



**Preparing and Caring
for**

Beautiful Feet



***Plenary #3: When Beautiful Feet
Come Down off Mountain
Trails...***

***Helping God's International Servants
When they come (not exactly) Home***





END OF
TRAIL





Things that concerned me as I watched cross-cultural workers “come home”:

- They weren't being appropriately celebrated.
- They weren't prepared for retirement
- They weren't prepared for re-entry
- Agencies and churches were often not making use of their valuable gifts and experience
- Creative options for semi-retirement and ongoing service were not being utilized

We will cover:

- The concept of “coming home”
 - also known as “Re-Entry”
 - what that may mean for overseas servants
- Retirement: aspects that need to be considered
- What international workers need to think through in regard to both Re-Entry and Retirement
- How agencies, churches and member care staff can help with those transitions

HOME...

what does that mean to you?

where is home now?

What do we mean by “home”?

1. The place you were born and raised?
2. Where people speak your native language and behave (more or less) as you do?
3. Where people you love are?
4. Where you “**feel at home**” ... ?



Resident Aliens...

*God's international servants are often
confused about the concept of "home"--
--correctly confused*

*"Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and
strangers in the world..."*

1 Peter 2:11

Home and Heroes of the Faith

(Hebrews 11)

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on the earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own...a better country—a heavenly one.

Hebrews 11: 13-16

Part of the angst of the sojourner who tries to return “home” is the appropriate, biblical angst of not really belonging anywhere on this earth.

The solution for that particular angst is to center ourselves in our identity as God’s children, God’s servants, waiting patiently for our eternal home.

*The cultural sojourn is a voyage that can
end in the resocialization of the
sojourner.*

Anderson, International Journal of Intercultural Research,
Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 320

“Re-entry”

“Not only is reverse culture shock normal, most returnees say that adjusting after coming home is much harder than adjusting to the ‘foreign’ country ever was.”

The Art of Coming Home

Craig Storti

Retirement

“Retirement is one of life’s most difficult transitions, comparable to divorce or death of a spouse. It is a more difficult adjustment than getting married or becoming parents.”

www.baby-boomers-planning-for-retirement.com

Re-entry: why is this so hard?

Culture shock is the expected confrontation with the unfamiliar.

Re-entry is the unexpected confrontation with the familiar.

Paige

Re-entry: why is this so hard?

Aspects of home:

1. familiar places...



Re-entry: why is this so hard?

Aspects of home:

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- 2. familiar people...**



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Re-entry: why is this so hard?

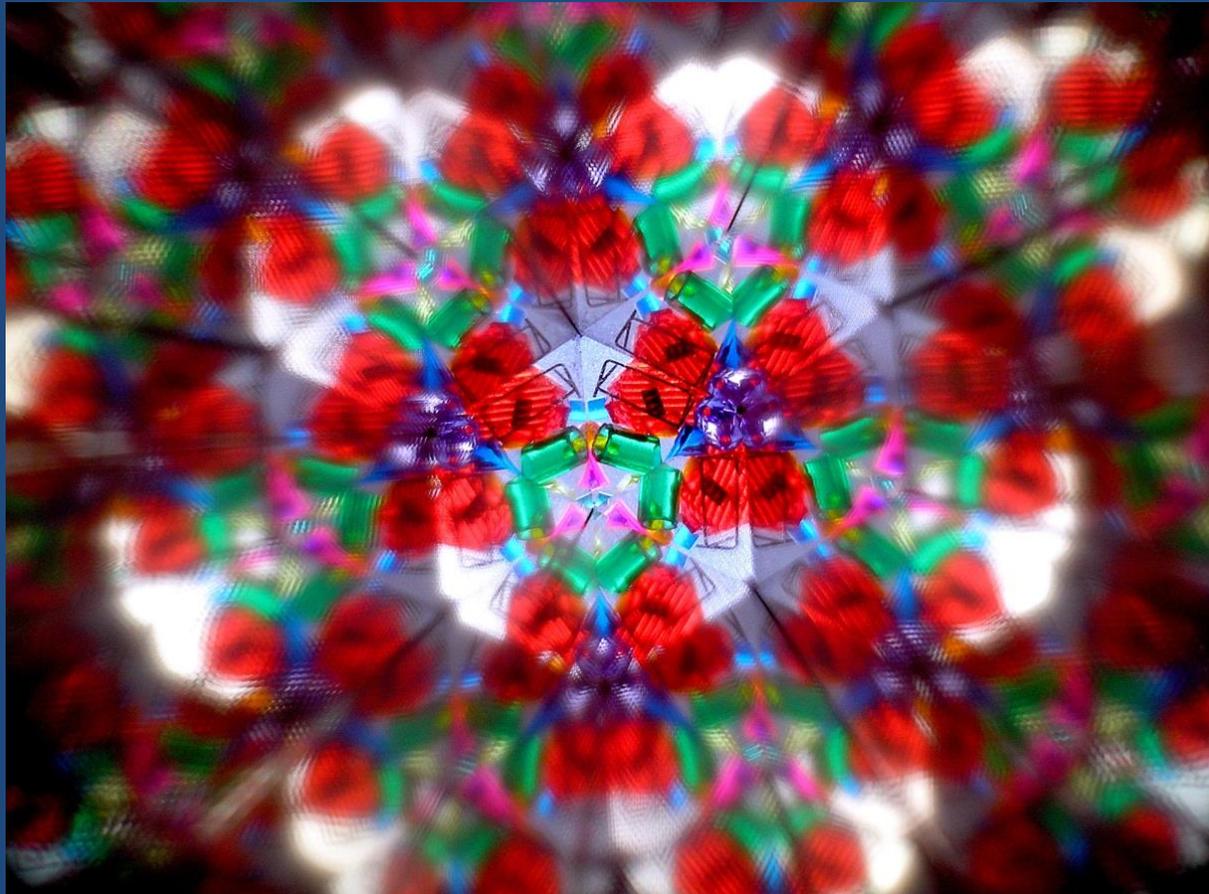
Aspects of home:

