

The Center for Medical Missions'

e-Pistle

September 2008

Welcome to the September issue of the e-Pistle. If you've been thinking about home, I'm sure you realize that at least in the eastern half of the US, the weather is definitely saying it is fall. Leaves are just beginning to turn and the cool nights make sleeping easier. Wish I could just enjoy it but my brain keeps telling me, winter is coming.

This month's e-Pistle includes:

- [Dr. Stevens' continuing article on Leadership](#)
- [Rev. Key's devotional](#)
- [Conference announcements](#)
- [Book Review and announcement](#)
- [Dr. Johnson's thought provoking article – Cruel Choices](#)

We hope you enjoy. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to serve you.

Susan

susan.carter@cmda.org

Leadership Section VII: Useful Skills

By David Stevens, MD

Good leaders are empathetic. They can identify with and understand another person's feelings and concerns. When I speak on physician-assisted suicide (PAS) I tell people that it is dangerous for physicians, patients and their families. That does not make my point nearly as well as illustrating a key point with an empathetic story can.

Can you imagine going to visit your mother in the nursing home one morning and finding her bed empty? You ask the nurse where she is and she replies, "Didn't they tell you? She asked her doctor for a lethal prescription and she committed suicide last night." How would you feel? I would be asking myself, "Why didn't she say something? Did she think we didn't love her? Did we not visit her often enough? Was she afraid that we don't want to be burdened with the cost of her care? Did the doctor influence her to do this?" There are many more victims of suicide than the one who died. If we legalize PAS, this could happen to you.

Get the point? Empathy puts you into someone else's shoes and you see the issue from their point of view, their concerns and their priorities.

President Harry Truman, a student of good leadership principles, emphasized the leader's role in motivation with this tongue-in-cheek comment, *A leader is someone who can get others to do what they don't want to do and like it!*

Cherished Values – Not only is a good leader a good motivator with strong convictions and empathy, they also communicate a strong set of values that say, “This is who we are and this is how we act.” I expect my CMDA staff to treat every member like they would want to be treated. When you call, you do not want to be referred from person to person without your problem being resolved or your question being answered. You want someone to go to bat for you and get the information you need. I want every one of my staff to handle each member contact like they were dealing with their own family member or best friend and go out of their way to solve the problem.

Wise Recruiter – An excellent leader realizes that they can not accomplish their mission alone. They need to recruit the right kind of people to work with them. The best measurement of a leader is to see the kind of person that is attracted to follow them.

I look at the Five C's when I evaluate prospective employees:

- Christian Commitment – Does this person really know Christ as their Savior and is their life different because of it? Do they exercise spiritual disciplines?
- Character – Is this a person of integrity and have they demonstrated it in their life in their honesty, work ethic, relationships, etc.?
- Chemistry – How will this person fit in with my present team? Will they blend in and work well? Will others value their contribution and get along with them? Are they going to be sand or oil in the organizational gears?
- Competency – Does this person have the skills and experience to accomplish what I am hiring them to do? Are they a self-starter and a problem solver or am I going to have to look over their shoulder all the time? Are they teachable?
- Calling – After learning as much about our organization and getting to know our key personnel, does this person sense a calling from God to join our ministry? Do we sense God's direction to make this person part of our CMDA family?

A good leader finds people who are smarter than he or she is in their area of expertise and then helps them find fulfillment in their role by helping them to be all that God designed them to be.

A Psychological Bond – A great leader like Winston Churchill, inspires their followers to be better. They establish a deep psychological bond. He or she helps their followers to have confidence when they are frightened and certainty when they are vacillating. Remember Churchill's words after the successful Normandy invasion when some were vacillating and encouraging Britain to sue for peace? He said, Now, this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

Great leaders move people to action when there is inaction. America was very reluctant to get involved in WWII. Many in Washington didn't want to even provide armaments to England, which was increasingly cut off by sea by U-Boat attacks and much of their country was being

bombed. To move the US from action to inaction, Churchill said in a radio speech, *Here is the answer which I will give to President Roosevelt... We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools and we will finish the job.*

A good leader inspires strength where there is weakness. Churchill said to his countrymen when they were reeling from the retreat at Dunkirk and the prospect of Germany invading across the channel, *Never give in--never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.*

He also instilled courage that banished cowardice. He said, *One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it. If you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half.* And then before Parliament in a speech just after Dunkirk on June 4, 1940, *We shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields, and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender!*

Great leaders instill optimism where there is cynicism. Churchill again, *Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that if the British Empire and Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, This was their finest hour.* A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.

Does the psychological bond you have with your team inspire them to greatness?

Problem Solver – I tell my senior staff that if we did not have problems, we would not have jobs. A competent leader has to timely solve problems and resolve conflicts. Often managers ignore small problems until they become big ones; as if by ignoring them, they will go away. Or instead of dealing with a relationship issue or a specific problem employee, they make a new policy. That can bring everyone down to the lowest common denominator employee and restrict everyone's creativity and joy.

