

# The Center for Medical Missions'

## *e-Pistle*

### August 2010

---

Welcome to the August issue of the e-Pistle. I trust your ministry is going well. Daniel and I are praying for you. Please know we are very grateful for the 47 who completed the survey which will help us update our Handbook for students and residents who wish to do an international rotation. We have left the survey open as we have decided to allow domestic ministries to list their opportunities as well. If you did not get your information entered before the 15th, please go ahead and do it now. The survey will be open at least through the end of August. But you do need to get it done now! <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22AY53EELR5>

We are gearing up for the November 11 – 13 Global Mission Health Conference in Louisville. Be sure and let your colleagues, who will be in the States know about this event. It is a great educational and recruiting venue.

While I am on the subject of the GMHC Conference, I want to let you know that we will host a focus group for a friend who is conducting research for her doctorate. Suzanne's goal is to help us define 'success' in medical missions as well as identify factors of satisfaction and longevity. If you will be at the conference, please be on the look-out for an announcement as to time and place for this focus group. Your input will be very important and greatly appreciated.

[susan.carter@cnda.org](mailto:susan.carter@cnda.org)

---

#### **Here are the links to this month's articles:**

[Leaving without Leaving](#) by Dave Stevens

[Cura Animarum](#) by Rev. Stan Key

[Resource](#)

[Medicines for Humanity](#)

[Re-entry: Leaving Well](#) by Dr. Ron Koteskey

---

#### **Leaving Without Leaving**

by David Stevens, MD

Aren't vacations great! I'm just back from a week off, and I have returned restored and renewed for a very busy fall schedule.

Most people want to get away and travel when they have time off. You know, "vacate-ion." I had a different goal since I travel all the time. I structured my time off as a "stay-cation." We stayed

at home and Jody and I did some projects around the house, went to a couple of movies, took long walks, read some books and my brother came down for a few days. We went fly-fishing. One of the best trout fishing rivers in the USA is a few miles from my house. We had a banner fishing day as we floated the South Holston fishing with small nymphs that you almost needed a magnifying glass to thread them on a 3 pound test tippet line. (Check out my Facebook site if you want to see a picture of the 8-pound trout I caught!)

My vacation was overdue to be honest. There have been too many weeks in the office and too many weekends on the road since the beginning of the year.

Knowing a missionary's life, I know you are harder up for some restoration than I am. You are likely in a remote situation where it is difficult and expensive to get away. The demands of providing healthcare are unrelenting. You have to work very hard to grab even a few moments for yourself.

I remember those days well. We usually got away for a couple of weeks each year to go to the beach with the kids. It was a two-day trip to get there and two-days back. We still have wonderful memories of those times together. Honestly though, they alone were totally inadequate to restore my emotional and mental batteries for a whole year. There had to be something that did that on a regular basis.

I dubbed that, "leaving without leaving" and I'm a great believer in it. As a missionary, you have to have outlets that restore and renew you personally. Of course, the most important thing is keeping yourself in God's Word and taking time for prayer and fellowship. Only God can provide the strength and wisdom for the challenges you face each day (and night!).

But "leaving without leaving" adds another indispensable dimension. I had to learn to disconnect and mentally leave when my body couldn't. I got onto this as I watched the other career doctors, who had been there for years, cope.

Ernie Steury, my mentor, was raised on a farm and loved growing a garden, raising chickens and even keeping a herd of pigs that were fed leftovers from the hospital kitchen. Ernie would frequently transport 50, day-old chicks all the way from Nairobi when he was there on business. He created a "brooder" area in his basement where he would keep them warm with kerosene lanterns till he could transfer them to his chicken coop and grow them into tasty meals for all of us. He even injected a few of them with hormones so we could have some hens as big as "turkeys" for Thanksgiving. When he was working on his garden or dealing with his animals, he was "gone" because he was totally focused on what he was doing.

Dick Morris liked to collect stamps from around the world and enjoyed mounting them in albums. When he had spare moments and wasn't working with his stamps, he was reading a good book.

