Member Care Update

Ethnê-MC Facilitation Team
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Ethnê-MC Update **Issue 2: July 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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In this Issue:
Supporting Tentmakers and Other International Christians

The providence of God has led us all into a new world of opportunity, danger, and duty.
World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910

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

- *Malaysia:* Tentmakers International Congress, July/07; **www.tentmakersinternational.info**

This is a global conference on Christian witness in secular work/study settings, especially LPGs

SPECIAL RESOURCES: Tools to further equip you for member care

- *Expat Expert—Resources for Living Abroad;* **www.expatexpert.com**

This site offers materials to assist expatriates/families, including dozens of helpful web links.

- *CARD—Counsellors Assisting Relief and Development;* **www.headington-institute.org**

Check out and register with this free new directory for locating counsellors and consultants.

- *Families in Global Transition* (FIGT); **www.figt.org**

FIGT resources and connects several international sectors: business, military, mission, etc.

- *Mission Finder*; **www.missonfinder.org**

Helps committed Christians who want to find a suitable mission agency with which to work.

- *The Finishers Project*; **www.finishers.org**

Resources and ideas to enter mission ministry from your career.

- *Aid Workers Network;* **www.aidworkers.net**

This site helps connect international relief and development staff and resources.

- *Exchange Student Survival Guide, Intercultural Press*; **www.interculturalpress.com**

Spend time reviewing this book and others from this publisher, on cross-cultural work/life.

SPECIAL TOPICS: Current issues and approaches related to member care

- *Supporting Tentmakers and other International Christians*

Consider these perspectives/directions from the Ethnê-Member Care Facilitation Team

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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
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Unsubscribe: Ethne-MC-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

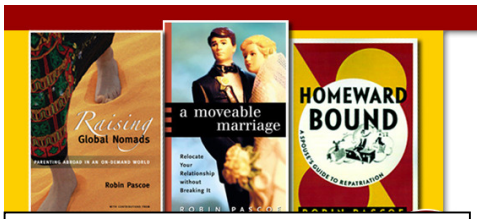
SPECIAL EVENTS: Gatherings to help you connect/contribute to the member care field

Port Dickson, Malaysia: Tentmakers *International (TI) Congress, 9-11 July 2007*

TI promotes "tentmaking as mission" to serve national tentmaker associations, denominational groups, and vocational and professional associations around the world. It serves as a clearinghouse for information to enable vocationally skilled Christians worldwide to minister cross-culturally. Their next global conference (number five) brings together leaders from many fields in order to consider strategies and resources, especially for missionary tentmakers in LPG and creative access settings.
Contact: www.tentmakersinternational.info

SPECIAL RESOURCES: Tools to further equip you for member care

- *Expat Expert—Resources for Living Abroad*



Books by Robin Pascoe
Available for Expatriate Press

This web site and its materials assist expatriate families living and working overseas—and returning "home". Expat Expert is also the home page of Expatriate Press, which publishes three titles devoted to global living: *Global Nomads: Parenting Abroad in an On-Demand World; A Moveable Marriage: Relocate Your Marriage Without Breaking It;* and *Homeward Bound: A Spouse's Guide to Repatriation*. Be sure to also seriously look over the dozens of fascinating web links.
Contact: www.expatexpert.com

- *CARD (Counsellors Assisting Relief and Development)*

Counsellors and mental health professionals interested in providing services to mission workers and humanitarian workers around the world can now register to be listed in the Headington Institute's CARD-Directory. The CARD-Directory allows humanitarian workers and others to find a counsellor/consultant. You can search by location, languages spoken, areas of expertise, and other variables. It is free to register and to use the Directory.
Contact: www.headington-institute.org

- *Families in Global Transition* (FIGT)

FIGT resources and connects several international sectors: business, military, mission, etc. It promotes the positive value of the international experience, and convenes a superb annual conference.
Contact: www.figt.org (note: the web site is currently being adjusted)

- *Mission Finder*

Provides assistance to committed Christians looking for a suitable mission agency with which to work. Offers many practical resources and logistical helps too, in addition to its classified directory.
Contact: www.missonfinder.org

