



We grieve for the dead and missing and hope for the quick recovery in flood and landslide areas.



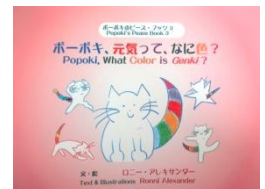
In Japan where Popoki lives, red dragonflies are a symbol of the coming of autumn. Popoki loves the summer, so he's a little sad. There is a famous song called 'Akatombo' (red dragonfly), too.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVv7eCdDVHk>



Popoki's Hot News!

Popoki's Peace Book 3!

You can get copies of the third book in the Popoki's Peace Book series, *Popoki, What Color is Genki? Popoki's Peace Book 3* at your local bookstore (in Japan), from the publisher Epic (<https://bookway.jp/epic/>), at the Kobe YMCA or from the Popoki Peace Project! We look forward to your orders and comments.



Pieces of Peace

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



"The time when I feel peace
It's when I am awakened by the sunrise
It's when I am tickled by the wind
It's when I am comforted by the rain
It's when I am encouraged by a star
It's when I am healed by your smile
I always feel peace in my life".

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 new videos! Please have a look on his HP or Facebook page!

URL: <http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/videos.html>

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!

Report on Kodomo no Sato Event

Bashinyan

On a hot summer day, 12 July 2014, Ronyan along with other nyans held a peace event at a place in Osaka named Kodomo no Sato. A Lot of international and Japanese adult nyans joined the event to share the peace message from Popoki where many Japanese child nyans came and exchanged their thoughts on peace.



The program started with reading pages related to the theme for the program, the seasons, from Popoki's Peace Books in various languages. How do different languages sound to those who do not speak them? If not familiar, they might sound like magic words! Or they might sound kakkoi (cool)! Especially, for the children who may not be familiar at all with any languages other than their mother tongue, that would be very interesting and funny for them. French, Swedish, Filipino, Tongan, English, Italian and many other languages were used to read the book and that was really a good part of the program. Is not it nice to hear the same peace message in different languages?

The second part of the event was about expressing views regarding seasons in Japan

through drawings mainly by the child participants. There are four seasons in Japan, Natsu (Summer), Aki (Autumn), Fuyu (Winter) and Haru (Spring). All the child and adult nyans divided into four groups based on the seasons, but most chose summer and winter.

The Natsu group drew many interesting pictures that portrayed the image of summer. Among them were drawings of fishing, eating fruits like watermelon, having a BBQ, and swimming in a pool or the ocean. The Fuyu group drew snow, polar bears, and other symbols of winter. The Haru group drew cherry blossoms and flower viewing, while the Aki group drew people playing different sports and autumn Japanese maple leaves. Those drawings showed the passion and talent of the child nyans through their own art. International nyans asked questions about the child nyan's work and they nicely expressed how they look at the different seasons, in other words, what a season means to them. All the nyans enjoyed participating in the program.



In addition to reading and drawing, the adult and child nyans played with each other in a very friendly atmosphere. The temperature was very hot, but all the nyans tried their best to create a peaceful environment through chatting, playing, reading and drawing. It was a really nice event that was possible because of the efforts by Ronyan and her friend Popoki. It was a privilege to have the chance to attend such a nice event. Thanks to both of them!

Thinking about 'things nuclear' on Hiroshima Day: Shadow Project and Skype

Mori-nyan, Kimoto-nyan, Oh-nyan

The day of the world's first atomic bombing, Aug. 6, has come around again this year. It is the 69th time. This year, too, Popoki Peace Project joined members of "Remembering Hiroshima; Imagining Peace" in Pittsburgh, PA, USA for a simultaneous and joint program. In Pittsburgh, they watched a movie called 'I live in Fear' about responding to the threat of nuclear weapons before contacting us on Skype.



We, in Japan, did a Shadow Project action based on the image of a famous photo of what happened in Hiroshima where all that was left was the "shadow" of a person sitting on the stairs in front of a building. The intense heat wave caused the stone around the person to change color. The shadow project aims to help people feel the reality of what happened during the tragedy by imaging how it might be to be turned into a shadow in just one, unexpected moment. At 8:15, the time the bomb exploded, we observed a silent prayer surrounded by our own shadows. After that, we moved to YMCA and contacted members in Pittsburgh by skype. We exchanged our opinions regarding issues of peace, nuclear weapons and nuclear power. Here is a brief description of some of the conversation we shared.