Here are some principles to help you be a better problem solver:

- Deal with small problems before they become big problems.
- Take the time to understand the issue from all significant points of view.
- Determine your options for solving the problem.
- Seek advice from wise counselors if the best option is not clear.
- Make a decision and implement it.
- Timely reevaluate how the solution is working. Is the problem solved?
- Recycle the process until the issue is resolved.

A few more Churchillisms? Kites rise highest against the wind - not with it. *Difficulties mastered are opportunities won.*

Exemplary – Character counts, especially in leadership. A leader needs to be respected and trusted. You can not influence people without these two exemplary characteristics. That means you are a person of integrity. Read these verses.

- 1 Tim. 3:2 - *Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach...*
- Titus 1:7 - *Since an **overseer** is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless — not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.*

Your followers may not agree with every decision you make but they are confident that you are endeavoring to act biblically and in their and the organization's best interest. They are confident that you are fair, truthful and honorable. You are willing to admit your mistakes and take responsibility for them. As one person said, *A real leader faces the music even when he dislikes the tune.*

A good leader either needs to be organized or to surround himself or herself with people who are and can fill in for this deficiency. How you attend to phone calls and letters, keeping appointments and accomplishing tasks can either enhance or damage your influence and your reputation.

One of the most exemplary traits of great leaders is that they are accountable. They are only not afraid of outside scrutiny, they welcome it. They respect those they are responsible to and are transparent with them.

Stewardship of People – Great leaders see their people as a sacred trust. I have seen so called leaders that use people like some people use Kleenex. They rule by intimidation and fear or alternate that with largess. An employee cannot tell if they are going to get emotionally hugged or strangled at any given time. They operate like an abusive husband or parent, destroying individual confidence and abusing their position of authority. Employees finally flee but are often permanently damaged.

Others in positions of power are not cruel or abusive but their employees are seen as units of production valued for what they accomplish, not who they are.

God has a different standard of leadership. He entrusts people to leaders and makes them stewards of them. Their task is to help those they lead to develop their spiritual gifts and competency skills, to grow emotionally, socially and in every aspect of life. That takes time and availability, but our example is Christ and His relationship with His "staff" of 12 men is our model. He taught, challenged and exemplified to them what it means to be a true God follower.

To help those you lead to be successful you need to provide them with continuing training to increase their knowledge, the tools they need to equip them to be successful and the right level of delegation to stretch but not over challenge them. You need to adequately compensate them, provide opportunities for feedback and hold them accountable. "Standards of Performance," as discussed in other chapters can help accomplish this.

You also need to establish, maintain and defend your “corporate culture” – the beliefs, values, customs, practices and social behavior expected in your work place.

To be cont’d.

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Cura Animarum

By Rev. Stan Key

There were three crosses on Calvary. The message that God wants us to hear is not limited to the central cross. There is a powerful message in the other two crosses as well. Here two common criminals were justly executed for their crimes. These men died with Jesus, one on his right, the other on his left. They saw and heard everything that happened that fateful day. They had front-row seats to witness the most momentous event in human history!

On one cross was a man who found salvation. After decades of sin, at the very last moment, just before he breathed his last, this man found forgiveness and peace with God. “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,” he pleaded. Jesus’ reply ranks as among the most surprising and most beautiful words He ever spoke. “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:42-43). The message of this cross is a reminder of how far one can be and still find Him.

On the other cross was another criminal. He too was receiving the due penalty for his crimes. However, as he watched the events unfold before his eyes, rather than growing tender and seeking grace, his heart grew hard. Angry that Jesus would not perform some miracle of deliverance, this man never sought mercy. He died with a bitter heart. He died in his sins. So close to the cross...and yet so far from grace. The message of this cross is a reminder of how close one can be and still miss Him.

The greatest parable Jesus ever told is the story of a man who had two sons. One son rebelled and ran far away. But he was found in the end. The other boy stayed at home and kept all the rules. But in the end he was outside the father’s house.

Perhaps today you feel far from God. You may think it is too late and your condition too desperate for God to redeem your life. Take heart. God is closer than you ever dreamed He could be!

Perhaps today you are assuming that God is near. After all you have kept all the rules. You’ve never run away to the far country. Beware. Some who stay at home have hearts that are far from the Father.

Far, yet near. Near, yet far. May God speak to us about the true state of our souls.

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CMDA's Continuing Medical & Dental Education Conference

February 9 – 19, 2009

Chiang Mai, Thailand

To register, send an e-mail Donnie Luper at lupercmda@suddenlink.net.

After September 15, registration is open to non-American healthcare personnel serving in missions.

