

Selective Mutism and “Hikikomori” :
On My Personal History

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Keyword : Selective Mutism, Hikikomori, School Refusal

I had experienced of selective mutism and “hikikomori”. When I was ten years old, I became a person who was not able to speak to or communicate with others outside of my house. Since then, I had suffered from selective mutism for thirteen years. After that I became to speak again when I was twenty four years old. The next year I entered a university. After I graduated from the university, I got a job but I could not keep on working. Those days lack of experience and a developmental disability caused my disincentives. Now I am thirty four years old, and have a part-time job that suits my situation. In addition, I sometimes do a lecture in order to spread more understanding of selective mutism.

This report summarizes my experience of selective mutism. I dropped out of elementary school and could not go to junior high school as well. It was “school refusal(non-attendance at the school)”. However, play therapy in a child consultation center was effective. I chose loneliness in my high school days, but continued having a dream. I was encouraged from a group member who depended and relied on me in the workshop of the hospital. It gave confidence to me. In my case, there were five factors to overcome selective mutism. The support of the university professor also played an important role after my overcoming of selective mutism. In general, persons of selective mutism cannot speak because of their uneasiness and strain. I hope that this report will promote understanding of selective mutism.