A HORSE
HANDBOOK
RESILIENCE
"Beginnings are sudden, but also insidious. They creep up on you sideways, they creep to the shadows, they look unrecognized."

Then, later, they spring.

— Margaret Atwood, *The Blind Assassin*
I. Appetizer - Introduction

II. Salad - Resilience of the Urban Environment

III. Soup - Resilience of Culture

IV. Fish - Resilience of Relationships

V. Entree - Resilience of the Self

VI. Dessert + Coffee - Conclusions & Thoughts
**Four months feels like both a terribly long time, but also devastatingly short. Time flies, it drags, and it always eludes us when we need it the most.** The four months that I passed in Japan with CityNet Yokohama Project Office were both incredibly quick and luxuriously long. In this time, I learned so much about the organization, the excellent and necessary work they do, Japan, and myself. Most importantly, I learned about how people endure and adapt.

So what is this handbook meant to be? There are several objectives.

1. A **documentation** of what I saw, lived, and experienced

2. An **examination** of how human beings demonstrate resiliency as both individuals and communities

3. A **connection** between the reader and the writer.

What I desire most of all is to **honestly and truthfully convey what this internship was and its indelible impact that it had on my life.**

**Thank you!**
"In my dreams of this city
I am always lost."
-MARGARET ATWOOD, CAT’S EYE
I. RESILIENCE of the URBAN ENVIRONMENT

A. CITYNET'S WORK

CityNet Yokohama project office ("CYO") is an organisation that focuses on the Disaster Cluster Work of its parent organisation through City to City cooperation. Its staff specialise in connecting municipalities and municipal officials to share knowledge, encourage best practices, and foster dialogue. CityNet's activities include:

- Providing conferences and seminars to share knowledge.
- Distributing surveys to assess municipal needs and progress towards international targets.
- Facilitating site visits to demonstrate different methods of education and organisation.
- Connecting key members of international organisations, academia, science, industry, and government.

B. LIFE IN YOKOHAMA

Japanese cities demonstrate an incredible resilience to disasters, extreme weather, and high population density through both formal and informal practices. Here is what I observed:

- People regularly storing, eating, and replacing emergency rations.
- Safety helmets in every office.
- Public announcements during extreme weather.
- Jackets with built-in fans for construction workers.
- Windows and doors that are meant to be broken.
There are a few key principles that guide disaster response —

I. Mutual Help

The idea that individuals, communities, and jurisdictions/authorities should cooperate and collaborate both in preparation for and as a reaction to disasters. The idea of knowledge-sharing and aid as part of this concept is crucial to citynet’s work and forms the foundation of sustainable cities. This manifest in neighbours helping neighbours, communities organising together, and close collaboration between institutions.

II. Self-Help

While self-help is challenging, it is crucial that citizens are also prepared to sustain themselves in the event of a disaster. This idea stipulates that we should be able to feed, clothe, and protect ourselves when a disaster strikes. This means individuals should have adequate stockpiles of food/water/safety supplies in every place where they regularly spend time.

III. Build Back Better

In alignment with the Sendai framework, the concept of "building back better" refers to the idea that communities recovering from disasters should try to rebuild in a way that reduces disaster vulnerability in the future. It builds resilience socially, economically, and environmentally. By learning how disasters impact our communities, we can strive towards a world that can handle our increasingly unpredictable weather and environments.
Resilience of Culture

In Yokohama, I had the privilege to live in YISH - the Yokohama International Student House. The students came from a wide range of continents and countries, and everyone had their own methods of holding on to their origins and cultures. Japan has a reputation of sameness - a cohesive population, a single language, and a collectivist culture. However, if you dig a little deeper, you will find little gems and footloose of other cultures, languages, and ways of life.

A Japanese Culture Mosaic

Sharing Middle Names - and the thought behind.
Dining, Sentimental memories.
Dressed in traditional costumes.
Hearing music.
Being reminded of a universal mess.
Loren Song at a Karaoke bar.

Speaking French in a Japanese Dorm - having a thick accent.
One of the remarkable things about the Japanese language is that it is remarkably porous. Foreign words slot seamlessly into the regular Japanese lexicon through "katakana"—a script used especially for foreign words and names.

Throughout my internship, I collected my favourite tidbits of examples for this phenomenon, which I share with you now. Many of these are food-related, naturally, but I am always surprised by what words make the cut.

外来語 - GARAIGO
"foreign loan words"

**ENGLISH**
- Pool → プール
  - Swimming Pool
- Ice → アイス
  - Ice cream
- Viking → ヴィーキング
  - Sausage

**FRENCH**
- Pain au miel → パン・オ・ミール
  - French honey bread
- Café au lait → カフェ・ラ・リ
  - Milk coffee
- Marron → マロン
  - Chestnut/Brown eyes

**GERMAN**
- Arbeit → アーベリト
  - "part-time job"
- Energie → エネルギー
  - "energy"
- Rucksack → ルックサック
  - Backpack

**SPANISH**
- Pan → パン
  - Bread
- Jalapeño → プアンペペロン
  - Jalapeño (popular in junk food)
- Mama → ママ
  - "Mom"

**PORTUGUESE**
- Udo dama → ユド・ダマ
  - Multis (like for kids)
- Castella → カステラ
  - Sponge cake (found everywhere)

**RUSSIAN**
- IKEA → イケア
  - "Sahara voice"
- NORMA → ノルマ
  - "Quota"

"A word after a word after a word is power."