Some Popoki-nyan members had prepared some questions.

1. Mori-nyan asked about the impact in the U.S. of the Japanese cabinet's decision to change the official interpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution and approve the use of the right to collective self-defense.

One response was that Article 9 has a strong message for the U.S government. In addition, anxiety was expressed about the hollowing out of the meaning of the Japanese Constitution.

The statement by Remembering Hiroshima Imagining Peace touched on this issue. The statement condemned the use of nuclear weapons and power, calling on the Japanese government to uphold Article 9 and work to establish a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, and on the US government to abolish nuclear weapons and to remove nuclear power from its clean energy strategy.

2. Kimoto-nyan asked about how it feels to be a nuclear weapons power.

The response was that people generally feel fear, but since nuclear technology has been developed, the world is stuck with it. It is necessary to find ways to make sure nuclear weapons are not used.

3. Suzanka-nyan asked about public opinion regarding Fukushima, and also asked whether people see a contradiction in opposing nuclear weapons while at the same time supporting

nuclear power.

Regarding Fukushima, the reply was that unfortunately there is a general decrease in interest. In response to the contradiction, we were told that there are various opinions about the nuclear power issue, even among people who are against nuclear weapons. In the US, nuclear power is considered to be part of the solution to the need for clean electricity, rather than as part of the problem.

The participants in Pittsburgh asked some questions, too.

Sue: Do you see the US as a peaceful and peace building country? Please give your honest reaction.

A1. Bernard (Congo): In Africa, we see the US as a leader of the world but some decisions have been wrong, such as those concerning Syria.

A2. Ana (Tonga): The US is a powerful country, but we only see it through the media and the media shows lots of wars.



Bernard went on to ask whether people in the US think nuclear weapons keep peace or threaten it. He said that people in Africa are afraid of being passive victims in case something nuclear happens.

The response was a very interesting description of nuclear weapons as violence versus non-existence, not a case of violence versus violence. The person responding said he remembered how important nuclear weapons were in the 1950s and said they are still in the background of all foreign policy.

In response to this, Ro-nyan asked about the awareness of the younger generation who do not remember the Cold War and the arms race.

The response by one young person was that the feeling of being scared grows as she gets older. She also spoke of how the government's choice to develop and use nuclear weapons was wrong.

Another person spoke about the perspective of deterrence. Since we discovered nuclear technology and ca not forget that knowledge, we have to find new solutions instead of using violence. That is non-violence. The continuous fighting between Israel and Palestine shows that fighting doesn't solve the problem.

One more opinion was from a person who worked at Westinghouse which manufactures components using nuclear technology used in both nuclear power production and defense. She said that the presence of both aspects is not a coincidence.

Anna sensei commented on how the US war landscape has systematically spread. Why can't we imagine other solutions? How about the economic question? From the range of Afghanistan to Israel/Palestine, the series of wars is now focusing on China. And is a new way of introducing military power.

Two Kobe YMCA youth leaders joined us for the first time. Their comments follow. Those comments show that thanks to many participants from a variety of counties, it was a

valuable time for each person to discover new perspectives on how to think about and create peace.

Comment by Kimoto-nyan. (Kobe YMCA youth leader)

This was the first time for me to join Shadow project. I felt so sad and can't say in words how I felt when drawing the shadow on the ground. I felt that the existence of people left only small shadow. Through the skype conversation about peace and nuclear weapons, I was able to feel their strong will for peace. Through this workshop, I became more interested than ever about the things that happened 69 years ago. Thank you for a valuable time.



Oh-nyan (Kobe YMCA youth leader)

As a Chinese, the history of the atomic bomb never made an impression on me until now. However, through today's project, I became opposed to nuclear weapons. About the story of only the shadow of a person remaining on the bank stairs, I imagined how it might be shaped. I can't believe that life gets extinguished in a moment. Just one second earlier, s/he was alive. One second later, s/he was already dead. That made me so scared of nuclear weapons. I hope such terrible things never happen again. I refuse to accept it.

