

Popoki



Newsletter

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http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/index_e.html

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It's almost June! The sun is shining, but Popoki is still staying close to home, trying to stay safe and keep others safe, too. He enjoys trying different masks and tries to stay positive during this difficult time. We hope everyone is well and safe!



Popoki's Hot News!



Coming up!

(1) Popoki Friendship Story Activities in Tohoku 2020
On-line Report Meeting Saturday, 13 June 14:00-16:00
Write to Popoki for the link!

(2) Nada Challenge! Togakawa Park, 2020.9.13 10:00~16:00.
<https://nadachallenge.wixsite.com/nadachallenge/cny>

***Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it might be postponed/cancelled. Please check Popoki's FB, etc. to make sure if it is happening!**



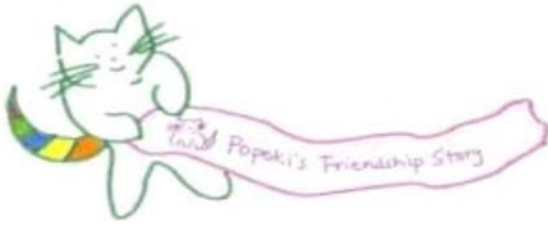
Piece of Peace

One of Popoki's friends, Siwinyan, sent the following piece of peace. "These days I feel peace whenever I get the turn to work from home. Because I can spend the whole day with my children. I realize that there are many things that I miss when I work at the office. Things like my kids quarrels over trivial things, their laughter, their tears, their stories, and their milestones".

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: [ronniandpopoki \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:ronniandpopoki@gmail.com) !



Popoki's Interview

* We have started a new series of interviews with Popoki's friends in different places. We are asking about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue we have reports from Nagisanyan and Laurennyan.

Nagisanyan

Mr. Lattasone Phommavong, Nagisanyan's friend living in Laos, told us about the situation in Laos and his recent life. Only a few cases of coronavirus have been found there, but the government is taking measures such as shutdown of the national borders and closure of schools since the medical system is still vulnerable in Laos.

Q1. Please tell me the current situation in Laos.

A1. From the end of March, the government hasn't allowed people to go abroad and has closed the national borders. All national flights got canceled. We are allowed to go outside, but not allowed to go over the province borders. We cannot go abroad except emergencies such as serious illness. For example, we can go hospitals in Thailand (In Laos, the medical infrastructure is still not satisfactory, so in case of serious illness, people often go to hospitals in Thailand). People who had been working in Thailand came back to Laos, and got put in quarantine for two weeks.

Q2. How about the people?

A2. They look frustrated. Many people are working from home. Companies and shops are closed, so people are staying at home. Many people use electricity and water so the water and power get cut off more frequently than before.

Q3. Please tell me about the medical system there.

A3. When there were not cases of coronavirus, people who came back from abroad and had fevers or coughs, they could get the medical tests for coronavirus. People who didn't have any symptoms couldn't get tested. After the first infected person was found, only people who have been involved with infected people can get tested.

Q4. Tell me about something that you that has changed because of coronavirus.

A4. I still have my job, but not many things to do there. I was supposed to study at a graduate school in Japan from April, but I couldn't go. I'm still not sure when I can go to Japan, so I'm frustrated a lot. Many shops are closed so it's difficult to go shopping. I cannot play soccer and exercise, and cannot meet my friends. It's difficult to go outside since there are many police men who are calling for self-isolation.

Q5. Did you find anything new under this situation?

A5. Now there is no traffic congestion in the morning. People who live with their families got more time to spend with them, but I don't live with my family, so I don't find any good things under this situation. The house owners lowered the house rent. Lives of people in Vientiane (the capital) changed a lot, but I don't think the ones of people in other provinces have changed. In Vientiane, we cannot go into banks and convenience stores without masks.

Q6. What do you want to do when the situation becomes better?

A6. I want to go to Japan as soon as possible. I want to play sports and see my friends.



Photos: Vientiane recently. Because of the order to self-isolate, there are fewer cars.