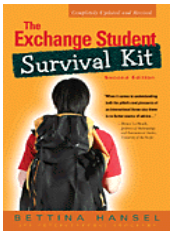
- *The Finishers Project*

A helpful source of information, challenge and pathways to enter mission ministry from your career.
Contact: www.finishers.org

- *Aid Workers Network*

Links international relief and development staff to share support, ideas, and best practice.
Contact: www.aidworkers.net

- *Exchange Student Survival Guide, Intercultural Press*



This is one of the many great books from this publisher on cross-cultural work/life. Intercultural Press publishes materials that help professionals, businesspeople, travellers, and scholars understand the meaning and diversity of culture. You will find country and culture guides as well as books on the expatriate experience, global business, travel writing, and tools for trainers and professional development.
Contact: www.interculturalpress.com

SPECIAL TOPICS

Supporting Tentmakers and Other International Christians

Ethnê-Member Care Facilitation Team

(based on *12 Treasures for Member Care* at www.ethne.net/membercare)

One of the guiding principles of our Ethnê-Member Care Network is to consider both current and new resources for supporting the *diversity* of Christian workers among the Least-Reached People Groups (LPGs). This principle is reflected in Christ's conclusion to the Kingdom parables. "Therefore every scribe that has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of the house that brings from his treasure new things and old things" (MT 13:52). We strongly believe that the variety of Christians who live/work internationally (business, military, diplomats etc.) are key for seeing the good news impact many social sectors and people groups. In addition, Christians who leave their own countries for economic or security reasons (immigrants, migrant workers, internationally displaced peoples), can be significant channels of blessing. We want to support such "international Christians" via both previous and new member care "treasures" (resources).

Tentmakers International is an organisation that is also interested in supporting Christians who work internationally. Its fifth congress, slated for Malaysia 9-11 July 2007, will bring together a variety of leaders committed to the work of "tentmakers", especially in creative access countries. Tentmakers are defined as being "Great Commission Christians who integrate work and witness through secular employment or study". Not surprisingly, there will be a specific member care component preset at this strategic congress. **[any specific details please?]** Consider now a few specific examples of Christian workers and support that can help the gospel penetrate LPGs and other social sectors.

Sending Churches and Support Teams—Churches play a core role in sending and supporting workers—including tentmaking missionaries. Historically though, this has often not been the case (e.g., tentmakers receive little systematic support/care or sending *agencies* undertake much of the member care responsibility for "traditional" mission workers). Sending churches can support workers in the areas of logistics, finances, prayer, communication, reentry, etc. The sending church, along with "support teams" need to be trained to send well and to help well. Neal Pirolo's book, *Serving as Senders*, is a superb resource in this area, and it has been translated into 21 languages.

Relief/Aid Workers—Psychosocial support is increasingly being recognised as a necessary and ethical organisational resource for workers in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (CHEs). This support includes debriefing and practical help or relief workers as well as equipping them with trauma/healing skills to help survivors. Many disaster scenarios provide opportunities to interact with LPGs. And eschatologically speaking, CHEs are likely to increase (MT 24, Ps 46). Radio programmes for example have been developed for discussing the affects of trauma and how to help oneself and others affected by natural and human-made mass disasters (e.g., **www.seasonsofcaring.org**). Further, two helpful publications from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies help equip relief/aid workers with psychological skills: *Managing Stress on the Field* (2001) and *Psychological Support: Best Practices* (2001) (**www.ifrc.org/publicat/catalog**).

The Diaspora of Peoples—There are "movements" of people all over the globe, as human demographics significantly shift. Christians would do well to track with such shifts, and seriously consider ministry to those who settle in places where there is a Christian presence. Especially consider those from LPGs. Another type of "movement" involves "good news sharers" who cross national and continental borders for economic reasons (e.g., Filipino workers in the Middle East), or who flee for safety as part of internationally or internally displaced peoples (e.g., Sudanese Christians). What an opportunity for the church to support people within either of these two types of movements— many who are either from LPGs or else are Christians that could potentially reach out to LPGs. Ministry to vulnerable people who are part of the diaspora of peoples—many of them are actually neighbours of ours—may be the most overlooked area of LPG mission/member care.

