



Soso Team for Establishing a New Health and Welfare System for Psychiatric Care

# Soso Cocoro News Nagomi

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2012

## 1st International Symposium "Radiation Contamination and Mental Care" was held

On August 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat) and 12<sup>th</sup> (Sun), we held an international symposium at Hall No. 8, Fukushima Medical University. About one year and five months has passed since the disaster. Fukushima is now still hosting many evacuees. In the symposium, we were able to listen to precious lectures on mental health of mother and child, Fukushima Health Management Survey, mental health of Self-Defence Force officials and TEPCO workers and so on.

There were about 150 participants in total in two days, and most of them were involved in medicine, welfare and education and directly giving care to disaster victims. There was a whole stream of questions from them regarding the current radiation contamination: Is the current radiation dose really safe?; How is the result of Fukushima Health Management Survey? etc. It was a very precious opportunity to listen directly to such questions.

I strongly felt the need to send out information about our activities to the world through an international symposium, and achieve a support that can stand close to the victims. (Otani)



### The 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium "Radiation Contamination and Mental Health" Topics

#### August 11<sup>th</sup> (Sat)

- Damage on Cells Caused by Low Level Exposure  
 Dr. Makoto Akashi (Research Center for Radiation Emergency Medicine, National Institute of Radiological Science)
- Psychosocial Support for Women in their 20's in Fukushima  
 Ms. Nahoko Harada (Boston College)
- Fear of Radiation and Situation of Thyroid Cancer  
 Dr. Robert Yanagisawa (Mt. Sinai School of Medicine)
- Mental Health for Fukushima Daiichi and Daini Nuclear Power Plant Workers  
 Dr. Jun Shigemura (Department of Psychiatry, National Defense Medical College)

#### August 12<sup>th</sup> (Sun)

- Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Accident and Radiation Health Risk Management  
 Dr. Akira Otsuru (Department of Radiological Health, Fukushima Medical University)
- Beyond Dose Assessment: Risk with Full Disclosure of Uncertainty in Public and Scientific Communication  
 Dr. Owen Hoffman (SENSE Oak Ridge)
- Mental Health for Members of Rescue Teams in the Great East Japan Earthquake  
 Dr. Yoshitomo Takahashi (Department of Disaster Psychological Support, University of Tsukuba)
- Psychological Support after Major Disaster in Japan : from Kobe and Tohoku Experiences  
 Dr. Hiroshi Kato (Hyogo Institute for Traumatic Stress)

### Outreach Activity

Nurse Yuko Kawamura

"What shall I do together today?" "Will I be able to talk well?" These are my thoughts as I picture my schedule of the day in my mind while commuting from my house to the office.

For me, a person worked in a general hospital after graduating from university, the activities at *Nagomi* such as working outside the hospital, working without wearing a white frock, visiting target people's houses etc. were all new experiences. In Outreach Activity, I take part not only in caring their diseases, but also their daily lives such as supporting their families and their life at home. In a hospital, patients spend their life mainly for medical treatment, and after they leave the hospital, the role of a nurse is over. But in Outreach Activity, I cannot easily see the clear "end". I often wonder what they are hoping for, what they need, and whether what I am doing is helpful or not.

Recently, after meeting with them several times, they remember my face and name, they are also waiting for my visit, and I feel more often that it is worth visiting them. Sometimes my activities do not go as I imagine. But I want to continue visiting activities which, in the long term, will bring little by little more smiles and joyful time to them.



Ms. Kawamura likes being in contact with nature. She is growing many plants like sunflowers and herbs at *Nagomi*.



### Mental Care Activity

Clinical Psychologist Yusuke Haneda

More than a half year has passed since I came to *Nagomi*. Now my main function is to conduct mental checkup activity for those working in public facilities and welfare centers. Another major work I do is salon activities at temporary housings and visiting target people in Outreach Activity.

Now in this area, the influence of the disaster has transformed the basis of people's work such as working environment and human relationship, and people's fatigue is accumulating every day. I want to support such people from behind so that they can feel the presence of *Nagomi* and appreciate it.

The residents of temporary housings smile a lot and many of them are looking forward to our activities. But on the other hand, suddenly I see that they have experienced loss in the disaster, and feel the difficulty of intervention.

*Nagomi* is a team made up of many types of occupations, and we exchange our opinions beyond the occupational boundaries. Moreover, it is a very cheerful place where many jokes are exchanged from the morning. When we come back to the office, we feel relaxed. The team is surely worthy of its name "*Nagomi*".



Mr. Haneda commutes from Fukushima City every day. He is doing very great service in mental checkup activities and *Hitoyasumi no Kai on*



### Health Class is Open

In our Salon Activity in temporary homes, and upon a request from other organizations, we hold a health class. We aim at giving easily understandable and enjoyable guidance on food poisoning, blood pressure, sleep etc. through the use of handouts, pamphlets and sometimes skit (!).

From this autumn, we plan to talk about measures against influenza and coldness for the coming season. We invite everybody to come and join us!





## Lecture “Mental Health and Future Support for Children after the Disaster”

Let's think about the community where children can live and grow in peace of mind.



On July 22<sup>nd</sup> (Sun), we invited Dr. Toru Yamazaki, the director of Disaster Response Headquarter in The Japanese Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Shizuoka Children's Hospital, and held a lecture on children's mental health.

