

# 10 years from the Earthquake・・・Sharing thoughts with Nagomi staff

“Each and everyone’s 10 years” ~Mayumi Ishii~

I started working at Nagomi in 2012, one year after the Earthquake. This year marks my 10<sup>th</sup> year with Nagomi. Nagomi engages in outreach promotion operation extended towards persons with mental disorders (counter earthquake disaster type) which is an on-going support activity conducted by the mental care team’s visiting activities which started right after the earthquake disaster. Outreach is a very detailed visiting activity which takes care that problems or critical situations do not occur in everyday lives. I used to work in hospitals before joining Nagomi, and heard the words community support outreach for the first time when I started to work at Nagomi. I was asking “What in the world is Outreach?” during my first days with Nagomi.

One of the most shocking events for me was to see one of the staff taking a bath together with a user as part of outreach support. “Is it necessary to go that far?” I was so surprised in the beginning. The reason why it was necessary to take a bath together with the user was because the skin of the user’s buttocks was red with rash and not taken care of. This was caused by not changing diapers till it was so full with urine and even the trousers were wet. There were complaints from others that the user’s body and clothes smelled terribly. The user was always wearing the same clothes and the clothes and face were so dirty. With the progression of mental disorder, the idea itself of taking a bath was lost. The reason for wearing diapers was because the user believed that there was a thief in the main house building and was too afraid to use the toilet. As we took baths together, we checked the condition of the body, and observed interpersonal relationships and also behavior and speech. We applied ointment on the rash and were able to have the user change into clean clothes. By continuing to take baths together, the user started to accept other people’s company and was able to start attending day service.

Another one of the users resisted taking a bath in the beginning, but gradually got used to it by periodically taking a bath and eventually started to visit the bathing facility on willingly. The user also learned to wash clothes and started to wash them after taking a bath. I believe that we were able to show them basic manners and living skills at their own paces.

Many people that the outreach team support tend to reject other people and the support extended. Even those who rejected the support from Nagomi in the beginning gradually starts to open up as we continue to extend support. Once they started to open up their minds, we were able to link them to other supporting organizations in the area, and they are now able to carry on their lives in their community without being isolated. I realized that the good point of outreach support is that we extend support necessary for the user at that point of time, take sufficient time and continue the support so that the user is able to gradually change and get used the community. What I enjoy about outreach support is, the more we are involved in the user’s lives, the more changes we are able to witness. Through Outreach support, I was able to learn the importance of support by the whole community.

## Community Update



## The Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum

We visited the Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum located in Futaba-machi. When we got of the Joban Line train at Futaba Station, we found the wall of the building right in front of the station fully covered with art wishing for restoration and reconstruction of the area. We walked the 2.7km from the station to the Memorial Museum. Once we stepped into side streets, we saw fences marking the difficult-to-return zone everywhere, showing that the current state of the area has not changed at all and areas that we are not allowed to enter are scattered around in so many places. Inside the Memorial Museum, we felt the earthquake disaster very close to reality through the exhibits of ruins and projection of cityscape at the time of the earthquake using state-of-the-art equipment. We recommend anyone interested to visit the museum. (Otani, Care Center)





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## Nagomi’s General Assembly was Successfully Held

The General Assembly of our organization, markings its 10<sup>th</sup>, was held on June 27. From the perspective of preventing infection of COVID-19, the assembly was held online and all propositions were successfully approved. Let us express our appreciation to all who participated and also to those who submitted their power of attorney. With the assembly being held online, we were able to hold discussions face to face with members from distant locations for whom it is usually difficult to attend. We were able to obtain valuable opinions regarding the future of Nagomi, and the assembly turned out to be a really good opportunity for us to think about our future activities.

We will continue to work hard on our activities to promote healthcare, medical care and welfare in the Soso area and also at the same time work to prevent infection of COVID-19.  
(Tadano, Administration)



## Tea Party Following the General Assembly was Held

Nagomi Tea Party following the General Assembly, which we had been holding during the past years as a place of gathering for members and local residents to show our gratitude for their support, was cancelled last year due to COVID-19 crisis. This year the Tea Party was held online for the first time in 2 years.

We first watched the video on Nagomi’s support activities shot and edited by Nihon Denpa News Co., Ltd. Doctors and others who had been supporting the area for a long period from the time before Nagomi started its activities after the Great East Japan Earthquake shared their stories about their activities with us as guest speakers.



