

Popoki



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

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It is almost Halloween and there are decorations everywhere!

Popoki's fur is white and he is wondering whether to dye it orange, just to be different. How about you? Is Halloween celebrated where you live? Are there orange cats? Is celebrating Halloween a sign of peace?

Popoki's Hot News!



COMING SOON!

It is almost Ponenkai season!

Please set aside the evening of 18 December to celebrate together.



Popoki's Peace Book 3 and Popoki's Friendship Story -

Our Peace Journey Born out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake

You can get copies of these and Popoki's other books 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, Ari-pan-nyan, sent the following piece of peace: "Red, yellow, and orange. We can see these beautiful and relaxing colors in nature. Is Fall in Japan a peaceful season?"

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.



NEW! New videos of Nada Challenge 2015!!! Watch on Popoki's URL or YouTube at:

<https://youtu.be/7LcYzZzNQYg> and <https://youtu.be/WYdWwmwogkE>

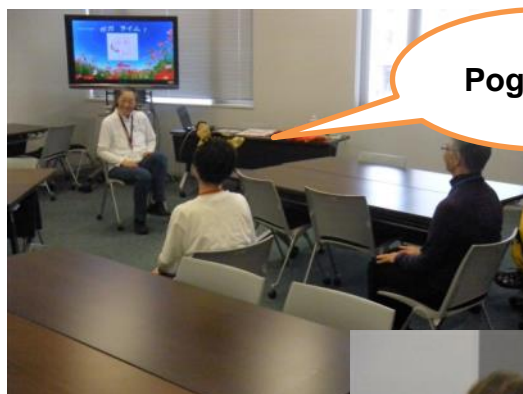
Hyogo University of Health Sciences Community Exchange Project
‘Popoki, is health the same color as being and feeling safe?’

Text & Photos: Shiro Nagashige

Date: 2015.10.17 14:00~16:00

Venue: HUHS Community Center; Participants: 10 (Visitors: 6; Staff: 4)

After greetings by Ronyan sensei, Satonyan led us in Poga. Then, everyone read pages from Popoki’s peace books. Everybody read in turn with feeling and it was very nice.

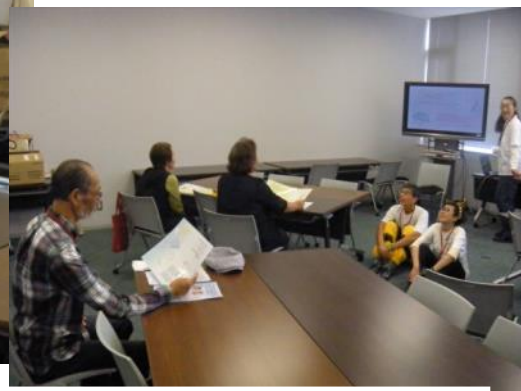


Poga time!



“All the participants”

