



July! It is still raining, but we are getting closer to summer! Every day, Popoki discovers fun things to do at home? What are your recent discoveries? We hope you have a lot of them!

## Popoki's Hot News!



“Popoki’s Mask Gallery – Living the Covid-19 Pandemic”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjT1ZjVUsm8&t=3s>

Popoki’s House

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8OCzg64oH8>

### Piece of Peace

One of Popoki’s friends, *Maonyan*, sent the following piece of peace.



"If you don't cry, your heart will become too full!"

If anyone wants to cry, s/he should cry a lot and refresh their heart."

What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today? Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail: [ronniandpopoki \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:ronniandpopoki@gmail.com) !

## Thinking about last month's 'Interview'

Last month, after sending out Popoki News, I sent the following statement to Popoki's friends.

... In (the last) Popoki News, there was an article with a discriminatory remark by a child. However, if you read all of that child's responses, you will see that her feelings are inconsistent. In other words, the child's own words are a good example of how households and society create prejudice and discrimination. I was troubled, but hoped that it would provide a chance for our readers to think about discrimination and decided to leave it. But I have reconsidered. Let me first offer my deepest apologies to anyone who may have been hurt by that remark. It is not like Popoki to allow discrimination to go unaddressed, so I added Popoki's comment. Please refer to the new version of this month's (June) Popoki News. I hope that we can continue to work together to create a society that does not accept discrimination. Thank you for your continued support.

Below are some reflections by Bethany, the author of the interview. I hope that you will read them, and that we can have a continuing conversation about how to treat others with respect and to live in peace in a world that is not peaceful. (Ronyan)

\* \* \*

Besanyan

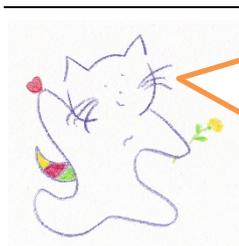
I too wanted to offer my sincerest apologies for not including a warning or my own thoughts in the interview found in last month's newsletter. In particular I would like to apologize to those hurt. The truth is, I wasn't sure what to say to you, the Popoki members, at that time. I did address this with the child immediately and have since followed up, coming to the same conclusion as Ronyan, that her feelings are inconsistent, but even within that, this particular discrimination comes from a place of fear, not hatred. That's not an excuse. I for one most definitely believe that the idea xenophobia isn't racism, therefore it's not as bad, is ridiculous and hurtful.

That being said, I do not regret this conversation and am grateful Popoki gave me the opportunity to have it. Popoki has taught us that we should be talking about these problems as they appear. Had I not asked these questions, I would not have known this seed was planted. As a white American, I have certainly recognized that prejudices are learned and have had to confront my own programming. We really should take a step back and evaluate where these messages are coming from. I fear the truth is that even when we think we're accepting and tolerant, we must stay vigilant throughout our lives. Because we must remain vigilant, like my omission, failures happen.

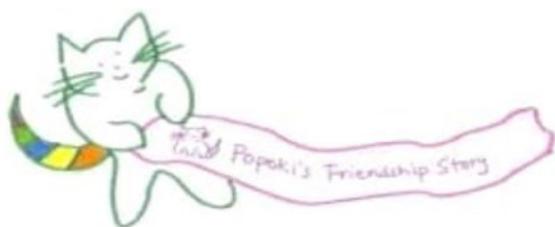
These prejudiced messages are not always loud and in your face. It's not always just from a person with a warning sign. It can also come from the people you love and respect. However, it's rarely a single source, a single person. It's an echo that resounds throughout society, education, media, and government and that echo seems to grow louder in times when people don't feel safe, when they are afraid. Regrettably, we too, as individuals, are such a small part of the overall picture that as much as we try, we may only have so much influence.

However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't try. If anything, this is more motivation for me to have these conversations with the people around me. I love Popoki and I love using Popoki in my classrooms. My personal goal with Popoki is, and always has been, to positively intervene with children and I hope to be allowed to continue to do so. However, as great as Popoki and friends are at starting these conversations, I am trying to promote diversity literature so as to continue them. I hope that you too will cooperate in confronting prejudice as well, and in the future, I would like you to allow me to report on my mission's progress.

*Presently, the state of emergency declaration is scheduled until May 31<sup>st</sup>.*



I want the COVID-19 pandemic to end soon, too! I want to meet people from every country and play with them, and to make friends with people from lots of different countries! There is not just one reason why COVID-19 spread around the world and not just one country is responsible. One thing I've learned from COVID is that everyone's health and genki are connected. What is important is instead of excluding people, we all join hands and work together to find a solution!



