Groups form in Japan for all kinds of reasons, some good, some bad. We talk about our experience with group identity in Japan.

**Transcript**

K: So, lately I’ve been thinking about groups in Japan. Like expat groups and not even expat groups. There’s tons and tons of social groups in Japan. I feel like – well in Nagoya, Japan. I guess all of Japan. I don’t know. I’m thinking about meetups and meetups are everywhere all over Japan. So meetups is an app – do you know about meetups?

C: I know about meetups. It’s actually a website, and they have an app associated with the website.

K: Well, I’m calling it an app because Word has decided everything should be called an app, and you know I am a drone for Word.

C: Yeah.

K: I drone Word. I don’t stan Word. I drone Word.

C: Okay.

K: And I drone Word because hello, PHD, Word is my life.

C: Yeah, it’s mine too.

K: Word, Mendeley**,** and PowerPoint.

C: Mmm.

K: PowerPoint, okay. Okay, digression right out of the gate. I feel like I need to confess this, and why? Why do I need to confess this? Nobody’s going to care. Like, literally no one will care. So, okay, here’s the thing: I think no one’s about to care, well I think no one will care, anyway. I’m completely spacey today. If you cared about this, hit us up on Twitter and let us know. Be like “Kisstopher, yo, we really cared that you drew your diagrams in SPSS” – I mean, no, I didn’t draw them in SPSS. That’s what I’m trying to confess. “That you drew your diagrams in Word instead of SPSS.” No, PowerPoint. Man, get it together. (laughs) If you guys could see Chad’s face right now. I am so scattered because I am so busy, and I think I just need to take a deep breath and gather my thoughts.

C: So, and I feel like that is the experience for me of working with PowerPoint.

(laughter)

C: It’s like I need to do it this way, no wait, the wrong tool, this…

K: So yeah, I’m fresh off of working with PowerPoint. And I was rushing because I was like – because all day I’ve been telling you “just let me do one more thing. Just one more thing.” Which is the bane of Chad’s existence is when I tell him “give me ten minutes.”

C: Yes.

K: So, for years and years, Rasta didn’t know how long ten minutes was because I would – no mater what I wanted, it’s just like “leave me alone until I tell you I’m available” and my language for that is “give me ten minutes.” I’ll be done in ten minutes.

C: Yeah, so you were drawing path diagrams, and I feel like if you’re drawing path diagrams, you really should be using either GGPlot which is in R or Graphviz. I know SPSS and AMOS and all of that can draw them, too, but

K: Yes.

C: But I’m a purist as far as how to draw them, but PowerPoint works in a pinch.

K: and I’m in a pinch people. I’m in a pinch.

C: But I’m only thinking about groups because you said you were thinking about groups. I was like “finally, we can discuss the group operator, we can discuss the commutation. Like **2:57**.” But apparently you want to talk about social groups.

K: (laughs) Yes, social groups. And I’m sorry to digress straight out the gate because I have been thinking about social groups, but I have also been thinking about guilt. And so I’m super, super guilty because I feel like I should be doing everything in SPSS but opening up SPSS when I’m working on a Word document just t do a couple of diagrams that go in my appendix, I feel like it is so much simpler to do them in PowerPoint.

C: It really is, yes.

K: And you sold me on that because I was like “aaaahhh, I’ve got to do this in SPSS” and I really have PHD brain, which is no surprise if you follow us on Twitter. And if you don’t follow us on Twitter, then go follow us on Twitter. We are @TheMusicks.

C: Yes, we are @TheMusicks.

K: That was a statement, not a question. I’m having inflection problems. But I’m also having guilt about groups because it’s been over a year, literally, over a year since I’ve done an in real life hangout. And so, the Black Women in Japan conferenc3, which is amazing and uplifting, and just a beautiful sister space, beautiful women of color from, specifically from, blackness color. So, like, there’s… there’s… Afro-Latinas, Caribbeans, Africans, African Americans, and I don’t know what Black Canadians call themselves. And there’s also Black indigenous people from different areas of the world. What do Black Canadians call themselves? Afro-Canadians? Black?

C: I have never met – yeah, every Canadian I have ever met as Black identifies as Black and Canadian.

K: If you’re Black and Canadian, hit us up. What is- so for me, I call myself Black, which is extremely controversial, and I have talked about it – you all don’t attack me, so I’m going to say my thing about it and do not attack me.

C: This is not the first time you’ve said your thing about it, so I think we’ve escaped the attacks, but go ahead for new listeners.

