Member Care Update

Ethnê-MC Facilitation Team
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Ethnê-MC Update **Issue 2: September 2007**

Welcome to the *Update*! This monthly report informs you about important member care resources, news, and topics. This *Update* is our second one focussing on Tentmakers (see July 2007).We especially want to further equip people with member care responsibilities who are focussing on mission/aid personnel in least-reached people groups (LPGs). In addition to the mission/aid emphasis, each report usually contains material from the international humanitarian, health, business, and human resource sectors. Each report is also 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.

The Lord bless you!

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God guards you when you leave and when you return.
He guards you now. He guards you always. PS 121:8

In this Issue: Caring for Tentmakers

SPECIAL RESOURCES: Tools to further equip you for member care

- *Working Your Way to the Nations: A Guide to Effective Tentmaking; Jonathan Lewis*

  This practical book and on-line course help people successfully prepare for their tentmaking life.
  www.tentmakernet.com/working/working.pdf and **www.tentmakernet.com/resources**

- *Business as Mission Resources, Scott Moreau and Mike O'Rear*

  Check out the many on-line resources listed in this *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* article (7/07).
  www.emqonline.com

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

- *United Kingdom: Building Human Resource Capacity, People In Aid; October 2007*

  This day-workshop focuses on further developing skills to manage/support humanitarian workers.
  www.PeopleinAid.org

SPECIAL TOPICS: Current issues and approaches related to member care

- *Tentmaker Care: Report from Tentmakers Congress; Pramila Rajendran, Peter Shankar*

  Study the summary from Pramila and Peter's interactive workshop on supporting tentmakers.
  www.tentmakersinternational.info

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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**
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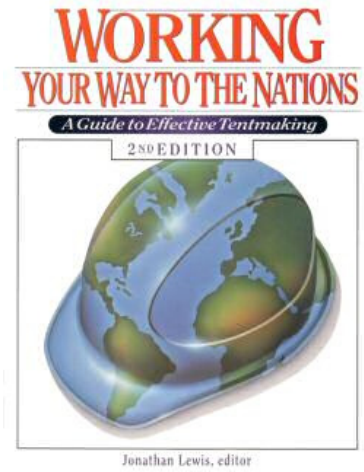
SPECIAL RESOURCES: Tools to further equip you for member care

- *Working Your Way to the Nations: A Guide to Effective Tentmaking; by Jonathan Lewis*



This practical book and on-line course is a tremendous help to successfully prepare people for tentmaking. It consist of essays from several authors and is designed as a study text for individual or group use. Anyone contemplating the tentmaking role would be well advised to check out this book. Contents include chapters on personal readiness, Biblical foundations of tentmaking, understanding the host culture, becoming a "belonger", team dynamics, the role of the local church, deployment, and more. It is organised mostly as a "workbook", and is available to download for free in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, and Arabic. **Contacts:** **www.tentmakernet.com/working/working.pdf** and **www.tentmakernet.com/resources**

- *Business as Mission Resources (BAM), Scott Moreau and Mike O'Rear*

Each issue of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* (*EMQ*) includes an article with current on-line resources for a particular topic. The latest *EMQ* (July 2007) article focuses on the world of Business as Mission. It is available on line (for a subscription fee) as well as in the usual hard copy of the journal. Some of the main resources listed in this article include:

EMQ
A professional journal serving the worldwide mission community

1. Directories with lin**ks** to BAM sites: Business as Mission Resource Center **www.businessasmission.com** (they also provide a core list of books/articles related to BAM; and the International Coalition of Workplace Ministries **www.icwm.net**
2. Organisational sites: AZTEM **www.aztem.org** and Business Professional Network **www.bpn.org**
3. Alliances and Networks: Canadian Tentmaker Network **www.tentmaking.org** and Tentmakernet **www.tentmakernet.com**
4. Guidelines for BAM: Lausanne Occasional Paper 59 on BAM, which includes a section on "The Essentials of Good Business as Mission" found at **www. www.lausanne.org/documents/2004forum/LOP59_IG30.pdf** and BAM Best Practices found at **www.Tentmakernet.com**
5. Audio and video files of conference presentations: **www.gbsf.org/bmt/Audio**.
6. There are also sites with BAM-related stories **www.globalopps.org/stories.htm** and blogs and discussions **www.aquilanetwork.org/blog/**.

Contact: **www.emqonline.com** (for this EMQ article, a subscription is required)

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

- *London, United Kingdom: Building Human Resource Capacity, People In Aid; 16 October 07*

This is a one-day workshop aimed at Human Resources staff who work at a senior and middle management level within their organisation. There will be the opportunity to discuss case studies presented by other organisations and to learn from and share with other participants. The workshop topics will include: The changing role of HR in INGOs; What effective business partnering means; The changing role of line managers; How to influence and lead change; How to influence and get buy-in from line managers; Working effectively across different cultures; and The importance of and how to build trust. It will be facilitated by Maggie Pankhurst.

PEOPLE IN AID

Contact: **www.PeopleinAid.org**

SPECIAL TOPIC (see also the July 2007 *Ethne-Member Care Update* on Tentmakers)

Workshop Report: Tentmaker Care
Tentmaker International Congress

Peter Shankar and Pramila Rajendran
www.tentmakersinternational.info

Tentmakers, mission executives, mission workers from eight countries, and representatives from a number of local churches and mission agencies attended the Tentmakers Member Care workshop (20 people). This workshop was held during the fifth Tentmakers International (TI) Congress, held at Port Dickson, Malaysia from the 9th-11th July 2007. The congress was organized by Tentmakers International and was hosted by MCGM, the national mission movement that facilitates mission endeavours in Malaysia. The workshop was a refreshing mix of Eastern and Western ideas with the same vision and goal to see a strong member care practice established for tentmakers serving both at home and the field.