Participating in the "Memorial Service for Victims of the Togagawa Accident"

Ronyan



On 28 July 2008, an accident occurred on the Togagawa River in Nada-ku, Kobe. Three of the five people who drowned were children. Since that time, every year on 28 July, the 'Group to make 7/28 "Protect the Lives of Children Day"' holds a memorial service. Popoki Peace Project and Popoki's friends from NPO Tsudoi in Otsuchi-cho, Iwate Prefecture participated this year, too, by folding paper cranes. Ronyan

brought the Popoki cranes to the memorial.

It was a hot day, but many people gathered in a park on the bank of the Togagawa River. While listening to songs performed by local junior and senior high school students, I thought again about what I can do to help to keep children around me safe. There have been many accidents this year, too, due to heavy rains. Let's try to use our experience, wisdom and strength to protect children. Thank you for the opportunity to attend.

Popoki in Fukushima Part 4

Ronyan

From 9-11 May, Popoki and I went to Fukushima with photographer Morizumi Takashi to learn about the impact of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident. I have been sharing my thoughts in a series of essays and this time I want to consider the impact of the Fukushima disaster, keeping in mind the right to live in health and peace.

It goes without saying that the Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster affects both mental and physical health. In terms of physical impacts, there is a body of knowledge gained from research into the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear tests, and past nuclear power plant and other accidents, but it is probably not sufficient to provide the information most wanted by those affected by the disaster. Probably no one can provide a definitive 'yes' to such questions as, "Is it safe to live here?" or "Is it safe to eat this?" or "Is it safe to play here?" Nor is there a way to relieve anxiety about the nature of the impact or details about when and how it will occur.

Living in this kind of situation is psychologically taxing. It is bad enough for individuals, but probably worse when people have to think about protecting their families, particularly their children. Living with anxiety is hard on the body, too, and when physical problems arise, people can easily become overly concerned. It is easy to imagine how physically and mentally exhausting it must be to have to continue to live in a state of anxiety and instability over a long period of time.



We learn in school that radiation is dangerous. When I was walking around in a hazard suit in the exclusion zone in Fukushima and watching my dosimeter go up, I was definitely scared. But there is something even more frightening. I found that I got used to the danger. At first, when my dosimeter showed even $0.3\mu\text{Sv}$, I was frightened. But then, it went up and up and when eventually I returned to a place where the reading was, for example, $5\mu\text{Sv}$, I felt it was not a problem. If one does not grow accustomed to things it is impossible to live, but in this case, getting used to radiation is a scary proposition.

People I met in Fukushima gave me various examples of how they have 'gotten accustomed' to living with radiation. People often said things like, "I know I should use a mask but..." or "I know I ought to think more about what I eat, but..." Perhaps because I have always lived in cities, one thing that impressed me deeply was that people who have spent their lives farming say that since they have never had to buy vegetables from a supermarket, they don't know what it is they should be careful of, or how to protect themselves. From the standpoint of health and

peace, in order to maintain one's health, it is not only important to have proper knowledge, access to information, and the ability to make informed decisions. But to make those decisions perhaps time, space, and energy are also important. Since many of those who have been evacuated have spent their lives working in farming or fishing, evacuation has meant not only living in a new place but also an entirely new lifestyle. In addition, there are many people who, even though they have not had to relocate, have had to make changes in the way they live because of radiation. For example, when asked about where to get ferns and other mountain vegetables, everyone will say, "Go to the mountain and take them!" But now, they cannot go to the mountain or eat what grows there. In that situation, even if they were to have information they could trust, it would be very hard to try to live more safely. Some people do it, but it must take a lot of energy.

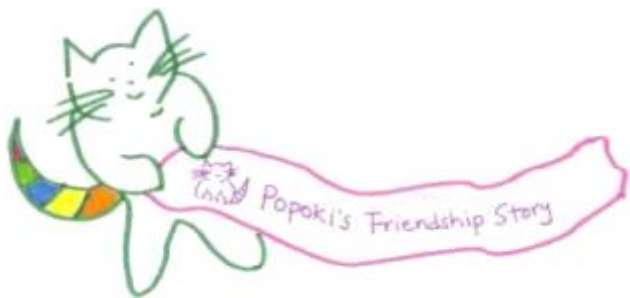
One thing that impressed me deeply about Fukushima Prefecture was the natural beauty. It was spring, and the sight of many shades of green and brightly colored flowers against the backdrop of a bright blue sky was really inspiring. I could not help but think how nice it would be to live in such a place. But now that beautiful environment has been contaminated by radiation which, having no shape or taste or smell, sneaks up on you and by the time you become aware of its presence, it is already too late. In Kansai, there are many people who believe the nuclear disaster is over, or under control, or safe. Other say that if it is dangerous, then people should move away. Certainly it cannot be said to be safe, but there it is also not so easy to run away.



