



WAY TO HEALTH

Way to Health Newsletter

June 2016

This morning I passed by the government hospital in one of the biggest cities in Haiti. The hospitals are on strike across the country because they are demanding materials and better conditions for their patients. Doctors are expected to deliver babies with no gloves, medical professionals have worked for months with no pay, and patients are required to bring their own sheets, food, water, medicine, IV bags and all their own material if they want to be treated. The government hospitals mostly serve the country's poor, making it impossible for patients to be able to afford all this.

This morning I met a man who was lying outside the hospital naked and dying from diabetes. His feet were halfway gone and he was being eaten alive by maggots and worms and was covered in flies. His mind was completely there. He covered himself from embarrassment and then cried and begged me to help him with medicine and material to clean his wounds. I have probably become desensitized to a lot of things after working in Haiti for 7 years, but this

level of suffering is inhuman and I will never get used to it. The man who was helping him wasn't a Doctor, but a true good Samaritan and missionary to his own people. He introduced himself to me as a servant of God.

As I got out some money to go purchase some food and medical supplies a nurse I know from the hospital walked by and said "I don't know how severe God is going to judge us for this!" She too was frustrated at the situation she finds her country in.

I don't have a happy ending or a moral to this story. This is just what's happening here. I wanted to share it with you because it's real. It's part of our "normal" day. It's happening all around us all the time. I always feel the need to highlight the good parts about Haiti, because there are so many amazing beautiful stories and aspects of Haiti. But this is reality too. This is what we are working with. God help Haiti.

~A humble missionary in Haiti who wishes to remain anonymous.

"I wanted to cry seeing all this for the first time, but you just can't. You are there to help, not cry and compare what they don't have to what you do..."

*~Sarah Keller,
Providing medical assistance on the March 2016 mission team in Cite Soleil, Haiti*



Cite Soleil, Haiti

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Haiti: Reflection and Thought

For everything there is a season. For me that season was the year I turned 51 years old. By all accounts my life was just as it should be, a good Christian upbringing, a great education, my own business, a wonderful family and good health. But in the midst of all the goods, I still found myself struggling with my relationship with God. That was the year that God challenged my comfort zone and challenged me to live a more active and present faith.

That year, my youngest son decided to take a mission trip to Haiti as part of a plan to expand his public service resume for school. Thinking of me and about how great it would be to take a trip with my son, I chimed in that I should go along. In that single decision, God moved my life in a direction that I never saw coming. That was the year my faith would never be the same.

If you have ever traveled on service trip, you no doubt have been asked like me. Why? Or why Haiti? My answer is always the same- it is because that is where God called me to go, broke my heart wide open and then healed it, just enough. Just enough. Just enough that my heart daily aches to return and my mind cannot let go.

Since returning to Haiti several more times, I am privileged to marvel at the spiritual journey God has led me on. Faith now is a living, moving essence in my life. A faith that is fed by a strange juxtaposition of exhilaration and despair.

How is it that we can find a new fountain of faith in these sometimes darkest of places? A recent theological reading by Father Richard Rohr, I believe speaks to the journey of the soul and our resultant faith. The term "liberation theology" may be new to many readers but the idea is "instead of legitimating the self-serving status quo", to "speak to the reality and history of the Bible not from the side of the powerful, but from the side of the pain." Pain. Rohr states, "Furthermore, this (theological) thought has "its beginning point not in sin management" but "Where is the suffering?" Suffering.

This thought aligned perfectly, with my spiritual journey in Haiti. God's word then focused more on my becoming like others, stepping into their pain and suffering and



Lisa & Judy during a busy clinic day in Moreau.

less focus on me and my experience with them. Really isn't this where Jesus went as well?

No doubt it is easier to avoid or pray for relief of pain and suffering, indeed, even Jesus asked for the cup to be taken away. But I would argue that the real growth of faith comes from the depths of our "broken open hearts". Not being focused on ourselves, leaves us open to living our life and faith through others and their circumstances. By reaching into the depths of pain and suffering, we can find a joy that is truly God given and totally non self-serving. We are then not awash in the pain and suffering but renewed spiritually by the communing of our spirit, the whole of humanity and our Lord.

Rohr continues to make the case, that it is "our starting point that makes all the difference in how we read the Bible." and I would argue how we go about our lives. If we start our journey less ego centric and setting aside our preconceived ideas and shallow judgements, we are open to the experience of growing in our faith in unconventional ways. sharing in the universal Holy Spirit that resides in all. Rohr says of Jesus, [He spent] "little time trying to ferret out sinners or impose purity codes in any form. He just goes where the pain is." Indeed. I would urge each of you to take a trip to where the pain is and rejoice.

