

Japan America Society of Minnesota

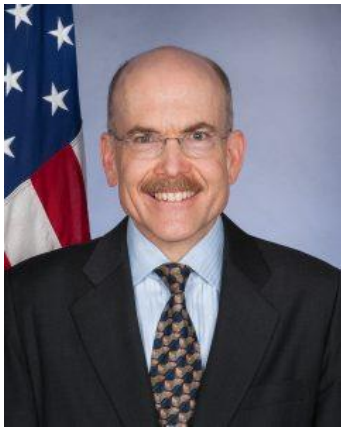


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How to Manage a Crisis: Seven Lessons from the 2011 Triple Disaster in Japan



Ambassador James Zumwalt

JASM Executive Director Rio Saito asked Ambassador James Zumwalt to give us his thoughts and advice, from his vast experience, about what we can do as a community to work through the crisis we are facing today. Ambassador Zumwalt is chairman of the Japan America Society of Washington, D.C. (JASWDC). JASWDC values Zumwalt's expertise and insight as one of the United States' most experienced and well-regarded experts on the U.S.-Japan

bilateral relationship. Zumwalt will help to establish a new Japanese-American cultural exchange facility at the JASWDC office in downtown Washington, D.C. Ambassador Zumwalt's distinguished 36-year career in foreign service included time in Tokyo and Beijing as well as Africa. He was responsible for policy toward Japan and Korea as deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of East Asia Affairs. Ambassador Zumwalt also served as CEO of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. Zumwalt has ties with Japan going back to a high school exchange in Osaka, continuing through college and his long diplomatic career. He speaks Japanese, French, and some Chinese, and currently resides in Washington, D.C.

The March 11th earthquake off the northeast coast of Japan and the resulting destructive tsunamis caused 22,000 deaths, left 400,000 persons homeless, and damaged 300 billion dollars of property. The following day, as Japan struggled to manage this unexpected humanitarian crisis, the government declared a nuclear disaster at two large nuclear power plants that threatened to release radioactive isotopes into the atmosphere.

At the time, I was the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy Tokyo responsible for coordinating the U.S. government's civilian response to the disaster. Although the crisis we confronted in 2011 was completely different from our present public health crisis, I do believe we learned lessons about crisis management that remain relevant today.

1. Be Prepared: Staff training is essential. Schedule regular fire and first-responder training, stock emergency supplies, and establish alternate disaster communication channels. U.S. Embassy Tokyo staff understood their roles in evacuating the Embassy chancery because we had just conducted a fire drill.

2. Communicate, communicate, communicate:

Organizations must communicate with their own employees and the public clearly, early, and regularly. The U.S. Embassy Tokyo communicated with its staff with daily morning briefings to promote transparency and to reassure staff of their safety. Communications with the public must be timely, relevant, clear, consistent, and credible. Embassy Tokyo hired a health risk communications expert to improve our public communications.

3. Organize staff efforts for a long-term response:

Organizations must organize their staff workflow to sustain a crisis response. Crisis responders need time for eating, sleeping, and exercise if they are to continue essential operations throughout a crisis.

4. Promote mental health: Organization leaders must manage the mental health of their staff as their organization responds to public needs. The responders from a community in crisis are themselves crisis victims with mental health needs.

5. Make timely decisions, then adjust: Organization leaders must make decisions with imperfect information during a crisis. As more information becomes available, it may then be necessary to change course, so leaders must be flexible in adjusting previous decisions. (But don't waste time criticizing past actions. There will be time for a lessons-learned exercise after the crisis is over. For now, focus on the present and future, not the past.)

6. Bring in expertise – then listen: During the crisis in Japan, the U.S. government consulted experts from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institute of Health, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Energy Department. Their expertise was critical to forging an effective response to the triple disaster.

7. Organize a whole-of-government response: No one entity can manage a large-scale crisis alone. It is important to consult, communicate, and coordinate, and to then organize all entities' contributions into a coherent whole-of-government crisis response.