I had no interest in stamps but enjoyed a good mystery, thriller or adventure story. My routine before we had our hydro plant was to climb into bed as soon as the lights blinked at 9 p.m. Five minutes later when the lights went out, I would turn on our battery light and spend an hour or

two totally disconnected from the challenges of everyday life. On Saturday night I would crank up my ham radio and talk to other amateur radio operators from all over the world. There were fewer than 50 “hams” in Kenya so as soon as I gave my call sign, everyone with a shortwave transmitter wanted to talk to me to add Kenya to their country list.

I took over some shop tools so when I had a day off, you might find me down in my workshop making bookshelves or helping the kids with a project. Jody loved to sew so I built her a combination desk and sewing table.

When the days of videotapes arrived, we had a wonderful friend that would tape movies and major sporting events and send them out by the box full with work teams. Our house became the “Blockbuster” outlet at Tenwek. We had so many movies that I created a database so other missionaries could come by and check them out of our “movie closet” to enjoy.

In some places it is easier to mentally get away than it used to be. With the Internet, DVD’s, Skype and other outlets it is easier to “leave without leaving” but no less important. Let me share a few principles I learned on how to do it well.

1. Disconnect but Don’t Escape – Watching a good movie or reading a book are great ways to disconnect when done in moderation. However, if you do them all the time as an escape they lose their effectiveness. A reasonable time away is refreshing but spending all your free time trying to live in another world is an addiction.
2. Be Productive – The best hobbies and activities are those that produce something of value upon their completion – new relationships, something you have grown or built or something to share with others. These days, I grow flowers in my cottage garden with Jody. It is refreshing to spend time together creating beauty we can share. I enjoy doing small and large projects around the house. My best friend, Dr. Gene Rudd, makes wooden bowls to give away. He calls it “sawdust therapy” and he is always eager to teach someone else how to do it.
3. Involve Your Loved Ones As You Can - Every hobby doesn’t have to be done together but all of them should not be done apart especially when they take significant time. Resentment is built in a marriage or with your children if anything steals time that rightfully should be theirs.
4. Make Sure Your Spouse Has an Outlet – If you are married, make sure to give permission and encourage your husband or wife to have a hobby or outlet that they love to do. Your marriage will be better for it. Jody loved to bird watch since we had over a 100 species on our compound and over 700 in Kenya. Occasionally I would go with her as she made her way with binoculars and bird book in hand.
5. There are Seasons for Everything – I have a friend who is a great golfer but when he started having children, he gave up his hobby because it took too much time away from his family. He instead developed some home hobbies he enjoyed and could do with his kids. Now that his children are grown, he is starting to get back into golf with his wife’s blessing.

I had to learn this life sustaining skill. I’m a very focused and goal oriented person and when I first arrived overseas I was determined to change the world. Without periods of restoration or

renewal, I soon found that my world was changing me. I had to remind myself that even God took a day of rest, and that I wasn't God.

Maybe you are facing the same battle. If so, it is time to step back, do a checkup on your life and reprioritize your schedule to make sure you make some time to leave without leaving! You and those you love and serve will be better for it!

[Back to menu](#)

---

## **Cura Animarum**

by Rev. Stan Key

The eye is an amazing instrument. With our eyes we have the capacity to see everything in the universe. We can discern shapes and colors and make intricate distinctions with our eyes. However, as marvelous as the eye may be, there is one thing we will never see: ourselves.

God made us so that we can see everything but ourselves. To know what I look like, I must have recourse to instruments other than my eyes: a verbal description, a painting, a photo, or best of all, a mirror. I will never "see" myself for who I really am without help.

Why would God make us like this? On the one hand, God tells me repeatedly in His Word how important it is that I know myself and "see" myself for who I really am. Yet, on the other hand, I do not have the ability to do what I am commanded. I may have the ability to see you and who you really are with 20/20 vision. But, myself, I cannot see.

If only I had a mirror. If only there were some means to help me get an accurate picture of who I really am. Without a mirror I will only be able to guess what I am truly like. Without a mirror, my knowledge of myself will be at best partial, at worst a total delusion.

I have incredible news. God has given us a mirror! In fact, He has made at least three mirrors available to every one of us.

