UPA students, was really good. Spiritual support was always there. I can't believe it myself, but the director has done a lot to get us through the WS as well. He came to the Cheonga Camp to be with us almost everyday, except for when the musical was being worked on. He often spoke to us about the attitude we should have: We shouldn't let ourselves get down even when things get tough, or that there's no tolerance for self-centeredness. We should give everything to make not only ourselves, but God and the True Parents happy.

About a week before the performance, there was a confrontation between a brother and the director. The director got emotional and very upset and started yelling at us. Some did not understand why the director got so mad. However, we had promised him to act as a team from the very start. It wasn't always easy to behave as a team especially towards the end of the workshop -- some people had a hard time putting the whole first. Focusing on the musical is important and hiding other stuff is certainly difficult, but those are the kinds of challenges you face in a musical WS. As an effect, the atmosphere shifted and people's attitudes started to change. The director's criticism did us well: the work and our training became more efficient.





We had to hand in our cell phones during the WS and would receive it in the evenings (except on Sundays, when we'd get to use them during the daytime). For the Korean participants it was a bit easier to keep in contact with their friends and family. Us international participants were more limited as we had to go to another other building to get access to free WiFi. Nevertheless, not having a phone really helped to focus on the WS.

At first, I didn't feel very emotional. But the more time passed and the more you understood the meaning and the more you sang, the more emotional I became. During the rehearsals in the World Center, we sang for True Mother as she came to practice her stage appearance. I had never cried during the training sessions, but suddenly tears came to my eyes.



My personal highlight over the 40 days was of course the performance. All the sweat, smell, injuries, and tears had paid off. Being on stage with 101 other brothers and sisters, people you didn't know before (and to be honest, still don't quite know) was just amazing. Everyone had their reason to come to the camp. Some came because they had to, others because they just wanted to sing, and a few wanted to challenge themselves.

To be honest, I haven't always had the best and deepest relationship with God and True Parents. However, the relationship gradually became stronger. Of course, the desire had to come from myself -- to be willing to invest and understand, even if it doesn't make any sense at first. Thus, I became very emotional during the final performance, and especially during the last song. When True Mother walked toward us I could hear the other performers next to me sobbing.

The next highlight was when we sang in front of True Mother in Cheon Jeong Gung. It was a song from the musical 'I Love You Because I Am Your Mother' written by a 2nd Gen, who was also our music teacher. When we stood on the stairs and True Mother came in, she shared a few words with us. After that, as soon as the intro started playing, the first tears flowed among the participants. It was just an indescribable feeling. The song was written for True Mother and describes, among other things, how much she loves us, her children.

I've never really been able to fully grasp the meaning of the words 'True Parents want to save humanity and love everyone.' But once I saw what True Parents have done and are still doing, in spite of the various circumstances, I can't help myself tearing up. As sad as it sounds, the 40 days were more than just tear-shedding. It was a time where you could learn a lot, if you wanted.

Thank you, to all who have taken the time to read this.

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