

질문과 대답 11회: 혼자 밥 먹기

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일상회화 편 2 출간

총 6권 완간(完刊)

Q: Why do Koreans think eating alone in a restaurant is strange? Why do people have lunch with your co-workers almost every day? At work, Americans find it comfortable to eat alone.

A:

1. Koreans think highly of "togetherness" and believe that eating is what you have to do together with other people. If you eat alone, you may look like a loner, who doesn't even have someone to have meals with. But this way of thinking is changing. Words like Honsul and Honbap are popular now, which means drinking alone and eating alone, respectively. There are restaurants that have tables for one. At this pace, in ten years from now, I don't think foreigners will ask this kind of question.

2. It's an example of Korean society's excessive emphasis on togetherness. You have fun eating with other people, but it's also good to eat alone. You can have what you want when you want it, and you can eat at your own pace. If you want to enjoy the pleasure of eating itself, eating alone sometimes can be better than with other people. Eating is just eating. Let's not attach too much meaning to eating alone or eating with other people. It's a matter of personal choice.

3. For working professionals, eating together is part of corporate culture. The people you work with are like your other family. It is normal to eat lunch with your team every day. Also, it is expected to have a team dinner at least once a month. Koreans think this is important for team building and maintaining good relationships with the people you work with. We don't see anything strange about this custom. But this is changing as well. Many younger employees do not want to go out for company dinner and prefer their own personal time after work.