Since the disaster, I have had the privilege to hear many stories from survivors. With regard to the nuclear accident, I have spoken with people who have stayed in the disaster area, others who left but came back, and still others who have remained outside the area; everyone has a different story. I asked a person who has returned to live in the exclusion zone whether he was afraid of radiation. His answer was, "Not really." Another person said, "I kept hoping that they would issue an evacuation order for us. The evacuation area kept getting bigger, but didn't reach us. I still wish it would come here." One person said, "we should have left earlier," while another said, "I left too early and missed out." Still another said, "I left, but came back. If I had stayed away, I would not have been able to send my child to college. Which do you choose – to worry about your child's health but be relatively stable economically, or not worry so much about health but be poor?" Some people want to, or think that they ought to, leave, but for lots of complicated reasons they cannot, or do not, go.

What can Popoki do to help? Of course he can continue talking about the situation, emphasizing the importance of each and every life. When he meets people from the area, he can take time to listen carefully to their story, and then join them in their search for peace and health. While they are searching, they might connect with others, and if they join together, their power might create a world that is peaceful and safe for everyone.





Popoki's Interview

Mari-nyan

Konichiwa, I, Marinyan, interviewed the father of voluntary activities, Mr. Masakiyo Murai (the head of NGO called Hisaichi NGO Kyodo Center: <http://www.pure.ne.jp/~ngo/>). Since the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake he has been exerting his effort on NGO activities. I had a wonderful opportunity to ask him how he feels when he engages in those activities.

Marie (Ma): Where is the first place you went in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake?

Mr. Murai (Mu): It was Tono city in Iwate prefecture but I sent a group of people by car to Yonezawa city before me. I came there after them.

Ma: How long did it take from here to there?

Mu: I took almost 8 hours by train.

Ma: Did you prepare anything in particular for Tohoku when you went there?

Mu: I did not prepare anything special because I always think about what I can do in the affected areas after I see the situation with my own eyes. I brought Makenai-zou

(<http://www.makenaizone.jp/?p=3874>) just in case. The reason why I said I always decide what to do over there was that we try to take action considering what they need for the long term. We are not going there for emergency help.

Ma: Where did you go first?

Mu: Tono Station.

Ma: Did you notice anything there?

Mu: Tono city is not the most affected area so I did not notice anything different there. Tono city was the hub for logistic assistance and assistance for inner areas. From Tono city, a person from the city office took me to Otsuchi cho.

Ma: How did you feel when you saw Otsuchi cho?

Mu: It was a scene I have never seen before. I have been to war zones in Afghanistan, and



These are called Makenai-zou, a pun, and are the main project of Hisaichi NGO Kyodo Center. 'Makenai' means 'we won't give up.' 'Zou' is a word of emphasis but also means elephant.

in terms of tsunami, I have been to Sri Lanka to give support when the tsunami hit there. None of them look similar to Otsuchi-cho. There was nothing left.

I saw a burnt car lifted up. For me, there was no sound. There was a slight scent of the tide, and I might have smelled mud a bit. I was looking at the affected area from on top of a hill. I was in such complete shock that I felt all my senses except visuals were shut down. I guess in situations like that, one of the human senses becomes sharper. Sight may become sharper if you receive strong messages from your eyes.

Ma: When is the first time you talked to the affected people?

Mu: It was in April when I joined our advance team. I asked questions such as, 'which prefectural social welfare councils have come to the affected areas?'

Ma: Did you see any children?

Mu: There were few children there. Usually parents send children to stay with their relatives 2 or 3 weeks after an earthquake.

Ma: I would like to ask you about the situation in the evacuation centers. Did you notice anything there? If you did, what would you do?

