Member Care Update

Ethnê-MC Facilitation Team
To contact us: mc@ethne.net

Ethnê-MC Update **Issue 2: August 2007**

Welcome to the *Update*! This monthly report informs you about important member care resources, news, and topics. We especially want to further equip people with member care responsibilities who are focussing on mission/aid personnel in least-reached people groups (LPGs). Note that each report is archived on our web site: **www.ethne.net/membercare**. Please share the *Update* with others and your networks. Feel free to submit materials for us to include too. May the Lord bless you!

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The Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?
Hebrews 13:6

In this Issue: Stress and Support for Mission/Aid Workers

SPECIAL EVENTS: Gatherings to help you connect/contribute to the member care field

- *USA: The Heart of Humanitarian Relief, November 2007;* **www.Headington-Institute.org**

This special symposium looks at current issues in managing/supporting humanitarian workers.

SPECIAL RESOURCES: Tools to further equip you for member care

- *Leave Right—Enter Right, Dave Pollock and Interaction;* **office@interactionint.org**

Core tips on a video CD to help expatriates transition well, to/from host and passport cultures.

- *Christian Recovery International;* **www.christianrecovery.com**

Check out these multi-lingual resources on addiction/recovery. Share them with others.

- *Coaching for Organisations;* **www.creativeresultsmanagement.com**

Coaching is often done in-house by people with basic training. Get more good training!

SPECIAL TOPICS: Current issues and approaches related to member care

- *New Research on Stressors for Mission Workers, by Brenda Bosch;* **purejoy@gmx.ch**

Brenda summarises what stresses and refreshes workers, based on her extensive doctoral research.

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The *Update* is compiled on behalf of the *Ethnê-Member Care Network*. We are a growing *network of colleagues* from different nations and organisations. Our passion is to see the least-reached people groups (LPGs) experience the transforming love of Jesus Christ. We are committed to help provide and develop member care resources in order to support the diversity of people/senders who are working among LPGs. Our *Network* is part of the Ethnê to Ethnê Movement (**www.ethne.net**).

Email: mc@ethne.net
Ethnê-MC Website: **www.ethne.net/membercare**
Subscribe: Ethne-MC-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
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SPECIAL EVENTS: Gatherings to help you connect/contribute to the member care field

- *USA: The Heart of Humanitarian Relief; People In Aid and the Headington Institute*, 14.11.07

This gathering in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, is a one-day international symposium for managers and leaders. It will be particularly suited to those responsible for management, human resources, or staff health and welfare in humanitarian organizations. The symposium will showcase good-practice and recent research relevant to managing people effectively in high-pressure situations; and facilitate learning, sharing and networking among the humanitarian aid community (faith-based and secular). Planned keynotes will focus on effective performance review and environmental scanning, the local implications of global organizational policies, the core of performance management for international multi-cultural teams, and more. Planned afternoon seminars will include coaching, conflict and communication, and psychological first aid.

Contact: www.Headington-Institute.org and/or **www. PeopleinAid.org**

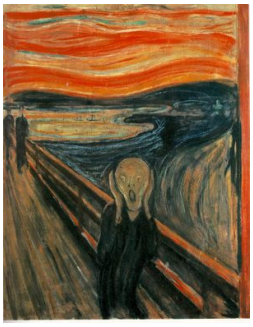
SPECIAL RESOURCES: Tools to further equip you for member care

- *Leave Right—Enter Right: Building a RAFT, Dave Pollock and Interaction*

Looking for a smoother transition as you travel and move internationally? This video CD equips expatriates with the tools needed to effectively transition to/from their host or passport countries. The video is hosted by the late Dave Pollock and includes four sections, each about five minutes long: Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewell, and Think Destination. It includes worksheets and is designed for use by individuals, families or small teams.

Contact: office@interactionint.org Note: The Interaction web site is: **www.tckinteract.net**

- *Christian Recovery International—Get help and share these resources with others!*



Many mission/ aid workers can struggle with compulsive behaviours that seriously disrupt their lives and the lives of co-workers and family members. These compulsive behaviours—addictions—require special help. Common examples include pornography, overwork, eating, alcohol and drugs, and even exercise and caffeine. Basically the addictive process involves habitually using a person, substance, or experience to stimulate/sedate oneself, in order to deal with internal and external stress. It is marked with a denial/minimisation of the problem, secretiveness, and an inability to change via sheer will-power. Christian Recovery International (CRI) a coalition of Christian groups dealing with addictions. The web links on their web site include resources/organizations in German, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, etc.

