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A Missiology of With: The Catalyst for Missionary Effectiveness in the 21st Century

Jennifer Williamson

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

A MISSIOLOGY OF *WITH*:
THE CATALYST FOR MISSIONARY EFFECTIVENESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

JENNIFER WILLIAMSON

PORTLAND, OREGON

SEPTEMBER 2019

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

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has been approved by
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DEDICATION

To the founding members of Elan, who joined me in doing *Mission With*:

Paul Davis

Matthieu Ducrozet

Virginia LeBihan

Douglas Livie

Anne Meynier-Schweitzer

Louis Schweitzer

Alain Stamp

David Williamson

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ABSTRACT

The world is a very a different place than it was a century ago, and while the modern missionary movement has slightly evolved through time, many of the accepted standards and approaches are predicated on realities that no longer exist. Global connectivity, the ease of travel, and shift of the global center of Christianity mean that practices which may have been effective even fifty years ago are becoming outdated and fruitless. Nevertheless, mission agencies continue to employ these archaic practices, burning-out missionaries, alienating nationals, and wasting Kingdom resources.

This dissertation proposes cross-cultural collaboration as the needed paradigm for missionary effectiveness and sustainability in the 21st century. Section One explores the current challenges facing cross-cultural Christian missions and describes existing barriers to fruitfulness. It includes a brief overview of modern realities that must be addressed in order to establish mission practices that are relevant to our time. Section Two analyzes the three dominant approaches to cross-cultural mission—the apostolic method, contextualization, and indigenization—and considers their viability for today. It also surveys and evaluates current missionary training and support methods. Section Three recommends a modification of the standard approaches to missions by suggesting a missiology of “*With*,” in which mission agencies, missionaries, and national partners prioritize collaborative efforts and relational methods. It suggests that doing *Mission With* would not only increase missionary effectiveness (particularly for future generations of missionaries, including Millennials), but may also reduce missionary attrition. Section Four introduces the artifact, a three-year program called Elan that is designed to help missionaries adapt to the field in France while equipping them to do *Mission With*. Section Five offers a detailed description of the Elan program, including the program

specifications, standards, budget, and evaluative measures. Finally, Section Six is a reflection on my personal learning through the dissertation writing process, with a call for further research on the topic.

SECTION 1: WHAT'S GONE WRONG?

INTRODUCTION

The call to global missions comes directly from Jesus, who commanded his followers to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20 [NET]). Those who are called to missions depart for their field of service full of hope and inspiration; yet, competent missionaries are leaving the field prematurely for preventable reasons, while some missionaries who remain on the field fail to create fruitful ministries.

Attrition and under performance of expatriates cost secular MNEs¹ as much as \$250,000 to \$1 million (Littrell and Salas 2005, 307) or \$2 billion collectively each year (Ghafoor 2011, 338). It can be assumed that the costs for overseas MNE attrition may be proportionally equal to overseas missionary attrition. As stewards of kingdom resources, churches, mission agencies and missionaries should be concerned about the financial losses resulting from missionary attrition and ineffective ministry.²

This section will explore the challenges of missionary attrition and ineffectiveness as well as other present realities that complicate mission work in the 21st century.

¹ Multi-National Entities.

² Dave Selvey, “The Truth of Missionary Attrition,” *Faith Global Missions* (blog), October 24, 2015, <https://blogs.faithlafayette.org/missions/the-cost-of-missionary-attrition/>.

MISSIONARY ATTRITION

By the Numbers

According to author and missions researcher K.P. Yohannan, 50% of missionaries leave the field after one term.^{3/4} Mission agencies do not publicize missionary start-up costs because they vary depending on the size of family and the field of ministry, but a reasonable estimate is \$35,000 for an individual and \$80,000 for a family.⁵ Given the amount of time, money, and effort that are required to raise support, transition to the field, learn a new language and culture, and prepare for cross-cultural ministry, attrition after one term represents a significant loss of both financial and human resources, to say nothing of the emotional pain and professional turmoil experienced by the missionary. Add in the reality that most cross-cultural missionaries do not reach a level of effectiveness on the field until their third or fourth year, this loss is even more significant.⁶

In 2007, The World Evangelical Alliance released findings from their extensive study, “ReMAP II: Worldwide Missionary Retention Study & Best Practices.”⁷ With data gathered from twenty-two nations, 600 mission agencies, and 400,000 missionaries, this

³ K. P. Yohannan, *Come, Let's Reach the World: Partnership in Church Planting among the Most Unreached* (Carrollton, TX: GFA Books, 2004), 45.

⁴ For most North American sending agencies, a “term” is four to five years in country of service, followed by a year of furlough in the country of origin.

⁵ ReachGlobal itemizes start-up costs here: <https://go.efca.org/sites/default/files/resources/docs/2013/05/understanding-missionary-support.pdf>. I arrived at this estimation by putting modest numbers in each of these categories. For example, \$15,000 for the purchase of a vehicle, \$6,000 pp for a year of language school, \$1000 pp for travel to country, \$4000 pp for cross-cultural training, \$8000 required monthly reserve. \$6000 for shipping/relocation costs.

⁶ Unpublished surveys of missionaries and sending agencies. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

⁷ Detlef Blöecher, “Good Agency Practices: Lessons from ReMAP II,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (2005): 227–37.

study offers comprehensive and reliable statistics available on missionary attrition.

According to ReMAP II, over a ten-year period, the average agency loses 43% of its people.⁸ Towards the end of his thorough analysis of the ReMAP II data, Jim Van Meter asks:

Why are we losing people in their prime of service? The average length of years of service for those who left in 2001-2002 was 12 years of service. That is after two terms of service, just when people are ready to enter that phase of “unique contribution” in their ministry. Why are people leaving at that point in their missionary career? What can agencies do to address this, to increase the longevity of service?⁹

The ReMAP II study indicated that “The number of missionaries leaving for preventable reasons is increasing over the past 20 years.” A more recent study reveals that missionaries are now leaving after an average of nine years on the field.¹⁰ This study shows that despite the efforts made by many mission organizations in response to the ReMAP II study, missionary attrition is still a concern.

The Challenge of Attrition

The questions that Van Meter asked fifteen years ago continue to generate discussion in the world of missions. While it does not explore the causes of attrition, the ReMAP II study reveals correlations between agency practices and missionary retention; for example, agencies who screen applicants for previous ministry experience had higher retention rates than those agencies who did not.¹¹ Executive Director of Faith Global

⁸ Jim Van Meter, “US Report of Findings on Missionary Retention,” December 2003, http://www.worldevangelicals.org/resources/rfiles/res3_95_link_1292358708.pdf, 3.

⁹ Van Meter, 11.

¹⁰ Katie Rowe, “Closer to the Truth about Current Missionary Attrition: An Initial Analysis of Results,” *A Life Overseas*, April 16, 2018, <https://www.alifeoverseas.com/closer-to-the-truth-about-current-missionary-attrition-an-initial-analysis-of-results/>.

¹¹ Van Meter, 7.

Missions, David Selvey cites other experts in an article about missionary attrition to conclude “better screening, training and shepherding during the selection and preparation process” may have improved sustainability of some missionaries.¹² As for causes of attrition, Selvey suggests, “Sometimes a lack of cross-cultural understanding on the part of the worker or missionary contributes to preventable attrition.”¹³

In July of 2019, Misso Nexus released findings from a more recent study on missionary attrition which surveyed eleven sending agencies and 384 missionaries.¹⁴ According to the “Field Attrition Study Research Report,” in over 80% of all cases, the missionary and sending agency did not agree about the reason for which the missionary left the field. “This demonstrates that new emphasis needs to be prioritized within agencies to increase communication between the missionary, the field office, and the home office.”¹⁵ Attrition cannot be addressed without a clearer understanding of its causes. The Misso Nexus study also suggested that as Baby Boomers near retirement, attrition has the potential to outpace recruitment for most organizations, putting the survival of mission agencies at risk.¹⁶ The report states, “Proactively engaging with current missionaries to keep them healthy and on point along with seeking innovative

¹² Selvey.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Michael R. Van Huis, “Field Attrition Study Report,” July 2019, https://adobeindd.com/view/publications/624b1574-7f5f-4fd0-b896-35739b18f6ed/elsv/publication-web-resources/pdf/Attrition_Study_2019_Final.pdf.

