

The Center for Medical Missions'

e-Pistle

February 2011

Hi! Welcome to this issue of the e-Pistle. I hope you will find it useful. Dave Stevens is in Thailand, participating in the CMDE conference so I do not have a new article from him. I went through some of his previous management articles though and am reusing one of them. I've selected this one because it is basic yet very important. Hopefully it will be a helpful reminder and an encouragement to set aside time for this important task.

I hope the following are helpful to you.

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Enjoy!

susan.carter@cmda.org

Basic Training - Section VI: Personnel Training

by David Stevens, MD, MA (Ethics)

What would you think of a surgeon who failed to scrub up properly? Oh, he could give you all sorts of reasons - he had too many surgeries, it was an urgent case or "things aren't that clean here anyway". As a healthcare professional you could easily predict what would happen. Infectious complications would increase. If you ignore the basics of successful surgery, patients pay the price.

As a doctor you are extremely busy. Besides providing medical care you are often called upon to manage the hospital, dispensaries, community health programs and much more. If you want to be a good manager, you need to pay attention to management basics. If not, sooner or later, you are going to pay the price in staff discontent and poor work habits.

Your job as a manager is first to help your staff understand how important their job is. Schedule a time with your hospital's department heads and lead them in a focused discussion on why their job is important. Use the following questions:

1. In what ways is this facility meeting real needs and doing worthwhile things?
2. What part of your own job contributes to meeting these needs?
3. What part of your job makes special use of your skills, talents and gifts?
4. What unpleasant but necessary parts of your job are best done by you?

It is best to give out the questions on paper, let each individually personally answer them and then lead an open discussion where insights are shared. Write their answers on a blackboard or plastic sheet. This lets your staff know that what they shared was important. At the end of the discussion, affirm that:

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1. Their jobs are very important.
2. They were created for a purpose.
3. They are not working at the hospital by chance.

Have your supervisors do the same exercise with those they supervise. This helps every level of staff understand how their job meets the overarching goals of the organization and is building God's kingdom. If a job is important, it is worth doing and putting effort into. If your staff realizes that their work is important--whether it is managing the nursing staff, sterilizing instruments or cleaning the floors--they will be more eager to do it well. They must understand also that you as their leader and the community at large think their work is valuable and needed.

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Cura Animarum

by Rev. Stan Key

Con-fess (ken-fes) *v.*

1. To disclose or acknowledge something damaging or inconvenient to oneself.
2. To concede the truth or validity of; admit.
3. To make known one's sins.

Most of us are not very good at confession. We know we should confess our sins, but we don't know how. When we try, our attempts are often vacuous banalities.

O Lord, I am not perfect, you know. Mistakes have happened. Errors of judgment have led to inappropriate behaviors. I need your help with issues related to self-esteem and networking. And Lord, I want to target holiness as a growth area. Amen.

This is not confession. This is pietistic nonsense. If this is the best you can do, you really should have stayed home. Why waste your time (or God's!) with such sentimental drivel?

In Hosea 14:2 the prophet exhorted the people, Take words with you and return to the Lord. In other words, prepare your speech. Don't saunter into the throne room of heaven and say whatever pops into your mind. No! Think about what you need to say to God. Put your brain in gear before your mouth goes in motion. Be specific. Name your sins. Don't speak in vague generalities. Take responsibility for your actions and attitudes.

Still need help? Most of us do. We find it difficult to know what to say when it comes to confessing our sins to God. Let me make a suggestion. Try these words on for size. Written over 500 years ago, these words taken from The Book of Common Prayer have helped thousands of worshippers to know what they needed to say to God.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy Name,; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Here is the good news. When you are specific with God about what you need to confess, God will be specific with you about His healing power to set you free and redeem your tragic circumstances.

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Question

I was asked a question that I can't answer. I shared what I know from my experience but I am very interested in learning from you. The question is: Can a US trained physician assistant be licensed in another country? I know you don't have a lot of time but even a sentence or two would be helpful. I'd love to learn from you. susan.carter@cnda.org.

Announcement

April 15-17, 2011 "Orientation for Medical Missions: Preparing for the Future."

by CMDA's Center for Medical Missions

Visit this [conference page](#) for registration and information on this great conference to help you answer your burning questions for your medical mission ministry and for your family. If married your spouse needs to be here as well!

- How do you live with a sense of never finishing what “ought to” be done – (caring for family, spiritual growth, unending medical need and...) - without feeling inadequate and insecure?
- What are the things I will face as a single? ... or ... What about my spouse and kids? How do I (they) survive and even thrive? I have concerns about school, adjustments, socialization skills, and so many others. There are sessions especially for “the missionary family.”
- What are the keys to developing and maintaining empathy, compassion, love and joy in my ministry?
- How do I minister to spiritual needs and still balance the long lines of people needing my attention and my desire to be “holistic?” What is my role as “healer” and the expectations held of me in different cultures?
- What are the keys to developing an awareness of key principles in medicine in the developing world - accessible, affordable, equitable and sustainable healthcare? Developing an awareness of these issues is critical for the new missionary in health related fields.
- How do I re-pattern my thinking, re-tool skills, and distribute available resources for the good of the greatest number of people? Do ethics enter into missions?
- How do I become an effective team member in the healthcare scheme of the culture I will be entering? Health systems in the developing world require a much greater emphasis on a health-team approach. Learn how to effectively integrate into the health team.
- How do I empower others? What are the keys to not creating dependency but to empowering communities and individuals in healthcare?
- How do I learn and function in crucial areas for which I am not prepared? Success in certain key areas can have major impact on effectiveness, and even on your contentment and fulfillment, in cross-cultural healthcare ministry.