*~Judy Dugas, Missionary and
President of a leading US research company.*



Future Chedesapa Medical Clinic in Cite Soleil, Haiti

Cite Soleil, Haiti

Try to imagine this in your mind: trash everywhere, green sewage in the streets, the rancid smell of poop and garbage, and you have no time to really stand by and absorb how poverty stricken the whole city is. You're fully aware of the fact that the city is run by gangs, people are starving and lacking so many of their basic needs, but you aren't there to notice that stuff. You are there to help. You are the hands and feet of God. Whether it's mom using her \$12 stethoscope and teaching the families about key medical and sanitation concepts or me playing simple games with the neighborhood children, you feel blessed with what you have; it's like a wave of relief. You know that this quality time that you are spending with each individual will impact you more than them; you realize that these small moments (simple children's games and a \$12 stethoscope) mean more to these people in this city than bringing them suitcases full of toys and other material objects.

Cite Soleil is more of a giant community, one that as Americans, we can learn a lot from. Everyone knew about Madame Joe, the burn victim we were there to provide medical treatment for. Everyone in the city

knew of this poor lady who needed urgent medical care but was unable to receive it, yet as Americans, we do not even know our next door neighbors name most of the time. When taking care of Madame Joe, not one thing was stolen. In fact, these people helped us instead of planning to steal any number of our supplies. Despite their poor living conditions, they always gave you the best seat they had to offer, cooked the best meal they knew how to cook, and always brought out their best dishes you knew they were saving for a time like this. I was in shock when we arrived at her house. There were no trees, no grass, and nothing was green. Everything was concrete and gray. There was graffiti all over the buildings about who to put in the governmental offices next, an overwhelming smell of sewer and waste, some children were naked and others only had a shirt and no pants or shoes running around their neighborhood. I wanted to cry seeing all of this for the first time, but you just can't. You are there to help, not cry and compare what they don't have to what you do. We got to Madame Joe's house and she was sitting outside on a chair in the middle of the dirt, rocks, and mud. We had our green medical bag with all of mom's supplies in it. A crowd began to form around us: kids and adults coming from who knows where. We greeted every-

Chedesapa

James Alexandre lives in Cite Militaire now, but growing up he only knew Cite Soleil. The area has no running water, no grocery stores, no police force, few jobs (unemployment is as high as 80%), intermittent electricity, no closed sewage system, no medical care. No one knows the population but it is estimated to be 200,000 to 400,000 living in extreme poverty. Life expectancy is only 52 years. Infant mortality rates are high. Literacy rates are low.

James has a dream of bringing medical care to this community that he grew up in through his organization Chedesapa. He would love to turn the abandoned building pictured to the left, presently used as a restroom, into a medical clinic.

Way to Health is partnering with James and Chedesapa to fulfill this dream. We are educating him through hands on experience in our mobile medical clinics, teaching him business practices and recently taught him Quickbooks accounting software, which he caught on very quickly.

At the same time, we are learning from James who knows Haiti, it's communities and it's people better than we ever could. He teaches us every day about how to do our work in Haiti better.

To donate go to www.waytoh.org

one, gave Madame Joe a kiss and got straight to work. There was nothing I could do except help my mom - the only medical professional there. This was healthcare at its rawest form. It's difficult to explain how this city still has a unique beauty to it in regardless of all the filth and misery.

~Sarah Keller, third year Healthcare Management student at The University of Texas at Dallas.

July 2016 Mission Trip Update

Five college students will provide disaster relief medical care to Cite Soleil and Moreau, Haiti. The Haitian government is nearly shut down, all medical staff have walked off the job due to no pay for three months, inadequate supplies and poor conditions.

Our three mobile clinics will each see 200+ patients a day. We will hire Haitian medical staff to assist and purchase medicines in-country to promote the local economy. \$6000 is needed to fund this project which is about \$2000 for each clinic. We will also do home visits for those too ill to walk to clinic.

Planning and itineraries are all set and team meetings have already begun. Missionaries are getting vaccinations, procuring donations, and preparing emotionally and spiritually for their trip.

We ask for your help in 2 ways: First, pray for our teams, our trip and the people of Haiti. Second, donate financially. No gift is too small.

"Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life." 1 Timothy 6:17-19

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Give us a call for more information about our medical work and mission work:

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Donate

We have an immediate need for donations for medicine and hiring Haitian doctors for the July mobile clinics. Donations are tax deductible. Please donate now.

<http://www.waytoh.org/donate.html>

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