¹⁵ Van Huis, 10.

¹⁶ Ibid., 12.

approaches to mobilization must be top priorities for North American mission agencies.”¹⁷

Retention AND Effectiveness

In his summary on the findings of ReMAP II, Detlef Blöecher makes an important statement about missionary sustainability in relation to missionary effectiveness: “[W]e do not consider missionary longevity as an end in itself, unless missionaries are really productive in a vital ministry.”¹⁸ Unfortunately, the terms “productive” and “vital ministry” are left undefined. Nevertheless, while seeking to improve missionary sustainability, it is important to recognize that some missionaries remain on the field despite their inability to create fruitful ministries. According to William D. Taylor, author of *Too Valuable to Lose*, “Too often, people fail to recognize the mismatch of job and talent. Instead they accommodate themselves in the all-enveloping comfort of suboptimum performance when they should ‘attrit.’ [sic] These are missionaries who adjust performance expectations downward and validate ineffectiveness.”¹⁹

While some attrition is unpreventable, the research suggests that mission agencies need to continue to strengthen their screening, training, shepherding, and cultural adaptation processes, so the missionaries who do launch to the field are capable of creating sustainable effective ministries. There should also be a process to repatriate those missionaries who fail to thrive.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Blöecher, 237.

¹⁹ William D. Taylor, *Too Valuable to Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1997), 21.

MISSIONARY EFFECTIVENESS

The Struggle to Measure

This research focuses on cross-cultural missionaries whose primary role is gospel proclamation and the establishment and strengthening of Christian communities or churches. Measuring ministry effectiveness for such missionaries is challenging, but necessary. The weakness of current evaluative measures makes it difficult to know what is and isn't working and how missionaries need to adapt their efforts in order to better reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Weakness of Existing Missions Metrics

Metrics on missionary effectiveness either don't exist or they are not made public by missionary sending agencies. A Christian watchdog website cites these statistics from K.P. Yohannan's book, *Come, Let's Reach the World*. "Only 1/4 of the cross-cultural missionaries from North America do missions work (e.g., preaching, teaching, church planting, Bible translation), while 3/4 do administrative and support work (e.g., agricultural, community or literacy development, medical or relief efforts, aviation). The average Western missionary spends only 3% of his or her time sharing the Gospel."²⁰ The most recent edition of the *North American Mission Handbook* reports the primary focus of mission organizations, revealing, "The activity with which the most agencies identify or engage is Church Planting (establishing);" but they offer no statics about the outcomes of these activities.²¹ Like most of the measurements that can be found to evaluate mission

²⁰ Yohannan, 35; 63.

²¹ Peggy Newell, *North American Mission Handbook: US and Canadian Protestant Ministries Overseas 2017-2019* (Pasadena, CA: Willian Carey Library, 2017), 59.

work, these numbers only address *what* missionaries are doing. They say nothing about *how well* the work is being done.

Finances, Falsehoods, and Faithfulness

Jared Looney of Fuller Theological Seminary admits, “applying metrics to missionary service is often rooted... in values of stewardship and mutual responsibility. However, if we are to be honest, we haven't always done well in this regard.”²² There are several reasons why measuring missionary effectiveness is a challenge.

The *first reason* why mission agencies have not done well in creating and applying relevant metrics is because global missions are largely dependent on financial gifts. Therefore, the demand for metrics has more to do with funding the work than perfecting it. Looney notes, “Our approach to metrics is... the result of Western management models rather than theological and/or missiological reflection...”²³ Furthermore, the quest for sustained donations has led many mission agencies to misrepresent their results. Darren Carlson of the Gospel Coalition writes, “I read a lot of e-mails and newsletters from mission agencies, and I get to see how many of them use statistics to recruit staff, missionaries, and donors. Sadly, in my experience, many exaggerate the truth...”²⁴ Carlson indicates some agency reports are “straight-up” exaggerations and others are “double-dipping,” where two organizations that are working together both present the results as their own. Finally, he laments that home offices fail to

²² Jared Looney, “The Problem with Metrics, Part II,” Global City Mission Initiative, March 13, 2013, <http://www.globalcitymission.org/1/post/2013/03/the-problem-with-metrics-part-ii.html>.

²³ Looney.

²⁴ Darren Carlson, “5 Ways Mission Agencies Stretch the Truth,” *The Gospel Coalition* (blog), July 1, 2015, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/5-ways-mission-agencies-stretch-truth/>.

check the facts that are being reported by missionaries on the field, resulting in the propagation of false claims.²⁵ This epidemic of inflated and invalidated numbers seems to suggest funders may have unrealistic expectations and/or missionaries and mission agencies are dissatisfied with actual results. It also brings the integrity of missionaries and mission agencies into question.

The *second reason* mission agencies struggle to develop strong metrics is because of a dispute over *how* effectiveness should be defined. Is effectiveness based on faithfulness or fruitfulness? Many sending agencies have reduced metrics to questions concerning the number of saved souls or churches planted, while other mission leaders recognize that “[s]imply counting heads is hardly the most responsible metric for assessing missionary progress.”²⁶ These leaders would argue for metrics that take faithfulness into account, citing cases where decades of Christian witness were needed before a single conversion was seen. In a blog post entitled “The Truth About Missions,” Jen Oshman candidly admits, “missions is a long, hard slog.”²⁷ Gary Hoag, R. Scott Rodin, and Wesley Willmer wrote *The Choice: The Christ-Centered Pursuit of Kingdom Outcomes* to discredit what they call “secular values” and “the world’s way of thinking” as motives for quantifying ministry results. They believe “The Kingdom path” requires faithful obedience to Christ rather than the pursuit of certain outcomes.²⁸ On the other hand, Dr. Paul Penley, the Director of Research for the organization Excellence in

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Looney.

²⁷ Jen Oshman, “The Truth About Missions Is That It’s A Long, Hard Slog,” *A Life Overseas*, February 19, 2018, <http://www.alifeoverseas.com/the-truth-about-missions-is-that-its-a-long-hard-slog/>.

²⁸ Gary G. Hoag, R. Scott Rodin, and Wesley K. Willmer, *The Choice: The Christ-Centered Pursuit of Kingdom Outcomes*, First edition (Winchester, VA: ECFAPress, 2014).

Giving, insists that Christian ministries should gather quantitative metrics. Penley asserts, “Tracking both faithfulness to Jesus’ teachings and numerical impact is a ‘biblical’ pattern for measuring Kingdom Outcomes.”²⁹ The dispute over what exactly should be measured and what could be considered “success” on the mission field continues to hinder both the gathering and sharing of missionary metrics.

And *finally*, when mission agencies require metrics, mission researcher Steve Moon has observed resistance from those on the field. The need to be faithful in ministry while knowing the results ultimately depend on God makes it challenging for many missionaries to accept the requirement to report the outcomes of their efforts.³⁰ Moon explains that missionaries are reluctant to be the subject of research because they don’t like to feel “judged” or “evaluated.” They also tend to over-spiritualize their work.³¹ This resistance may be related to dissatisfaction with results and fear of not meeting donor or agency expectations.

