



Popoki is doing his best to stay warm, and looking forward to spring. Finding blooming plum trees makes him smile!



Popoki's Hot News!



POPOKI'S PEACE BOOK 3!

We are working on the publication of the third book in the Popoki's Peace Book series, *Popoki, What Color is Genki?* You can look forward to reading it in early March!

PIECES OF PEACE

One of Popoki's friends, **Tetsuri-nyan**, sent the following piece of peace:

"I am going to graduate from the University in March, and will start to work abroad from April. Wherever I am, I think friends are friends the same as ever, and wherever I am, I want to think about peace the same as ever. The way to relate to Popoki might be different however I feel that precious things will not change."

What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today? Please contribute a bit of peace! Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail.

Popoki has a facebook page! Please have a look!

[www.facebook.com/pages/Popoki-Peace-Project](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Popoki-Peace-Project/1384738958444817) [ポーポキピースプロジェクト/1384738958444817](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Popoki-Peace-Project/1384738958444817)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING HELP!

Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake is getting a good reception, thanks to help from his friends. Please help to let more people know! More information about the book at: <http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/monogatari.html>

* You can purchase a copy at the Kobe YMCA!



Popoki in Ashiya – “Diversity means Possibility!”

Ashiya City Human Rights Seminar for Business People 24 January 2014

Ronyan

On 24 January, Ronyan gave a workshop on diversity. Mori-nyan and Satonyan came, too. This time, the organizers probably anticipated the discussion would center on types of ‘diversity’ such as citizenship, ethnicity, and physical and/or mental characteristics. Since it was Popoki, of course we took a very broad view of diversity, discussing differences among all living things, sexuality, and other topics. The eighteen participants were very diverse, too, and we all had a good time.

Let me introduce one exercise about ‘diversity’ that we used in this workshop. I asked everyone to line up according to their height. Then we discussed physical and other attributes they would be willing to compare, and those they would prefer not to talk about, such as weight. We talked about reasons, too. The theme for the drawing time was diversity, and people were asked to draw an enjoyable town where they would like to live with Popoki. Some people looked very stern and said nervously, “I haven’t used crayons in twenty years,” but by the end they, too, got caught up in ‘Popoki magic’ and enjoyed themselves. Popoki and Ronyan made new friends, and are thankful for having had this opportunity.



Photos: Yoko Nishino, Citizen Affairs Division, Ashiya City

What Japan Did in World War II

Nanohana-nyan, grade 8

I think one reason the war began was due to Japan 'putting on airs'.

Colonization is a method of taking things from weak countries in order to make your own country richer. When the Great Depression happened after World War I, countries with colonies were able to survive. But Asian countries were only colonized, and since Japan wanted to join the big powers (Germany, France, England, United States, etc.), it created Manchukuo in China. The United States had joined hands with China and told Japan to, "Get out of China." When Japan refused to comply, the US stopped exports of oil and iron, two products that were essential for Japan. Japan relied on the US for 77% of its oil and 70% of its iron, so became like a trapped mouse. As a result, in order to secure fuel, Japan carried out the Malaysian Campaign and began the war with the United States by attacking Pearl Harbor. But for Japan, a country with few resources, a drawn out war was difficult. At the beginning it was successful and occupied many countries, but starting with the naval Battle of Midway, Japan began losing ground.

Starting around 1944, Tokyo and other cities throughout Japan were bombed by the Allied Forces, and many civilians were killed. In March 1945, the US Forces landed on Okinawa, and one in four Okinawan civilians perished. In August, atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and Japan finally surrendered. A total of 3.1 million Japanese military personnel and civilians were killed. In addition, the lives of more than 20 million people in China, Korea, Asia and the Pacific were taken by the Japanese military.

Recently, I started feeling that Japan is gradually moving toward going to war. It made me want to investigate what happened in World War II and other wars. When I looked up World War II on the internet, I found out about the Malaysian Campaign and Pearl Harbor. It felt to me almost like a game, and I found myself wanting to cheer Japan on saying, "Japan, hang in there! Don't lose!" That feeling was in direct contradiction with the reason for my investigation and my question, "What can be done to stop war?"