1. The Bible.  
God's Word is like a mirror (James 1:22-25). It tells us the sober truth about who we really are and what Christ can really do.
2. The Holy Spirit.  
Jesus sent the Spirit into our hearts to help us see the sin, righteousness and judgment in ourselves (John 16:7-11).
3. Brothers and sisters in Christ.  
My Christian family and friends often see me far better than I see myself. If only I had the courage to ask them to tell me what they see.... If only I had the courage to take off my mask and get real....

Thank God for the mirrors He has given us. It may take some courage to use them, but I hope today you will avail yourself of the opportunity to take a hard look at yourself. You may be surprised by what you learn in the mirror!

[Back to menu](#)

---

## **Resources**

### **Medicines for Humanity (MFH)**

Do you need medicines for overseas projects or emergencies?

- Medicines for Humanity (MFH) can provide the essential medicines needed for effective emergency response or for ongoing healthcare projects in developing countries. We want to expand the number of organizations that we help.
- MFH is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides other nonprofits and their partners with the medicines they need.
- For the last ten years, MFH has provided needed medicines and medical supplies to over 30 nonprofit organizations with healthcare projects in over 60 countries.
- Our partial client list includes: International Medical Corps (IMC), Counterpart International(CPI), World Vision, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Crudem, and International Relief and Development (IRD).

Do you want to acquire medicines at a fraction of U.S. wholesale price?

- Through a network of U.S. and European suppliers, MFH can provide the essential generic medicines needed by developing countries at a fraction of U.S. average wholesale price. We have access to over 20,000 medicines and supplies so you can always access WHAT you need.
- This means that your organization can acquire medicines worth many times their cost, and stretch project budgets saving more lives and keeping people disease free for pennies.

Need high quality generic medicines?

- All medicines provided by MFH have a minimum one-year shelf life (fully dated).
- All medicines meet the World Health Organization and International Quality Standards.
- All medicines are shipped with all appropriate paperwork & documentation for customs.

Let Medicines for Humanity (MFH) help you meet your needs.

- With a minimum order of \$4,000(USD), groups with a local consignee can partner with MFH to have medicines or supplies shipped WHERE AND WHEN they are needed.
- Contact Kim Carvette, MFH Manager of Medicine Acquisition, to discuss your needs for medicines and see how MFH can help.
- Call Kim at 781-923-1325 or email [kcarvette@medicinesforhumanity.org](mailto:kcarvette@medicinesforhumanity.org)
- Please visit our website at: <http://www.medicinesforhumanity.org>

\*\*\*\*\*Note from Susan: I have a price list if you would like to get it from me.  
[susan.carter@cmda.org](mailto:susan.carter@cmda.org). For example, you can get 1000 mebendazole tablets for \$6.43.

[Back to menu](#)

---

## **Re-entry: Leaving Well**

by Dr. Ron Koteskey

You are excited about going “home” to the country and church that sent you to another culture as a missionary. Of course, you will miss the people you have been ministering to while you have been in your host country, but you begin to daydream about what it will be like to be greeted by friends and family when you arrive home.

This is usual for everyone who has been away from home a while. However, many times missionaries’ expectations are so high that they experience high reentry stress. When you get “home,” you may find yourself feeling lonely, isolated, disillusioned, misunderstood, depressed and irritated with people back home as well as with your own culture. During these next two months we will look at how you can prevent some of these feelings by leaving well, entering well, and being aware of some of the pitfalls in going home. Early cross-cultural workers in the Old and New Testaments provide us with both good and bad examples in Jonah and Paul.

### **Leaving Poorly: Jonah**

Jonah did not prepare for a good reentry. From the beginning he resisted God’s call on his life, and at the end he was still hoping that God would destroy the people to whom he had ministered.

- When God told him to go east, Jonah went west, to run away from God (Jonah 1:1-3).
- When in a desperate situation, Jonah called on God for help. Jonah was thankful when God helped, but, as far as we know, he never repented (Jonah 2).
- When he delivered God’s message about the destruction of Nineveh, he hoped it would really happen (Jonah 3-4).
- Jonah was very unhappy that God did not destroy Nineveh, and he became angry with God (Jonah 4).

Jonah’s story ended before telling us whether or not he ever reentered his passport culture. The last thing we read about him is that he is angry with God.