A Glance at France

In a quest to ascertain the effectiveness of missionaries, I surveyed three different groups: missionaries serving in France, missionary sending agencies who have missionaries in France, and French Christian ministers who partner with foreign missionaries. For the purposes of this survey, I asked missionaries and sending agencies

²⁹ Paul Penley. “Why Christian Ministries Should Measure Results: A Response to the Mantra ‘Aim for Faithfulness Not Results!’,” July 9, 2014, <http://analytics.excellenceingiving.com/post/3462014-why-christian-ministries-should-measure-results>.

³⁰ This also has been observed on the mission field by the author at an annual conference for her own sending agency. In a forum to discuss metric reporting systems, several missionaries expressed outrage at the demand for reporting results.

³¹ Steve Sang-Cheol Moon, “Mission Research as an Exercise in Humility,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 39, no. 4 (October 2015): 210–13.

to define what it means to be effective and then to base their evaluations of effectiveness on their own definitions. The following sampling of responses reveals that some defined effectiveness in terms of “faithfulness” while others defined it in terms of “fruitfulness”³²:

Missionaries were asked, “How would you define ‘ministry effectiveness,’ in general?”

- “Fulfilling the task given by God.”
- “Leading a church to spiritual growth and health.”
- “It would depend on the ministry.”
- “Working/moving in the Spirit.”
- “The ability to accomplish goals determined by you and your mission organization.”
- “Seeing those that I have disciplined discipling others.”³³

Sending agencies were asked, “How does your agency define ‘effectiveness’?”:

- “Able to have a meaningful ministry that is helpful to a French church or ministry partner.”
- “Develop, empower and release personnel and partners for transformational gospel multiplication.”
- “Being able to accomplish a job, do ministry, without cultural or language barriers stopping or slowing this.”³⁴

Survey Findings

I surveyed thirty-five American missionaries serving in France to determine whether or not they were effective and what factors might contribute to missionary effectiveness. While 28% identified “frustration over lack of results” as a major stressor, most of these missionaries considered themselves to be either “very effective” or

³² Unpublished survey of missionaries and sending agencies. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

³³ Direct quotes from missionaries in an unpublished survey of missionaries in France. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

³⁴ Direct quotes from sending agencies leaders in an unpublished survey of missionaries in France. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

“sufficiently effective” in their ministries.³⁵ This discrepancy might suggest these missionaries consider themselves effective based on faithfulness rather than fruitfulness.

When field leaders of missionary sending agencies were asked how long it takes for a missionary in France to become effective at ministry, five out of five indicated that it took two and a half years or more. The majority of missionaries, however, judged themselves to be effective after two years or less on the field.³⁶ This difference could reveal a cultural pride. It indicates that there may be a discrepancy between the expectations of missionaries and sending agencies, as well.

Finally, when French partners were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of foreign missionaries, 54% gave foreign missionaries a rating of six or lower (on a scale of one to ten) when asked, “*Je considère son investissement en France comme pertinent.*” (I consider this missionary’s contribution in France to be relevant).³⁷ About 30% gave the missionary a rating of three or lower. When asked on a scale of one to ten, “*Ce/cette missionnaire était épanoui,*” (This missionary was thriving) with ten being *tout à fait* (absolutely) and one being *pas du tout* (not at all), 58% of French partners gave foreign missionaries a score of six or lower. Again, about 30% gave the missionary a rating of three or lower.

Strikingly, missionaries and sending agencies consider missionaries to be more effective than do their French partners. Many of these French partners noted that this was the first time they were asked to contribute to the conversation about missionary

³⁵ Unpublished survey of missionaries in France. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

³⁶ Unpublished survey of missionary agencies. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

³⁷ Unpublished survey of French ministers. Spring 2016. Personal archives.

effectiveness—a response that is indicative of a significant gap in the research. No one seems to be asking national partners to evaluate the contributions of foreign missionaries.

RELEVANT PRESENT REALITIES

In the book, *The Meeting of the Waters*, author Fritz Kling observes, “In the coming years global church leaders... will increasingly need to try out experimental, innovative, and even uncomfortable ideas.”³⁸ Those who have the most experience on the field will need to learn to incorporate the Millennials’ concerns for social justice, the environment, and refugees. At the same time, the new generation of missionaries will need access to the insights and networks that their predecessors have built. Kling asserts, “The future of the global church will look very different.”³⁹ Missionaries and mission agencies should consider these current realities as they plan for and move into that future, especially if they want their work to be both effective and sustainable.

Global Connectivity

In the past, missionaries expected to endure long periods of separation from their home country and family. “Forty years ago, when missionaries left for the mission field, they knew they would only see ‘home’ about every five years.”⁴⁰ With the Internet and ease of travel of today, missionaries can easily stay connected and involved at home while serving on the field. “This results in high expectations from supporters at home in regard to regular news and to the quality of presentations - and the missionary needs to

³⁸ Fritz Kling, *The Meeting of the Waters: 7 Global Currents That Will Propel the Future Church*, First ed. (Colorado Springs, Colo: David C. Cook, 2010), 20.

³⁹ Kling, 21.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 16.

compete with the information overkill.”⁴¹ Furthermore, global connectivity can give the impression all people are the same, and could fool cross-cultural workers into thinking adaptation and integration into a different culture is easily accomplished. Experts believe that the opposite is true. John Naisbitt, author of *Megatrends 2000*, says, “The more homogeneous our lifestyles become, the more steadfastly we cling to deeper values of religion, language, art and literature. As our outer worlds grow more similar, we will increasingly treasure the traditions that spring from within.”⁴² Understanding and navigating the opportunities and risks that come with global connectivity will be critical to missionary effectiveness and sustainability in the next century.

Millennial Mind-Set

In the past century, most missionaries were long-term, career missionaries with a life calling, while today, missionaries see their time overseas as one of many careers they will have.⁴³ Kling asks, “Beyond the hip clothes and cool gadgets, will they bring enough depth and commitment to very difficult cross-cultural assignments?”⁴⁴ Mission’s expert Detlef Blöecher summarizes some of the characteristics of the new generation of missionaries:

They are open to the world, put strong emphasis on personal relationships, sensible, self-critical, extremely creative, enthusiastic and willing to work under indigenous leadership. But many of them come from broken homes

⁴¹ Detlef Blöecher, “World Mission in the 21st Century: 12 Modern Trends,” *DMG*, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://www.dmgint.de/mission/id-12-modern-trends.html>.

⁴² John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, *Megatrends 2000: Ten New Directions for the 1990s*, First Ed. (New York: Morrow, 1990), 120.

⁴³ Kling, 19.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

and carry scars on their souls. They are looking for fellowship. Stamina and self-discipline are not their strengths.⁴⁵

In a TEDx Talk entitled “Corporate Fail: Millennial and GenZ Entrepreneurial,” millennial Crystal Kadakia says her generation’s entrepreneurial spirit is driven by a desire for “YOLO⁴⁶ experiences.”⁴⁷ “Yolo means that we don't want to waste our time doing things that we don't enjoy, because in today's world, with today's tools, we don't have to. We have an infinite number of options to achieve our goals.”⁴⁸ This entrepreneurial spirit could be a huge asset to cross-cultural mission work, should missionary sending agencies learn how to harness and release it.

Shift of the Global Center of Christianity

Surveys indicate that today, 32.9% of the global population is Christian, a slight decrease (proportionally speaking) from 1900, when 34.5% of the world was Christian.⁴⁹ However, while growth in Christianity has lagged behind birth rates in the north, it has outpaced birth rates in the south. “While 82% of all Christians lived in the Global North in 1900, today nearly two-thirds of all Christians live in the Global South.”⁵⁰ This has resulted in “the trend of ‘reverse mission, where younger churches in the Global South are sending missionaries to Europe,’ even as the numbers being sent from the Global North were ‘declining significantly.’ Nearly half of the top 20 mission-sending countries

⁴⁵ Blöecher, “World Mission in the 21st Century: 12 Modern Trends.”