K: I am scarred because when I said int in my Black Women in Japan group, some people got really hurt. Here’s the thing: I am not trying to distance myself from Africa. I am not African American because Africa is not a country. Slavery took away my right to say that I am Nigerian-American, took away my right to say that I am South African American. Took away my right to say that I am Logos-American, whatever country that my people come from in Africa. I don’t know. Because slavery took that right away from me, so I am not going to put salves on the conscious and ego of people who want to act like the legacy of slavery is over. No. It is not. It is not for me. The legacy of slavery is not over for me. But that’s not what we’re talking about. But I just call myself Black, but I know that publicly I should identify as African American because it is extremely offensive to some Black folks from the United States if you are not a person of color to call them Black. And by person of color, I mean specifically if you’re not Black, you should call them African American or better yet, call them by their name. How about that? How about I just be Kisstopher? So I am all over the place today, they’re going to be like “whoa, Kisstopher is so manic today.” But I am not manic.

C: Okay, so how do you call them by their name if you are talking to an entire group? Do you do an Outkast thing? Do you go like “okay, to all the Beyoncés out there, and all the Lucy Lius”?

K: So what do you mean if you’re talking to a group of people?

C: Well, you said that the best thing is to call them by their name, but what if you want to say something about an entire group of people? Do you say, “I want to talk about Bob and Sally and Fred and George” and list their names? That sounds really laborious.

K: Okay. What are you talking about? Give me an example. African Americans are not a monolith.

C: Okay, but the group you belong to is not African American and Black Women in Japan.

K: No, they’re the Black Women in Japan.

C: Right. So, how could somebody, and this is a question that I really don’t know the answer to, who is offended by being referred to as Black join a group called

K: If you say Black-American and say “we understand that Afro-Caribbeans” – I have a girlfriend who is Afro-Caribbean, and she’s like “do not call me Afro-Caribbean. Girl. I’m Jamaican.” And I have another friend that’s like “girl, do not call me that. No. I’m from the Bahamas. I am not – I am Caribbean. There is no need for the Afro part, I am just from the Caribbean.”

C: I worked with this guy named Charles, or [French accent] Charles. French guy. And at work somebody said something about him being African American. And he said “I am not African-American. I am not African. And I am not American. I am French. My skin is black. If you want to say I am Black, just say I am Black, but I am a Frenchman.”

K: Yeah, so this is like a huge digression on color politics.

C: But I think it goes back to group identity, so if you want to talk about within Nagoya, at least, a lot of groups are founded around group identity. And the first identity that many of the groups we belong to people form themselves about is foreigner.

K: Yes. So, there’s the Black Women in Japan group, there’s Black Mommies in Japan, there’s Expats in Japan, there’s Black Creatives, Black Nerds – so there’s Black Creatives Japan, Black Nerds Japan, I belong to all these groups. I belong to a ton of groups.

C: So you’re very active eon Facebook.

K: Yes. And then there’s Mommies Japan. Foreign Mommies in Japan. There’s Naturals Japan – which those are for people who have natural hair. So I have my natural hair, so I am a natural. I am a Japan natural.

C: Natural. See, I hear naptural, and I just think that’s a group of people who want to take naps whenever they feel like it, and I think sign me up, I like taking good naps.

(laughter)

K: That is so awesome. That is so crackety awesome. And then there’s Foreign Women in Business

C: Right.

K: And I belong to Foreign Women in Business. And then there’s Just One and The Power of One – I belong to both of those, they’re activist groups. And then – so yeah I

C: There’s Foreigners in Nagoya, there’s Nagoya Help, there’s a lot of different

K: I love Nagoya Expat Help. Seriously, you all, if you’re in Nagoya or even if you’re not – mostly Nagoya though – Nagoya Expat Help is a popping group. It is so lively. Like, I post a question, and literally within thirty minutes I have like fifteen answers for things that I want.

C: Yeah.

K: Not things that I want, but for help I need. And then there’s like Hello Nagoya…

C: Yeah.

K: So these are all Facebook groups.

C: Yeah.

K: So if you go into Facebook and you put in Nagoya in the Facebook group, tons of different groups will show up.

C: Well, if you’re in Nagoya, and you want to shop, check out some of the Sayonara Sale groups.

K: Ooo, yes. I love a good sayonara sale. And then there’s also Nagoya Expats Garage Sale, Nagoya Garage Sale.

C: Yeah, so Sayonara Sale isn’t a group. It’s a category of thing. So, Sayonara Sale is when somebody who is not Japanese is selling all of their things because they are leaving Japan.

K: Yes. And you can get some good deals.

C: Because if they don’t sell them, they have to pay to throw them away. So a lot of times, a lot of the stuff is free, and only the more valuable stuff you have to pay anything for.

K: Yeah, most places will be like “if you can come take it, you can have it.”

C: Yeah, so I know people who have gotten like free cars, or a hundred dollars for a car, or, you know, entire furniture sets for just hauling it away because

K: But man en for a car is a rarity.

C: It is a rarity, and you end up paying a lot in registration for the car, and tune-ups, and taxes and all of that.

K: And there’s something called the Shaken and all of that, which is the Japanese version of registration

C: So, ultimately a free car will cost you a couple thousand dollars.

