

May 20, 2020

## NALC Holland Newsletter vol.9

April 2020 we are now facing one of historical moments. Corona virus started spreading from China a few months ago to all over the world. The Netherlands' government set strict rules to prevent virus from spreading away, such as to keep 1.5m distance in public place, work site (only in case of vital works), no shaking hands, no greeting kisses, Schools are closed till May holidays, etc. Similar rules are set in each European country according to their situation.

Therefore we can't say it is the best time now for giving physical help or communication in person, especially elderly people, who are in the groups of people at high risk for getting disseize, but on the other hand it could be said that it might be a given situation, in which people are stimulated to be creative to invent various methods and manners to help each other, many people are creating ways to help people needing supports from others. For example, using digital communication network someone notices there is a person who can't go out to buy food herself and delivery service does not help her, then the guy found it does a shopping for the person never met before. What a wonderful thing to hear.

However, people are more tending to try to be helpful for victims and weaker people when a natural disaster or crisis comes, we may be following the rules of the nature to protect own species from extinction.

I hope that so many people as now are still showing their kindness and helpfulness to other people even after Corona virus crisis is gone and a normal life comes back. There are always people who need help from others.

NALC Holland, we are even a small group, but we do our best to give support to people in the area we live and make life of them and ourselves happier with peaceful feeling. This is always our hope and wish. (Chairman: Kuniharu Iwasaki)

### \*\*\* From the committee \*\*\*

(A) There was a mistake in the newsletter vol.7, on the first page.

③ *Other volunteer activities (ex. Joining potluck, taking care of the animals/plants at the non-profit organization /public organization )*

This sentence should be:

③ *Other volunteer activities (ex. taking care of the animals/plants at the non-profit organization /public organization )*

You can not receive points by "Joining potluck"

We apology for the confusions and inconvenience caused by this mistake.

(B) The general meeting is scheduled on the 21st of June. The detail will follow.

## In Memoriam : Mr. Keiichi Takahata



**Mr. Keiichi Takahata; the founder of NALC passed away in January 2020. He was 90 years old. NALC Holland sent a condolence message to NALC Japan. You will find “memory of Mr. Keiichi Takahata sensei” by Mr. Millenaar on page 3.**

**Mr. Takahata was born in 1929. He was the chairperson of the Union of Panasonic and later on became one of the Directors of the company. After his retirement, he established NALC in 1994. A short story about the establishment of Nalc is as follows.**

Mr. Takahata was impressed by the following words of Mr. Shinzo Mori “ The most important years in your life is the last years. The true value of someone is decided how he/ she lives after 60 years old. Thus, you have to live 2~3 times more conscious than when you are under 60. Otherwise you will fail to say “ I had a good life “ when you will die.” He was happend to hear Mr. Mori’s words when he was about to retire.“ What is the good life for me ? Serving to the others must be good” He decided to think further about it.

“VOLUNTEER !” that word came in his mind. But the concept of “volunteer” in those days in Japan had an image of “ something that the rich people give to non-rich people” On the other hands he found out that in America, many small social / local activities are done by volunteer workers, not by the local government. Furthermore, he founds out that those kind of volunteer workers belong to few volunteer organizations, offering help 2~3 days per week. Comparing to those, the Japanese volunteer activities were more “ one time action” which is not sustainable, although it had social value.

Mr. Takahata thought: “In order to feel the happiness offering volunteer activities to the others, people need to offer those 2~4 days per week.” He asked to himself “Can I establish a volunteer organization? “ In 1994, he established NALC, calling the people from the similar backgrounds in the same generation. Those are the people who was called “ ex- corporate warrior” (who dedicated exceptionally to the company that he/she belonged ) These people did not know what to do after their retirements.

“Kaigo-Hoken” (Long-term care insurance system) did not exist in those days. A new word: “ rou rou kaigo” ( an elder taking care of another elder inside a house ) was created in those days. He thought that NALC should act in the field of “ care”. He followed the course “ home-helper grade: 3” together with his wife and they got that degree. During the course, he thought “ men and women should work together. For instance moving an old lady from a chair to a bath-tub should done by a man, but I know that everyone agree that it is comfortable if a woman cares the diaper of that old lady. Thus he made a rule for NALC: “when a couple is the member of NALC, the annual fee is charged only for one person.

“ Mr. Takahata’s wife promoted NALC to her friends asking them to be the members together with their husbands. It was a success.

Mr. Takahata thought: Nalc main office / branch should have an office and it should be open 365 days per year. He offered a part of his retirement allowances to have the main office. As for the branch office, sometimes they used the house of the branche members as the “offie”

Mr. Takahata introduced the “Time-banking system” to keep the system running smoothly and to keep it in a healthy condition. Normally speaking, when you do a volunteer activity, you do not ask for the compensation.