⁴⁶ YOLO stands for, “You only live once.”

⁴⁷ Crystal Kadakia, “Corporate Fail: Millennials & Gen Z Entrepreneurial,” TEDx Talk, July 16, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VkVz1IVciE>.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Newell, 6.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

in 2010 were in the Global South, including Brazil, India, the Philippines, and Mexico.”⁵¹

It is imperative, therefore, that mission teams all over the world develop the skills to build and work on multi-cultural teams. Furthermore, this global shift means that international sending agencies that have traditionally been led by people from the Global North need to be sharing leadership with their colleagues in the Global South, learning from their experience and seeking their contributions.

Change in Funding Priorities and Processes

Sending agencies must consider how to evaluate and sustain multiple mission strategies and approaches, as well as integrate teams with missionaries who have diverse backgrounds and activities. Under the influence of K. P. Yohannan, “Gospel for Asia reported the number of Asian ‘native missionaries’ (his term) supported by their one mission as expanding from 6,439 to 16,377, a dynamic growth of 154%. In comparison, the number of North American long-termers plus middle-termers during the same period grew by only about 10%.”⁵² The reasoning is simple: “(1) national workers already know the language and culture and thus serve with greater effectiveness, and (2) it costs far less to support a national worker than a North American missionary.”⁵³ Another noteworthy trend is BAM, or Business as Mission, which has experienced a growth of 18% over the past 8 years.⁵⁴ Also called “tentmaking,” the appeal behind BAM is that the mission work

⁵¹ Saba Imtiaz, “A New Generation Redefines What It Means to Be a Missionary,” *The Atlantic*, March 8, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/03/young-missionaries/551585/>.

⁵² Michael Jaffarian, “The Statistical State of the North American Protestant Missions Movement, from the *Mission Handbook*, 20th Edition,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32, no. 1 (January 2008): 38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/239693930803200110>.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁵⁴ Newell, 51.

can be financed by the business/professional endeavours of the missionaries themselves. The growing popularity of BAM and indigenization will change the dynamics of mission work considerably.

CONCLUSION

Poor missionary retention rates represent significant losses of both financial and human resources. Furthermore, the effectiveness of current missionary efforts is complicated to ascertain because most agencies fail to regularly and accurately evaluate both the faithfulness and fruitfulness of their field workers. Existing challenges with missionary effectiveness and sustainability may be intensified by the reality of global connectivity, the strengths and weaknesses of the new generation, the shift in the global center of Christianity, and trends towards new means and methods of funding overseas missions.

In a critique of modern missions, Richards and Yang assert:

Much of our missional paradigms come from an expired anthropology which is based on a European encounter of the ‘exotic’ other....That's a very different vision from the Antiochene model. In accepting underdeveloped anthropological models, we built modern missions around doing mission to the ‘other’ rather than the Antiochene model that insisted on doing mission with the other and from our collectively “otherliness.”⁵⁵

Exploring what it looks like to do mission “with the other and from our collectively ‘otherliness’” may point us towards the needed responses to these challenges. This would require educating mission funders on the optimal role of a missionary by suggesting that the most sustainable fruit may be produced when the missionary is no longer the one who

⁵⁵ John C. Richards, Jr., and Daniel Yang, “Preaching on Racism from the ‘White’ Pulpit: Reflections from David Platt’s Talk at T4G,” *The Exchange* (blog), April 12, 2018, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2018/april/preaching-on-racism-platt.html>.

brings solutions, but one who works alongside nationals to discover the best way to evangelize and minister. It would require redefining effectiveness to include not only faithfulness and fruitfulness, but also collaboration with national partners. It would require greater surrender on the part of missionary sending agencies and a willingness to lay aside their own agendas in order to build and empower multi-cultural teams. And it would require an intentional shift towards humility on the part of the missionary, accepting to collaborate with and submit to national partners. Such a shift would address the challenges and realities presented in this section and move missions towards the place of doing Kingdom work “with the other.”

SECTION 2: WHAT'S BEEN DONE

INTRODUCTION

In 1865 missionary Hudson Taylor launched China Inland Mission (CIM) in hopes of establishing new means and methods for engaging in foreign missions. Desiring to free the gospel message from any trace of colonialism, CIM's approach was revolutionary: "its missionaries would have no guaranteed salaries nor could they appeal for funds; they would simply trust God to supply their needs; furthermore, its missionaries would adopt Chinese dress and then press the gospel into the China interior."¹ Taylor even wore his hair in the traditional Chinese pigtail, a move that his Western peers ridiculed.² Nonetheless, Hudson Taylor's commitment to cultural relevance resulted in tremendous success and reformed the predominant missionary approaches of his day.

Today—with global connectivity and shifting funding priorities—there are new opportunities and challenges for followers of Christ who are called to "go and make disciples of all nations." (Matt. 28:19 [NET]). Practices that may have been effective and sustainable in the 20th century need to be re-examined in order to determine their relevance in the new millennium. According to *The North American Mission Handbook*, "A world of rapid change requires the ability of organizations to think innovatively when it comes to operations that have existed in a similar fashion for many decades."³ This

¹ Mark Galli and Ted Olsen, eds., *131 Christians Everyone Should Know*, Holman Reference (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 253.

² *Ibid.*, 251.

³ Newell, 27.

section will review current missionary approaches and training methods and evaluate their applicability to the realities of the 21st century.

CURRENT APPROACHES TO CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONS

Ever since Paul became a missionary to the Gentiles, missionaries have wrestled with the challenge of presenting the gospel in cultures and languages that are different than their own. Since the modern missionary movement, missiologists have suggested different ways through which cross-cultural missionaries could best reach people with the Good News. Today, three predominant approaches to missions can be observed: apostolic, contextualization, and indigenization. Though there is some overlap between these methods, each has defining characteristics.

Apostolic Approach

Description

Anglican missionary Roland Allen promoted the apostolic (or “wandering evangelist”) approach to foreign missions in his book *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours?*,⁴ which was first published in 1912. *Missionary Methods* is a seminal work that missiologists continue to discuss and debate today.⁵ In a recent article analyzing Allen’s work, Steven Rutt describes the apostolic method: “These ‘wandering evangelists’ plant the indigenous Church, train its local leadership and then attempt to ‘retire’ from what they have established. To Allen, this was ‘apostolic order.’”⁶

⁴ Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours, a Study of the Church in the Four Provinces* (Lexington, KY: ReadaClassic.com, 2012).

⁵ Steven Rutt, “Roland Allen’s Apostolic Principles: An Analysis of His ‘The Ministry of Expansion,’” *Transformation* 29, no. 3 (July 2012): 235, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378812449973>.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 225.

Avant Ministries is an organization that employs the apostolic approach to cross-cultural missions today, though they call it “Short-Cycle Church Planting.” On their website, they explain: “The typical Joint Venture team consists of six to ten adults...who train together in Avant’s method of church planting. The team will spend five to seven years planting churches in an unreached area of the world.”^{7/8} Just as Allen proposed, Avant’s method is to establish a church among an unreached people group and hand leadership over to nationals as soon as possible (i.e. within “five to seven years”), at which time the apostolic team will leave.

Measures of Success

A missionary using the apostolic approach would be considered successful when he or she leaves a newly planted church in the hands of nationals and departs. Rutt explains, “[The missionary’s] success would not consist in finding a group which would restrain his further progress, but in establishing a church from which he could make a further advance.”⁹ Avant Ministries places a high value on speed, stressing that the planting and retiring of the apostolic team should be done as quickly as possible.¹⁰

Analysis

One of the strengths of the apostolic approach is its value of giving leadership over to national partners. “The possibility to engage the laity to take ownership of its local activities stemmed from Allen’s missionary ecclesiology which sought to empower

⁷ Avant Ministries, “Church Partnerships - Avant Ministries,” accessed December 4, 2018, <https://avantministries.org/churches>.