Interviewer: Lauren Peng

Interviewee: Tzu-Hao Wang

Brief introduction of the interviewee

Wang is a 25-year-old nurse working at Shuang Ho Hospital in Taiwan for nearly three years. After graduating from university, he devoted most of his time to taking care of patients. He has to work for over 120 hours per month. He said that it is exhausting and traumatic, especially when the patient died in front of him and the only thing he could do was watch it happen. Despite the challenges in this occupation, he still chooses to stay for he wants to save and help as many people as he can.

What is the worst experience you have ever had during the COVID 19 outbreak?

"There is no negative pressure isolation room in our unit. However, there are times when we encounter some suspected cases. I have been assigned before to take care of a Person Under Investigation (PUI).

It is more stressful compared to handling real cases since anything can happen due to uncertain circumstances. Even though you are well-prepared before entering the ward, you will still feel terrified because there is a possibility of being infected since the virus is contagious. After a series of tests, the patient I was assigned with was cleared. It turned out he was suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis and not COVID-19. Eventually, we transferred him to other units to have other treatments."

How do you deal with patients who have hospital anxiety?

"We are all afraid of death so, it is okay for us to be scared. This kind of feeling also saves us during this time. Months ago, while other countries were still considering COVID-19 as simple flu, an alert stage had already been issued in Taiwan. Moreover, a comprehensive plan had been laid out to control the number of COVID-19 cases. This was a great effort by our government and the medical centers. However, social media worsens the situation. Oftentimes, they trigger the hatred among the people. As a nurse, I only hope that people stay calm and take care of themselves rather than believing everything they hear from the media."

As a government nurse, what do you think are the ways to control the spread of the virus and improve the situation in Taiwan?

"Taiwan has implemented more than 130 pandemic-prevention policies so far. These policies include border controls and mandatory quarantines. Our confirmed cases are under 500. I could say we have pulled off a good job given the circumstances. People wear face masks when taking public transportation, and they are aware of sanitizing. The mask-rationing plan is also pretty smart. It gives people an equal number of masks to prevent hoarding. As for the number of COVID-19 cases, I would proudly say that our government and the medical group have effectively controlled it. Working under the most contagious environment has become less stressful because of their comprehensive plan. I sincerely appreciate their efforts and sacrifices."

What is your definition of peace? Has the meaning changed because of the COVID 19 pandemic?

"What we lack is not good policy or clever executors, but citizens who can exercise tolerance under a difficult circumstance. I did not know how to define peace before COVID-19. Also, I did not feel that I had to. However, during this pandemic, I know that fighting over the division of resources is unavoidable. How we handle COVID-19 from the very beginning could extremely affect the social climate. So now for me, peace is being humane despite experiencing a bad situation. We should not only sympathize, but also empathize with others to avoid triggering hate among people especially during dark times."

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 14 This month's theme core muscles!



1. First, as always, sit up straight and look beautiful.
2. Now, stand and stretch your arms high and long. Without moving your lower body, with your upper body circle to the right and to the left.
3. Next, lie on your back with your arms and legs stretched to the sides. Feeling energetic? Keeping your arms and legs straight, raise them and bring them to the center of your body, and lower them again. Not so energetic? Keep your arms on the floor and raise and lower your legs. Taking it easy? Keeping your arms and legs on the floor, move your arms up and down and your legs in and out.
4. Now, stand with your knees straight and stretch out to touch the floor. Then, keeping your balance, raise first one leg and then the other out behind you.
5. Did it? Even if you didn't succeed, you tried! It is time for the 'success pose.'
Congratulations! Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!



Next Po-kai: 2020.6.10 @ zoom! 18:00~

6.13 Popoki Friendship Story in Tohoku 2020 Report meeting! On-line meeting! Please contact Popoki for the link. 14:00-16:00

7.11 Popoki @ kodomo no sato! Morning program (tentative)

8.9? Hiroshima/Nagasaki Day Skype to discuss nuclear issues in Japan, U.S., Guam

9.13 Nada Challenge! 10:00 – 16:00. Popoki will have a booth and exhibit!

* Please note that these activities may be cancelled in order to prevent further spread of the Corona virus.