Global Missions Health Conference

November 13 – 15, 2008

Southeast Christian Church

Louisville, KY

To register: www.medicalmissions.org

If you are going to be in the States the second weekend in November, Louisville, KY will be the place to be. The Global Missions Health Conference will gather around 2,500 people to focus on medical missions through workshops, a huge exhibitor area and plenary sessions. If you want to have your mission represented in the exhibit area you must register soon. The exhibit places have been sold out the past few years.

Even if you are not exhibiting, there will be many opportunities to meet and share with young people who are preparing for a life of missionary service.

Be sure and come by the Center for Medical Missions' booth to say, 'Hi' and let us know you are there.

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Book Review

“Preach and Heal” by Charles Fielding, MD

“Preach and Heal” is a must read missions book written by Charles Fielding, MD. Dr. Fielding has extensive experience in medial missions in closed or creative access countries. Dr. Fielding has written “Preach and Heal” to combat the unfortunate tension that exists sometimes between spiritual and social ministry. It is clear that Jesus did not neglect one for the other as He modeled love and compassion and demanded repentance from sin. This book brings together into one thought and mindset what we often try to divide into two separate arenas – physical and spiritual ministry.

While Dr. Fielding is a medical doctor, and the focus of this book is upon health care strategies, he does not limit his writing to health care. Much of what he writes can be applied to all 'social' ministries. Beginning with showing how we often become trapped into thinking in separate boxes of spiritual and physical ministry, Fielding clearly shows how this can hinder the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ. He develops a strategic approach for entering a community and defines the endpoint of entering as earning the right to be heard, not just establishing a physical presence. Using Luke 10 as a biblical basis for proposing models of health strategies, Fielding then develops numerous potential health related initiatives. Fielding also develops his own ranking system of these initiatives, rating [ease of] entering a community, making disciples and empowering the church. He also rates the initiatives as to how he feels they are appropriate for urban/rural/developed/undeveloped areas of the world.

It is clear Fielding has great passion to see a great harvest of souls for the Kingdom and is passionate about ministry within the unreached areas and peoples of the world. Whether you agree with everything written in "Preach and Heal," there is no doubt you will be stimulated to think deeply and challenged to follow the example of Jesus to preach and heal.

"Preach and Heal" is available on the CMDA website. Visit shopcmda.org.

Handbook of Medicine in Developing Countries (2nd Edition)

By Dennis Palmer, MD and Catherine Wolf, MD

The first edition of the Handbook of Medicine in Developing Countries was well received by thousands of healthcare professionals around the world. Many took the time not only to express their appreciation but to give ideas and suggestions for the next edition. Their contributions along with input and critique of an editorial board of missionary doctors has added 100 plus pages of superb information to this second edition. The authors have updated the entire volume with the latest scientific advances in diagnosis and treatment. If you practice overseas or take care of patients who travel the world, you need this book in your reference library.

CMDA special price - \$10

To order, visit shopcmda.org; call: 1.888.231.2637; or e-mail: resources@cmda.org.

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Cruel Choices

By Dr. Michael Johnson

I open the refrigerator and think, I can choose either to treat this child for malaria, or put butter on my bread. The other alternative is to fix this man's fractured hip, or have another slice of yesterday's pizza, with antacids. Decisions, decisions, decisions! What can I do with so many

choices? Such are the challenges for a modern day missionary surgeon in one of Africa's most prosperous urban centers.

Nairobi continues to be a place of contrasts in class and culture. As I am wondering what kind of ice cream topping I want, there are children waiting for me to decide how much, what type and when we will provide porridge for them. In my clinic at Saint Mary's Hospital the choices are even more cruel. I have to decide who gets help and who has to...suffer. Cruel choices come daily.

I only have a specific amount of money allocated to treat the 'medically indigent' (a politically correct term for those who must choose meals over medicines). If I fix that man's hip, I won't have enough in the account to treat the child's malaria. The man has had a painful ride with his hip broken in two pieces, on the typical 'public-means' of transportation, a matatu (a van manufactured for six to eight people, but carrying 12 people). The child has had fevers, seizures and his mother is confused by the delay of the long clinic lines...and of course she has no money.

"Make that chocolate topping with the little sprinkles, please."

My real problem is there are literally millions of people (probably 38 of the almost 40 million in Kenya), who have to decide which child to feed and which one to treat and which one to let die.

There is an insurance plan for the poor. The acronym is DEUWFOHMTMC ('Don't Eat Until We Find Out How Much The Medicine Costs') plan. With that thought in mind, I close my refrigerator and think, "Who was it that said; 'I was hungry and you did not feed me, naked and you did not clothe me, in prison and you did not visit me?' If I think long enough about this child with malaria, it won't be a matter of treating the sick it will be, 'I was dead and you would not even bury me.' That's right. Money for life insurance is better spent on those who still have life.

Decisions, decisions, decisions. What can a modern day missionary surgeon do with so many cruel choices?

Mathew 25:45, Then shall he answer them, saying, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me."

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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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