⁸ On their website <https://avantministries.org/about>, “Avant defines ‘unreached’ as places where less than 2% of the population is evangelical Christian.”

⁹ Rutt, 225.

¹⁰ J. Paul Nyquist, *There Is NO TIME*, 2nd ed. (Monument, CO: Snowfall Press, 2010).

the members to act for themselves when necessary.”¹¹ Trevin Wax of The Gospel Coalition asserts, “One of the greatest strengths of Allen’s work is the way in which he popped the paternalistic bubble surrounding missions in his day”¹² In explaining why missionaries often stay in one place for long periods of times, the former Avant president and CEO suggests, “The reason missionaries never leave is because they don’t trust national believers to lead the church.”¹³

While the apostolic approach is one that empowers nationals, it still assumes leadership by the foreign missionary at the onset. In fact, the very idea that a foreign “wandering evangelist” could plant an “*indigenous* Church,” as Allen suggests, is questionable given that the definition of “indigenous” is “originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native.” Furthermore, financial sustainability may be an issue, particularly if a full-time missionary, whose salary came from outside sources, established the church. Many young churches do not have the financial capacity to pay a full-time minister.

Missionaries who employ the apostolic model minimize the importance of language learning and cultural adaptation since they plan to quickly empower local leaders for long-term ministry.¹⁴ They aspire to communicate a pure form of the gospel

¹¹ Rutt, 231.

¹² Trevin Wax, “Why Roland Allen’s 100-Year-Old Book Continues to Challenge,” *The Gospel Coalition* (blog), October 23, 2013, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/why-roland-allens-100-year-old-book-continues-to-challenge/>.

¹³ Nyquist, 67.

¹⁴ In J. Paul Nyquist’s book *There is NO TIME*, he tells a fictional story about Short-Cycle Church Planting that is meant to be a model for missionaries to follow. In that book he talks about a team successfully planting a church in the capitol of a Central Asian country in two years, with only this to say about the language and culture barrier: “The language was difficult to learn and the culture proved challenging” (83). It is said as if these were minor side notes, peripheral to the real mission work.

that will then be contextualized by their national partners. Wax affirms this aspiration: “Another great strength of Allen’s proposal is the consistent focus on the power inherent in the gospel itself. The hard edges of the gospel do not need to be softened in order to win a hearing; rather, the Word of God is powerful precisely because it offends and transcends the sensibilities of every culture with which it comes into contact.”¹⁵

In contrast, others believe that learning language and culture is an act of love that allows the missionary to incarnate the gospel message to those she or he aims to reach; and, that doing so does not diminish the gospel, but rather contributes to it being rightly understood and received. Missiologist Andy McCullough asserts, “Language-learning is disparagingly slow. And yet, it is essential to the missionary enterprise, imperative for those seeking to get to know a culture, and indispensable to church planting. If we will plant national churches, we must learn the local language.”¹⁶ Missionaries who place a high value on language learning tend to be proponents of contextualization.

Contextualization of the Message

Description

The word “contextualization” was coined in 1972 and the concept has been widely accepted and applied in cross-cultural missions ever since. Simply put, “Contextualization involves an attempt to present the Gospel in a culturally relevant way.”¹⁷ Alan Hirsh expounds on this idea, writing, “[Contextualization] is primarily

¹⁵ Wax.

¹⁶ Andy McCullough, *Global Humility: Attitudes for Mission* (UK: Malcolm Down Publishing, 2018), 82.

¹⁷ Ed Stetzer, “What Is Contextualization? Presenting the Gospel in Culturally Relevant Ways,” *The Exchange* (blog), October 12, 2014, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/october/what-is-contextualization.html>.

concerned with presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets peoples' deepest needs and penetrates their worldviews, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain in their own cultures."¹⁸ Like the apostolic approach, contextualization stands in contrast to the colonialism that permeated early Western missionary efforts. But unlike the apostolic approach, advocates of contextualization stress language and culture learning, believing, "Effective communication requires understanding the language and worldview of the people you are trying to reach."¹⁹

The Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) promotes contextualization in its cross-cultural ministries. Stefani Varner of IMB, writes, "In order to take the gospel to the nations, we must learn to interact with others in a way that allows us to communicate truth clearly. We must understand our own culture, learn about the cultures we are entering, and articulate the gospel in an understandable way for people of those cultures."²⁰

Measures of Success

A missionary using the contextualization approach measures success by his or her ability to share the gospel and/or plant a church that communicates the gospel in a culturally relevant way. Ultimately, the goal of contextualization is to "see people come to Christ and be formed into groups we call churches that are both biblically and

¹⁸ Alan Hirsch and Michael Frost, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-Century Church*, Revised, Updated edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 83.

¹⁹ David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming a Lost World* (Arkadelphia, AK: WIGTake Resources, 2004), 179.

²⁰ Stefani Varner, "8 Guidelines for Crossing Cultures with the Gospel," *International Mission Board* (blog), January 20, 2017, <https://www.imb.org/2017/01/20/8-guidelines-crossing-cultures/>.

culturally appropriate.”²¹ In terms of the ultimate objective, then, there is little difference between the apostolic and contextualization approaches.

Analysis

Some missiologists believe that contextualization is risky and leads to “syncretism,” which is “the mixing of Christian assumptions with those worldview assumptions that are incompatible with Christianity so that the result is not biblical Christianity.”²² This is why major sending organizations go to great pains to clearly articulate what they mean by “contextualization.”²³ Zane Pratt, VP of Training for the IMB, says, “The gospel challenges and stands in judgment over every culture, but it can be at home in any culture.”²⁴

Missiologist Alan Hirsch believes the real danger lies in a lack of awareness around cultural differences.

A failure to understand this point can actually lead to a form of cultural imperialism. A person might begin to believe that his culture’s way of practicing Christianity is the only way to practice Christianity. Should such a person begin to minister in a different culture, he will inadvertently share not only the Gospel but also his cultural traditions. This action would be unhelpful; it would try to force a distant culture onto potential converts.²⁵

²¹ Ralph D. Winter et al., eds., *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, Fourth ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 404.

²² Ibid., 405.

²³ Pioneers has published a “Statement on Contextualization” (<http://pioneers.ca/res/pub/Documents/Pioneers-Beliefs.pdf>) and IMB trustees have written a definition of contextualization: <http://www.bpnews.net/26854/imb-trustees-define-contextualization>).

²⁴ Zane Pratt, “No First Century Churches Exist Today, So Biblically-Faithful Contextualization Matters,” *International Mission Board* (blog), February 21, 2017, <https://www.imb.org/2017/02/21/how-we-view-contextualization/>.

²⁵ Stetzer.

Thus, contextualization is required not only to make the gospel relevant to those in another culture, but to avoid imposing one's own cultural biases onto others. After all, "all expressions of Christianity are contextual, including [one's] own."²⁶

Some believe that in order to contextualize the gospel message, the messenger (missionary) must inculturate. Sherman Lingenfelter describes the well-adapted missionary as a "150%" person, explaining that as a foreigner one can never fully integrate into a new culture, but that by setting aside about 25% of who one is in a home culture and adopting about 75% of a new culture, a person can become that 150% person.²⁷ Steve Addison, director of Church Resource Ministries (CRM), takes contextualization even farther, saying, "To fulfill their mission the most effective movements are prepared to change everything about themselves except their basic beliefs."²⁸

The missionary who is dedicated to contextualization may stay at one post for the duration of his or her ministry, as yielding leadership and ownership to local believers is not the main priority. In a challenge to the apostolic approach, IMB missionary Todd Jamison writes: "In these times, value is placed upon being fast and effective....The proper question for the mission worker is not really, 'How long do I stay?' but rather, 'How do I do the work of missions for however long God has me to stay?'"²⁹ While

²⁶ McCullough, 35.

