

interview

WITH THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED THE MISSION



Oh what need- less pain we bear.

by 'ED'

Pain is part of life. We all get hurt by others; we can be offended by what people say or do to us on an almost daily basis. Emotional and spiritual pain – like physical pain – are realities. And sometimes pain is self-inflicted. But we often carry needless pain.

As followers of Jesus, shouldn't we be impervious to hurt and pain and other offenses against us? Shouldn't we be totally protected? No!

Jesus says, "It is impossible that no offenses should come." (Luke 17:1 NKJV)

To say it another way, "You *will* be offended." You *will* take arrows to your heart. We all will. Therefore you must be prepared – prepared to deal with the pain, rather than to let the wound fester, inflame and infect the rest of the body (your own body as well as the body of Christ).

Pain is real – even when self-inflicted.

I am told (by reliable sources within my family!) that often a woman, upon holding her newborn child, quickly forgets the travail that had so recently wracked her whole body. The tiny bundle of joy at her breast seems to sweep away the pain and even the memory of the excruciating birth process.

When life's painful experiences are held

onto, it's like the hard parts of pregnancy, labor, delivery and after, but with no 'baby' to dandle and hold and love to take away the pain; instead the pain remains... the pain of rejection; the pain of violation and abuse; the pain of insults and harsh words; the pain of your own mistakes; the pain of what might have been.

Unless something is done to cleanse the areas of pain and hurt that follow a wounding – most often inflicted knowingly or unknowingly by others – it will get worse. The infection will spread.

Hurting people, hurt people.

Don't forget – you *will* be offended! But carrying an offense (dandling and holding the hurt to your breast), may seem to build a wall of protection around yourself against further attack; and it may seem to offer a safe place from where you can launch missiles of your own. (Proverbs 18:19)

The walls you build are actually a hindrance to your own healing.

Healing comes out of humility, and humility is the forerunner of forgiveness.

Wherever I go in the world – and I am blessed to be able

to circulate quite widely in the body of Christ – it appears to me that unforgiveness is perhaps the most evil of 'viruses' afflicting us. Along with its companions of bitterness and resentment, unforgiveness is often the way of revenge – or payback – for the hurt that has been done to you.

It's as though to get back at the one who has wounded you, you swallow a lethal dose of poison, and then wait for that person to die. Of course, that's ridiculous; but unforgiveness is like poison to your system. It knocks you out and will eventually suck the life out of you.

Unlike HIV, the horrendous virus that is sweeping the world, there is a known cure for unforgiveness. That's right, it's called *forgiveness*, and the healing starts by acknowledging the pain within you – whether it came from others or you brought it upon yourself. Once you are able to say, "Hey, this pain that I'm holding onto, is crippling me – I want to get rid of it!" Only then can you start down the path of healing.



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Intimate Worship

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Honored

Recently, Gwenda Loong was honored at a Singapore/Malaysia Renewal Gathering for her leadership of YWAM Associates SE Asia over the past ten years. Gwenda's initiatives include 13 annual Renewal Camps/Gatherings; 'The King & I' - quarterly workshops for Associates, utilizing visiting YWAM speakers; and recently, an Alpha course with the core team comprised largely of YWAM Associates. Well done, Gwenda!



AlpenGathering

Having been surprised and enchanted by the mellow tones of the Alpenhorn wafting down from lofty steeps, a group of posing picnickers enjoy the late afternoon sun at the July Renewal Gathering in Switzerland



LETTERS



& EMAIL

From the Subcontinent... a really nice one:

✉ I've been meaning to write a thank you note for sometime but have been swamped since coming back to the field 2 1/2 years ago. I was in YWAM from 1984-89 and left to go back to college and prepare long term to come back. If it wasn't for your *inTouch* I'm not sure I would have made it back out here. It was the link that kept me in contact with YWAM during the years 1989-2001 in which I finished college, youth-pastored, taught public school, and worked in a company. I think I still have all my *inTouches* saved as they are such a good resource.

– Name withheld due to his sensitive location – and what follows!

p.s. Concerning all the single Christian sisters active in service for the Lord... could you possibly point one in this direction? At 39 I'm still waiting, and very much available. I am a veteran (U.S. Army) and have excellent financial support which I would love to spend on candlelit dinners, roses, and anything else that would make a faithful sister in Christ know she is worth more than gold, silver, and diamonds. Anyway, I thought I'd request your prayers in this matter.