Persecuted Believers—Tens of thousands of Christians (and those from other religions) are affected by discrimination, human rights violations, and violence as a result of their faith. There are also major emotional consequences to persecution. How can we better support these Christians, as many of them are in strategic proximity/relationship with LPGs. As John Amstutz says in Humanitarianism with a Point. "…the place of hospitality and kindness toward followers of Jesus Christ is no small matter, particularly those who are being persecuted for their faith in Him…. [It is time] to speak clearly and fully of the essential need of intentional humanitarianism—member care— toward those who have chosen to suffer loss for Christ in these nations" (*Doing Member Care Well*, 2002 p. 39). Check out the web sites at: **www.idop.org/overview** and **www.Religios-Liberty@hub.xc.org** section; and Human Rights Advocacy in Missions (chapter 45) in *Doing Member Care Well* (2002).

Special Support for A4 Workers—Countries from Asia, Africa, Arabic-Turkic, and America-Latina regions (referred to as the *A4 Regions*) are intentionally sending more workers to LPGs. How can they develop member care approaches that fit for them? And how can other sending nations learn from groups in Nigeria, Brazil, The Philippines, Korea, and India for example? We want to provide culturally-relevant, quality care from many sources. The need for quality care is emphasised in a special listing of "15 commitments of Member Care Workers", which I believe are applicable to most caregivers regardless of their level of training/experience (see "Upgrading Member Care", *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, July 2006 or contact us for the article at: **Ethne-MC@yahoo.com**. The commitment to quality care for A4 workers is also clearly stated in these excerpts from the *Declaration* by the Philippine Missionary Care Congress of October 2005:

> …we will foster a culture of care among our churches and mission organizations compliant with the model and mandate of Christ to love and serve each other; we will endeavor to raise awareness about Member Care that would catalyze the Filipino church to harness capacities in order to ensure the flow of care towards those who were sent out;
> …we will share knowledge, resources, and personnel; cooperate in stewardship of God's resources with each other and with the global member care community so that potentials are maximized and excesses are minimized in serving cross-cultural Christian workers;
> …we will seek out good practice models of Member Care that are biblically founded, and harness the existing strength of the Filipino culture for missionary care; we endeavor for the cross-cultural Christian workers' personal growth that includes the nurture of each of their family members;
> …we will raise more church leaders and ministers particularly focused on Member Care, adequately equipped and tooled to serve the needs of the Filipino missionary including their families and home-based personnel;
> …we will personally engage in caring for Filipino cross-cultural Christian workers- celebrating their joys, sharing in their sorrows, supporting their needs and supplicating for their victory in seeing the unreached peoples coming to Christ. (*Global Member Care Briefing*, February 2006; www.membercare.org).

Strategy: Internet Connections—We want to develop our skills to use the Internet well. The internet is now the main source for many who want to stay in touch with the member care field and colleagues, exchange resources etc. Some of the newer skills needed include using voice over internet technologies (VOIP), podcasting, running web sites, and using webcams for consultation. But note that many people—including member caregivers and international Christians—do not have inexpensive, reliable, secure, and fast access to the internet, or to computer technology. So the internet is currently still a real luxury item for many. Many helpful web sites are listed and briefly described in the web links section of our Ethne-Member Care web site: **www.ethne.net/membercare**.

Final Thoughts

Member care is a broad service ministry provided by a variety of caregivers. It must be creative, flexible, and embrace both previous and new ways to support international Christians who live/work in a many contexts. As a global movement of caregivers, the member care field should carefully consider its need to further develop and "stretch" to help all types of "good news sharers" develop the personal character, professional competencies, and life skills necessary to work effectively, especially those in creative access/LPG settings. Indeed, as the opening quote of this *Update* reminds us, "The providence of God has led us all into a new world of opportunity, danger, and duty."