

# TCK Life on the Flipside

I'm part Kiwi, part Italian and British, have Dutch grandparents, was born in New Zealand, grew up in Turkey, and came out with a hard to place accent. I grew up among worlds; I've become a nomad. I'm a Third Culture Kid (TCK).

A TCK is someone who's spent a significant part of their childhood or youth growing up in a different country. It means being part of a wider unique sub-culture, shared by others who've likewise experienced internationality.

Eastwest College recently hosted an inaugural camp for transitioning TCKs. Our mutual experiences and life stories enabled us to form an instant and deep comradeship. Many a TCK can curse convincingly in several languages. Our accents change depending on who we talk to. Our birthday's last longer due to time zones. We can rank the best and worst McDonalds from different countries, and our passports look like they've been through hell and back.

Being a TCK I also have to work on toning down a superiority complex, and a 'slight' sense of pride in my multicultural fluency. I recall galloping



on the back of an Arabian horse through royal tombs; have been swept up in desert sandstorms, meandered through countless religious sites, descended into six-storey underground cities, and lived in a megacity spanning two continents.

But the knife cuts both ways. I've spent many a Christmas or birthday without my relatives, wrestled with feelings of rootlessness, grief and an understanding of where and how I fit. I've faced a world marked by a very naked kind of everyday struggle, seen up close the dehumanising face of poverty, persecution, and a country terrorised by war with school buses routinely checked for bombs, malls with metal detectors and bag checks, death threats, and my Dad beaten and held at gunpoint.

I sit down at Turkish restaurants in NZ vainly hoping that the kebabs will be authentic, the bread won't be knock-off Indian naan, and the tea will have the bittersweet taste I recall so fondly - I miss it, badly. I miss the love I was given by a country that did not need to recognize me as one of its own. I miss the challenges and thick skin that it gave me; the deep connections and rich conversations. It's changed me irrevocably. Not only has it given me a deep love for cultures and the vibrant mine of life that each person is, but, it's also convinced me of the need for people to continue to take the gospel to those who've not yet heard.

Madison's a coffee-loving teen, who grew up in a middle-eastern culture of tea and neighbourhood gossip. Still feeling somewhat foreign at "home," she's looking forward to beginning studies at Waikato University in 2016.

Madison



Spreading the Gospel where it's thinnest

## Stop Sending Them!

**"Stop sending them! Stop sending under-qualified missionaries!"** This is the vociferous appeal made in the blog by Steve Jennings, a missionary to the Middle East. Have we sent too many missionaries? Are the workers too many and the harvest not so plentiful after all? No! Steve's concern is not that we are sending too many missionaries, but rather that underprepared workers are hindering frontline mission work.

Steve goes on to say: "It seems that the impatience that so marks the current generation has infiltrated the missionary movement under the guise of "urgency." In our haste to send people to needy places, underprepared workers are being sent." This is creating problems for existing workers resulting in mistakes in mission with far reaching (even eternal) consequences.

Steve's argument is for workers to be better prepared before going out to serve God. Workers that are sent need to have proven godly character, know the Scriptures, know how to work with others, and be people that are, in his words, "called and ready."

You can read Steve's blog at <http://9marks.org/article/stop-sending-missionaries-why-more-isnt-always-better/>

Another seasoned mission worker in an international survey responded, "For me, it's not about more people, it's about suitable people. I've been supervising missionaries for 15 years and would prefer less who stay longer and accomplish more."

In this issue we'll examine how WEC ensures that workers that go out with us are the type of worker that Steve would welcome. We'll also hear from some of those who are in training or reflecting upon their mission experiences.



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# Equipping the Called

What makes people rearrange their lives to study at a place like Eastwest College? We asked two Kiwi families to share why they made the step, and why they're going back for more!

Planning for long term missions service usually follows a familiar pattern - Bible and mission training, discernment, joining an agency, more preparation and then finally departing. Our journey was nothing like that. You could say we've done everything backwards!

With minimal training we left these shores to oversee a hostel for missionary children in Thailand. We loved it. We returned home after four wonderful years with a clear plan for further training. One thing we're now certain of is long term mission involvement requires more than a clear calling. It also demands well-tailored, cross cultural Biblical and mission training.

We left behind a land of incredible beauty, amazing people, food, and adventures. But we couldn't have returned to a better place. We continue to live in community, learning cultural lessons with Biblical principles that our time in Thailand didn't allow. Best of all, our vantage point now, with fresh experience and a good dose of reality, means we ask questions and probe in ways that maybe some of our peers don't.