## **\*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 time we have a report about Sweden.

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## **COVID-19 in Växjö, Sweden**

Interviewer: Yuka Asa

Hello, I am Yuka Asa. I conducted an interview for my friends, David about "COVID-19 in the country that you live in" because I have hoped he would express about his own situation freely.

**David: He reported about COVID-19 in a city in Sweden, named Växjö.**



Växjö is a small city in Sweden, where I have been living. My main way of knowing about the situation was by the different posts from Facebook since I could not speak the Swedish language (David is from Spain. He is an exchange student and there are many lectures available in English at universities in Sweden).

**Figure 1. Gathering outdoors**



**Figure 2. BBQs at the lake**

David's experience: Sweden itself is a country where people are used to having a big amount of personal space. Also, due to the cold weather, the rain in the winter-early spring seasons, and the little number of sunlight hours, they normally spend time indoors. However, my experience has shown me that due to this fact, Swedish people crave sunlight very much. Due to this, from the mid Spring season, Swedish people love to gather with their relatives and friends at BBQs, enjoying a drink or an ice cream from the very the moment a small ray of sun appears.



**Figure 3. Outdoor sports**

Since last year, some changes happened in Växjö. The universities decided to turn the subjects to an online format, the schedule of the library was reduced, and the student pubs were closed. Additionally, some public places like supermarkets were offered to the customers, and the workers in these supermarkets were protected by a transparent plastic wall at the cashier.



**Figure 4. Fearless gatherings not wearing mask**

However, the general commerce in the city center was still open to the people as well as public places and gyms that continued with their normal activity, as well as swimming halls. As far as I am concerned people in Växjö had no restrictions for going out from their homes, Swedish people still meet in the public places as lakes and to practice outdoor sports as can be seen in the pictures. In general, the feeling that a citizen of Växjö had was that, although Covid-19 was an important pandemic in the world, people feel to be living in a safe place.

# POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 158 This month's theme is breathing and stretching our backs!



1. First, as always, sit up straight and look beautiful.
2. Now, lie on your back with your knees bent. Gently bring your knees toward the floor to the right, keeping your shoulders and head flat on the floor, giving your spine a twist. Now take 5 deep breaths. Bring your knees back, and then to the other side for 5 more breaths.
3. Next, raise your legs up straight. Try crunching up, exhaling as you go up and inhaling as you go down. Repeat five times, rest and try again. Or keep your back flat and raise your rear end!
4. Okay! Now spread your knees out to the sides. Relax, and take 5 slow, deep breaths.
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: 2020.7.20 @ zoom\* 19:30

Everyone is welcome. We always use the same link, so send an email if you need it.

8.4 15:00~16:30 Seminar for Multi-cultural Living Together: "Thinking with the cat Popoki about being and feeling safe, and making peace!" Online seminar, advance reservation required.

In Japanese. For more information refer to: <https://kobeymca.org/data/pdf/20210803.pdf>

10.10 In person Nada-Challenge!?!

### Reading Suggestions 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.

- アレキサンダー ロニー&桂木聡子 (2020)「被災体験後「今」を表現する : 絵から読み取れる被災ナラティブ」『国際協力論集』27(2)、17-32 (2020年1月発行) [http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/infolib/meta\\_pub/detail](http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/infolib/meta_pub/detail)
- Alexander, Ronni (2021) "The Meaning of Art in Disaster Support: Stories from the Popoki Peace Project" *Journal of International Cooperation Studies*, 28(2), 1-22. [http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/infolib/meta\\_pub/detail](http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/infolib/meta_pub/detail)

## Popoki in Print

\* Back issues of Popoki News: [http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives\\_e.html](http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html)  
➤ Alexander & Katsuragi. “Expressing ‘Now’ after