K: Yeah, or a couple hundred thousand yen. I just like saying the money in Japanese because it’s so baller.

C: Yes.

K: Because as a therapist, there’s no way in the United States that I could charge ten thousand anything, well ten thousand dollars. But in Japan, I charge ten thousand yen an hour. Which is really impressive because it’s ichi man an hour.

C: You could charge ten thousand pennies an hour in the U.S.

K: Yeah, I could. Snap. The joys of being married to a mathematician.

C: Thank you. Got to come in helpful sometime.

K: So, then there’s other groups that are super, super, super expensive to belong to. Like the American Chamber of Commerce Japan, and then there’s the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Japan, and I think there’s also a British Chamber of Commerce Japan, but a lot of them would belong – a lot of them – a lot of Canadians and Brits belong to the American Chamber of Commerce Japan because – I don’t feel like – okay, look. I know some of the chamber members listen to our podcast, thank you. Shout out to the ACCJ. Much love. Appreciate the love back. But you all know that the Nagoya chapter is busted. You all know it. It’s problematic.

C: All of the chambers in Nagoya are pretty small because there’s only about 50,000 Americans who live in Japan.

K: Yeah.

C: Most of those people live in Tokyo. And most of those people don’t belong to any of the chambers because they’re teaching English, they’re students, they’re whatever. They’re living their own life, not trying to run a business.

K: Yeah.

C: So you already have a very small amount of people. You’ve got about

K: And they’re not convenience.

C: No.

K: They’re inconvenient. So I’m just going to – I’m going to – if you guys are listening, change the time that you do things. You can not have things in the middle of a day on a Thursday and expect me to attend ever. Which is one of the main reasons I left because all of the stuff that I was interested in would happen in the middle of my workday. And I’m not going to take a day off of work to go pay to be somewhere. I’m just not.

C: Well, and your workday is mostly evenings because people have to come see you after their workday has ended.

K: Yes. So yeah, to be fair, my workday can go pretty late because there are some times that I am working until 10:30 / 11 o clock at night, which is not my favorite.

C: No, but you do what you’ve got to do because you roll like that.

K: Yes, I do. Because I’m down for my clients. I take my duty of care seriously. So, that is what has led to my inability to socialize or belong to any social groups. The other day, I was talking with a client, and – so before talking with them, I knew I was going to talk with hem about Meetups groups – there were 89 meetup groups in Nagoya, in the city of Nagoya.

C: So let me ask you though

K: In just the city of Nagoya, the boringest city in all of Japan. (laughs)

C: Yes, as we talked about last

K: Yeah.

C: No, that was not last week. That was a long time ago.

K: (laughs0 I feel like I’ve infected you with my silliness.

C: You have.

K: Ah. So, you have to go and check out the archives. You can check out all of our archived episodes for 2 bucks on Patreon. It’s totally worth it.

C: Yeah.

K: Go do it now. (laughs)

C: Let me ask you though: do you think that the group situation is any different here in Japan than it was in the California? Because all of the people

K: In the California?

C: In the California.

K: Okay.

C: In the California time. During our time in California. Because when we were in California, all of the people that we hung out with in our different groups were interest based or association based.

K: That’ snot true. Tell the truth. Everyone we hung out with in California all had kids Rasta’s age. Keep it real.

C: Most of the people we hung out with in California had kids Rasta’s age. Some of the people we had gone to school with.

K: After we got married, how many of the people we had gone to school with did we hang out with?

C: A couple.

K: A year after we got married?

C: Still a couple.

K: No, by our one-year anniversary, we hung out with zero people we had gone to school with. Unless you’re counting Bill. Oh, I said his name. Sorry, dude. But he’s a good friend, we’re not going to say anything bad about him.

C: Yeah.

K: He’s a beloved family friend who we’ve known for over – we never say anybody’s name, and I feel so bad. Sorry dude, but it’s a positive shout out. We’ve known you for over twenty years and still love you. Think you’re awesome.

C: Yeah.

K: Love your wife, too, think she’s amazing.

C: Okay. So we’re sorry about how unique that name is.

K: (laughs) I know, right?

(laughter)

C: Just one unique Bill. Don’t tell him we said anything about him.

K: I’m trying to think of how many Bills I currently know, and I currently know literally 6 bills.

C: And you get new bills in the mail every month.

(laughter)

K: It’s so my thing to not say anybody’s name, and I think that comes form what I do at work. You don’t tell anyone’s story, and confidentiality is my brand. I just wanted to sho- I didn’t want people to tune in and think they get gossip because we don’t gossip.

C: No, no.

K: We’re not gossips. So, aside from that one friend, who did we hang out with? Not who did you know.

C: I don’t think we really hung out with anybody, but that’s my point that

K: I think in California we hung out with everybody whose kid went to the same school as our kid. And all of them had kids the same age as our kid.

C: I think everybody we hung out with went to- had a kid at that school. I don’t think we hung out with every person who had a kid at that school.