1. familiar places
2. familiar people
- 3. familiar routines and
predictable patterns
of interaction**



Re-entry: why is this so hard?

Shift in values







Re-entry: why is this so hard?

But doesn't "Home Assignment" help?

Yes

&

No

Re-entry: why is this so hard?



Identity issues...

In the U. S. an overseas worker
can have...

...a certain *mystique*



Identity losses...

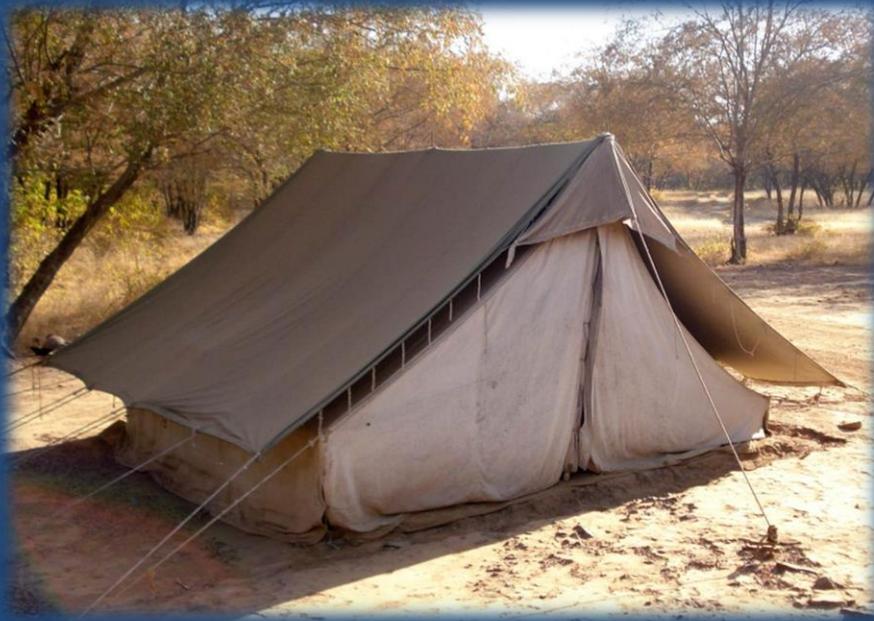
B. Overseas...
...relationships



Re-entry: why is this so hard?

“To re-enter, it turns out, is to be temporarily homeless.”

The Art of Coming Home, p. 19



In terms of:

- place
- purpose
- relationships
- identity



Re-entry: why is this so hard?