Mu: There are many things that I noticed in the evacuation centers. For example, they use the same slippers both in the center and its bathroom. There is no partition between people. You can see the lack of consideration for women, especially for girls who are in junior high school and high school and for women who are breastfeeding. If I noticed something, I would just say 'what about doing this?' There is an episode related to this. When Mt. Usu in Hokkaido erupted, the person who was in charge of one evacuation center told me that 'Mt. Usu erupts once in 33 years. I have experienced it 3 times but our center has never used partitions.' This information was made public a few days after the eruption. Immediately his superior ordered that partitions be brought for people in the center. I had already suggested that, 'if people in the center want them, you could make partitions.'

Ma: In that situation, how do you think we should deal with it?

Mu: Nowadays we have many classes such as a facilitator training program. But the most important thing is that the more you know about the situation, the more you should remain in the background. If you put your nose in everything, it may cause conflicts. So I have been saying for 20 years since the Kobe earthquake in 1995 that the important thing is how people agree. Residents should talk everything out patiently. Additionally I truly realized how important practice is when I experienced several persistent discussions after the 3.11 disaster. We understand things in theories. But only makes sense when everyone's words come together. Furthermore, there are some people who call themselves volunteer coordinators or facilitators now, but they just follow the instruction from manuals without questioning. They have to stop for a moment and question those instructions, asking 'why we are doing this?' If you get used to questioning everything, you can think. But it is actually very hard for people to reach that stage.

Ma: It must be very difficult for us to bring agreement without forcing our own intentions. I suppose it is important how we make the setting for the discussion.



Mr. Murai and staff are collecting information regarding the landslide happened in Hiroshima on 19 August.

Mu: I call it the power of the setting. In other words, I think this is the essence of being a facilitator. We can create something special when you do not set up or prepare, although you might want to guide the discussion to some degree in order, for example, to establish larger goals. When the atmosphere of the discussion is nice, even a person who always says too much expresses his opinion concisely to make sure everybody can say something. Everyone in the group somehow finds a way to be comfortable there and the discussion will be deep and productive.

Apart from the setting, it is nice to have a person who can unconsciously ease the tension and lead the discussion in a better direction. Normally they do not see themselves as that kind of person. I think it is very rare to meet those people.

Ma: Finally, can you tell me when you feel peace?

Mu: I feel peace and joy seeing my grandchild. I do not have to think about a lot of things. Even if it is only for 20 minutes, I always like that time.

Ma: Thank you very much!

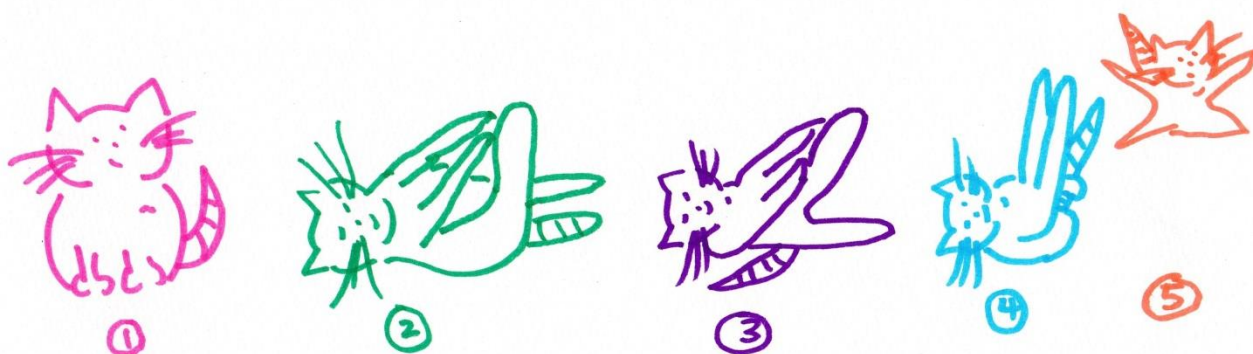


Mr. Murai likes gardening. This garden is next to the office. This statue of the Goddess of Kannon came here as 7 years of anniversary on the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. If you come around, please feel free to drop by.

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 75

This month's Poga is about looking up at the summer sky and stretching!



1. As always, begin with sitting up straight and making yourself look thin.
2. First, lie on your back and raising your right leg, stretching way up. Place your hands on your knee, or if you can, your ankle. Stretch your tail out straight, too!
3. Next, switch legs. Is one easier to stretch than the other? Try the difficult one again.
4. Finally, raise both legs. If you like, raise your lower back too, using your hands for support!
5. Did it? It is time for the 'success pose.'