In order to prevent us from ever causing a war again, I think a 'strong feeling of remorse' is necessary. But in Japan today, it feels like whenever people oppose war, all they talk about is the harm and suffering we received. I think that knowing about the damage is important for stopping war, but I think that rather than knowing our 'history as a victim,' knowing our 'history as an aggressor' has a tremendous potential for serving as a brake on war. For example, it is just a small thing, but when I think about when I argue with my younger brother, I think that rather than the pain of being hit by him, the feeling of remorse for having hurt him is much more likely to prevent me from fighting.

The history I read on the internet was not about Japan's role as an aggressor. Everything has many sides, and maybe people can only see one. Different people all look at different parts and say, "This is the truth!" but I don't think there is just one truth and one way of looking at a situation.

The present dispute over the 'Nanjing Massacre' is a good example. Some say it happened, others say it didn't happen; some say 300,000 people were killed, others say it was only 30,000....

We are surrounded by an unbelievable amount of information. Deciding what to believe and how to act is an important responsibility. I thought that war was someone else's problem, but one day I might turn around and there it will be right beside me. So it is important to know a lot of things, but we shouldn't just depend on TV, newspapers and the government. Instead I think it is important to connect with people we can trust, not only in Japan but around the world.

This year, I investigated a number of wars, and now I have a new question for myself. "OK, what should we do to stop war?" The answer is to not be greedy, put yourself in others' shoes, connect with people you can trust around the world. I thought these were three small things, but learned they are powerful and something that I can do.

People who helped me write this:

Akemi Akai & Shinichiro Sakamoto (my father)

References

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<ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/太平洋戦争>

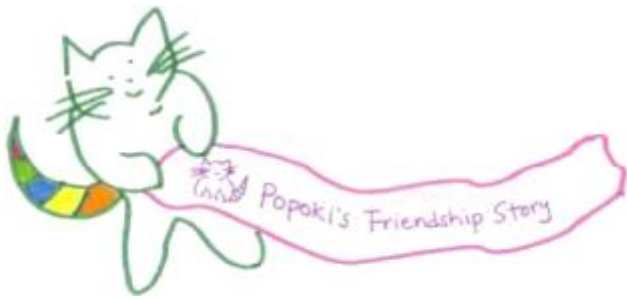
Video about Ryutaro Honda (a WWII soldier who talks of his war experiences)

Photo:

"Where did my family go?" from '{World Peace} Learning about the Battle of Okinawa from Photographs {Iron Rain} , accessed 2014.2.18.

<http://matome.naver.jp/odai/2127726384218993601/2127727284219205103>





Popoki's Interview

☆ Meeting people in Otsuchi-cho☆

Popoki is back in Otsuchi!!

Ronyan~Satonyan~Morinyan~Aripanyan~Aasthanyan~Suzankanyan~Popoki

December 6~8, 2013

Suzankanyan & Aasthanyan

Suzankanyan(S), Aasthanyan(A): We are back in Otsuchi!

A: Yes, We are! It's nice to be back! Wow, this is so surreal! It feels like we were here yesterday!

S: Yes, look at the blue sea and green mountains! The fresh winter air feels good on my skin!

A: I know, right? And, look there is Motomochi nyan!

S: Oh. Popoki's and our good friend, Motomochi nyan!!

A: Oh, it's so nice to see familiar faces. I wonder what her mom has prepared for breakfast. I miss her cooking so much when I am away!

S: Yes, Motomochi nyan's mom is such a good cook, but Aasthanyan! Is that the only reason why you are here?? ☺☺

A: Maybe?...☺ Of course not!

S: Ok, so why are we here this time?

A: Hmm...we are here to share the drawings and messages we have collected through Popoki Friendship Story over the years. We are also here to connect with Otsuchi-cho and its people; talk and think together about peace and hope.

S: Also share our thoughts, feelings and learn from each other.

A: Yes, and we plan on doing that through: a) a three-day exhibition of the Friendship Story cloth and b) a one-day workshop where we make a five-page *kamishibai* (paper drama) imagining a day of peace and health in Popoki's life. Doesn't that sound like a lot of fun?

S: I can't wait! So, shall we go to Otsuchi-cho shopping mall - Mast - now?

A: Yes, let's!Suzankanyan, do you see that?

S: What is it?



A: A fish? A lot of fish in the river! But, the river is so shallow and it looks like they are struggling! Popoki...?

Popoki: Those are salmon, they first returned to the river last year and now they are here again! They are here after a long swim to lay eggs.

S&A: Oh, really?