Phases of Re-entry:

1. leave-taking/departure
 2. honey moon phase
 3. reverse culture shock
 4. judgmental phase
 5. life at the margins
 6. doubt
 7. overwhelmed
 8. readjustment
- ... and a LOT of grieving*

Retirement...why is this so hard?

Issues for U.S. resident retirees:

1. living on a fixed income
2. what to do with leisure time
3. Identity issues:
*“who am I...
now that I don't
work?”*



Retirement...why is this so hard?

1. living on a fixed income
2. what to do with leisure time
3. loss of identity
4. loss of life structure

Retirement = 2 x husband + 1/2 money

5. declining health

For the re-entering
AND
retiring
sojourner...

combine all the issues

What helps?

- 1. Leave well*
- 2. Be aware of how transition works*
- 3. Relocate wisely*
- 4. Deal with psychological issues*
- 5. Develop the right mindset*
- 6. Find friends/mentors who understand*

Leave well

1. *Pass the baton with forethought, realism, care
(succession planning?)*
2. *Don't burn bridges (if you can help it)*
3. *Say your good-byes well*
 - places*
 - things*
 - people:*
 - give affirmation (writing is best)*
 - reconcile where needed (carefully)*
 - say "Good-bye" –but leave room
for continued connection*

Leave well...

4. *Have, or give (!) strategic “Good-bye parties”*
 - commensurate with your goals and energies
5. *Give thought to whether/how you want to wield continued influence...*
 - visit?
 - do “half terms”?
 - stay in touch

When you are nearing the end of an important assignment, think of

*INFLUENCE**

more than accomplishment of tasks.

Preserve influence where possible and appropriate.

**It is a valuable commodity that took a long time to earn—and can still be used.*

What helps...

- *Be aware of how transitions work...*
 - See: *Finishing Well: Retirement Skills For Global Servants*

by Nathan Davis

Transition	Entering	Re-involvement
<p style="text-align: center;">Chaos</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Superficial</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Committed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must initiate relationship • Isolation • Self-centered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observer • Uncertain of trust • Exaggerated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging • Involved • Conforming behavior
<p style="text-align: center;">Statuslessness</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Introducing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Belonging</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special knowledge without use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown • Lack of structure • Marginal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known • Knowing • Position
<p style="text-align: center;">Anxiety</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Vulnerable</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Intimacy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissolution of ego • Ambiguity/sacred objects • Grief from loss • Emotional instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fearful • Ambivalent • Easily offended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure • Affirmed

What helps?

Relocate wisely

If a new job does not dictate a new location...

What factors should?

Relocate wisely

- *who do you want to live near?*
aging parents, children, friends?
- *housing costs (& other costs of living)*
- *health services*
- *climate*
- *urban, rural, near airport?*
- ***what will you DO?***
- *don't get permanent too soon!*

To relocate wisely:

Be informed: (do research)

Finances:

- know your government policies
 - SS and Medicare rights/expectations
- know your projected income
 - couples: think of “splitting check”
 - consult a financial advisor

Consider owning property

Research different locations

Talk to others who may have information

Deal with psychological issues...

1. Do your grieving
2. Confront expectations
 - yours
 - others
3. Figure out your new identity
 - ...this will take some time and prayer
 - ...give yourself and others GRACE

Have the right mindset:

1. Consider this not so much “going home” as “another assignment.”
 - with pluses and minuses
2. Expect to adapt to the culture...
 - instead of “fitting in,” “belonging.”
3. Remember who you are—a servant
 - how can you serve God “here”?
 - don’t expect to be understood
 - or appreciated
4. Remember where home is...

The right mindset...

*Now that I am old and gray
do not abandon me, O God.*

*Let me proclaim your power to this new
generation,*

*Your mighty miracles to all who come after
me.*

Psalm 71:18 NLT

What helps?

Find friends, mentors, who understand
Re-Entry and Retirement

- Retirees
- International Workers
- Foreign Nationals



How agencies can help:

- provide a conference/retreat on preparation for re-entry/retirement
- provide counselors familiar with re-entry/retirement issues
- adopt financial policies that help those who re-enter and retire
 - e.g. split SS, allow for post-retirement processing of funds
- plan how to use valuable knowledge/services of retired workers

EMERITUS

*E*xperienced

*M*issionaries

*E*ngaged in

*R*epatriation and

*I*ntegrated in

*T*houghtful

*U*plifting

*S*ervice

EMERITUS: the program

1. The conference was publicized:
 - letters to potential retirees
 - an annual conference
2. Tools were provided:
 - books
 - 3 ring binder full of information
 - workshops on...