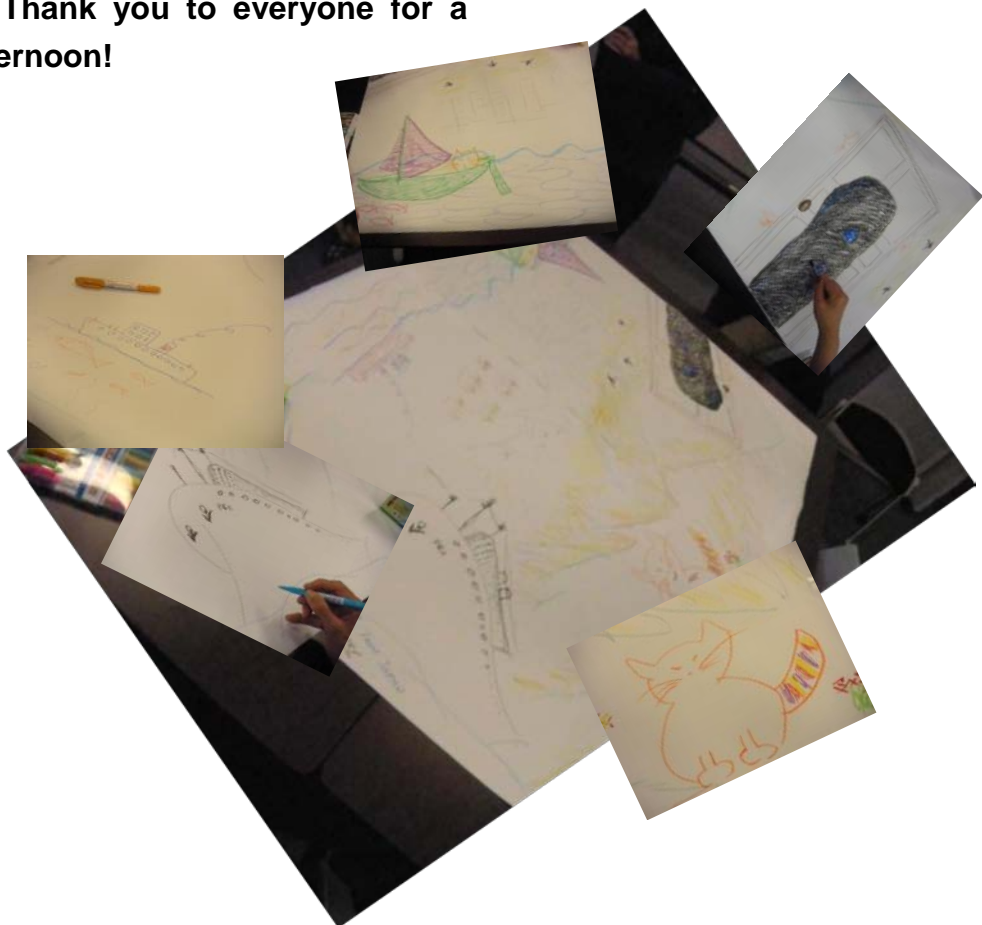
Reading together

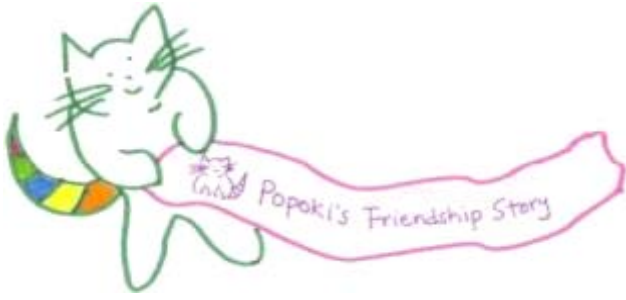


Next, we discussed the theme, “Is health the same color as being and feeling safe?” For example, many people said that they feel safe when they are happy or relaxed such as when they climb into bed at night or wake up in the morning and then go back to sleep again. On the other hand, it was suggested that being and feeling safe are equivalent to happiness, which is just personal or individual desire. Ronyan said that what she translates as ‘being and feeling safe’ is different from the Japanese terminology (*anzen*, *anshin*) and is very hard to translate.

I wonder how people around the world experiencing human rights violations, war, conflict, discrimination or hunger would express being or feeling safe. I think that they would express something basic about being human and give us a lot to think about.

The last part of the program was drawing. After taking a break and enjoying the view of the city and sea outside the classroom, we went inside and everyone expressed what s/he had felt through drawing. Not surprisingly, many drawings related to the sea. The view of the sea from one person's house, love of the sea drawn by a former sailor, Popoki enjoying the view of the sea...maybe he feels safe. One person drew the feeling of wanting to go into space. Does that mean there is no safe place here on earth?!? Thank you to everyone for a delightful afternoon!





Popoki's Interview

Ronyan

AKAGI Shuji

Teacher, Fukushima Prefectural High School

I first heard about Akagi-san from my friend, Maeda Keiko-san. One day, she handed me a book called Fukushima Traces 2011-2013 saying, "My friend just published this." It is a collection of photographs of how residents of Fukushima City have lived with radiation since the March 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant accident. It does not have much text, and as I turned the pages I found myself having a taste of the confusion that happens when what is 'normal' is no longer 'normal'. I found myself asking, 'What is common sense?' 'What is normal?' 'What is safe?' With Maeda-san's help, I went with some Popoki friends to meet Akagi-san and he took us around Fukushima City. It would be best if you could go there yourself and see with your own eyes, feel the breeze, experience the anxiety that cannot be put into words and feel the anger that comes of being confronted with so many contradictions. Here I will introduce just part of what we learned. Perhaps it will serve to entice you to go, too.

Ronyan (R): Were you in Fukushima at the time of the disaster?

Akagi (A): I was living in Fukushima City. It is about 60 kilometers from the nuclear plant. After the accident we evacuated, and I really wanted to leave. But I came back because of my family and job and am still teaching at Fukushima Prefectural High School.



R: In Kansai, we often hear that the people who want to leave are mothers, but in your case it was the father who wanted to leave.

A: Yes, but.... Without a job to go to it is difficult...

Akagi-san took us to places that residents of Fukushima use in their everyday lives – parks, stations, schools, etc. Fukushima is 60km from the nuclear plant and is supposed to be 'safe,' but marks on trees in front of the train station and in a supermarket parking lot are raw scars of the ongoing decontamination.