One final lesson I learned in responding to the triple disaster in Japan was that communities are resilient. Countless numbers of people stepped up by taking extraordinary measures, sometimes at great personal risk, to contribute to solutions. Although we are now facing a new crisis, I remain confident that Americans again will rise to the challenge to manage this threat.

Ambassador James Zumwalt

Tokyo under a COVID-19 “State of Emergency”

Mr. David Smith was JASM President from 2012 to 2014. He is living in Tokyo, Japan with his family and shared the COVID-19 situation there with us.



David Smith and his wife, Olivia with Gracie

By David Smith, JASM President 2012-2014

April 12, 2020 The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, hitchhiked to Hokkaido with an unsuspecting Chinese tourist intent on enjoying the Sapporo Snow Festival in early January 2020. The first Japanese patient was diagnosed in late January and the fuse was lit. For the most part, Tokyo citizens shrugged, donned a face mask, and went about their normal lives.

Everything changed on February 4th, when the Diamond Princess cruise ship docked in Yokohama with numerous infected passengers and crew members. For the next month the world’s media was focused on this floating petri-dish which incubated 712 COVID-19 cases and resulted in 12 deaths.

By the beginning of March, COVID-19 was foremost in everyone’s mind, and many companies asked their staff to work from home, including my company, Abbott. Since early March, I have been working from home and using my kitchen table as my home office. My wife and I spend the vast majority of our time in our central Tokyo apartment. The only exceptions are for our daily dog walks through local parks.



Hibiya Park

Although Tokyoites began social distancing, restaurants, bars, and night clubs remained open and the novel coronavirus continued its slow spread throughout Japan. As the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases increased, so did fear, as we watched the horrific scenes from Italy, Spain, and most recently, New York City.

Daily life disruption seems particularly apparent in sports.



Gracie in the Hibiya Park

For the first time, the Spring sumo tournament was held without spectators. This was quickly followed by the cancellation of the legendary Japan High School Baseball Tournament held in Koshien Stadium each year. Professional baseball and soccer leagues have postponed the start of their seasons until the situation improves. However, the biggest gut kick was the heart-wrenching decision to postpone the 2020 Olympics Games that were to be held in Tokyo this summer.



David Smith and Gracie

The COVID-19 risk was driven home by the passing of renowned Japanese comedian Ken Shimura. Suddenly, everyone knew a famous Japanese person who died as direct result of this vicious virus.

On April 7, Tokyo imposed a “State of Emergency” through May 6 to more aggressively address the growing health crisis. This emergency order has closed most entertainment venues, bars, and many restaurants, and has created significant financial hardships for small businesses. Although significantly reduced, there are still many people using public transportation to get to work. Many retail and grocery stores, restaurants, and construction firms continue to operate as usual. However, the number of people disregarding social distancing recommendations continues to fall.

These are stressful times for us all. Let’s hope the “State of Emergency” measures curtail the rising COVID-19 diagnoses in Japan. As there is a significant lag between infection and diagnosis, we will not know for several weeks. However, I know that the Japanese people are strong and resilient. I am certain they will find a way to work together to beat this global economic and health challenge.

Membership News

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Frances Bressman Egan, John and Hiroko Shade,
David and Olivia Smith, Kashi Yoshkawa,
Magara Maeda

Thanks to the following renewing Corporate members:

Deloitte Tax, LLP

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A Word from Nihonjinkai

This month we are sharing some recipes from Nihonjinkai members. We hope we can gather at the Japanese Library again soon, to share these dishes in person. Until then, take care!



Nihonjinkai members: Kay Merrit and Suzuko Erickson

Suzie's Sukiyaki (submitted by Suzuko Erickson)

Traditionally, sukiyaki is cooked in a big cast iron pan in the middle of a table and eaten communally, with all the dinner guests around the table. Each guest has their own bowl of rice in front of them. When the sukiyaki is ready, each guest uses their chopsticks to pick out the food items that they would like to eat and places them on top of their rice or on a small plate next to their rice bowl. Then they eat the food they have picked out between mouthfuls of rice. When they finish those items, they go back to the pan to pick out more to eat. A sukiyaki pan over a single burner can be used, but it might be easier to find a large electric frypan or shabu-shabu pan. The pan needs to be 10" or larger.