K: Yeah.

C: That was a big group.

K: Well, we volunteered quite a bit.

C: We knew those people.

K: Yeah, we knew almost al the parents. At one point in time or another, we had met all of the parents.

C: Yeah, because there were only like 400 kids at the school, so.

K: Yeah. But we knew them all dangnabbit.

C: Yeah. And then when I had a regular job, way back when, I did hang out with people from work. Like, my first job at California was at The Well, and I hung out with people from The Well. We went to Star Wars when it was prereleased together, we went to concerts, we went out to eat.

K: So are you saying all of your friends are convenience friends?

C: I’m saying most of the people that I hang out with are convenience friends.

K: Well and now the two people that you hang out with the most, won’t say any names, but the two people you hang out with the most you met online.

C: Yes.

K: And before you moved to California, all of your friends were online friends.

C: Correct.

K: And so now for me, currently, my closest friends are online friends. Sorry girls. I have my girls that I 0- well I haven’t hung out with them in years, but – ooohhh. I honestly was just going through the list of my girls, and I don’t even know if they’re still in Japan.

C: Yeah.

K: Aaaahhh. But they’re still my girls in my heart.

C: That’s the other thing about hanging out with people in Japan. You don’t know when somebody is going to leave.

K: Yeah, so I don’t get attached.

C: For example, a business contact of mine. He hadn’t given any indication when he was leaving, and then I saw on LinkedIn that he posted his new job position in another country.

K: Yeah.

C: I was like “oh, I guess he left.” And it’s not the first time. I think there’s probably been thirty or fort people who I’ve developed as a business contact, and then they just leave. So it can be very frustrating if you’re trying to develop a cohesive group.

K: It’s really hard to develop a cohesive group because even Japanese nationals – I had a good friend who is a Japanese national who left. Just up and out of the blue left Japan, and I was like “girl, you were supposed to be my forever friend.”

C: But Japan is rough

K: I thought for sure she would never leave. Born and raised in Japan – although she was born in the United States and wanted to go back to the United States, but I felt like this is so cold-blooded, but I felt like it was a pipe dream, I didn’t think it was ever going to happen. I felt like it was a wax and wane thing, like when I retire I want to retire to the United States, and I was like “okay, you know” whatever, didn’t really pay attention.

C: So you mean waxing nostalgic, not

K: Yeah.

C: Because I don’t think you can wane nostalgic.

K: You can’t wane nostalgic?

C: I don’t think so.

K: I think you can wane nostalgically. I think you can wax and wane nostalgically.

C: Okay, weigh in if you have an opinion.

K: Seriously. Hit us up on twitter, or you can even hit us up on Facebook and be like “yes, you can wax and wane nostalgically. #Kisstopher’sRight #TeamKisstopher”

C: Well they can hit you up on Facebook.

K: And they can hit you up on Facebook as well.

C: Only if they tell me who they are. Because I don’t accept friend requests

K: The Musicks in Japan, everybody can go to the Musicks in Japan or just @TheMusicks on Facebook

C: Oh, okay, yeah. I thought you were saying like personal Facebook. I was like

K: Why would they be hitting up our personal Facebooks about something we were talking about on the show? Because doing the victory lap is only fun when it’s public. I like it on all the Musick stuff, so you can see how right I am about it.

C: See well maybe they want to tell me I’m right, but they’re not trying to rub your nose in how wrong you were.

K: Oh, please rub Chad’s nose in how wrong he is. (laughs) I think they know that we’re really not malicious. And nobody ever really does it. There’s like – I think my name has too many letters in it. There’s 7 letters just in Kisstopher. And then team has 4 or 5. K I S S T O P H E – there are 9 letters. (laughs) I don’t even know how many letters are in my name. Oh my god.

(laughter)

K: It’s so funny because I misspell my name all the time because I write emails, and I’m dyslexic, and I’m typing, so I – I sometimes – my name is just a jumble of letters. Okay, so my name is K I S S T O P H E R. It’s ten letters. K I S S T O P H E R. Yeah, it’s ten le (laughs) Oh my gosh. Okay, my name is ten letters, and then team. T E A M is four, so that’s 14, plus the hashtag is 15. They would have to use 15 characters just to say how right I am. So maybe that’s why nobody’s doing TeamKisstopher because one, I have never told them how to spell it.

C: They could just do team K.

K: Team K?

C: Team K, yup.

K: I don’t like that.

C: Okay.

K: I don’t like that. I mean, you could do that, but I won’t like it.

C: Team Special K?

K: No. Special K (sniffs) MM. (laughs)

C: That’s a different type of group.

K: Getting on the K train. (laughs)

C: We don’t know anybody with that kind of group in Japan.

K: You may not. But I

C: I don’t, yes.

K I know them clinically, but not socially, and we might know them socially, but I stay away from anybody who does illicit things because I don’t want to be deported.