Decontamination changes the color of the trunk, leaving a line where they stopped work.

The circular marks in the parking lot are left by the decontamination machines.





There are plastic markers like the one in the photo embedded in parking lots, sidewalks, schools, and everywhere. They mark places where black bags filled with soil, leaves, etc., removed during decontamination, are buried. The bags are covered with 30cm of soil, so they are said to be 'safe'. The markers indicate the 'temporary temporary storage areas' in these inhabited places so they can be found when in the future they are unburied and moved to a storage site.



A: So you can see the scars of decontamination everywhere, and also see people engaged in decontamination work. Of course the bags are covered and just left in some places. Lately they have been leaving them in the backs of houses, so you can't see them from the front but if you go around the back streets, there they are. Of course you can see evidence at shrines, too.

R: In Kobe after the earthquake, they used blue plastic sheets, but these are green....

A: Yes, there is talk that they are stronger but I don't really know.

Akagi-san showed us the school where he works. Decontamination is finished and the contaminated soil has been buried under the playing field.

A: You can see marks on the ground, just like in the parking lot I showed you. They buried the soil that they removed and put in pipes to vent the gas that is created underground. Students eat their lunches under the trees by the gym, but the radiation is a bit higher in the drainage ditches.

R: When you see them eating there, do you caution them?



A: Radiation is something that each person has to decide about for him or herself. I don't keep my activities secret, but it is hard to talk about it at school. If a student is worried, I think it is good, but another teacher might scold them for worrying about it.

R: Parks, graves, the university.... There are black bags everywhere. It makes me want to say, 'enough already!' I like to run, and it would be so nice to run in these places, but....



A: Recently had a big trail running competition here. They ran right past the black bags. I like to run too, but here....



R: You have been taking photos ever since the disaster. How many have you taken?

A: In 2011, I took 9000, in 2012, 15,000 in 2013, 60,000 and in 2014, I took about 80,000. Maybe something inside me makes me want to take them, but maybe there are other reasons. Maybe I am conscious of those who want me to take them and I'm doing it to satisfy the people who want to see them.

R: I think you are doing important work and you are giving us something we could not ordinarily get through your photos and tours. You don't say 'It's dangerous!' or 'It's wrong!' but let us figure it out for ourselves. I think that is just so important, but it must be hard for you.

A: I want to change jobs and move someplace safe, but I haven't gotten an offer I can accept. I want to leave because of the situation here, but if I leave I will stop taking these photos. It seems contradictory, but I think wanting to leave makes my identity as someone from Fukushima stronger.

R: I think with your sensitivity and perspective you would be involved in some kind of activism wherever you were. Were you an activist before the disaster?

A: I had the perspective, but I never felt the necessity to be involved. After the disaster, I felt I had to record it, so I started taking pictures.

R: As an artist?

A: I don't consider myself to be an artist, but through my activities I have connected with many people doing art. They appreciate my work and have invited me to show it with them. I am just doing what I have to do, and actually I haven't shown my most controversial photos. Maybe I'm afraid of the reaction of my colleagues at work.

R: Do people around you oppose you?

A: Just because you have similar interests



doesn't necessarily mean you have the same attitude toward disaster. I don't think I have changed during these 4 years, but others think I have. I just think the situation has changed. If your environment and everything around you is crazy, then you have to be crazy too. Otherwise you just can't go on.

R: You said at one point that silence is the other side of fear. If you could say anything to your students and colleagues without fear, what would you tell them?

A: This disaster has to be dealt with by each person in his or her own way. I have found what I can do, and others have to find what they can do. Years from now, I will be judged by the children. Fifty years from now, people will look at my photos and I don't know what they will see or how they will evaluate me. I don't think I have done everything there is to do.



There are black bags piled near where children play, near universities where young people gather, and in towns where people live, but no one pays any attention. No one tries to look at them or to avoid them. How should we think about this 'abnormal' situation has become such a part of everyday life that it is invisible or seems 'normal'? Each of us must think about it and decide what to do. I think that is Akagi-san's message.

Akagi-san, thank you so much!



Please help to spread the word about Akagi-san's book:

Akagi, Shunji. *Fukushima Traces 2011-2013*. Osiris, 2015.

Available from:

<http://www.shashasha.co/en/book/fukushima-traces-2011-2013/>



POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 89

This month's theme stretching our sides, legs and arms!