In the lecture, we were able to learn about various things, for example difficulty in psychological care for children in the Great East Japan Disaster, diversity of children's response to stress and how to support the children who suffer from the disaster. The lecture mentioned about stress care not only for children but also for their supporters. The guardians and supporters, who had been feeling their way to support children's lives in chaos after the disaster, were able to reflect what they had been doing, gained new advice and hints about supporting children, and seemed to be encouraged.

The lecture also pointed out that the most important thing in supporting children is that an adult who cares about the child is staying near him/her, and by being watched over by the adult, s/he will gain strength to recover. Enormous damage caused by the disaster, continuous aftershocks, radiation etc., we still have many issues and worries. But I want to continue to watch over and support children who live in the community so that they can grow in peace of mind. (Natsumi)



## Application for Membership of Soso Team for Establishing a New Health and Welfare System for Psychiatric Care!

We are recruiting regular and supporting members who sympathize with our purpose.

1. Regular member Annual membership fee 10,000 yen
2. Supporting member Annual membership fee 3,000 yen

### How to apply

- ① Specify the following and apply by mail or fax to the address below:  
Regular member or supporting member; address; affiliation; occupation; phone number; e-mail address

Bank Name: Toho Bank, Soma Branch  
 Account Number : Savings account no.1044879  
 Account Holder : Specified non-profit corporation  
 Soso Team for Establishing a New Health and Welfare System for Psychiatric Care  
 Chair of the Board Niwa Shinichi

In the case of remittance by mail:  
 Account Number : 02260-0-126825  
 Account Holder: Specified non-profit corporation  
 Soso Team for Establishing a New Health and Welfare System for Psychiatric Care  
 Please note that the name of the account holder is different from that of the Toho Bank account)

- ② Applications are also accepted through our website.  
<http://soso-cocoro.jp> (in Japanese only)

※We will regularly deliver our newsletters and local information to our members. We look forward to your active participation.



Contact:  
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 FAX 0244-26-9739  
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 E-mail Address: office@soso-cocoro.jp

## Outreach Training “Outreach Activity in Disaster”

On September 9<sup>th</sup> (Sun), we held “Case Management Training on Strength Model” with Dr. Junichiro Ito (National Institute of Mental Health) and Ms. Fumie Hisanaga (COMHBO). Although it was on Sunday, 32 participants, who work in welfare centers, hospitals, health welfare offices/centers and so on, joined the training. The content was as follows: 1) What is strength model?; 2) How to utilize care management; 3) About strength assessment; and 4) Experiencing group supervision.

In the strength model, it is said that “the basic is to strengthen the individual's cheerful part, cherish his/her talent and ability, and facilitate his/her own course of action and choice”. Furthermore, “it is essential to focus on the output which s/he is hoping for”. The goal is recovery. I was able to learn many basic ideas such as supporting him/her to live as s/he is and bringing out his/her “strength”, and that it is important to assess and manage these matters. In group supervision, I learned facilitator's procedure and steps. In order for me to do facilitation, I thought I needed to have more experiences and brush up my skills in goal setting and assessment.



Through this training, in order to support them to “live as they are”, I felt that a way to bring out the users' strengths into their life is needed as a friend living in the community, and also it is essential to create an environment in which we can bring out the staff members' strengths.

Furthermore, I would be glad if the participants of the training could introduce some cases in which they utilized the strength model for supporting handicapped people's life in the community, and was able to improve their service. Thank you for your participation. (Terumi)



Photo: During the training

### Talk of Office Manager

From 28<sup>th</sup> July to 7<sup>th</sup> August, I joined the Hachijo Island Children's Camp with children from Koriyama City, Minamisoma City and Namie Town. Hachijo Island is located 287km to the south of Tokyo. It has a temperate climate and abundant nature. The host organization, *Robe no Kai* manages a support center for continuous employment type B and a group home.

Their work program is on agriculture and food, taking advantage of the goodness of nature. In the agriculture sector, they grow Freesia and organic vegetables. In the restaurant sector “*Yamanba House*”, they prepare dishes and sweets using organic ingredients.

So far it sounds like an ordinary institution, but I was amazed by how talented the staff members were. The children enjoyed listening to folk stories, fishing, trekking, harpooning, and drums. The children who joined this camp enjoyed swimming in the sea for the first time after two years due to the impact of the nuclear power plant accident. Children in Fukushima are seriously suffering from loss of physical strength because of a lack of exercise. The reality is that many mothers and children are worried about the effect of radiation and are living with anxiety. I felt again the need for a retreat program that includes outdoor activities outside of Fukushima Prefecture.

If you are interested, please visit the website below.  
Fukuhachi Children's Camp Project  
Website: <http://www11.ocn.ne.jp/~fuku8/>



Children from Minamisoma, enjoying Hachijo Drum, which is said to be the oldest drum in Japan.



Children from Koriyama are enjoying swimming in the sea for the first time after two years

How was our 4<sup>th</sup> newsletter? In this summer, at *Nagomi* we had various events such as the lecture, the 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium, Outreach Training etc., and all the staff members had new discoveries and were inspired. One and a half year has passed since the disaster. Although there is a less number of prominent coverage on the disaster, it is not yet over. From now, we want to continue to stand closely with the local residents and support them.

(Natsumi)