C: Yes.

K: I’m terrified of being deported.

C: I don’t either. I know people who’ve lost their permanent residency, and I’m not about that.

K: Yeah, I’m not about that lifestyle either.

C: People often on twitter will say “well, why don’t you smoke some marijuana or use CBD oil” the CBD oil is a big thing because of my epilepsy. And people will be like “have you tried CBD oil” no actually it’s illegal here in Japan, so I have not tried it. “Oh, but it would work” oh but I don’t want to be deported.

K: Yeah, so, and I think too that your epilepsy, while it interrupts daily functioning, we have your work down to s science, because now you work part time, and you write.

C: Yeah. Yeah, I think that’s pretty much managed. But I do belong to a lot of groups related to that. So I belong to a lot of writing groups.

K: Mhmm.

C: And also some editing groups.

K: so do you belong to more online groups or more in-person groups”?

C: More online groups. Because most of us work online. And so, especially for the editing, almost everybody works online from home. And, so… belonging to those groups, people can discuss grammar questions and things because even for professional editors, grammar is not contrived.

K: Grammar is so cultural. Different – so a lot of people think that there’s only one type of English, but there isn’t. Then, too, there’s grammar for a specific purpose.

C: Yes.

K: I was recently talking with a friend of mine – we were talking about the difference between when you were writing for D&D and when you’re writing for – like, writing a one-shot for a D&D that’s a game that can be played in one day, so like played in a couple hours, is very different than when you’re writing dialogue in a story.

C: Right.

K: And it’s not the same. I have to yawn.

C: Even within a particular discipline, if I’m writing a math paper for a journal that’s aimed at the general public, it’s very different than when I’m writing a math paper for a specialist journal.

K: Yeah. And also I feel like there’s – the grammar’s very different between psychology and math.

C: Yeah. Absolutely.

K: And MLA and APA so MLA is

C: Modern Language Association.

K: Yeah. And APA is American Psychological Association. And then there’s another standard…

C: There’s quite a few. There’s CSA, there’s…

K: Did you say TSA?

C: No, I said CSA.

K: You said what?

C: CSA. The Chemistry Society of America.

K: Oooh, nice. Tasty. CSA.

C: Yeah. There’s the American Medical Association, there’s the Oxford University Press Guide – not to be completely America-centric.

K: So these are all groups, too, just so you know that we may seem like we are digression, but we are not digressing. We are staying on the topic of groups I say with raised eyebrows and emphatic fingers. (laughs)

C: Are your fingers emphatic? They are very swirly fingers.

K: I feel like when I’m pointing to you and kind of swishing my fingers in the air that those are emphatic. Like I am emphatically making a point, and so if I roll them away from my body so that they’re timed with my speech, then they are emphatic. Did you see?

C: I did.

K: Did you feel it?

C: I did.

K: I was doing it at Chad. Because we’re sitting facing each other.

C: I feel like in the United States a lot of times, groups will go to somebody’s house to hang out.

K: Mhmm, yup.

C: And that’s not as much of a thing here, so groups pretty much have different kinds of places they can hang out. Which is bars a popular hangout spot.

K: Well and you know the Girl Scouts of America lost their place to congregate.

C: I didn’t know that.

K: Yeah, I forget when it happened. I think it may have happened around March of 2019. So, they were using a building attached to Nanzan University, which is one of the universities here in Japan. And it was an old outbuilding that they didn’t use anymore. I’m pretty sure it was one of those buildings. I’m not sure if it was Nanzan or if it was connected to the Catholic Church because Nanzan is a Catholic university. It was all kind of strange to me because one of my Japanese girlfriends was telling me about this, and so what I find something really cool – and I love, love, love about my Japanese girlfriends is they do a lot of stuff that is – and I do quotes “Christian” – the reason it’s air quotes “Christian” is because they don’t care about the religiosity of it all. At all. And so Nanzan and the Catholic church that’s near Nanzan and all of the Catholic property, they view that as Nanzan’s property, not property of the Catholic church.

C: Mhmm.

K: Because the Catholic church can’t own property in Japan it’s really interesting, or at least that’s what my girlfriend told me, I don’t know.

C: They can absolutely own property.

K: (laughs) So my girlfriend doesn’t believe that a church can own property in Japan.

C: But when we bought the apartment, the real estate agent said foreigners aren’t allowed to own property in Japan, and I had to show him the law.

K: So does the Catholic church own property in Japan?

C: Yes, the Catholic church owns property in Japan.

K: Really?

C: Yes.

K: Okay, I’m going to talk to my girl because she was like – she explained to me in very great detail that no, the church doesn’t own the property, the school does.

C: So, I don’t know about the specific case for Nanzan. I know that churches are allowed too own property in Japan.

K: So like the YWCA, that building is not owned by - that building is owned by the YWCA organization, but not owned by a church.