1. First, as always, sit up straight and look beautiful.
2. Next, stand and spread your legs. Point your right foot out and bend your right knee, keeping your left foot pointed forward and your left leg stretched out. Raise your arms out to your sides, keeping your shoulders relaxed.
3. Now, using your abs and inner thighs to keep your balance, lean to the right. Can you hold your right ankle with your right hand? Keep your left arm out straight. Now try repeating ② and ③ on the other side.
4. Finally, stand squarely on both legs and raise your arms high into a big stretch.
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: 11 / 20 19:15 ~ Kobe YMCA (Shin Kobe OPA, 2F) Rm.201



11.18 Popoki at Aboshi High School!

12.7 Popoki at Musashi University, Tokyo

12.9 Popoki at a disaster and gender symposium in Taiwan!

12.18 Ponenkai!

2016.2 Popoki in Otsuchi-cho!

From Popoki's friends....

New photo collection! Akagi, Shunji. *Fukushima Traces 2011-2013*. Osiris, 2015. Orders:

<http://www.shashasha.co/en/book/fukushima-traces-2011-2013/>

Popoki in Print

- 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
- R. Alexander. (2010) "The Popoki Peace Project: Creating New Spaces for Peace in Demenchonok, E., ed. *Philosophy after Hiroshima*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp.399-418
- 省窓: Column in *Kobe YMCA News*, No.606, 2011.1, p.1 (*In Japanese*)
- "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 2010.3.15
- FM COCOLO 76.5 'Heart Lines' 2010.1.9 Japanese Interview: Ronni on Popoki in Palestine
- "Human Rights, Popoki and Bare Life." *In Factis Pax Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice* Vol.3, No.1, 2009, pp.46-63 (<http://www.infactispax.org/journal/>)
- Nishide, Ikuyo. "Popoki, What Color is Peace? Lecture by Ronni Alexander." "PPSEAWA" (Pan-Pacific and south-East Asia Women's Association of Japan), No.63, 2009.12, p.5
- 'Friendship' No.2 2009.11 Itami City International/Peace Exchange Commission, Annual Events, p.1-2.
- '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
- 'Yujotte...Kangaeru Ehon.' *Asahi Shimbun* 2009.7.2 AKUZAWA Etsuko
- 'Yujo wo kangaete – Ningen to, Neko to, soshite Jibun to,' *RST/ALN*, No.259 2009.6.28, p.11
- 'New Books: Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2 ' (Rebecca Jennison) "Cutting-Edge," Vol.35 2009.6, p.3
- 'Thinking about Peace with a Cat: Second Peace Book Published.' (SAITO Masashi) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2009.4.21
- 'Popoki, What Color is Peace?' *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.3.1. No.593. p.2
- '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
- "KFAW College Seminar: What Color is Peace for Women? Thinking about Peace, Violence and Gender with Popoki." *Asian Breeze* No.54 October 2008, p.8 (Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women)
- *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/>
- * **Back issues of Popoki News:** http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html





What Popoki Means to Me

Yoko Ito (Ito-nyan)
Otsuchi-cho, Iwate Prefecture

One day, I got a phone call from Ronni sensei.

She asked me for a piece of peace...! Aah, what to do!?!

Peace is a word we generally use without thinking about it very much, but actually it is very deep and seems very difficult.... But, at that moment the image that floated through my mind was listening to music with a cup of coffee in one hand, feeling happy and enjoying the relaxing atmosphere of that moment.... Is this peace?

I decided to look it up in the dictionary. (According to *Kojien* {with a little translation help from Ronyan})

Peace

① state of being tranquil or calm; calm and unchanging situation

... a *peaceful* feeling; a *peaceful* home

② Tranquil and without war

...world *peace*

Peace keeping activities; peaceful revolution; peace protocol; peace memorial park; peaceful co-existence; peace movement: 5 principles of peaceful co-existence; 10 peace principles; peace treaty; peace corps; pacifism, etc.

The Chinese character for peace (平和) seems quite peaceful, but looking at the words that follow peace in the definition makes you realize just how little tranquility there is in the world and how often peace has to be forced or artificially created in situations where there is no peace.

I have a feeling that if you constantly have to be aware of peace, then it is not peaceful.

I could say pretentiously that peace is when the lives and stability of people in a country are protected. But happiness is something felt by each individual, and it is not necessary to feel the same way as somebody else.

I feel good when I look at the sky on a clear autumn day. Recently, I found myself unable to stop gazing at the sky full of stars. Our town is different from the city, and especially because of the

disaster, we have no neon or sparkling lights. It might be a question of values, but this makes me feel happy....



So I guess that what I am trying to say is that peace for each individual might be something that seems tiny and insignificant, but for that person it is extremely important and necessary. I think that the accumulation of those moments becomes 'nutrition for your soul' and leads to feeling peaceful.

If more people were to feel peaceful, then maybe the world would become a more peaceful place.

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

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