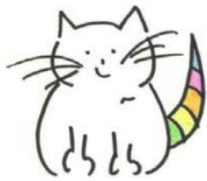
Book Suggestion from Popoki's Friends

Otsuchi-cho (July, 2019). *"Ikiru Akashi – Iwateken Otsuchi-cho Higashi nihon daishinsai kirokushi"* (Testimony of Living: A Record of the Great East Japan Earthquake in Otsuchi-cho, Iwate Prefecture). Editorial Supervision: Otsuchi-cho Board of Education, others.

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- ESD Digital Archives, Kansai Council of Organizations for International Exchange <http://www.interpeople.or.jp>
- “Peace Picture Book Published – linked to disaster support in East Japan” *Kobe Shimbun* (2014.3.25) KIHARA Kana
- “Awards given to 37 groups Daiwa Securities Foundation” *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.23 p.8)
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- “If we all participate, something will change! Reflecting on Palestine” *THE YMCA* No.607 June 2010, p.1 (*YMCA Japan Monthly Newspaper*)
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- ‘Not for But With...’ No.79, 2010.1 Notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event. P.12
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- ‘New Books: Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki’s Peace Book 2 ’ (Rebecca Jennison) “Cutting-Edge,” Vol.35 2009.6, p.3
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- ‘Popoki, What Color is Peace?’ *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.3.1. No.593. p.2
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- Popoki on the radio. <http://www.kizzna.fm/> Click on 6CH to hear the program and reading of Popoki in Japanese (No longer available)
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- “An Interview with Dr. Ronni Alexander.” *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh’s Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, October 2008, p.5
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- Popoki in Pittsburgh. Check out the Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace URL: <http://www.rememberinghiroshima.org/>





What Popoki Means to Me

Nagisanyan

In March 2020, I graduated from Kobe University Graduate School. During my two years there, I learned a lot not only through classes and writing my thesis, but also from Popoki Peace Project. In the activities, I had a lot of fun, but faced many difficulties as well. Yet, I deeply think that I was so happy to become a friend of Popoki.

The most important treasure that I gained through the activities is all of the wonderful “stories” that I had heard from everyone. In the past two years, I went to many places that I had never been such as Tohoku. In those places, I met many people and heard their stories through reading and drawing activities. I have been very bad at drawing since I was little, so at first, I felt a little uncomfortable with activities of Popoki. However, through drawing, I have heard varieties of warm, fun, and even sad stories from many people, and gradually found out that drawing has such a big power. Especially, during the second visit to Tohoku, I heard a mother who lives far from her children, saying “I felt gentle and kind after drawing,” which made me feel pleasure at having been involved in someone’s happiness.

As I said at the beginning, there were many difficult things during the activities. Especially, during the first visit to Tohoku, my will to this activity was weak, and caused trouble to other people. I sometimes felt a dilemma when participating in this project. However, when the reading and drawing activities during second visit to Tohoku ended with a huge success, I felt, “I was right about joining this project!” The ones who taught me how wonderful it was to do the best for other people without asking for anything in return were Popoki and Ronyan, my beloved teacher.

I would like to say thank you to all the people I have met through Popoki Peace Project. I will do my best in my next journey, keeping what I learned through Popoki in my mind. I wish the connection with all of you will continue forever.



My first visit to Tohoku. So cold!



Nada Challenge in 2019. I was moved by the reunion with Ms. Esashi!

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: *Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki's Peace Book 1, Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2, Popoki, What Color is Genki? Popoki's Peace Book 3 and Popoki's Friendship Story*

From outside of Japan

1. Go to your local Japanese bookstore: Kinokuniya, Maruzen, etc. (or their website)
2. Write to us at ronniandpopoki@gmail.com and we'll figure it out!

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 ronniandpopoki@gmail.com



Contributions are always welcome!

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THANK YOU FROM POPOKI!