But with this Time-banking system you receive your time back; for instance, when you do one hour volunteer, you receive one hour back. Mr. Takahata said; “ I guess that Kami-sama (god /lord) will allow us to have that time back. In the near future, the time will come that YOU have to ask for help. Or, even it can happen tomorrow that you need help because of an accident. Then your colleague volunteers will help you. For the most of the (Japanese) people It is NOT easy to ask for help, although it is easy to offer help. In case

you die before you use the earned time? That is the most happy way of your death.”

‘ What is happiness ? ’ That is what Mr. Takahata was asking to himself, and its result was Nalc system. Let us keep his spirit in our minds and keep on moving forwards.

Bron : <http://www.relnet.co.jp/izuo/kinenko/kinenko20>.

(M. Higashi)

## ~~ Memory of Keiichi Takahata- Sensei ~

A number of years ago I read an article in a Dutch Newspaper about Time-banking in Japan . A Dutch journalist - named Kjeld Duits wrote this article. He is living in Japan and is writing all kind of topics about Japanese culture . From the beginning I was interested in the suitability of the phenomenon in various cultures. Therefore I contacted Mr Duits and asked if he knows the name of the keyperson of Time-banking . He mentioned the name Mr Takahata who developed an advanced system with was named NALC .



Mr. & Mrs Millenaar together with Mr. Takahata ( middle ) in the spring of 2016 at NALC headquarters in Japan. During this meeting, they got permission to start NALC in Holland.

So, when I stayed in Japan I was happy I could contact Mr Takahata and we got a meeting with him and other board-members of NALC ;together with my wife Masako Iwasaki. She is also interested and is my interpreter .During the meeting I found that he is the “Right Person on the Right Place “First of all because of is many sided experience in various levels .He started his career in Matsusita Electric (Panasonic ) as a technician. Later he also got an economic degree from Kansai University .Based on many years of experience he was chosen to represent the labour union movement. Then he became the executive Director for labour.

After his retirement he want to use his broad experience to support vulnerable people. In his network inside and outside Japan he found that Time Banking is very useful .Although he was experienced in many fields he was not in Care and Welfare. Then he showed his flexibility because he followed an intensive study of of Social Welfare and got a basic certificate in this field .

That is the reason he became so inspiring for me because even after his retirement he explored new directions. Moreover he also is resilient ;that means he knows how to overcome difficulties in a new starting movement. With his Charisma he could convince the people who had some resistance against innovation. In this way he became the model for many people ; including me .

Therefore NALC became a strong organization with thousands of members inside and outside Japan with many branches ( also in the Netherlands ) . This is all the more very important in a crisis ( like now with Coronavirus ) in which people need to support each other in a mutual way. It is now more clear than before that economy is not the only important in the society, but also Care & Welfare to survive for a better Quality of Life .

That mission we can learn from Keiichi Takahata-sensei.

Ton Millenaar ( Until 2019 chairperson of NALC Holland and since 2020 ‘Senior Advisor’ )

## Report: NALC Holland East Study meeting (2020-02-09)

On 9<sup>th</sup> of February we (NALC Holland East group) had a Study meeting about "Dementia and Care" at Peters's house in Oosterbeek.

Ms. Hitomi Suwa who works at Elderly people home "Drie gasthuizen" in Arnhem who was the lecturer, she recommended to watch the YouTube film: French style care technique teaching kindness by Umanitude. (by National hospital organization Tokyo hospital center Elderly people care research institute) On the film, we saw some scenes that a daughter cares her demented father at home.



Ms. Hitomi Suwa

### Scene 1: Father does not eat his meal.

If you say: "Eat it quickly" it has no effect.

The father should see that meal and he must understand what he has to do. (It's time to eat meal.)

You have to get close to your father slowly in front of your father and on his view height.

### Scene 2: Father asks same thing many times.

You should not say: You asked that some time ago." If someone has dementia he (she) forgets that he (she) asked thing already and asks same thing again. Then he (she) wants to escape from trouble having anxiety.

You have to say / answer same thing many times kindly.

You can ask some simple thing to help you as he (she) can feel easy and forget that anxiety.

### Scene 3: Father does not take off his cloth. (Bath time, or Bed time)

When you have to get in your father's bed room or get in his private space, you have to knock the room door and your father needs to know / understand that you are getting closer to him.

You need to get your father's approval and he understands what you are doing.

You have to explain what you are doing. ( ex: I prepare warm water for you, or I shall clean your body with this towel.)

### ☆Most important and common thing at any scene.

- Do actions slowly with smile.
- Explain what you are doing having eye contact with each other.
- Knock the door before going into his (bed)room even though he is your family. You can go there later again if he does not understand what it means.