Contact: www.christianrecovery.com

- *Coaching for Organisations—Training/reading resources from Dr. Keith Webb*

"Contrary to popular belief, most coaching is not done by expert coaches from outside the organization, otherwise known as external or executive coaches. Rather, most coaching is done by already overworked line managers. In non-profit organizations line managers are supervisors, team leaders, pastors, field directors, regional leaders, and the like. But manager coaches receive very little training. Surprisingly, 38% of respondents [in one UK study] received less than two days training, and around a third received two-five days training. My experience shows non-profit organizations do no better. Two books that provide practical help for manager coaches are: *First Among Equals* and *The Coaching Manager*" (see links below on these books). Upcoming coaching courses by Keith are in Singapore (August 2007), Los Angeles (September 2007), and Hungary (January 2008).

Contact: www.creativeresultsmanagement.com

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SPECIAL TOPIC

New Research on Stress for Mission Workers

Brenda Bosch, Member Care Training Consultant, purejoy@gmx.ch

As part of my doctoral dissertation, I posted a survey for mission workers on the Internet. Participants included 2228 mission workers from a myriad of nationalities, host countries and sending agencies.

Stressors. Of the 37 possible stressors in the survey, the following had the five highest scores: **financial pressure, overwork, language barrier, lack of spiritual disciplines, being under-staffed**. "Financial pressure" was by far the most difficult and stressful issue. If the figures for "Overwork" and "Under-staffed" are added together, the stressor "Financial Pressures" will still be higher than this combined total. "Lack of Spiritual Disciplines" was the fourth highest stressor. This "lack" can leave workers in a vulnerable position, especially if prayer support networks are not solidly in place. A question for further research is whether being overworked and under-staffed contributes to a lack of spiritual disciplines, affecting the energy and time to build one's relationship with God. Note that the results vary by country or region. For example, workers in one country in Central Asia emphasised language barrier, cultural differences, and conflicts.

What Refreshes Workers? Out of 25 choices, the following "refreshment factors" had the five highest scores: **friendship with co-workers**, **husband/wife/children**, **friendship with locals**, **attending a conference**, **reading books.** It is a pleasant surprise to see how important workers value relationships, especially in light of the research on the severe impact of conflicts among workers. The participants indicated that nothing refreshes them more than their relationships with their co-workers, family and locals. It is also encouraging to see that workers' marriage partner and children are such sources of refreshment. It will be an interesting topic to research why conferences were rated fourth highest as a source of refreshment. Personally I think that conference organisers should not overload the programme with too many activities, but allow ample time for relationship building, networking and relaxation with others. I also note with concern that spiritual vitality/disciplines was not one of the 10 highest factors of refreshment.

Finances. Workers indicated the percentage of financial income they were receiving compared to what they really needed. Of the **2228** participants, 32% of them receive only 0 to 60% of required finances. When workers do not have enough income to live on, this could also put a financial strain on their co-workers who may feel responsible for their survival. Some sending agencies maintain scales of fees for communal accommodation and other expenses, based on the levels of income that different nationalities receive. When people work in a culture where the average national income is much higher than in their home culture, the strain can be severe on them as well as on their team members.

Care that Workers Desire from Their Agency. The survey included 28 possible options concerning the type of agency care that was desired within the next year. The top seven options included: **someone to listen to me, fitting my gifting to my role, personal development, friendship with co-workers, regular debriefing, regular accountability, prayer partnership on the field.** All of these forms of care, except "Personal Development" and "Fitting my Gifting to my Role", have to do with listening to workers. It is therefore important for teams and co-workers to mutually care for each other via actively listening.

Reasons Why Workers Might Leave the Field. Out of the 37 choices available on the survey, the following top seven reasons were marked for leaving the field: **financial pressures, conflict with co-workers, family issues, needs of their children, cultural issues, emotional struggles, being overworked, unrealised goals, health.**

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Other survey questions to be processed include: **the most valuable care received from one's sending agency, and the most important issues for training member care workers**. Participants could also write comments about field life. The most popular topic was the lack of support from home and sending churches Many also commented on how they love what they are doing, regardless of the stressors, and how they love the Lord. For more survey results contact the author: **purejoy@gmx.ch**