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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)
- “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)
- “‘Safe’ and ‘Secure’ Society is from the bottom-up”, *Mainichi Shimbun Interview with Ronni Alexander*, 2012.10.29, p.1 (evening edition; Japanese)
- R. Alexander. “Remembering Hiroshima: Bio-Politics, Popoki and Sensual Expressions of War.” *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Vol.14:2:202-222, June 2012
- “Article 9 is at the base of Peace with Popoki” *Kodomo to Mamoru 9 jono kai News*, No.66, 2012.5.12
- “Hope on 60 meters of cloth” Etsuko Akuzawa. (In Japanese) *Asahi Shimbun* 2012.1.21
- “Voice for Peace made into a book” Masashi Saito. (in Japanese) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2012.1.19
- K. Wada. “Conversations with Ronni Alexander: The Popoki Peace Project; Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki, What Color is Friendship?” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* Vol.13, No.2, 2011, 257-263
- S. McLaren. “The Art of Healing” (Popoki Friendship Story Project) *Kansai Scene*. Issue 133, June 2011, p.10. [kansaiscene.com](http://kansaiscene.com)
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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)
- Hiroshima and the World: What Color is Hiroshima? Chugoku Shimbun Peace Media Center, [http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/mediacenter/article.php?story=20100312140608602\\_en](http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/mediacenter/article.php?story=20100312140608602_en) 2010.3.15
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- ‘Not for But With...’ No.79, 2010.1 Notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event. P.12
- ‘Nada’ notice of the Popoki Peace Challenge event, 2009.12, p.2
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- *Yujo wo kangaete – Ningen to, Neko to, soshite Jibun to,* ‘*RST/ALN*, No.259 2009.6.28, p.11
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- “Thinking about Peace with a Cat: Second Peace Book Published.” (SAITO Masashi) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2009.4.21
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- ‘Popoki, What Color is Trash?’ *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.1.1. No.592. p.2
- *Tomodachi ni Natte Kuremasenkai,* ‘*RST/ALN*, 2009.2.22
- Popoki on the radio. <http://www.kizzna.fm/> Click on 6CH to hear the program and reading of Popoki in Japanese (No longer available)
- *Yasashii kara hito nann desu* Exhibition Organizing Committee ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights.’ Hyogo Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Institute. 2008.10. ¥500. For information contact: [blrhyg@osk3.3web.jp](mailto:blrhyg@osk3.3web.jp)
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- *Kobe Shimbun* “Human Rights Declaration Exhibition Panels: 6 Local Hyogo Artists Illustrate all 30 Articles” 2008.10.8. p.10
- “An Interview with Dr. Ronni Alexander.” *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh’s Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, October 2008, p.5
- Human Security – Dr. Ronni Alexander speaks about Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh’s Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, Oct. 2008, p.4
- Popoki in Pittsburgh. Check out the Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace URL: <http://www.rememberinghiroshima.org/>





## What Popoki Means to Me

Mio-nyan

### Popoki

Popoki is always with you.

“Ok! “

Popoki often has the same dream as you.

“Open your mind.

Keep smiling, smiling....”

In the dream, wagging the seven-colored tail softly and yawning.

ポーポキはいつも側にいるよ

" 大丈夫！"

ポーポキはよくあなたと同じ夢を見るよ

" 心を開いて

笑顔を絶やさないで ...."

夢の中で、七色のシッポを振ってあくびをする

“ポーポキとなかまたち“

ポーポキは何をしているの？

そーっと覗きに行ってみる？

ポカンと浮かんだ白い雲

キラキラ光る水溜り

とおり雨の散歩道

なな色の足跡

かろやかなステップ

「まわり道も

たのしいね！」

ちいさなのしっぽが揺れている

What is Popoki doing?

Do you want to take a small peek?

Floating white clouds

Shining puddles

Brief rain showers on the promenade  
Seven-Colors of Footprints  
Springy steps  
"Taking a detour is a very enjoyable!"  
Wagging his small tail softly

”포포키 너무 좋아“

ポーポキ大好き  
I love Popoki.

뽀뽀키는 무엇을 하고 있나요?  
뽀뽀키는 평소처럼  
키우고 있는 꽃에 물을 주고 있어요.  
너한테서 받은 일곱 빛깔 꽃봉오리  
“무슨 꽃일까?  
좋은 향기가 날려나?  
아마도 내일이면 필 것 같아요.

ポーポキは何をしているの?  
ポーポキはいつもみたいに  
育てているお花にお水をあげています  
あなたにもらった七色の蕾  
“何の花だろう?  
いい香りがするのかな?”  
どうやら明日には咲きそうです

What's Popoki doing?  
Popoki is watering the flowers as usual.  
The seven-color buds you gave me.  
"What kind of flower is it?  
Does it smell good?"  
It looks like it's going to bloom tomorrow.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:ronniandpopoki@gmail.com)



*Contributions are always welcome!*

**Popoki Peace Project [popokipeace-at-gmail.com](mailto:popokipeace-at-gmail.com)**

**<http://popoki.cruisejapan.com>**



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**THANK YOU FROM POPOKI!**