²⁷ Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin Keene Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, 2nd ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 24.

²⁸ Steve Addison, *Movements That Change the World: Five Keys to Spreading the Gospel*, Revised ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011), 116.

²⁹ Todd Jamison, "Stay or Go: How Long Should a Missionary Serve in One Place?," *International Mission Board* (blog), May 16, 2017, <https://www.imb.org/2017/05/16/how-long-should-a-missionary-serve-in-one-place/>.

surrendering leadership is the main goal of the apostolic method, it may not even be on the radar of a missionary whose aim is contextualization.

Contextualization, then, has its limits in terms of effectiveness. According to David Garrison, who has researched global church planting movements (CPMs), local leadership is one of ten universal elements found in all CPMs.³⁰ If foreign missionaries are leading all the church planting efforts in a nation, it is unlikely that they will reach movement. If the desire is to see a CPM or a discipleship movement, Garrison would encourage a missionary to take a back seat and focus on contextualized modeling and mentoring: “Local church planters receive their best training by watching how the missionary models participative Bible studies with non-Christian seekers.”³¹ Mentoring nationals as they lead would be a hybrid approach between the contextualization method and the indigenization method, though it is not true indigenization, as the missionary is still taking a teacher/trainer stance within the people group he or she wishes to reach.

Indigenization of the Messenger

Description

Recognizing the enormous expense needed to send foreign missionaries to other cultures, not to mention the challenges of language and culture, some missiologists believe that mission work should be left to natives—while still financially supported by traditional “sending nations.” K.P. Yohannan, a proponent of indigenization, says, “Now

³⁰ Garrison, 172. The other nine universal elements in CPMs are extraordinary prayer, abundant evangelism, intentional planting of reproducing churches, the authority of God’s Word, lay leadership, house churches, churches planting churches, rapid reproduction, and healthy churches.

³¹ David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, e-Book, (Richmond, VA: IMB, October 1999), 34. https://www.call2all.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Church_Planting_Movements_Garrison.pdf

around the world today, the Holy Spirit is moving over Asian and African nations, raising up thousands of dedicated men and women to take the story of salvation to their own people.”³² Yohannen believes that indigenization is the future of missions. “This work of the Holy Spirit among these national believers is the third wave of mission history—the indigenous missionary movement.”³³

Gospel for Asia is an organization that uses the indigenization approach. Founded by Yohannen, Gospel for Asia seeks to connect donors (typically from Western countries) “with a national worker (or multiple workers) in Asia” who are described as “simple, humble servants of God” who “minister to people’s deepest needs both physically and spiritually, in communities throughout Asia.”³⁴ The Gospel for Asia website explains, “Because national workers were born and raised in the countries where they minister, they have few or no cultural barriers to overcome, so they can readily share the message of Jesus Christ with those who have never heard.”³⁵

Measures of Success

The goal of indigenization is to have believing fellowships free from the cultural influences of outsiders. Success for an indigenous missionary is when “the fellowships established in each culture are truly indigenous in character” and self-supporting.³⁶

³² Yohannan, Introduction.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Gospel for Asia, “About Us - Gospel for Asia,” accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.gfa.org/about/>.

³⁵ Gospel for Asia, “Sponsor a Missionary,” accessed December 5, 2018, <http://www.gfa.org/sponsor/why-national-missionaries/>.

³⁶ Gospel for Asia, “Sponsor a Missionary.”

Again, this is very similar to the desired outcomes of the apostolic and contextualization approaches.

Analysis

The obvious strength of indigenization is that the missionary already knows the language and culture. Furthermore, the cost of sponsoring indigenous missionaries is much lower than the cost of sending foreign missionaries. Yohannen estimates, “North American Christians alone, without much sacrifice, can meet all the needs of the churches in the Two-Thirds World.”³⁷ Indigenous missionaries can live and eat and dress as natives, and can be supported for as little as \$360/month, whereas an American missionary in Asia would need at least ten times that amount because their standard of living would be different.³⁸

Another strength of indigenization is the access that national missionaries have to regions that are closed to Westerners. Yohannen asserts, “Even if Western missionaries somehow were permitted back, the cost of sending them would be in the billions each year. National evangelists could do the same for only a fraction of the cost.”³⁹

Yohannen also believes insiders would have a better chance of being heard than outsiders. “I realized without being told that if the village people of India were ever to be won, it would have to be by brown-skinned nationals who loved them.”⁴⁰ However, God often uses outsiders to communicate God’s message. Foreigners can sometimes say

³⁷ Yohannan, 45.

³⁸ From the Gospel for Asia website: <https://www.gfa.org/sponsor/why-national-missionaries/>

³⁹ Yohannan, 63.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 28-29.

things that nationals would not dare to proclaim, and they get away with it because they are strangers.

Furthermore, the Kingdom of God is a multi-cultural kingdom, and therefore a mono-cultural church would fail to reflect this kingdom reality.⁴¹ Andy McCullough believes that “Indigenisation is not the same as isolation.”⁴² Rather than remove foreigners from the mission fields, McCullough posits, “The question that needs to be asked, then, is does the teaching or example that is brought from outside direct the church towards contextual maturity, or rather does it pull the church towards a non-indigenous way of doing things.”

In fact, there are some dangers for fellowships that have no outside influences or voices, enabling indigenization to become a form of nationalism. In an article entitled, “Ironies of Indigenization,” Harvard lecturer Susan Billington Harper reveals that V. S. Azariah, Indian missionary and the first Indian bishop of the Anglican Church, was “fundamentally uninterested in becoming more ‘indigenous.’”⁴³ Harper quotes Azariah as saying, “The religion of Christ is one of the most dynamic factors in the world. It always bursts its boundaries, however strong and rigid those boundaries may be.... It refuses to be confined to any one race, class, or caste. It seeks to embrace all.”⁴⁴ For Azariah, indigenization flowed too easily into the caste system that sought to divide the people of

⁴¹ Revelation 7:9 [NET] says, “After these things I looked, and here was an enormous crowd that no one could count, made up of persons from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb dressed in long white robes, and with palm branches in their hands.” EVERY nation, tribe, people, and language are part of the redeemed of God.

⁴² McCullough, 36.

⁴³ Susan Billington Harper, “Ironies of Indigenization: Some Cultural Repercussions of Mission in South India,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 19, no. 1 (January 1995): 18.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

India. British church planter David Devenish writes, “I would not go so far as to say, as some do, ‘Leave it all to the nationals,’ i.e. Westerners should not presume to apply biblical principles to a different culture. I believe that this denies the gifting and benefit of apostolic wisdom, as well as the objectivity that someone from the outside can bring.”⁴⁵

Whatever the approach a mission agency adopts to *do* the work of missions—whether apostolic, contextualization, or indigenization—most agencies also recognize the need to *equip* and *support* the missionary for that work. Here, too, there are several different approaches that are currently practiced.

CURRENT TRAINING AND SUPPORT MODELS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONARIES

Most North American sending agencies provide, recommend, or require one or more of the following opportunities for training and development, some of which are outsourced. Each of these approaches is intended to not only improve the missionary’s effectiveness, but also enable the missionary to sustain a fruitful ministry. They include pre-field training, language and culture coaching, disciple-multiplication training, leadership training, and member care.