C: That’s probably true, yes. And you also have the situation in Japan which is unusual in the U.S. I don’t know about other countries – I know some countries you can’t own property, you can only lease property from the government.

K: Yeah. And in Mexico, if you’re not Mexican you can’t own property.

C: Yeah, and Thailand same thing

K: Only Mexican nationals can own property

C: In Japan, nationality is not tied to whether you can own property, and a lot of temples, though, don’t ever sell their property. They lease it out for 99 years or whatever, so

K: Well and I know temple families and the families will

C: Yeah, live on temple land.

K: But the families own the land that the temple’s on.

C: Right.

K: So anyways back to

C: Groups

K: Back to groups and the girl scouts. So, the girl scouts, they condemned the building that they were doing the girl scouts in – at least this is the stories I’ve heard.

C: No, so that makes sense to me. When I was working as a teaching assistant at Nagoya University, the building I was working in had actually – hadn’t been formally condemned, but it had bee labeled as not earthquake safe because I graduated 2012, so I was at Nagoya University when the big earthquake hit, and they had signs up saying “these buildings that you’re working in are not earthquake safe, if an earthquake hits Nagoya and you’re in the building, you’re going to die.” But

K: Use at your own risk.

C: Yeah, use at your won risk. So they hadn’t condemned them, but they had put it in the budget to retrofit them for earthquake safety sometime in the next ten years.

K: These are like condemned now, and so they’re not – they’re going to sell the piece of the land… why am I sow yawny?

C: I don’t know.

K: They’re going to sell the piece of land that the buildings are on so

C: Okay, I can see why it would be important to your friend whether it was owned by Nanzan or the Catholic church because it’s a difference in terminology. Because if the building was owned by – if the land the building was on was owned by Nanzan, the building was condemned. But if it was owned by the Catholic church, then the building is damned.

K: … Yeah.

C: You’re laughing now.

K: Waaahn, waaahn.

C: Okay. I see.

K: Waaaaahn. Waah waaahn.

C: I see if a humor appreciation group came around, you would not be welcome.

K: No, I would not be. At all.

C: Yeah.

K: I would be an outcast. I’m doing the hey ya hands.

C: For all the Beyoncés and Lucy Lius.

K: That’s right, thank you.

C: Baby dolls.

K: And so lately I’m finding I’m more of a Lizzo than a Beyoncé.

C: Mmm.

K: But I might be a Normani. I don’t know. Because I will say that when Normani came out, a while back, when Normani came out

C: Her music right?

K: Yeah, when Normani came out with Motivation, that video was everything for me. I was like, mood, #motivation, Normani, I stan, and all of that. But I always stan Lizzo. Because we’re twins. Because my DNA tests came back, and I am 100% that bitch. Just as Lizzo is 100% that bitch based on her DNA, which makes us twins.

C: Mm.

K: And we’re both curvy and swervy.

C: It also means I will never accurately describe you because I’ll just be “Kisstopher.”

K: (laughs)

C: They’ll be like “what is she?” “She’s Kisstopher”

K: Thank you. I am. I’m Kisstopher. And so -oooh, important relevant fact, in over twenty years of us being together, you’re never once called me a bitch. Not once.

C: That’s my point, that’s why I couldn’t

K: Yeah, so I didn’t’ think they’d know that about us. No matter how hard we fight or how angry you’ve been, and that’s why I feel like you elevate me because when we were first together, I did name call. And I’m not proud of that fact. And you never name calling me really elevated me and made me want to take our fights out of the ring of fight to discussion. Sometimes we fight if you all followed our twitter in June, you know June was a rough month for our family. Um… there wasn’t any name calling during that time.

C: Yeah, yeah.

K: and so I feel like – we’re doing - I feel like we’re doing a really good job of elevating our marriage and elevating our relationship, and I feel like lately I’ve just really been focusing on – I just have to do another music reference – like Ciara level up, level up.

C: Okay.

K: Yeah. And the Rihanna of it all, work work work. That’s me.

C: Okay. So, relevant to this and how it relates to group, is that I have left some groups because it’s become apparent to me that they are either very misogynistic or very racist or whatever, and so when I leave the group, I tell them “everything you own in a box to the left.”

(laughter)

K: High five, that was an awesome Beyoncé reference. That was awesome. (laughs) If I bought it, please don’t touch.

(laughter)

K: I love that song. You know I love that “keep talking that mess, that’s fine, can’t you walk and talk at the same time.”

C: Yup.

K: I love that. I love that song. So, yeah. So, we’re musically inclined. Though there are no music-based groups in Japan.

C: That’s not true.

K: I shouldn’t say in Japan, in Nagoya. What music-based groups are there in Nagoya?

C: We know several people quite well who belong to music-based groups, but the thing about music based

K: Such as? What’s the group Name the group. What’s the name of the group?

C: I’m not going to name the group because

K: So not bands.

