

My Message for the 23rd Touhoku Occupational Therapy Congress in Japan August 24, 2011

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Title: Noda village and Fudai village

We went to Noda village and Fudai village this summer vacation. These are two villages in North Iwate prefecture facing the Pacific. I have visited this area every year for the last 26 years. In summer, people used to gather at the Tofugaura coast in Noda village. The coastline was very beautiful, and the sand festival of Noda brought us the real feeling of summer. The Tofugaura coast side on route 45 had a delicious sea food noodle restaurant and a beautiful row of pine trees.

On the other hand, Fudai village had a large breakwater outside the town area. The breakwater was big and eerie. And there was a campground with a beautiful sandy beach when we passed through the breakwater. Fudai fishing port had a delicious seafood restaurant. My family played in the water at the Noda coast and had a BBQ at the campground of Fudai. It is a pleasant memory.

However, the beautiful coast, the beautiful row of pine trees and the delicious restaurant have all disappeared from Noda now. Of course the campground with the beautiful sandy beach and the fishing port restaurant has disappeared from Fudai too. Furthermore, many people have passed away due to the tsunami in Noda. We witnessed the scratch of the tsunami. I was very sad and felt empty in my heart when I saw this natural menace. On the other hand, we knew that the breakwater of Fudai saved many inhabitants who were able to rely on this eerie breakwater. Human wisdom was superior to the natural menace there.

We also visited Kuki district in Kuji city for the first time. This area experienced a lot of suffering from the tsunami which occurred by the Chile earthquake about 50 years ago. The people moved to mountain plateaus afterwards. Now they go down a steep mountain road to go to their fisheries. They seem to have only slightly suffered from the great East Japan earthquake disaster. This visit taught us the methods of how people can live with nature. And we experienced a "sense of awe" at the same time.

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