Sure, nothing beats real life cross cultural mission experience, but we're confident that Eastwest College is almost the real thing. We wouldn't return overseas without the best training possible, and we think we've found it. Maybe this backwards approach wasn't such a bad plan after all.



Andrew & Raewyn



Rob

After 20 successful years in my career I found myself at a crossroads. I was feeling an increasing dissatisfaction with my "normal life"; the pursuit of material things and other cultural values were becoming passé. At the same time, my desires to further understand God's plans were growing.

Following a season of cupboard prayer, and discussing the possibilities with my wife Sarah, it got to the point where God was saying, "Jump!" So we put the house on the market, I gave in my notice, and so began this faith adventure.

I've always loved meeting new people and learning about other cultures. I think God placed this in me as a way to begin to understand His heart for the nations.

My first year at Eastwest College was invaluable – gleaning from the wisdom and stories of fantastic tutors, wrestling with ideas and scripture, growing in faith as I saw God at work in this multicultural community, and allowing all areas of my life to be challenged.

College life is building a foundation of useful tools and disciplines that I can take into the future. It's also an investment towards discovering the possibilities in mission for my family. I'm so appreciative of their support and God's great provision. Maybe Eastwest should be on your radar too!

# Business Without Borders

Munju and Raj were locals in our small village. Raj had a drinking problem, affecting his work performance and attendance. After numerous warnings, he was fired. God however, had other plans.



Munju began work in our house. Her husband Raj also started doing odd jobs around our home, and painting at John's work. The relationship John had built with Raj meant John could share in depth about his own past. He too used to be a slave to alcohol. It was only when John made Jesus Lord in his life, that he was freed to be the man, husband, and father that God intended him to be.

Our first four-year stint involved the learning of language and culture, and a time of experimentation, where we developed our ministry philosophy through the medium of business. We now embrace what we believe to be a very old concept, that of missional business.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were obedient followers who trusted in God. They were also businessmen. Joseph and Daniel sought to honour God with their God-given business acumen. Further examples can be seen in the lives of Amos, Job and Paul. Throughout the span of scripture we see that our business practices shouldn't be compartmentalised from our lives as children of God. It is our desire to continue in this tradition of life, ministry, and business without borders.

Our first enterprise used John's carpentry background to manufacture (by hand) children's products for home and school use. More recently we've established an "umbrella company," with the flexibility to adapt to future opportunities. By us serving as full-time volunteers, profits can be reinvested in the business,

creating employment opportunities, the capacity for vocational training, and future community initiatives utilising Jane's nursing experience.

Back to our story. Munju told us she was glad Raj was fired, because our house had become her sanctuary. She experienced a peace that she didn't feel elsewhere. When we encouraged her to think about what that peace might be, Munju realised that it was the peace of God.

Later, after leaving the village, we heard that Raj and Munju had a new daughter. The whole village attended the naming ceremony, at which they announced her name, Hannah, after our daughter. How wonderful it was to be able to share with them that Hannah means *favour, or grace*. While Munju and Raj have not yet become believers, they are well on the way.

From a business perspective Raj may well have been a liability. From a Kingdom perspective though, our significant interaction with him and his family was made possible because of the business relationship.

After many years in the building and health professions, John and Jane (pseudonyms) trained at Eastwest College before joining WEC and moving to Asia with their two daughters.

**John & Jane**

# Sending Them Well

The need for missionary agencies to send out well prepared workers was brought home to me during my first year working in Central Asia. A fellow worker had faced a choice between an organisation requiring a four month orientation to ensure she was ready for the field, and another which required only a week. Keen to get on with the task, she chose the one week orientation. This led to her bringing ‘excess baggage’ with her, resulting in her colleagues setting aside their work to help her deal with her issues. Issues that would have surfaced and been dealt with during a well-run longer orientation.