✉ Even though I personally had a hard time, those of us who God calls out of YWAM must realize that we return home infected with YWAM's DNA - we are changed and we are not ordinary. I have come to see that YWAM can be a Christian hot-house for fast growth. Maybe YWAM should consider a re-entry course for two weeks before people leave.

My husband and I now lead a large church in Sydney, Australia. I am forever changed for the better by my YWAM years. Our church has probably 20 former YWAMers and their families in it. I look back on the good and bad times in YWAM with joy that so many people affected my life for good (yes there was bad, yes there was hurt).

We should hold all things of this world lightly, be passionate about seeing His Kingdom come and understand *that it is not about me*.

If you were hurt in YWAM, forgive and then get involved in a church wholeheartedly and passionately; make relationships that will last to eternity (become ya ya sisters and brothers), give of your life to others and I know that healing will come.

– Susan Botta, Australia

✉ Thank you so much for the last issue of *inTouch*. It was exactly what I needed to hear. I have been out of YWAM for about 15 years and considered myself an ex-YWAMer. After reading your magazine I felt part of the fold again. I now look at my year in Hong Kong (1988) doing a DTS and a Far East Evangelism Team (FEET), as training for the mission field, even though in my case the mission field is corporate America.

I identified with "Re-Entry Pain" even though it has been so many years. Then "Your Job" in Donna's Corner wrapped it up for me in one neat article. Over and over again I read the sentence, "The place where you function in ministry is the place of your occupation..." *I am* on the mission field and look back at my year in YWAM as great training for what I'm doing now.

I was so blessed just thinking that there are people out there giving their time and money to encourage people like us via communications like *inTouch*.

You also inspired me to attend an *inTouch* gathering with my three daughters and wife as soon as possible. I'm turning 40 this year and a Gathering would be a welcome mid-life checkup.

– Kirby Repko, CA

Another Kind of Pain

Lionel & Misha Thompson are 'YWAM kids.' Born in New Zealand, Lionel was raised in Kona; Afghanistan was Misha's birthplace and she grew up in The Netherlands. Here's their recent history as told by Misha...

I had been quite seriously ill before Lionel and I were married in 2000 – in fact I had been bedridden and sporadically in a wheelchair for six years with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME). I was miraculously healed in the summer of 1999, just when I was adjusting to my doctors having told me that I may eventually not walk again, travel, get married or have children.

Lionel and I began the process of proving the doctors wrong after we met in Colorado, got engaged and married in New Zealand, church-married with family in the U.S., and traveling then to Europe and Africa for our first year.

Early on in our marriage I became pregnant, but to our heart's great pain, we lost that first and precious baby. The questions and fears we faced were stifling, as were the fears we had to face during the whole season (mostly in Africa) of my second pregnancy with our daughter Kezia, who was born in the U.S.

Around a year later I became pregnant again and this one was far from easy. I was suffering with intense depression, and we faced white-knuckle choices to trust that we wouldn't lose this little baby as well. Then some complications arose.

About two weeks before the birth, I had a horrible dream that something happened to me and I was in a wheelchair and "not there mentally" for many years – and my baby was not in the dream.

What followed was a nightmare. On April 23rd, 2003, as I was almost ready to deliver our son Luke, I gasped, "I don't feel good." I was struggling to breathe and that's the last thing I remember.

I was having an amniotic embolism, where some of the amniotic fluid was absorbed into my bloodstream causing a heart-lung collapse. Survival is rare. The odds against me were one in 1.2 million for survival without serious brain damage. I was rushed in for an emergency C-section to try to save Luke's life who they discovered was also in acute respiratory distress. Luke was delivered and Lionel was told that it was unlikely I would survive the night, though they were pretty sure Luke would make it.

Luke is now over a year old and talking, and we don't have one single lasting after-effect from the whole crisis. It's miraculous; and we are more than certain that it was through the prayers of our friends and family that Luke and I survived.

We are eternally grateful – not just that Luke's and my life were saved – but that each day we live here on earth continues to breathe testimony to the goodness of God. Our children are both doing well and Luke can now say all sorts of things, which as every parent knows, means he is undoubtedly the most gifted and brilliant of children!

– Misha Thompson



Kezia, Lionel & Misha

Miracle baby Luke



AND Profound Pithy

some wisdom
from somewhere

A dream is a vision you're willing to pay the price for.

