

Who we are, and what we do

Ron & Bonnie Koteskey

We taught for 35 years in Christian colleges as well as in public and Christian elementary schools. Bonnie taught elementary school as well as teacher education at the college level, and Ron taught psychology at the undergraduate level in college. Our three children are all married and have families of their own. As member care consultants with New Hope International Ministries of Wilmore, KY, we are now retired and, as volunteers, provide member care for cross-cultural workers. We are not licensed health care professionals, but we emphasize care, encouragement, growth, and prevention of problems rather than treatment of severe problems. Rather than working as professionals for pay, we provide member care as amateurs in the original sense of the word—out of love rather than for money.

We do whatever we can to help cross-cultural workers. We do not belong to any sending agency but help others as someone with no official connection to their organization. Listed below are things we are currently doing, but we are always open to new ways to help. Let us begin with the most general forms of help, continue with helping cross-cultural workers through their years of service, and end with specific ministries.

Website. Our website, www.crossculturalworkers.com contains 45 “brochures” on topics relevant to cross-cultural workers and four E-books. Cross-cultural workers anywhere in the world can visit this website to read, download, print, copy and

distribute the information free of charge to anyone who can use it.

Books. Six E-books are available on the website and may be downloaded free of charge by anyone, anywhere, anytime.

What Cross-Cultural Workers Ought to Know... is a 260-page book about living in other cultures. This book has 42 chapters in seven sections: Basics, challenges, problems, sexuality, relationships, care, and ending well.

Coming “Home”: The Reentry Transition is a short 50-page book with six chapters related to the challenge of returning to one’s passport culture after living in another culture.

Third Culture Kids and Adolescence: Cultural Creations is a 150-page book written for adolescent TCKs. The book has 17 chapters in five sections: Before adolescence, adolescence invented, identity lost, sex forbidden, and work forbidden/school required.

Understanding Adolescence is a 175-page book written for parents of adolescents. Its 13 chapters parallel to the *Third Culture Kids and Adolescence: Cultural Creations* book.

We’re Going Home: Reentry for Elementary Children is a 100-page book written for children 6-12 years of age. The story and activities appeal to children reentering their passport country.

I Don’t Want to Go Home: Parent’s Guide for Reentry for Elementary Children is a 65-page companion book written specifically for parents to help them assist in their children’s reentry.

Brochures. The chapters of *What Cross-Cultural Workers Ought to Know...* are also available as individual brochures. Each chapter stands alone and a worker may be interested in reading only about a few topics and

not want the whole book. We give permission on each brochure for it to be copied and distributed as long as it is given to others free of charge.

Caring for Cross-Cultural Workers by Radio. Trans World Radio broadcasts in 180 languages to reach people through radio. TWR has begun a daily 15-minute program in English aimed at Christian cross-cultural workers in situations where receiving information through other means may be difficult. The program is broadcast so that it reaches from Central Asia through North Africa, and one can find out more by visiting www.mcbr.org. TWR is adapting the brochures to a format suitable for broadcast to let Christians working in this area of the world know that they are neither alone nor forgotten.

Seminars. We present information on various topics to a variety of cross-cultural worker groups. We have done seminars on third culture kids, leadership, generational differences, conflict, anger, adolescence, maintaining mental and physical health, and psychology from a Christian perspective. We have made these presentations to groups as varied as the entire cross-cultural worker force of one organization, cross-cultural workers on a field, seminary students, university students, field directors, national pastors, retirees, and appointees.

Cross-Cultural Workers in Our Home. Cross-cultural workers have stopped by our home to discuss issues that concern them. We have talked with individuals and couples about a variety of topics ranging from grief to interpersonal relationships to debriefing when they return to the states. These are people who have met us in larger group settings such as

conferences, retreats, orientations, seminars, or even discovered us on our web page.

Cross-Cultural Workers on the Field (from Our Home). Cross-cultural workers serving on their fields are unable to stop by our home, so we have communicated with them in a variety of ways. Of course, telephone conversations are always helpful, but may be quite expensive between some countries. E-mail is free, but the time between sending a message and receiving a reply may be rather long.

On-Site Visits. Occasionally at the invitation of cross-cultural workers, we visit them on the field to help them cope with various issues. We do this only if everyone involved wants us to come, and we have the blessing of the organization. At these times we have talked with individuals, couples, and groups of cross-cultural workers. We are not sent by the organization, but go only when invited by the cross-cultural workers themselves.

Care of Cross-Cultural Workers in a Geographical Area. We are seeing the realization of a dream we have had for several years, a dream of providing care for cross-cultural workers from many different organizations in a given place. We go on a regular basis to the same cross-cultural workers so that they will get to know us and feel free to talk with us, rather than just going to help in a crisis situation. We visit Bolivia on a regular basis, talking with 30-35 cross-cultural workers from five different organizations several times. We also presented seminars on various topics to different groups of cross-cultural workers.

Reentry. We facilitate reentry retreats for cross-cultural workers in transition as they return to the USA. This includes a group

debriefing as we talk for two days about where they have been, where they are now and where they are going. As a part of this we have written *Coming "Home": The Reentry Transition*, which is available on our website, www.crossculturalworkers.com, for anyone to download and use even if they are unable to come to a retreat. Currently we do about half a dozen reentry retreats each year.

Third Culture Kids. Since we live near a college that has a rather large number of TCKs, we were very involved with them while we were teaching at the college. Of course, now that we are retired and travel more, we are unable to keep up the same active relationship. However, we do let them know that we are available to help them however we can, and they contact us for everything from taxes to borrowing things to personal problems.

If we can be of help for you in any way, please feel free to contact us at ron@crossculturalworkers.com bonnie@crossculturalworkers.com

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