*“It was really helpful to be part of a multi-cultural group with time to reflect on anticipated challenges, cultural adaptation and potential crises. We gained realistic insights into working overseas. It was particularly helpful for us, as Helen had some overseas experience whereas I had not. CO brought us to a place of equal preparedness and understanding. It helped establish good relationships with the WEC NZ staff, giving us the confidence of future care and support. We thoroughly recommend it to all, however short their anticipated service.”*  
Charles and Helen

In WEC NZ we do a twelve week Candidate Orientation (CO). This is a time of practical preparation for people heading out to various parts of the world on missionary service. Our time of orientation has three core functions. The first is to ensure that the new worker is ready for the rigours and strains of cross-cultural life and ministry. Are they firmly rooted in Christ? Do they have a suitable grasp of the truth which they are trying to teach others? Are they able to relate well to others? Can they relate to people of different cultures? Is their marriage strong? Are they comfortable being single? Will their family withstand the pressures of life on the field? Can we affirm their sense of call and their fit with their intended place of service? We don't believe that these things can be discerned over a weekend or even a week. During this orientation we are able to confidently affirm the missionary candidate's readiness for their field – or not! And if not, then we work with them so that they will be ready – even if their time is ‘not yet’.

A second purpose of our three months together is to build a strong bond between the worker and those of us in the national office. As our orientation is residential, it gives us all at the national office a chance to really get to know the candidates and, in turn, they know what to expect from us. The importance of this was also brought home to me during our time in Central Asia. As we walked and talked, a fellow missionary complained about his latest agency (he'd been with a few). In contrast I expressed how satisfied I was with WEC. He stopped walking, looked me in the eye and said “You are the first person I have heard speak well of your organisation in your first term of service.” I believe our positive experience was a direct result of a good orientation.

Thirdly, our three months together is not just spent naval gazing, but includes training on various aspects that are likely to be encountered.

*“We attended CO in 2012 to further our understanding and relationship with WEC. It was a fantastic time for increasing cross-cultural understanding and gaining skills needed to live in another cultural setting. The small group context, very practical focus and experienced leaders all contributed to a positive, life-changing experience for us.”*  
Martyn and Wendy

Our training includes much class discussion, scenarios, role plays as well as readings, videos and shared outreach. We have divided our programme up into modules which include church planting, self-care, relationships, home and family life, crisis management, cultural adaptation, working in multicultural teams as well as an introduction to WEC.

It is not a Bible school and does not replace the need for Bible training. Orientation is led by various people, who share from their area of expertise. More than 30 people shared during our last orientation.

Candidate Orientation is usually held twice a year, (March – May and August-October). For more information contact us at [nzco@wecnz.org](mailto:nzco@wecnz.org) or get more information from <http://www.wecnz.org.nz/get-involved/go-long-term/joining-wec-what-is-co/>

*“CO was all about how we could best be prepared and supported into sustainable long-term mission with WEC. It enabled us to work through issues, some quite deep, but come through knowing God's calling and His enabling for the path ahead. It was a warm welcome into the worldwide family of WEC. We'll remember it as a life-changing experience! Special components, like the marriage course were really helpful to us.”*  
Dave and Anilu

We'll leave our final comment to “Alfred” who has been living overseas for the past 15 months

*“I'm currently at language school surrounded by dozens of new workers from various organisations. At the risk of feeding pride, WEC'ers appear generally the best prepared. They settled into their new culture quicker, are acquiring the language at a faster rate, making friends with nationals more easily, have more spiritual conversations, and cope better with the stress of transition. I'm sure this is in no small part due to the excellent Candidate Orientation every WEC'er undertakes. During my CO I was able to dialogue with seasoned workers giving me a clear framework for contextualisation; when to be cross cultural and when to be counter cultural. The time spent examining the difficulties of suffering, stress, spiritual disciplines, and spiritual warfare helped me come to my region with the right expectations. I've been able to cope with trials more easily, as I learned to trust in God and not my own capacity. The time spent living onsite with various cultures was excellent practice. It has helped me resolve conflicts when they have arisen and highlighted weaknesses in my own character which I'd previously been unaware of. I unreservedly recommend WEC CO. It's not wasted time!”*

Joseph, part of our Candidates Orientation team, has served in Central Asia and has a soft spot for Liverpool football.

Joseph



# SITsvacant

What are your plans for 2016? Perhaps you are thinking of doing something different with a portion of the year or more. Have a look at a few opportunities out there and let us know if you're keen...

**Teaching:** Are you a music teacher, special needs teacher, an art or history teacher? Yes, we could use you.

What about helping with childcare or homeschooling – loads of opportunities.

There are many places open to English teachers – both trained and native speakers without training. Mexico, Central Asia, Chad, Russia and others.

**Trade:** Someone with tiling or plumbing skills is needed to build a toilet at a multi-purpose centre in a large Central Asian city. The building is used for language classes, accommodation for short-termers and church meetings.