C: That’s what I was going to say. Is that the music-based groups in Japan are based around particular bands, so you’re

K: Or like playing a particular instrument, or are you saying like idol groups?

C: I’m saying like bands.

K: I do dig the idol group culture. Although I don’t – I don’t have an idol group that I follow.

C: So do you dig the idol group culture or the fan culture around the idol groups?

K: I did the fan culture around the idol groups, thank you for that distinction. So, I love the fact because I have a really sweet friend who I haven’t spoken to in over three years, but I still think of them as sweet friend.

C: You and I are both like that, so if we haven’t talked with you in a while and we didn’t have a fight, and we thought you were our friend before, we still think that. We’re just very slow. We are laggardly about reaching out.

K: Yeah, so I still think of all these people as my girls even if you’re not in Japan anymore. My girl, my guy, my bro, everything. You’re still fam, like if I called you fam, we’re still fam. I have fam all around the world. I’m an international family member.

C: Yeah. I think I probably have more ex-fam than fam, but

K: (laughs) You’re talking about your relatives, not your family.

C: Yes.

K: I think one of the cool things about being part of the LGBTQIA+ community is that it taught me that your relatives are your blood relation, your family is your chosen family. The people that you choose to love, and so I have a lot of groups and a lot of friends that I just choose to love them. But I don’t always have the time to see them. And I think anybody who works and does a PHD is like “girl we completely get it” and so I dig that everybody who knows me completely gets why I haven’t been around, and they’re all completely supporting me and sending me loving emails, and sending me lovely messages on social media and all of those kinds of things like a really good girlfriend of mine just sent me a message that she’s pregnant, and I’m super happy for her, and that adventure was so like “so, girl, can I come hang out at your office with the baby?” And I was like “absolutely, like before, after, and in between clients, I’m all about that lifestyle” because my office is super baby friendly.

C: Yeah.

K: I have two offices, and one’s sort of my waiting room slash family kids’ room, and the other one is teaching slash therapy room. And so, when I have young kids, Id o engage in play therapy, so there’s a bunch of toys and bouncy balls and it’s just mayhem and chaos in one of the rooms.

C: The only thing about your office is that it is a fourth-floor walkup.

K: Yes. And she was like “girl, I’m going to lose my baby weight.” And I was like “yes you will.”

(laughter)

K: Although I’m still voluptuous as all get out, and I do that climb. I joke and it’s like my only cardio of the day, I tell my clients, s…. I feel like people are willing to come to me sometimes, but my book is so wild and crazy

C: You mean your appointment book.

K: Yeah. Even now, I just – I really don’t have time. Like, I don’t have time to hang out in groups, but there are tons and tons of groups in Nagoya if you know… and oh, there’s something – an app called HelloTalk – so HelloTalk is for people who want to practice talking in a foreign language, or an additional language, or even in your mother tongue if you’re happy to help people practice with you. Whatever your mother tongue is not their mother tongue – it’s a language exchange app. And then, mind blown, a few months back I discovered iVoice, which like – you know, they need to be paying us for these shout outs, and they’re not. I just love these products, seriously they aren’t promos or anything you guys, wish that they were. Would love it if they were paying me to pay this, but they’re not. iVoice you can speak English into it speaks Japanese out of it, and so – it’s only like 550 en per month. And the first two weeks is free.

C: So it’s interesting how the English to Japanese is so much easier than the Japanese to English.

K: It does Japanese to English as well.

C: I know it does Japanese to English as well, but it’s always going to be a little bit wrong because of the way that Japanese works. I could go on and on about this, but having worked in

K: See, that’s the thing about the app. I super love it because it does idioms, it’s really good, it’s a really solid app. It does meaning more so – it doesn’t do word for word interpretation, it does meaning. It interprets the meaning because Japanese as you’re about to explain does not translate word for word into English. It doesn’t even hat e same syntax

C: Well I was just about to say working at a translation and editing company for five years, I don’t do translation, but I saw the translation side of it.

K: Yeah, all the computer-generated translation.

C: Yeah, and they’re just really bad because

K: But translation’s different from interpretation.

C: Yeah, but because of the context – so if I just say “taberou” that means “let’s go eat” but the only word in there is the word eat. Conjugated in a particular way.

K: Yeah. So I think – so, spoken Japanese is completely different than written Japanese because written Japanese, there’s one, two, three, four ways to write in Japanese.

C: Yeah, which we’ve talked about before.

K: To me a kanji is so much harder to translation than spoken word is to interpret.

C: Mm, interesting.

K: Because translation is taking the written from one language to another and interpretation is the spoken. And so, the only reason I make that distinction is because Chad has been on my back about it for twenty years.

C: And for me, it’s the opposite way. My Japanese reading is better than my speaking and listening comprehension because the homophones in Japanese get me. So many words sound the same, but if I see them written down, I know the different meanings of them because the kanji convey the meaning to me.