Ingredients (Serves 4-6 people)

- 3-4 cups water
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 lbs. tenderloin or sirloin steak - sliced thin (*If you freeze the meat before slicing, you will be able to easily slice it thinly.*)
- 3 bunches green onions – white section sliced diagonally; discard the green ends
- 3 medium onions – quartered
- 3 carrots – sliced thin
- 1 head Napa cabbage – cut into 2-inch wide slices, then cut in half in the middle of the white part

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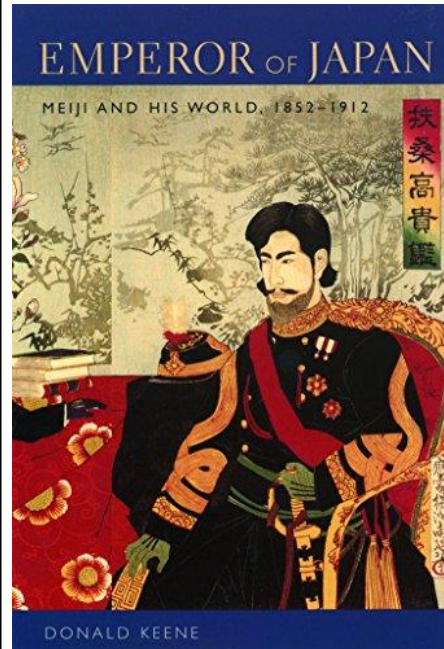


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Tom Haeg's Book Review



Emperor of Japan: Meiji and His World;
Donald Keene,
Columbia University
Press, 2002, 922 pages.

American-born Japanese scholar, Donald Keene, acclaimed Japanese literature and translation expert, recently died at the age of 96. He is credited with over 600 works and 1,400 publications translated into 16 languages. Yes, he certainly passes the prolific test.

Emperor is his crowning academic achievement: an

historical biography of Emperor Meiji (formerly Sachinomiya) and his eponymous Restoration (1852-1912). This 900-page opus demonstrates his intellectual experience in all things Japanese.

While early on Keene admits a "...general lack of knowledge of the man [Meiji]...", he then contradicts himself that "...so much material is available..." His go-to source is the official chronicler, *Meiji tenno ki (Record of the Emperor Meiji)*, an official 12-volume record. In addition, he relies on a plethora of books written immediately after the Emperor's 1912 death, plus a trove of journals and diaries by foreign and domestic dignitaries. Keene spices the text with legends, anecdotes, and interesting gossip asserting Meiji's alcoholic proclivity, an appetite for courtesans, and a penchant for equine gamesmanship.

Meiji's progressive social and economic accomplishments are absolutely astonishing: abolishing feudalism, moving the capital to Tokyo, centralizing all political decision-making, land reform, mandatory education coupled with a national system of public schools, creation of the prefecture system, enacting a constitution, massive industrialization, tax reform, adoption of western technology and science, opening ports to international trade, re-writing every foreign treaty, jettisoning Confucian hierarchy and replacing it with modern Western models of enlightenment, nationwide military conscription, an army, a navy, adopting a dominant national dialect (*hyojungo*), modernity. And more. Under his watch, Japan was the first Asian nation to defeat a European empire in the Russo-Japanese War. It was settled by the 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth mediated by (drum roll, please)... President Theodore Roosevelt.

While the text sometimes drifts by supposing events using descriptors such as "this may have happened", "perhaps" or "seems to have been", Keene does this so well and his academic credentials are so impeccable, well, we just forgive these parenthetical opines because in the end *Emperor* is such a great read.

Tom Haeg

Japanese Conversation Clubs



The Japanese Speaking Club is an informal meeting place for those wishing to practice Japanese. We encourage those just beginning the language as well as native speakers to gather at **Corner Coffee** in Uptown Minneapolis to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to speak Japanese. Activities are now suspended until local nonessential businesses reopen.