**Medical:** Doctors, nurses, physiotherapists or other medical professionals are required for a project planned to treat and train Tibetan villagers, for 6 months to 1 year. This will involve staying in a medium sized town as well as travelling to small villages.

Gambia is always in need of medical staff especially between June and December.

We also need a Physio- or Occupational therapist for two years to work in a pioneer situation helping an NGO to establish a family / home based rehabilitation network.

**General:** Join a team of WEC camp staff in the UK to help with all sorts of tasks but also to be there for the young people. 25 July-1 August, 1-8 August or 8-15 August 2015.

For the more athletic – Sports trainer for camps – cricket, rugby, basketball, netball, badminton, chess etc

**IT:** Computer expertise is also needed – could you help with a project without even leaving home? However if you wanted to come to Asia you would be very welcome. We have material we would like to make available as an app on IOS and Android.

# NZoutlook

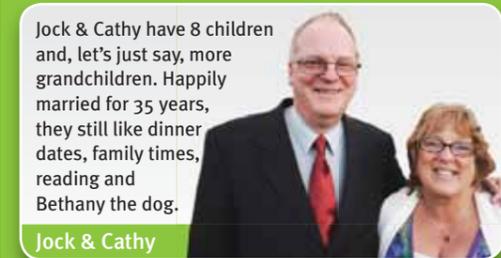
I read an interesting article the other day entitled ‘5 Questions that I would ask a missionary before I supported them’. The first of those questions was whether they had received adequate training. If you want to know the others you can find the article on <http://everylastone.net/2016/01/01/5>.

Internationally some missiologists declare that the dropout rate for new missionaries is around 50% – a shocking and rather tragic statistic. Training really helps to prevent these kind of attrition rates. But even more importantly – having adequate, targeted, specific missiological training should also help to avoid planting a cult instead of a church. This is no idle boast, and we are talking here about the serious business of obeying Christ's Great Commission.

Training helps answer questions like:

- How do you share the Gospel across cultural barriers in a way that the hearers can understand effectively?
- How can we effectively learn and understand their culture, heart language, worldview and view of reality?
- How do we avoid the issues of syncretism, paternalism and dependency?
- How can we plant a church using reproducible principles and resources?
- How do we work in a multi-cultural team of colleagues?
- How do I maintain my spiritual vitality when I am far from everything that is familiar and comfortable for me?

Training is just the beginning – it is necessarily followed by a humble heart open to life-long learning. Part of the role of the team here is to prepare you for effective Kingdom service. Contact us to see how we can help.



Jock & Cathy have 8 children and, let's just say, more grandchildren. Happily married for 35 years, they still like dinner dates, family times, reading and Bethany the dog.

Jock & Cathy

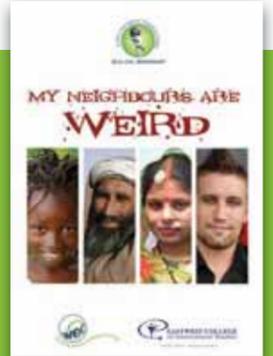


## GO GLO-CAL!

WEC NZ offers a range of GLO-CAL Workshops to equip your church for cross-cultural mission.

Check the website for details, or contact the Mobilising Team and book yours early!

Contact the mobilising team for details:  
**0800 GO INTO • mobiliser@wecnz.org**




## Trek Stories

I had the privilege of serving in the WEC drug rehabilitation ministry, Betel, for three weeks. I stayed in the women's house with 16 Betelitas or Betel women. I did what they did; doing the house chores, following the house and Betel rules, attending church services and sharing life with the women.

Having no Spanish when I left NZ created some difficulties in communication. Praise be to God who helped me learn the language and by the second week, I was able to communicate with some Spanish. I'll always remember working in a store with a Betelita with our Bibles wide open and using it as a way of translating our conversation. I thought this was an awesome way of communicating through the language barrier! My biggest struggle was the lack of freedom and space, but I learnt to live in a closed community, respecting and sharing with others, being disciplined and being considerate towards one another. Two things that touched me the most were meeting missionaries very passionate for Christ and who have deep compassion towards the lost, and gaining trust from the Betelitas; I heard and saw their changed lives and their restored family relationships. It was beautiful and heart warming. I'm very grateful for this serving opportunity.

Michelle is using her love of travel to explore mission for the first time. She is currently in Canada serving at the WEC base cooking for their current Candidates Orientation course. If you're keen to explore mission first hand, get in touch with Jillian on 0800 GOINTO or [treks@wecnz.org](mailto:treks@wecnz.org)