K: Yeah, so something that’s interesting to me about Japanese also spoken Japanese is people are always correcting my spoken Japanese because I’m speaking to you most often. So Japanese nationals never do this to me, a few months back we were going on a trip, and I was telling – so it was right after Obon, which is the August holiday – we were going on a trip to where?

C: Hakone.

K: But when I told you we were going to Hakone, you said no, we’re going to Hikone, which Hikone is twenty minutes away, and Hakone is two and a half hours away. And Hikone – no, Ha, hi, he – Hekone. So, my pronunciation is busted, and then I get a yip. So, Hikone, Hakone, and Hekone are all cities in Japan, so H I is Hikone, Hakone is H A, and Hekone is H E.

C: Right.

K: so people are always correcting me.

C: Shame on them.

K: Wait, it’s not Hekone it’s Hokone.

C: I know, but shame on them.

K: So, good for you for not. And so, google is Hekone a place? I’m convinced Hekone is also a place, but it’s Hakone, Hokone, and Hikone.

C: There’s only so many ways you can make three syllable combinations of sound in Japanese, so it is probably a place

K: I think there’s a Hekone. I’m going to google it afterwards, but we don’t google during the show, but everyone was correcting me because I was like “I’m going to Hakone.” And everyone was like “don’t you mean Hokone?” And I was like “I don’t know, maybe I do” because I have no Japanese confidence. And I was like “aahh, it’s in my email” and I had made the reservations like three months in advance.

C: I’m going away and that’s all I know, and that’s all I need to know.

K: I’m going to a lake. I know I’m going to go be on a lake. That’s all I cared about. And I don’t get super uptight about it, but then people are like super upset with me because how could I let them think I was going to Hikone.

C: When you were going to Hakone.

K: How could I trick them? And I was like “see this is why I can’t mess with groups of foreigner” because you all trying to correct my Japanese, and when I’m cool as a fan about it and let you just say whatever you’re mentally most comfortable with, you’re going to hate on me afterwards when I tell you my truth. Because I don’t feel the need to be debating people about Japanese.

C: Well and people leave so often. Among foreigners, most English-speaking foreigners don’t stay that long. The average stay is something like six years, so people leave so often they might not even be around when you discover that they were mistaken.

K: (laughs) Or when they discover that I was right.

C: Yeah.

K: I’m sometimes wrong but trip out. A few months back I said I would never, ever speak Japanese and now I’m starting to speak Japanese. And that’s because I have been practicing my Japanese, and I feel like anybody who hates on someone how is trying to learn Japanese, they’re coming from the wrong mindset. You should always celebrate somebody’s language acquisition, it doesn’t’ matter what language it is. And I say this from my own personal growth.

C: Yeah.

K: When I was in the United States, I was really harsh on people like how can you live in a country and not speak the language? Especially if you’ve lived here ten years. Well now I’ve been in Japan for over 12 years, and my Japanese is still busted. And I find that some people are really super competitive about their Japanese level, and I personally am not. So, I’m working on my Japanese as part of my own self-improvement, and I want to be able to speak the language, I want to be able to read the language. I will say that my kanji study is going much faster than my new vocabular word study because I’m dyslexic, and so I have to study – first I have to study a row of words, and I just remember the pronunciation in Japanese of a row of words. No definition, just pronunciation. And then I memorize a matching row of English definitions.

C: Mhm.

K: and then I memorize the pair of them together, and then I memorize from English to Japanese and then I memorize from Japanese to English. And that’s what it takes for me to memorize a list of ten new vocabular words.

C: A group of words.

K: Yeah. I do it in groups of ten to twenty.

C: I was just bringing it back to groups. So, I like interest-based groups because

K: Oh, really?

C: Yeah.

K: Good for you. I’m on a roll here. I’m talking about something.

C: Okay.

K: (laughs) I am digressing. And so my kanji is going much faster because I already know the words, now I’m just learning the symbols. So, what kind of groups were you saying you like?

C: Interest based groups, like learning Japanese groups or whatever rather than groups based on nationality.

K: Interest based. I heard interspaced, and I’m like “what does that mean?”

C: Oh yeah, time traveling, space traveling groups. Love those.

K: And I’m like “what” mind blown. Do you meet in real life and online? Two spaces? Do you meet in the space in between online and real life?

C: I belong to a time traveling group.

K: (laughs)

C: I’ll be a member for the next four hundred years.

K: So, I have no idea what we talked about today. I think we talked about groups.

C: Mostly about groups, yes.

K: And so you know, hey, keep the conversation going, as always hit us up on our social media. Love a good tweet. (laughs)

C: You love the bad ones, too.

K: Yeah I do. Tweet at us. Hit us up on Facebook. Hit us up on Instagram, you know. Listen to the outro.

C: Become part of our in-group.

K: Yes, become part of the Musick fam.

C: Yup.

K: (laughs) Tune in next week, bye.

C: Bye-bye.