### **Leaving Well: Paul**

One of the things that may increase your reentry stress is not leaving your mission field correctly. The last part of Acts 20 gives us a good example of missionaries leaving well. Paul had spent three years in Ephesus and was headed back to his passport country and headquarters in Jerusalem. Dave Pollock was fond of saying that to leave well you should build a “RAFT,” so let us see how Paul fulfilled that acronym.

- Reconciliation. When leaving, you may try to deal with tensions in relationships by ignoring them, hoping they will just disappear. However, they do not. We carry them inside, and they interfere with new relationships. If we ever spend time with the other party again, the tensions will still be there and even harder to settle. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders how he had lived among them the whole time he was there and that he never even took support from them but was always giving.
- Affirmation. Let others know how you respect and appreciate them by telling them how important their friendship has been and how you enjoyed working with them. As you acknowledge how people have blessed you, you will become aware of what you have gained. Paul commits the Ephesians to God's grace and warns them of potential difficulties.
- Farewells. Say good-bye to people, pets, places, and possessions. Take pictures and small reminders of the good things that have happened to you. After Paul was done speaking, they all prayed, wept, embraced, kissed, went to the ship, and tore themselves away.
- Think destination. While saying your good-byes, begin thinking realistically about where you are going. Think of it as a visit to the place you used to call home and imagine realistically what it will be like there. Paul wanted to be in Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost, but he also realized that there were hardships facing him there.

One thing that is particularly difficult is being forced to leave the field before you really want to. This can be because of health problems in yourself or family members, difficulty with a teenager, and a host of other things. In such cases you may have feelings of failure, depression, discouragement, resentment, and guilt. In such cases it helps to acknowledge your grief, face present realities, draw a healthy line on the past, and commit yourself to the present task.

## **Traveling**

Airplanes are wonderful for getting home in a hurry, but they provide little time to “leave” your host country in your thinking. There is little time to grieve your losses and anticipate your arrival as you fly home, and sometimes you are still “traveling” in your thinking even when your body has arrived back home. In one sense many people are still transitioning for several days or weeks after they arrive home. They unpack their suitcases long before they unpack their minds.

Although Paul was in a hurry to leave to get home in time, he had time to think as he traveled. Remember that he was covering more than 600 miles by ship at the mercy of the winds, and he had to make a “connection” (find another ship headed his way) after the first 200 miles. People back home may not understand and think it is extravagant, but a week in Hawaii or in Europe on the way home is a good way to transition more effectively.

## **Next month: Entering well!**

The following E-books about reentry are available on-line free of charge.

- Ron Koteskey (posted July 2008). Before you get “home”: Preparing for Reentry. [http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#before\\_reentry](http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#before_reentry). This book is an expansion of the material above, particularly Chapters 1-5.

- Ron & Bonnie Koteskey (posted November 2003). Coming “home”: The reentry transition. <http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#reentry>. This book is written to be used by people after they reach their passport country, but it contains relevant information in Chapters 1-4.
- Ron Koteskey (posted May 2010). Reentry after short-term missionary service. <http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#shortterm>. This book is written for short-term people, and contains relevant information in Chapters 1-4.
- Ron & Bonnie Koteskey (posted February 2007). We’re going home: Reentry for elementary children. [http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#going\\_home](http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook.htm#going_home). This book is written for children 6-12 years of age with relevant information in Chapters 1-7.
- Ron Koteskey (posted February 2007). I don’t want to go home: Parent’s guide for reentry for elementary children. [www.missionarycare.com/ebook](http://www.missionarycare.com/ebook). This book is for the parents of children 6-12 years of age with relevant information in Chapters 1-7.

For a more complete treatment of this topic as well as other topics please visit [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com). Also please let your non-medical colleagues know about these free resources.

[Back to menu](#)

---

**Center for Medical Missions**

PO Box 7500  
Bristol, TN 37621  
423-844-1000  
[www.cmda.org/cmm](http://www.cmda.org/cmm)

To unsubscribe, send an e-mail to [susan.carter@cmda.org](mailto:susan.carter@cmda.org). Thank you.