Vision is not enough to hold us together; but friendships will.

If you love yourself, you're free to love others.

Meekness is love in the driver's seat.
– Mark Rutland

If we can't walk together as a family, we won't stay together around a vision.

Be fishers of men – you catch 'em,
He cleans 'em.

He who angers you, controls you.

God doesn't call the qualified,
He qualifies the called.

Some people want the front of the bus,
the back of the church, and the center
of attention.

Unity is a tool of evangelism (John 17).

Upcoming *inTouch* Gatherings

Kona, Hawaii – Nov 14-20, 2004

John Dawson, President of YWAM
With Joellyn Wright, worship leader
Hosted by Peter & Donna Jordan
Contact: Laurie Jordan
laurie@ywamassociates.com



Sydney, Australia

Jan 2-8, 2005

Winkie Pratney
With Peter & Donna
Contact: Peter West
westfolk@ozemail.com.au



Matamata, New Zealand

Jan 9-15, 2005

Dr Bruce & Barbara
Thompson
With Peter & Donna
Contact: Dianne Dingle
dingle@clear.net.nz

Transition

For many of us, the year 2004 is a year of transition.

God wants to get His people into place for what He is about to do. Many ask me, "What is God doing?"

Often my answer is, "I don't know; but one thing I DO know, is that ONLY one thing is needed" (necessary, needful, essential, worth being concerned about); "and that is to sit at Jesus' feet and listen to Him." (Luke 10:41-42).

We must stop our busyness and give Him all our fears. Our security is in Him and in Him alone. Relying on God's love takes away all fear (read 1 John 4:16-18); and, "the peace of God which transcends (or surpasses) all understanding, will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:7)

God cares about every individual. He created each one of us for relationship with Him. He is standing at the door of our hearts asking, "May I come and dine with you?" (Rev 3:20)

Jesus is standing at the door of His church longing for fellowship, saying, "Where will My resting place be? My house is to be a house of prayer for all nations." (Mark 11:17)

Are you listening to what the Spirit is saying? Is your heart a resting place for His Spirit? Is your home a place where He can dwell? Is your church?

As I speak in different nations I hear the same thing, "Where will My resting place be?" (Isaiah 66:1-2) "Where are My people who will fellowship with Me and hear what is on My heart? I want to see My Kingdom come, My will be done."

Those who are abiding in Him, will have peace, because, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you." (Romans 16:20)

Love and blessings,



Oh What Needless Pain We Bear *continued from front page*

That path leads to the cross. And the cross means death – death in this case, to the pain you have been carrying. When you've truly died to it, you won't be able to pick it up again. When rigor mortis has truly set in, you won't want to hang on to any other pain either, ever again; which is not to say that you'll never be wounded again; and don't forget what Jesus said, "It is impossible that no offenses should come."

Once the pain has been dumped at the cross, you are free to forgive. Forgiveness is not some wimpy, emotional, caving in to your feelings; to be truthful, you'll never 'feel' like forgiving. Forgiveness is a pro-active choice of your will that Jesus requires of all His followers (Mt 18:21-35). You choose to forgive (or you choose not to forgive).

Jesus also said, "If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you DO NOT forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." (Mt 6:14-15) Very sobering.

Practically, how does forgiveness work? Here's a guide:

- Make a list of all those who have offended you; and include anyone toward whom you harbor negative feelings.
- Face the pain of the hurt along with the resentment and bitterness – maybe even hatred – that you are nurturing within you.
- Decide that you will bear the burden of their sin and not hold it against them – ever again.
- Take it to the cross and crucify it to total death, never to resurrect it.
- Forgiveness is now your choice.

Ready now?

- Remember, forgiveness is an act of your will – a choice.
- God can't forgive if you don't forgive others.
- Think about what God has forgiven you.
- Consider that your offender also has needs.
- Ask God to give you His love for that person.
- Pray the prayer – forgiving each person – totally.

Now, get ready for the really hard part.

Commit to pray daily for blessings upon the one who was your offender. God knows what blessings that person needs, so leave it in His hands. Assuming they are still alive – yes, you need to release yourself in forgiveness even to those who have 'gone on' – when you see your prayers of blessing being answered, then you will surely know that you have forgiven. And your healing will accelerate.

Go for it!

No more needless pain to bear.