EMERITUS: the program

3. Company/mentors were provided:
 - trained helpers
 - personal debriefing
 - at the conference—
 - colleagues in similar state

4. Appreciation was expressed:
 - we told them again and again...
 - we invite them to stay involved

EMERITUS: the program

5. They were informed of options:

a. don't retire – remain on the field

1) full time/full support

2) fewer hours/lower support income

b. don't retire – change to U.S. region

1) stay on support: full/partial

2) no support – as volunteer

Options, cont.

c. retire from overseas, but:

1) work from U.S. office:

a) on full support

b) on partial support

c) as a volunteer

in: --Church Connections

--Recruiting

--Member Care

*--Rope Holders**

**helping First Termers*

Options, cont.

- d. become an International Resource Specialist/Consultant –*
 - i.e., serve occasionally*
 - raise funds for projects, expenses or travel*
 - no salary involved*

EMERITUS affirmed:

*“Our people are **GOLD**;
we want them to stay as involved
with US
as they are willing to be.”*

Sending Agency

How Member Care can help:

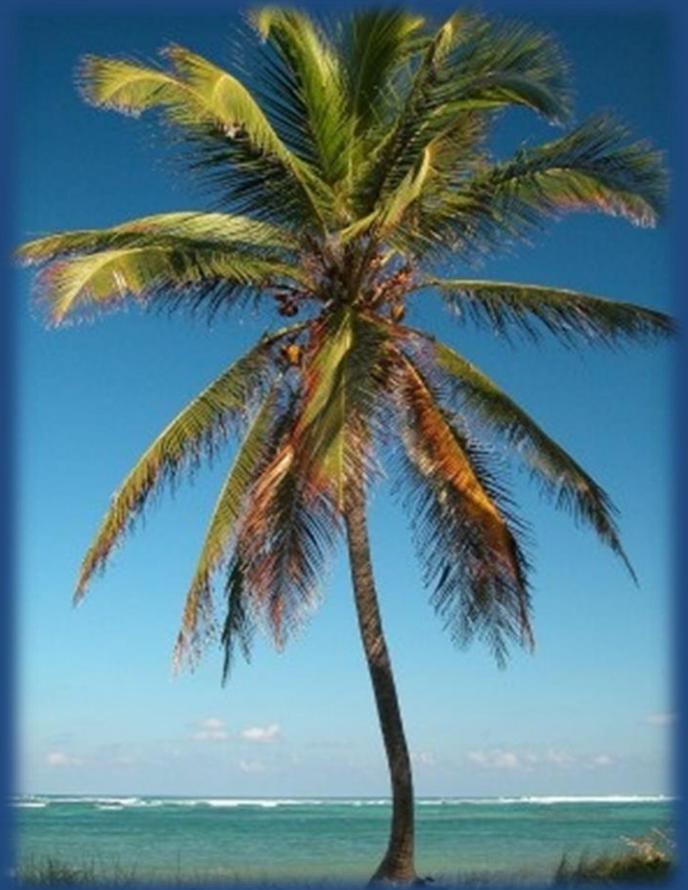
1. Teach and counsel people re:
 - how to leave well
 - how to plan ahead
 - how to deal with grief and identity and homelessness issues
 - how to research various options
2. Provide bibliographies, books and information, referrals to other advisors
3. Advocate with their agency for appropriate helps and policies for re-entering and retiring international workers

How Churches Can Help

- Celebrate the life and ministry of a returning overseas servant
- Provide temporary housing and vehicle during the transition
- Give referrals to wise and understanding financial planners, real estate agents, health advocates
- Make use of the talents and experience of returning servants in your church and ministries
- Give guidance and information about local projects, agencies, resources, recreations

Psalm 92: 12-15 NLB

But the godly will flourish like palm trees and grow strong like the cedars of Lebanon. For they are transplanted to the Lord's own house. Even in old age they will still produce fruit; they will remain vital and green. They will declare, "The Lord is just! He is my rock! There is no evil in Him."





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