- Use positive words (For Example: You feel easy as the room is warm. You are wearing your favorite pajama. You can sleep on your soft, warm bed.)

It's very important that you tell him that you are happy when you are with him, You are glad if he eats his meal.

Finally,

Sometimes it does not go well, however, it does not mean that your kindness is not enough, nor your father does not like you. It means your approach technique does not reach him correctly. Please try again, maybe in another way. Changing approach to him must give another opportunity to become closer to him.

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After watching this film, we had lunch and discussing about "care".

Hitomi told about her work at elderly people's house.

Mrs. Yoko Huys-Watanuki told her work as "Thuiszorg".

We had a discussion about examples:

☆Ms. Yoshioka told about her parents in law. (Mother in law has dementia.)

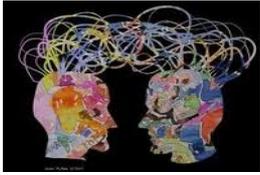
☆Mrs. Steenbergen told her mother who lives in the elderly people's care home in Japan.

☆I (Peters) told about my mother in law who has a light dementia.

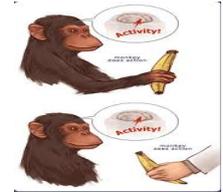
We (were a small group of 6 persons) had a nice and significant study meeting even though we had a stormy weather.

☆ On the 5th of April we had a on-line chat instead of study meeting because of "Corona Virus" we had a very nice time.

Nobue Peters (who is in charge by NALC Holland East)



## Empathy is not just Feeling but also Action



The word “Empathy “was launched in the beginning of last century (20<sup>th</sup>) .

Before this philosophers; economists et al. used words like “Sympathy”. Which means someone expresses an understanding about what other people feel .

Empathy is more than just only feeling and understanding. It is the (cap-)ability that someone is able to put him-her-self in another person’s position; like a proverb “Empathy is the ability to put yourself in another’s shoes “. That gives people the possibility to share with each other. Active listening to other people is an important attitude for this sharing.

Almost everybody has the potentiality to explore Empathy but ,like other talents, this has to be developed in good education and stimulated through” modelling “by involved people. Moreover a safe and secure family and environment is a necessary condition.

At the end of last Century Neurologists Biologists et al did a lot of experiments with M.R.I first on monkeys to find the origin of Empathy in the brains.

By coincidence they found that one part of the brains was activated when another monkey e.g. ate a banana. They called this part of the brains : “Mirror Neurons” ( in Dutch: “ Spiegel Neuronen” )

After these first experiments a lot of other experiences with human beings has been confirmed these findings.

**Through further study Scientists could distinguish 3 Components of Empathy**

### **-1-First Component**

**The unconscious Response to the other’s Actions or Emotion**

In daily life everybody has certain experiences e.g person -A- sees another person -B- almost is falling down and then unconsciously person -A- will be frightened; that is caused by the Mirror Neurons.

Another example person-A- sees another person is crying by sadness-B- Then person -A also gets the tears in his/her eye.

### **-2- Second Component**

**The conscious Response on the other’s Activities/Position**

This a cognitive process. We understand the meaning of another’s activities/position-A- and we could express our understanding/empathy.

-B- feels reinforced and understood.

e.g. a Volunteer want to understand the suffering of a vulnerable person and is expressing this understanding.

### **-3- Third Component**

**Decision making to start empathic Action**

This is a continuation on -2- Person -A- feels and understand Empathy and find a way how to support person -B- .

The Component -1- is unconscious and spontaneous.

The Components -2- and -3- can be educated from early childhood by parents ; taught by teachers at school and as adults trained by coaches.

**In summary we are able to move beyond unconscious response; cognitive process toward Empathic Action in sharing with others ;which we called: “Reciprocity”. This provides Solidarity with other people in broader Perspectives.**

**Reciprocity is possible in a Community where people exchange their activities on a mutual basis e.g. Time-banking which has been developed by e.g. NALC.**

**In this Newsletter and former Newsletters you can read many impressive experiences with this Empathic Actions.**

**We need this kind of Actions; even more with recent crisis (Coronavirus ).With less financial help people need more practical support by Volunteers.**

(Ton Millenaar)

## A team Visiting F san (F san = Mrs F. We call her "F san" in this tekst)

There is a team visiting in turn to see a Japanese lady who is a resident of an elderly people home, the team is named "Visiting F san team" as it is. I would like to tell about the team, how it was established, how the members feel when they are visiting her.



F san (90+) used to live at her own home with her son in a village close to Amsterdam till she moved to the elderly people home located in the same village a few years ago. F san was still fit according to the members who already knew her at the time. When they paid a visit to her home, she welcomed them asking "Pleas have a cup of tea! How about a piece of cake?". Peony flowers were beautifully blooming in the large garden where two small dogs were playing freely. F san told with her smiling face that she was always looking forward to taking a walk with the dogs so many times a day as allowed, and especially to chatting with neighborhood children in the daytime.