Pre-Field Training

Organizations favoring the contextualization method put a high priority on pre-field training to help new missionaries understand the cultural adaptation process. This includes teaching them to do ethnographic studies, coaching them on team dynamics, and

⁴⁵ David Devenish, *Fathering Leaders, Motivating Mission: Restoring the Role of the Apostle in Today’s Church* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2011), 251.

supplying them with techniques for learning foreign languages. Many U.S. mission agencies outsource pre-field training to places such as The Center for Intercultural Training in North Carolina or Mission Training International in Colorado. These pre-field training experiences last from four to eight weeks, and have a residential requirement. They teach generally applicable courses to missionaries going to any country in the world and are not meant to help missionaries adapt to a specific culture or learn a specific language. According to their website, MTI provides, “relevant, practical, in-residence training on the make-or-break issues that help make cross-cultural messengers of the Gospel more effective.”⁴⁶

Language and Culture Coaching

Some mission agencies offer language and culture coaching for missionaries who are new to the field. A Language and Culture Coach is typically a seasoned missionary who has received some training to enable them to accompany arriving missionaries and provide support as they adapt to the field and learn a new language. While the coaching may be done internally within an organization, or outsourced to a coaching organization, such as Advance Global Coaching⁴⁷, the coaches are typically from the sending rather than the receiving country.

⁴⁶ Mission Training International, “About – Mission Training International,” accessed December 9, 2018, <https://www.mti.org/about/>.

⁴⁷ Advance Global Coaching, “Advance Global Coaching,” accessed December 9, 2018, <https://advanceglobalcoaching.com/>.

Disciple-Multiplication Training

The main focus of most cross-cultural gospel proclamation missions is disciple multiplication.⁴⁸ To that end, many mission organizations offer training programs on discipleship. Some of these programs are developed in-house and others bring in outside experts. There are multiple approaches, all with the goal of seeing a discipleship movement within a people group. A wide selection of books has also been written on the subject. Some examples are *The Discipling of a Nation*, by James H. Montgomery and Donald A. McGavran, *Growing True Disciples*, by George Barna, and *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution*, by Steve Smith and Ying Kai.

Leadership Training

The top three primary activities done by North American mission agencies are church planting, evangelism and leadership development.⁴⁹ Disciple-multiplication training will generally address the first two, but many mission agencies are adding leadership training programs to equip missionaries both to lead projects and to train up leaders.⁵⁰ Interestingly, the training programs surveyed were developed in a North American context, but assumed to be applicable anywhere in the world. Even organizations placing a high emphasis on contextualization of the Gospel showed little evidence of contextualizing their leadership programs.

⁴⁸ Newell, 59.

⁴⁹ Newell, 59.

⁵⁰ D. Ray Davis, "The Missionary Task: Training Faithful Leaders," *International Mission Board* (blog), November 13, 2018, <https://www.imb.org/2018/11/13/missionary-task-training-faithful-leaders/>.

Member Care

Member Care became a sending agency priority after the first ReMAP study on missionary retention revealed that missionaries were leaving the field for preventable reasons.⁵¹ “[Member care is] the ongoing investment of resources by mission agencies, churches and other mission organizations for the nurture and development of missionary personnel. It focuses on everyone in missions (missionaries, support staff, children and families) and does so over the course of the missionary life cycle, from recruitment through retirement.”⁵² Some organizations have pastoral or lay people doing member care while others have trained mental health professionals. Thus the type and quality of care differs greatly between organizations.⁵³ While the accessibility and de-stigmatization of counselling services for missionaries is to be applauded, the effectiveness of in-house member care may be substandard. One study reports that missionaries were “disappointed” with in-house workers and “expressed a feeling of being ‘member cared’ rather than there being a genuine concern, not feeling heard, a lack of follow-up, a lack of confidentiality, and a tendency to take sides with those in positions of authority.”⁵⁴

⁵¹ Detlef Blöecher, “Reducing Missionary Attrition (ReMAP) - What It Said and What It Did,” *World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission*, April 5, 2005, https://www.dmgint.de/files/cto_layout/img/red/downloads/PDFs/englisch/remapi_summary.pdf.

⁵² Claire A Camp et al., “Missionary Perspectives on the Effectiveness of Current Member Care Practices,” *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 42, no. 4 (2014): 360. Citing O’Donnell.

⁵³ K. Elisabet Hogstrom and Heather Davediuk Gingrich, “Experiences and Utilization of Member Care in an International Missionary Sample,” *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 33, no. 3 (Fall 2014): 240.

⁵⁴ Hogstrom and Gingrich, 248.

CONCLUSION

The current approaches to cross cultural mission (apostolic, contextualization, and indigenization) and the current training and development programs (pre-field, language and culture coaching, disciple multiplication, leadership training, and member care) all have one thing in common: they are rooted in a missiology that does mission TO or FOR the other rather than WITH. Even indigenization is a model imposed upon nationals by foreigners. The pervading mission models also see the missionary as one that leads and then leaves once locals can take over. Andy McCullough writes, “The call is to remember that if foreigners do not see their role as specific and temporary, then there will be no emerging leadership, no indigenisation, no reproducibility, and no local responsibility.”⁵⁵ There do not seem to be any models that encourage mutually submissive collaborative efforts between nationals and foreigners from the onset.

In addition, Westerners have established these models in a time when the global center of Christianity was north of the equator. As the global center of Christianity has shifted, new approaches to mission will emerge from new missionary sending countries.

Finally, the effectiveness of these models has only ever been evaluated by the sending country’s agencies and not by those in the receiving countries—and the evaluations that exist are dated and few. If sending agencies truly want to know if these models are working, regular systems of evaluation including feedback from the people they serve should be created.

The 21st century, with its rapidly changing environment, is an ideal time for missionaries to rethink their models, to incorporate leadership from the global south in

⁵⁵ McCullough, 171-172.

the process, and to invite the opinions of nationals into the conversation about how Christians should engage in cross-cultural ministries.

SECTION 3: A MISSIOLOGY OF “WITH”

INTRODUCTION

In a 2013 speech commemorating the Martiniquais poet Aimé Fernand David Césaire, the French Minister of Education denounced the ills of colonization and encouraged those who work cross-culturally to engage in the world “*autrement*” (differently). Invoking Césaire’s critique, he said, “And this is where a true Copernican revolution must be imposed, for so deeply rooted in Europe, and in all parties and in all fields ...is the habit of doing for us, of arranging for us, the habit of thinking for us, in short the habit of depriving us of the right to initiate, which is, ultimately, the right to have our own personality.”¹

In the past, most mission models have followed the same pattern, doing missions *for* or *to* the other. Instead of building collaborative networks with national partners and planting churches that reflect the multi-cultural Kingdom of God, these approaches create power structures and ministry silos and impose extra-biblical norms. Followers of Christ are called to go into all the world and make disciples, while continually aligning their methods with the biblical values and principals of the Christian faith. Cross-cultural missions in the 21st century can make a clean break from paternalistic methods of the past by equipping and empowering missionaries to think and work collaboratively with

¹ Jean-Claude Girardin, “La contribution des églises issues de l’immigration à l’évangélisation en Europe francophone,” *L’évangélisation en Europe francophone*, ed. Hannes Wiher, (Charols: Excelsis, 2016), 237. Citing MINISTÈRE DE L’ÉDUCATION NATIONALE, “Aimé Césaire. Commémoration 1913-2013,” Document d’accompagnement pédagogique, http://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/Aime_Cesaire/13/0/Aime_Cesaire_dossier_integral_dec2013_292130.pdf. The quote as it appears in French: « Et c’est ici une véritable révolution copernicienne qu’il faut imposer, tant est enracinée en Europe, et dans tous les parti s et dans tous les domaines...l’habitude de faire pour nous, de disposer pour nous, l’habitude de penser pour nous, bref l’habitude de nous contester le droit à l’initiative, le droit à la personnalité. »

national partners. By prioritizing mutual love and hospitality, missionaries can pursue mission that is not *for* the other or *to* the other, but *with*.