Popoki: Yes! The sad part is that they die soon after they lay eggs...but that's the way of nature. That's the circle of life...

S: So, what happens to them then? Do people eat them?

Popoki: Actually, no. People say that these fish don't taste good since they have endured a lot of stress.

A: Oh...so, they just get washed away with the river?

Popoki: Sadly...yes!

S: Hope they are happy to do that...

S, A & Popoki hear Ronyan in a distance saying, "Come'on minna nyans, it's time to head to Mast for our exhibition!"

A: Wow! This time we have a lot of cloths for the exhibition! Look Suzankanyan, this one is from Otsuchi-cho, this from the Philippines, and that's from the Czech Republic, isn't it?

S: Yes, it is! And, look this is from Guam, that one from Pittsburgh and this one here is from the UK!



A: They're beautiful and all these wonderful messages in many languages!

S: Yes, Popoki has travelled and is still traveling around the world! And, here we have a space where people can come and draw or write new messages.

A: Oh Suzankanyan, look there're people heading this way! Let's talk to them and inform them about our exhibition and the workshop on Sunday!

S: OK. Let's go!

S&A: *Konnichiwa*~~ (Hello!) We're from the Popoki Peace Project and we're here exhibiting the message cloths from the Popoki Friendship Story, please have a look at them if you have the time...

We're also having a small workshop on Sunday; please join us if you're free on that day...Thank you very much!

A: Suzankanyan, let's join the kids at the drawing corner!

S: Sure, I want to talk to them and I'd love to draw too!

S&A: *Konnichiwa*...! (Hi!) We're Suzankanyan and Aasthanyan; what's your name? And, what are you drawing? Oh, it's a dolphin! And, what's that you've written? Is it Ruru chan? Is that your dolphin's name?... Would you like me to read something from Popoki's books to you? How about this: I will read to you in English and you could read to me in Japanese? ...Okay, here we go!

A: Oh Suzankanyan! It's so much fun to draw and interact with children! They always surprise me with their witty comments and their unique views. Sometimes I wish I were a child!

S: Yes, I like to watch them when they focus on their drawings. It's amazing how spontaneous they are and draw whatever they think of or feel at that moment. Some children think a lot before drawing, other just draw, draw and draw...

A: Yes, we've met some little endless drawing artists, right? :-)

S: Yes! Oh...*Konnichiwa*!!!...Nice to meet you! Oh, look at this...here is a world map...here is Japan, here is America and here is my home country the Czech Republic...If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?...Do you like to draw?...You like to

draw Popoki?...Ok, let's draw Popoki now...Do you like cats? Oh, me too...



S: Aasthanyan! I think that it is really amazing how an exhibition gives us a chance to talk, share and know each other...learn from each other. For me it feels like at any moment Popoki helps us opening our hearts. ...

A: Well, time passes by so quickly! It's already time to return to Kobe!

S: Yes, but I think we had an amazing and fruitful trip!

So, what was your most interesting experience or observation this time in Otsuchi-cho Aasthanyan?

A: Well, I was glad to see a lot of happy faces in Otsuchi-cho! It was interesting to see how the shopping mall (Mast) is serving as a space for social interaction and communication among people. I noticed that people belonging to various age groups visited Mast. Most elderly people stayed shopping, visiting the physiotherapists, and/or chatting with shopkeepers and their friends until the store closed for the day. It almost felt like Mast was a happy place for individuals and families to spend their days. I was happy to know that such a place was available to people here... How about you Suzankanyan?

S: First of all, I was really happy talking to many people, sharing our thoughts and feelings...I felt we smiled, talked and discussed as never before. I was also very happy when people came and recognized us from our visits before. It was very interesting to see how people responded when they came to see the Popoki exhibition. Sometimes parents would be the ones saying 'do you want to draw?' to their kids, sometimes kids were the ones to say 'let's check what's going on here!!' to their parents. Also, while parents didn't plan to draw at the beginning, they joined later when they saw their kids enjoying themselves. Sometimes a wife would be surprised at how her husband could draw well or kids were surprised how mom could draw well.

I think we all can learn and experience new things being together with Popoki.

S&A: Thank you Otsuchi!! We will be back again ☺

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 69

This month's Poga is about relaxing!