She is fond of sports very much and sports program was always on TV when the members visited her. And she was talking happily about many sports stories which she was good at when she was young. She often worn dresses in light blue and told us "If you become old, it is better to wear bright colour clothes, because it makes your feeling bright as well!"

She was such a lively granny, but unfortunately dementia progressed year by year, and her son's capacity for taking care of her reached the limit. And it was decided to move into the facility. Some years later the son passed away. Grandchildren were not in the Netherlands, and it didn't look like that she had communication with any family members in Japan either.

Several women were wondering how it could be possible that someone visits F san even once a week. Then they formed a team to realize it. And now 10 members are associating in the team. Actually I am one of the team members as well. We are using Net-Schedule system to manage who visits her when, and after visiting her we are reporting to the other members about the situation through e-mail and WhatsApp. Some of those 10 people are belonging to NALC, or Nichi-Ran Silver Net or not belonging to any. It is a group of people, who gathered together without any special arrangement, just in a natural way.

If I read the reports made by the members, I see that someone is chatting with her, or singing together, or treats her with Japanese cuisine or sweets. There is a person, who pushes her wheelchair for a walk and have a cup of tea at a cafe downstairs.

Through WhatsApp we are chatting like this : "I heard that she fell down from her bed!", "She was not so active today. She said it doesn't hurt, but I'm worried". "She had good complexion today. She was glad to my visit and told a lot of stories. However, they were the same old stories as usual~". "She was speaking in Japanese to me, but when the nurse came to her during our conversation, she switched immediately the language to Dutch, it was really amazing that she showed such accuracy". "She likes watermelon very much and ate many slices today. Please bring watermelon to her, she will be surely very happy even small amount.", etc.

I asked some members about their impressions. "If F san doesn't feel well, I feel also depressed. But you know, if she is in a good mood, I'm so happy as if I want to sing." "It is very difficult to continue this kind of activity by one person, but if some people are cooperating with each other, we can go on". "When I read reports, I can see how the other members are interacting with F san and I can often have empathy with. Also feeling of being grateful to my fellow volunteers is the driving force behind my further activities, I guess".

Even after interrupting the visit by Corona virus crisis, we are calling the facility to ask her situation, so I can see all the members are taking care of F san and wishing her happiness and safety. The visiting team will surely continue to be an active group.

( JP text : M. Higashi  
ENG. Translation: K. Iwasaki )

**When the government announced that we should stay at home because of Corona, we hear many nice stories of people offering help / asking help. The followings were found on the media. The spirit of “Alles is mogelijk” is to be seen !**

- “ Dear neighbor, if you are in trouble to go to the supermarket, I will do it for you. “ this message came immediately via “buurt app” Very helpful offer for the elder people living alone.
- When the restaurants must close their doors following the governmental announcement, many restaurants sold their meats, vegetable,,inside the restaurants with low price. Win & Win !
- It is hard for the adolescents to stay home. They go out and they get penalty as they are together with many other boys and girls. They were advised to do volunteer work at “Voedselbank” It was win & win as Voedselbank had shortage of Volunteers - usually many elder volunteers are working there. The boys and girls were working hard !
- A big concert was cancelled. The company which should do the lighting up of the event had all equipments in their truck. This truck did not go back to their office, but went to a hospital to light up the hospital building to cheer up the medical staff who are working days and nights.
- A young singer had to cancel her concert. She went to an old people’s house and made her “stage” in the garden. She was singing with her full voice. The “audiences” inside the house were surprised by this young lady and enjoying her performance.
- Fire stations offered their lift cars to the people who wants to visit their family isolated in the old people’s house ( above in the high buildings)
- “Dear neighbors, I have one request to you. I walk everyday the same way with my small son as he can not walk long. It is nice if we can play during that walking time. Could you please put your teddy bear at you front window? Then I can say to him “ where are the teddy bears today?” I know he will be very happy with that.” This was a request from a young mother. This story was on TV one day and after that we see many Teddy bears at the front windows all over the country. (M. Higashi)

**Corona problem changed our lives. Maybe we learned: “It costs you not much to make others happy. “**

## ~~ 2019/2020 Membership fee: 22 euro/year ~~

This membership fee is to cover the expenses for the meetings, and the office supply.

We appreciate your understandings and kindly ask your payment.

- Financial Year 2019/2020 is from Sep. 2019 till Aug. 2020). Please mention this at your payment.

• **Account name: stichting NALC Holland**

**Account number: NL67INGB0006896387**

Any questions about the fee: please contact K. Matsubara [kayenkayo@gmail.com](mailto:kayenkayo@gmail.com)

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