- Spelling - Margaret Atwood
One of the most remarkable things that I witnessed was how each person I met taught me a little lesson about how to sustain, nurture, and value connections, whether they were romantic, familial, or simply friendships. It was an education in discovering what truly matters—vulnerability, honesty, and a willingness to put forth effort into meaningful intimacy. Through their eyes, actions, and words, I saw daily demonstrations of what devotion and love can manifest as.

A photo peeling out of someone's wallet.

60:52

Short-long calls with long pauses—just spending time together.

When I lived at home...

Stories shared with a fond tone.

Waking up to dozens of kind messages.
The art of losing isn’t hard to master:
so many things seem filled with the intent
To be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster
of lost door keys, the hour badly spent.
The art of losing isn’t hard to master.

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:
places, and names, and where it was you meant
To travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my grandmother’s watch. And look! My last, or
next- to- next, of three loved houses went.
The art of losing isn’t hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,
some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.
I miss them, but it wasn’t a disaster.

Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture
I love) I shall not have lied. It’s evident
The art of losing’s not too hard to master
Though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster.
- The Recognition that I am a person who deserves weekends, evenings, and holidays — and that they make me kinder.

- "Damn, that one will hurt for a week!" "Actually, I think it's okay." "Nononono, a week for sure!"

- A willingness to spend money more liberally, especially on experiences.

- The realization that, sometimes, it really isn't just you that's the problem — sometimes it really is the job, the city, the people.

- An appreciation for public parks, recreation centres, and communal spaces.

- A deep love for soy-based ice creams.

- A desire to find my own little niche that feels just right.

- The knowledge that I truly do not need anyone unless I choose.

- An adoring love for the past and process.
RESILIENCE of the SELF

IN OUR very first meeting, ROBIN, the GUIDE and MASTERMIND that
IS THE CADP INTERNSHIP PROGRAM'S MANAGER, she emphasized that this experience
would test us to our very maximum—the language, the heat, the food
and the communication would test us DAILY, RELENTLESSLY, STRONGLY.

At the time, I was absolutely terrified. "How can I do this?"
I thought. "Every day can already be such a struggle."

But I went anyways, alone. And while there were indeed
difficult times, it was a labour that I was happy to toil for.
Each day was such a treasure, because I was forced to live, feel,
and interact with everything. My experience in Japan reawakened
parts of myself that I thought had been long dormant.
The part that was BRAVER, WIDER, more CONFIDENT—something that
had been lost in my day-to-day life.

There is something about key life experiences that strips away
all of the unnecessary chaff from us—like peeling cedar bark
from a bough or sloughing scales off a fish belly. It is
not PAINLESS, but it REVEALS THE TENDER HEART OF WHAT WE
TRULY are.
II. Conclusions + Thoughts

When I reflect back on my time at Citibet, I find myself overwhelmed with deep gratitude for all that it brought me. There are some life events that sequester your story into sections of "before" and "after." Japan was one of them. I am writing from the depths of that after - in my tiny Richmond rental, on the passenger decks of ferries, and the warm light of my parent's kitchen table.

It has been daris, randy, and difficult as I try to reconstruct what I have found during the internship back home - the ground is shift, it seems like my infrastructure won't take.

Yet here I am still building. So much of what I thought I wanted is washed away in Japan - tenure, stability, dental, clocking out. These are no longer guiding my personal and professional life. Instead, there is the frightful responsibility that comes from knowing exactly who you are. I now know precisely what I want to get out of this life with a foggy idea of the methods.

But his internship, his place, these people taught me how to endure. As individuals and as a collective, we persist. We are such stubborn and enduring creatures. Disasters wash away our homes, we are separated from our families, we become strangers in a strange land. Yet, through all this struggle, I watch people pick themselves up, dust themselves off, and rebuild. I will never forget what it feels like to be unmoored and will I ever regret the difficulties.

Even now, I know that even the hardest of times was necessary, because it brought me to this place where you now can read my clumsy hand - reaching beyond this page and this time.
Acknowledgements

Kendra, Fushiki-san, Oki-san — thank you for your endless patience and kind working at CITYNET. You showed me that it is indeed possible to find deep meaning in daily work. I learned so much with you — handle you for the on-site visits and all of the learning. I hold it in my heart dearly.

CITYNET
YOKOHAMA

D CAPI

ROBYN — thank you for being a spiritual gangster, in choosing me in His placement, and all of His gentle guidance. You prepared us, guided us through your internship, and gave a gift beyond compare. I am so grateful.

Thank you for being brutally honest and terribly kind. I owe you one special thanks in April, Diaper jokes, and support.

SUN & SPECIAL

CAPI INTERNS — thanks for the advice, diaper jokes, and support.

D YISH

JOE — thanks for the dinners, advice, and wine.

MITCHI — thank you for being so deeply kind, fun, and wild. Kiss the dogs for me!

YUKI — book Pelo — will be seeing you in France/Switzerland for sure.

Thank you for bringing me into the food.

MATT — myavic comrade and pal — I'm so glad you can stay in Japan. Thanks for singing karaoke and chatting about great big sea wine.

LUAN — for being the best and teaching me how to be a kinder, more patient person.

D NY FAMILY — for zapping me and bearing me, always.