Date/Time: ONCE CORNER COFFEE REOPENS, Every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. (however, most people do not show up until at least 3:30.)

Place: Corner Coffee
1414 W 28th St, Minneapolis, MN 55408 (Just east of Hennepin Avenue South)

Check out another conversation group: **Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup Group** (<https://www.twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com/>)

Note: This is a private group. In order to join, a questionnaire must be completed at the web site linked above.

The goal of Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup is language fluency in either Japanese or English. This group is for Japanese language learners who want to improve their Japanese speaking skills or/and native Japanese speakers who want to improve their English speaking. Those who just want to help out are also welcome.

Parts to the meetup: 自己紹介 (self-introductions), 質疑応答 (questions and answers about language) and 会話練習 (conversation practice).

Meetings: Edina (Monday), Minnetonka (Thursday), Saint Paul (Saturday).

Since March 16 the group is holding all meetings online.

For any question about this group, please email Mariquita Anderson: mariquita@twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com

A Word from Nihonjinkai continues...

1 cup sliced button or shiitake mushrooms **or** 1 bunch enoki mushrooms (cut off and discard bottom part of enoki bunch; tear the rest into smaller bunches)

1 cup bean sprouts
1 package frozen spinach
Japanese soy sauce to taste
Cooked rice

Prepare all the ingredients and keep them on separate plates/bowls near the frypan. Put the water and oil in the frypan and heat to a low simmer on medium. When the water and oil are heated, add the meat slices one at a time in one corner of the pan. Do the same with the onion quarters in a different corner of the pan. Add the rest of the ingredients, keeping each separate from the others. Add soy sauce to taste. Cook over medium heat 5-10 minutes. In the last minute of cooking, add the sliced green onions. **DO NOT OVERCOOK.** Serve over hot rice.

Teriyaki Salmon (submitted by Kay Merritt)

4 small Salmon (with skin)
Teriyaki Sauce: 3 tablespoons shoyu
3 tablespoons cooking sake
3 tablespoons mirin
1 tablespoon sugar

Mix all Teriyaki sauce ingredients. Heat, then cool. Reserve 1/3 of sauce. Pour the rest over salmon and let sit for 30 minutes. Preheat grill. Grill marinated salmon about 6 minutes total, turning at 3 minutes, until done. Add 2 teaspoons sugar to remaining sauce; stir to dissolve sugar. Brush cooked salmon with the remaining sauce.

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通信

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The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a non-profit, non-political association engaged in bringing the peoples of Japan and the United States closer together in mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation. Through programs and interchange, it endeavors to promote an appreciation of cultural, educational, economic, public, and other affairs of interest to both peoples. Membership in the society is open to individuals, corporations, and other organizations interested in furthering its programs.

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a member of the National Association of Japan-America Societies.

(Please report any inaccuracies you find in this publication to jasm.interns@gmail.com)



*Utagawa Hiroshige, Suidō Bridge and Surugadai, from the series One Hundred Famous Views of Edo, 1857. Published by Sakanaya Eikichi. Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper 13-1/4 × 8-11/16 in. (vertical ōban).
Minneapolis Institute of Art, Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.115*

The carp-shaped streamers, white flags, and red wind cones shown here flying above gray roof tiles are decorations associated with celebrations on the fifth day of the fifth month. Originating in China, Tango festival was introduced to Japan in the eighth century as a day to wish for the good health over the coming summer months. Under Japan's first samurai regime, in the fourteenth century, the festival was expanded to include wishes for the strength and good fortune of boys and young men—the future warriors of the country. Carp-shaped streamers, koi-nobori in Japanese, symbolize the great potential of male children because the ancient Chinese believed that strong carp that swam upstream against the strong current turned into dragons. In this print, the square flags are emblazoned with images of Shōki, a Chinese scholar who vowed to rid the realm of evil. Thus, Shōki, became an emblem of male determination and courage.