The discussions included both member care issues for tentmaker care and general mission care. Practically it is difficult to separate these two areas, since there are overlapping needs and resources. We were concerned about the types of care that all workers need, and especially about tentmakers who may or may not be part of a sending group. It is essential to discuss this crucial area of member care openly and intentionally for the variety of tentmakers, with the general sense being that many of them may be without adequate supportive resources.

Presentation One by Pramila

An overview of "member care for tentmakers" was presented in light of who is a "tentmaker". A "tentmaker" is a Christian who works in a cross-cultural situation, is recognized by members of the host culture as something other than a "religious professional" and yet, in terms of his or her calling, commitment, motivation and training is a "mission worker" in every way. We agreed to adjust this definition according to our views about tentmakers. We also looked at the five-sphere model of member care: master care, self care, mutual care, sender care, specialist care, and network care.

We discussed several issues for tentmakers such as wages, hours of work, status, contact with locals, language learning, qualifications, stress level, and career path along with adjustments in new places with spouses, children and schooling, and home leave. Member care is intended to help tentmakers and mission workers in general to function effectively and not to overly "pamper" them! We also noted that in some instances a type of "emotional blackmail" could happen in which workers inappropriately expect or even demand excessive care/resources in exchange for their work.

We also explored what are or what could become "enemies":

- Discouragements/loneliness
- Personal baggage from the past
- Cultural convictions brought into the new culture; Culture shock and cultural adjustments
- Difficult faith elements
- Financial pressures
- Relationship struggles with colleagues, poor structures for resolving conflicts
- Lack of inter-personal skills (for many); Lack of channels for complaints/communications
- Opposite sex attractions
- Pastoral care and health/medical care
- Children's schooling and spouse adjustment
- Pension and retirement benefits; Personal housing
- Opposition from the locals
- Pressure from sending churches to produce 'numbers' and results, high expectations.
- Lack of orientation and preparation by home agency or local church
- Re-entry issues – etc

Culture shock is another issue in member care where we need to prepare tentmakers emotionally, mentally and spiritually. We looked at normal and abnormal stages of culture shock. Orientation on culture and culture shock should happen from the time workers consider mission and not just part of an intervention when people are actually going through culture shock. Leaders must be coached to recognise the possible reactions that result from culture shock.

Presentation Two by Peter

We looked at four broad issues of member care, related to field stages. Member care starts from the time of recruitment and continues through retirement. There are a variety of tentmakers, and in general they need to be sent and supported the way that mission workers are. A main difference is that tentmakers are often financially more stable and thus need less financial support from sending groups.

1. Pre-Field Care. Pre-field care includes proper screening, recruitment, family evaluation, orientation, psychological assessment, and addressing specific issues. The delegates felt that psychological/physical assessment is extremely important in recruiting cross-cultural workers. Cross-cultural candidates must go through complete medical tests before heading to the field. Delegates related stories of workers getting sick on the field, realising much later that they were already not well prior to going to the field. "Accidents" like this can be prevented! A couple of the delegates highlighted proper pre-field orientation (culture, work, ministry) to help candidates assimilate well into the society. Some commented that there needs to be clear communication between the sending church, sending agency and the receiving side. Further, if pre-field care is good, then, on-field and after-care would be easier. Candidates are also encouraged to do a short-term mission to gauge if they really want to do long-term mission.

2. Field-Care. Field-care includes field orientation, field placement, and field support. Delegates reiterated that "self-care" is of utmost importance for any cross-cultural worker. This includes time for personal reflection, rest, de-briefing, on-field skills training, recreation, etc. Delegates also agreed that "sending church care" is vital. Sending church care includes regular communication, moral support, logistics support, financial support, prayer support, etc. The delegates felt that there was a need to develop member care teams in each of their sending churches. One key of doing well on the field is to build good relationships in the local community to help understand the local culture better.

3. Re-Entry Care. This care is provided when mission workers return home for a break, furlough, or permanently. There must be people available to welcome them and assist with logistics, de-briefing, counselling, and the providing of basic essentials like housing, transportation, and communication tools. One of the main priorities for returning workers is to help them with re-entry stress which includes “reverse culture shock”. Workers on furlough must especially have time for rest. Churches play an important role in ensuring their workers have adequate rest before they head back to the field.

4. Team Care and Ongoing Support. Team care refers to the collaborative efforts of missions agencies, churches, and member care teams. Each functions according to their strengths and resources and provides ongoing medical care, counselling, conflict resolution, literature, support groups etc.

The Future

A spirit of sharing, learning, networking, and synergy was very evident during the member care workshop, as it was also in the overall Tentmakers International Congress. The delegates agreed to connect together so that resources can be shared, including when assistance is needed. A priority is for delegates to be in the member care communication loop, primarily via the *Ethne–MC Update* and possibly the TI group email. The delegates believe that the synergy at the member care workshop can only be continued through a commitment to communicating, learning, and sharing together.

After the TI Congress, a TI *Consultation* took place for two additional days to deliberate on issues and future plans. There were three main tracks. Tentmaker care was discussed during the Deployment and Mobilization Track. The track participants decided on two items: a) research tentmaking care regarding needs, issues, challenges; and b) establish a master structure of care for tentmakers. Peter Shankar is working on both of these items and an initial plan is to be developed by December 2007.