Latter half of the party was spent looking back at our activities through the photographs of our past activities. With some equipment troubles, we are not able to use much time for the participants to interact with one other. However, we believe that it was a good opportunity to get to know each other in relaxing ways through the warm words from the guests and participants. There have been so many encounters with users and supporters during the 10 years following the Earthquake. We shall treasure all these encounters and do our best to continue growing together. (Hattori, Visiting Nurse)



## Outreach Team

### “Reflecting Study Session”

Reflecting Process is an interview method which increases the diversity of conversation through the words spoken by the consulter, with consideration on their safety.

We asked Dr. Fuminori Misawa of Education and Research Center for Comprehensive Science, Fukushima Medical University, to visit us once every month to hold “Study sessions on Reflecting Process”. We are studying how to conduct interviews using Reflecting through training format.



Each participant is assigned a different role to play in the training sessions and we continue to work on acquiring this method, with focus on putting this method into actual practice when we visit our users. We are still in the learning process, but all of us are working hard to be able to put this method into actual practice.

(Kikawada, Outreach Team)

## Visiting Nurse Team

### “Lotus Flower that Blooms Every Year”

There were some changes in the Visiting Nurse Team including change of staff. Even within one organization, each section is different and it takes time to get used to the new environment and different procedures. As we get accustomed to the new environment, we start to be able to notice the best in our users. What a relief!

Our activities still remain limited this year due to COVID-19 prevention measures. From the car on the way back from visiting our user, I noticed some beautiful lotus flowers blooming, the same as last year. The human world continues to change from moment to moment, but flowers bloom beautifully without any change and heals and soothes our feelings. The words that Dr. Niwa used to say around the time when we were setting up our office, “We have to continue for 10 years for our efforts to be recognized” crosses my mind. We would like to be rooted in this community forever like the flowers that bloom every year. (Sato, Visiting Nurse)



## Nagomi CLUB Team

### “Change of Seasons”

Nagomi CLUB introduces activities which enables participants to feel the change of seasons. We planted flower and vegetable seedlings in April. In May, we made pressed flowers with the flowers that we picked during our walks and made wallpaper that looked like flower gardens. In June, we made plum pickles and plums syrup for the first time. The plum syrup turned out to be very tasty and we enjoy them on hot days. We added Red Shiso leaves to the plum pickles and are waiting for the plums to become tasty. We look forward to putting them in rice balls and eating them. (Yatsu, Nagomi CLUB)



## Care Center Team

### “Enjoying Coffee Break in the Garden”

Care Center also support people suffering from mental disorders and who have isolated themselves in their homes. There are cases where relationship with people close to them including family members living together are the cause of their worries and disorder, and it is important that we provide some time away from daily lives for them.

The house that we visited the other day was very fashionable with everything coordinated in white. We wondered what the best thing we could do in the garden to change the pace and cheer up the user was and decided to challenge making coffee in the garden. We were able to enjoy a lively conversation with the speciousness of the garden and the wonderful aroma of coffee.

We will do our best to extend support which enriches the users' daily lives. (Otani, Care Center)




## We are inviting you to become a new Nagomi Supporter Member (member of the NPO)!

### 【How to become a new member】

Please send your application as follows and make payment of your membership fee by postal transfer.

1. Send us the following information by postal mail or fax to the address/fax number below; type of member (regular member or supporting member), name, address, company or organization name (occupation), phone number, e-mail address.
2. Application can also be made via our website: <http://soso-cocoro.jp/>

Click  button and fill out the application form.

We are now authorized as a Certified NPO Organization. Membership fees and donations made to our NPO are now eligible for income tax exemption applied to donations. By choosing between tax deduction for donations (income deduction) and tax deduction and filing for final tax returns, you will be able to receive income tax exemption. Please refer to our website for details.

1. Regular Member Annual Membership Fee: 10,000 yen
2. Supporting Member Annual Membership Fee (per unit): 3,000 yen
3. Donations

To pay your membership fee/to donate: Postal Transfer  
Account number: 02260-0-126825  
Account name: The Association for Establishing a New Psychiatric Care, Health, and Welfare System in Soso

We regularly send newsletters and local information about Soso area to our members.  
We look forward to your participation!

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