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Healing of Memories

By Dr. Ron Koteskey

The story of Joseph, a third culture kid and cross-cultural worker, is found in the last ten chapters of Genesis. As a teenager his jealous brothers hated him so much they couldn't even say a kind word to him, they plotted to kill him, and they actually sold him into slavery. The emotional baggage from these experiences was apparent in chapters 42, 43, and 45 where Joseph was unable to control his weeping when he saw those brothers decades later.

You may have experienced similar things at some time in your life, and the emotions related to them still influence you years later. You may have prayed about the situation and tried to forget about it, but the feelings are still there—the emotional part of forgiveness has not taken place.

Following are steps that can lead to healing of these memories. God does not give you amnesia about the events; however, he can remove the damaged emotions the memories arouse.

Thank God for gifts given.

The first step is to thank God for the gifts he has given you. This is not an ego trip or bragging. It is simply a matter of recognizing that God has blessed you with good things in life. He may have given you athletic ability so that you can kick or throw a ball more accurately than others. He may have given you intellectual capacity to grasp abstract concepts that most other people cannot understand. He may have given you musical talent for a particular instrument or a voice that can sing beautifully. He may have given you a face that others in your culture see as beautiful or handsome. He may have given you a personality that others like to be around or the ability to relate so well that people want to be your friend. The list goes on and on.

When talking with his brothers more than two decades after they had mistreated him (Genesis 45), Joseph pointed out that God had sent him on ahead to save their lives. He noted that God had made him “father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household, and ruler of all Egypt.” He said to tell their father about the honor given to him in Egypt. These were not boasting, just statements of fact. He told his brothers not to be angry with themselves because God used what they did for good in his life—and in theirs.

Ask God about healing.

The second step is to ask God what he wants to heal in you. Sometimes we want to be healed just to have fewer tensions or to live up to what someone else expects of us. Our motivation must be to become more like Christ, and we want to be sure that we really want to be healed—regardless of what other people think.

Sometimes God seems to delay the time of healing. Although Joseph was in charge of the prison, he still wanted to get out (Genesis 40). After he interpreted the dream Joseph asked the cupbearer to mention him to the Pharaoh when things improved. The cupbearer forgot—and Joseph waited two more years.

Sometimes God does not heal. Paul, another cross-cultural worker, asked God for something three times, and God never removed the “thorn in the flesh.” God just told Paul that his grace was enough—that God’s power was made complete without removing the thorn (2 Corinthians 12).

Share the memory with God.

The third step is to share the memory with God, the painful memory that keeps you from being healed. Rather than concentrating on the current problem such as fear of people (because you were abused as a child) or difficulty speaking in public (because you were laughed at in first grade), go back to the memory of the original event causing the problem.

We have no record of Joseph doing this, but he certainly could have done so. He had those memories available as we can see in his comments to the cupbearer (Genesis 40), “For I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon.”

Paul had had many painful memories, such as being beaten, stoned, and shipwrecked, and he shared not only with God but with believers in the church in the chapter just before he wrote about God's grace being sufficient (2 Corinthians 11).

Replace the hurt with love.

The fourth step is to replace the hurt with love by forgiving those involved in the painful memory as God would forgive them. Even though the people causing that hurt may no longer be alive, you must forgive them unconditionally—not dependent on the other person's changing and becoming worthy. When you do this, you can focus not on the hurt, but on change and growth.

By the time he revealed who he was (to his brothers) 22 years after they hurt him, Joseph had forgiven them. He told them not to be distressed and angry with themselves (Genesis 45). Seventeen years later (39 years after the offense), at the death of their father, his brothers still thought that Joseph had not really forgiven them, and they asked for his forgiveness. Joseph wept as he realized they had still not accepted his forgiveness. Showing that he had replaced the hurt with love, he reassured them and spoke kindly to them. He told them not to be afraid, that he would provide for them and their children (Genesis 50).

Become thankful for the memory.

The fifth step is to become thankful for that painful memory. Because you believe that all things work together for good, now is the time to look for the good in this situation. For example, your abuse as a child may have made you particularly compassionate toward other abused children and made you very effective in helping them. Or being laughed at in first grade and your not speaking in public may have encouraged you to develop other methods of communication, such as writing or painting.

Joseph did this when he revealed himself to his brothers. He pointed out that God had used their hurtful act to save lives, to preserve their family (Genesis 45). He reiterated this seventeen years later when he told them, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it to save our lives" (Genesis 50). If they had not sold him into slavery, they all (including him) would have died along with thousands of others in the famine in that part of the world.

Thank God for healing.

Finally, you thank God for healing and go ahead acting as the healed person you are. Remember that the healing is from God, and we accept it by faith. When God has given you this gift, you can go out and pass it on to others while keeping it yourself. Since he has set you free, you can help to set others free, setting in motion grace and love to everyone.

When sending out the twelve their first time to spread the good news, Jesus said, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8). The root word for "gift" appears three times in this statement so that it literally says, "Giftwise you have received, giftwise give." Since you have received this wonderful gift, you can go out and give it to others.

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

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Center for Medical Missions

PO Box 7500

Bristol, TN 37621

423-844-1000

www.cmda.org/cmm

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