1. As always, begin with sitting up straight and making yourself look thin.
2. Now place both hands on the sides of your head. Gently press on your temples, just about the level of your eyes.
3. Next, place your fingers above your eyes and press gently up toward the bone. Be careful not to press your eyes, though.
4. Finally, bring your hands to the back of your head. Gently press on your neck on either side of the bone.
5. Did it? It is time for the 'success pose.'

Congratulations! You have successfully completed Lesson 69. Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!

Next Po-kai: 2/28 Kobe YMCA 19:00-

2014.2.22 Popoki's Mini Peace Film Festival. 13:00-17:00 Kobe YMCA 301
Don't forget your cup!

2014.3.8-10 Popoki in Otsuchi-cho! Popoki will go to Otsuchi-cho just before 3.11 to deliver a little bit of 'genki' to his friends there.

3.20-24 Popoki in Henoko and Takae! Popoki will join his friends in Henoko and Takae (Okinawa) who are opposing US bases. Please help, too!

3.26-29 Popoki in Toronto! Ronyan will make a presentation at the International Studies Association annual convention about using Popoki's methodology in teaching.

Popoki's Friends

From Kobe YMCA: 2014.2.25 Lecture. Kobe YMCA Know the Constitution Vol.2!
Constitution ABC's... "The Heart of the Constitution" (in Japanese). 19:00-20:30.

Venue: Kobe YMCA Sannomiya Center. Admission: free. For reservations contact Kobe YMCA: 078-241-7204 houshi@kobeymca.org

Popoki in Print

“Awards given to 37 groups Daiwa Securities Foundation” *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.23 p.8)

- **“Reproducing ‘human shadows’ and asserting no nukes” *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.7 p.22)**
- ‘Draw inner thoughts about disaster’ *Yomiuri Shimbun* 2013.2.16:4 (evening edition; Japanese)
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- ‘Nada’ notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event, 2009.12, p.2
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- * **Back issues of Popoki News:** http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html





What Popoki Means to Me

The bond of friendship!!

Norio Komukai

Last December, the second exhibition of Popoki Friendship Story was held at Mast in Otsuchi-cho, following the first one held in February of last year. For this time, under the leadership of Professor Alexander, the Popoki members and students came again from places as far away as Osaka and Kobe. Everyone had taken time from their busy schedule, especially one who both works and goes to school.

A lot of Otsuchi people visited the Popoki Friendship Exhibition and enjoyed it. Since this time was the second time an exhibition was held at the same place, some people remembered Popoki and Popoki's activity. Because of that, this exhibition had a more enjoyable atmosphere compared with the first time

While thinking is important, I think it is more important to move into action what you think. The exhibition place was a warm and peaceful mood. The communication with Popoki members and Popoki was healing for the people who were afflicted by the disaster.



PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE POPOKI PEACE PROJECT!

The Popoki Peace Project is a voluntary project which uses Popoki's peace book and DVD to promote peace through various activities such as peace camps, peace workshops, seminars and other activities. Since the March 2011 earthquake, we have also worked in the disaster area and in 2012 published a book about that work: *Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born Out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake*. *Popoki, What Color is Peace?* has been translated into Thai, Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Indonesian, Tetun and Bengali, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hebrew. Spanish, Farsi, Lao, Swahili, translations are underway. If you would like to translate Popoki, or have a way to have the book sold at your local bookstore, please let us know.



How to purchase Popoki's books from outside of Japan



1. Go to your local Japanese bookstore: Kinokuniya, Maruzen, etc. (or their website)
2. In the US, thanks to a very satisfied customer, *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* can be ordered from Kinokuniya Bookstore in Los Angeles. The bookstore is at www.los_angeles@kinokuniya.com and the telephone number is 213.687.4480. The price is US\$20.00 plus tax.

Some ways to purchase *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1* and *Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2* and *Popoki's Friendship Story* from inside Japan

From the publisher, Epic: TEL: 078-241-7561 · FAX: 078-241-1918

From Amazon.co.jp or your local bookseller

From the Popoki Peace Project (popokipeace(at)gmail(dot)com)

Contributions are always welcome!

Popoki Peace Project popokipeace-at-gmail.com

<http://popoki.cruisejapan.com>



From within Japan, please use our Postal account or Postal bank account:

Account Name ポーポキ・ピース・プロジェクト神戸

Postal Account number: 00920-4-28035

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Branch name: 009 店、special account(当座) 0280350



THANK YOU FROM
POPOKI!!