Congratulations! You have successfully completed Lesson 74. Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!

Next Po-kai: 9/12 Kobe YMCA College (New location!) 19:00-20:30

8.26 Popoki at teacher & staff training workshop on sexuality, Toyonaka City No.14 Junior High School. 10:00~12:00.

9.7 Popoki in Fukushima

9.18-22 Popoki in Otsuchi-cho and Akazaki, Ofunato City

10.5 Peace and Health Workshop. Hyogo University of Health Sciences.

From Popoki's friends

Raisins from Afghanistan Project (CODE): The amount of the grapes is increasing year by year with the project. We want many people have chance to taste the Afghan grapes and we have finally begun importing their grapes as raisins. The grapes are dried in the sun in Mir Bacha Kot by the grape farmers and delivered to Japan Fairtrade Committee to get packed. The grapes have a naturally sweet taste with no use of agrichemicals or added substances. The profit goes to people in Mir Bacha Kot. You can order them from us or get more information from: <http://code-jp.org/afghanistan/index.html>



To Popoki's good friends from the Kobe YMCA - Nagai-nyan and Matsuda-nyan! Congratulations on your wedding!!!

Popoki in Print

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- Popoki in Pittsburgh. Check out the Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace URL: <http://www.rememberinghiroshima.org/>
- * **Back issues of Popoki News:** http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html





What Popoki Means to Me

Federico-nyan

It was a sunny and warm day at the end of March, and I was sitting in my room being lazy and surfing the web. I was looking for some information about university activities when I first met Popoki.

Well, it was not a real encounter but when I asked about joining the Popoki Peace Project to Popoki's best friend Ronni, she told me he would be happy to have me in the team.

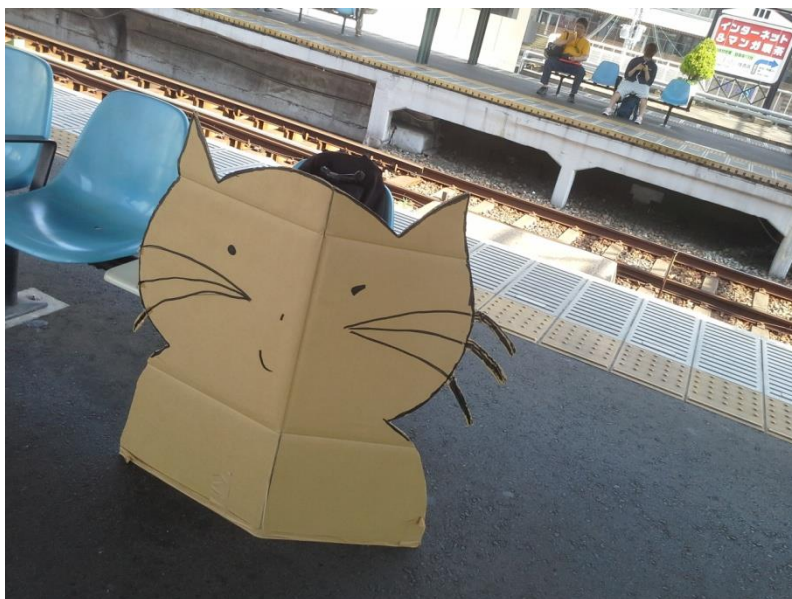
So, the adventure began and it was amazing.

The first time I read the books, I felt that those pieces of paper and pictures were something important. Indeed they were. There are lots of books for children teaching human values, friendship, and so on, but Popoki's books are different: they let people think! What is written inside it is no more than a collection of questions. The reader should try to answer by using his or her own experience, feelings, and knowledge.

Popoki does not want to teach people what peace is: like a modern and furry Socrates, he tries to let people think about peace because the answer is within us; we just have to find the way to see it.

This is what Popoki is to me: a peace-philosopher.

This is what Popoki means to me: a way to find peace, which is already inside us.



This is a peaceful Popoki waiting for the train; he could not help smiling at the people.

- See Federico-nyans videos of Popoki at Nada Challenge on Popoki's video page:
<http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/videos.html>

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*, *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 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](mailto:popokipeace(at)gmail(dot)com))



Contributions are always welcome!

Popoki Peace Project popokipeace-at-gmail.com

THANK YOU FROM
POPOKI!!



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