The Theology of *Mission With*

In Luke chapter 14, Jesus is invited to the home of a Pharisee, where he observes the arriving guests taking the seats of honor. Reading Luke 14:7-14 through a missiological lens offers insight for both missionaries and those receiving them.

First, Jesus addresses the guest, saying, “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, because a person more distinguished than you may have been invited by your host.... But when you are invited, go and take the least important place...”² Often, when missionaries arrive on the field, they assume places of honor. With passion for their call, funding from their sending country, and pressure from their mission organization—full of good intentions—missionaries initiate projects and jump into leadership roles. Even if the missionary does not occupy an official pastoring or teaching post, he or she may have an attitude of benevolent superiority. In the book *Cross-Cultural Servanthood*, mission’s expert Duane Elmer explains:

Usually superiority appears in disguises that pretend to be virtues—virtues such as

- I need to correct their error (meaning I have superior knowledge, a corner on the truth).
- My education has equipped me to know what is best for you (so let me do most of the talking while you do most of the listening and changing).
- I am here to help you (so do as I say).
- I can be your spiritual mentor (so I am your role model).

² Luke 14:8, 10a (NET).

- Let me disciple you, equip you, train you (often perceived as “let me make you into a clone of myself”).³

Elmer concludes by saying, “Superiority cloaked in the desire to serve is still superiority.”⁴ A missiology of *Mission With* requires missionaries to follow Jesus’ instructions to the guest—to take the least important place, to assume the posture of a learner and to seek to serve from below or beside, rather than from above.

“The least important place” is the starting point for the guest, but not the final destination. Jesus also goes on to say, “. . .when your host approaches he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up here to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who share the meal with you.”⁵ In other words, the hospitality of the host ensures each person fills the proper seat at the table. This is a word to those who receive missionaries. National partners know the spiritual climate of their country and the strengths and weaknesses of the Body, thus they are strategically positioned to help foreigners find the places where they can make their best contribution to the Kingdom of God. This is a beautiful picture of the mutual submission that epitomizes *Mission With*. First, the missionary submits to the national partner by coming to serve and being teachable. Second, the national partner recognizes the gifts that the missionary brings and invites the missionary to put those gifts to use.

There is another word to the host that also applies. Jesus says, “When you host a dinner or a banquet, don’t invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich

³ Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006), 17.

⁴ Elmer, 17.

⁵ Luke 14:10b (NET).

neighbors so you can be invited by them in return and get repaid. But when you host an elaborate meal, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.”⁶ The host is encouraged to invite people who are not like him—and those who are considered the outcasts of society. While missionaries may not be poor or lame, they are typically at a disadvantage in terms of language and they are outsiders in the culture. National partners are encouraged to invite foreign missionaries to collaborate. In other words, *Mission With* requires a paradigm shift not only for missionaries, but for those who receive them as well.

The Power of Collaboration

In a Missio Nexus article entitled, “Mission in a Globalized World,” author Daniel Dow quotes Karin Butler Primuth, the CEO of VisionSynergy about the importance of collaboration in the 21st century:

Partnership is the future of the global mission movement. I don’t mean “partnership” in the sense of sponsorship or financial support. I mean partnership as mutual cooperation – sharing information, sharing resources, and working on joint projects toward shared goals. Partnership is the key that minimizes the duplication of our efforts, maximizes our resources, and enables us as the Body of Christ to leverage our strengths to accomplish together what could never be done alone. Unity results in God’s blessing! (Psalm 133)⁷

Missio Nexus created an infographic called, “Degrees of Partnership” that describes the different levels of partnership that can be achieved, with “collaboration” being considered a “deep partnership,” which is described as “A multi-faceted

⁶ Luke 14:12-13 (NET).

⁷ Daniel Dow, “Mission in a Globalized World,” *Synergy Commons*, October 12, 2018, <https://synergycommons.net/resources/mission-globalized-world/>.

relationship that has been hewn and molded over time.”⁸ While all partnerships have advantages, the power of collaboration lies in its emphasis on relationship and shared ministry focus. Collaborative efforts can produce substantial ministry results. Moreover, the process of working together collaboratively builds mutual respect and genuine love for the other, which is a strong witness and a desired outcome in and of itself for those in the body of Christ.

Yes, but How?



THREE SECTIONS FOR THE BEAUTY OF PARTNERSHIP

Werner Mischke created the workbook *The Beauty of Partnership* to help churches establish and maintain healthy cross-cultural partnerships in their mission endeavors. The workbook focuses on three “core ideas” that are key to partnership: Godly Character, Cultural Intelligence,

and Organizational Competence.⁹ Mischke’s “core ideas” are rooted in personal experience, insights from respected missiologist Duane Elmer, research by cultural expert Brooks Peterson, and concepts from organizational guru Steven Covey, among others. Like most missionary training programs that have been employed for the past 50 years,

⁸ See Illustrations A and B.

⁹ Werner Mischke, ed., “The Beauty of Partnership: Study Guide,” Version 1.0 (Scottsdale, AZ: Mission ONE, 2010), <https://mission1.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/bop-part1.pdf>.

The Beauty of Partnership is designed for North American missionaries to complete *before* they launch to the field. It is intended to be relevant for those going to any location in the world. In order to do *Mission With*, two adaptations are needed. First, training programs need to extend to missionaries who are on the field; and second, they need to enlist the participation of national partners in the receiving country. Mischke’s “core ideas” ring true, but need modification to provide the framework for equipping missionaries for *Mission With*.

EQUIPPING MISSIONARIES TO DO *MISSION WITH*

In summarizing findings from the recent Missio Nexus Field Attrition Study, analyst Van Huis concludes, “From candidate school through the end of service we need to provide individualized care for each worker. This intentionality will lead to more healthy processes, longer terms, and God-glorifying transitions.”¹⁰ Recognizing the need for such intentionality and related to Mischke’s “core ideas,” the key components for *Mission With* are a Christ-like character, cross-cultural bridge building, and ministry effectiveness. These components can be cultivated by providing arriving missionaries with personalized training and supportive relationships during their first few years on the field. I suggest three additional elements: spiritual formation, NP mentoring, and coaching. Spiritual formation equips missionaries with essential spiritual disciplines so that they can abide in Christ and be transformed into His likeness. It also builds self-awareness and God-awareness, which enhance the missionary’s ability to discern God’s leading and obey God’s call. Mentoring by a national partner fosters cultural adaptation and builds cross-cultural relationships while familiarizing a missionary with national-led

¹⁰ Van Huis, 14.

initiatives. The mentors open doors for the missionaries, helping them to find their seat at the table—the places where they can make their best ministry contribution. Coaching builds on the spiritual formation and mentoring experiences to enable missionaries to establish relevant, effective, and sustainable ministry practices. The coaches can offer timely feedback and help the missionaries to build ministry capacity.

Spiritual Formation to Develop a Christ-like Character

Dr. MaryKate Morse, Professor of Leadership and Spiritual Formation at Portland Seminary, uses the following definition for spiritual formation: “Spiritual Formation is our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the glory of God and for the sake of the world.”^{11/12} While spiritual formation always has value in the life of a Christian, there are certain life circumstances in which it is particularly important for us to be attentive to our “response” to the “reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ.” The turbulence of transitioning to a foreign mission field is undoubtedly such a time.

Spiritual Formation in a Cross-Cultural Context

While moving to a new country is exciting, it also comes with unique challenges. Culture is tightly tied to personal identity, and integrating into a new culture—if done

¹¹ MaryKate Morse, “Spiritual Formation: Conformed to the Image of Christ for What Purpose?,” *Missio Alliance*, March 31, 2016, <https://www.missioalliance.org/spiritual-formation-conformed-image-christ-purpose/>.

¹² This is an adaptation of a definition: “Spiritual formation is our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the sake of the world.” (Greenman and Kalantzis, *Life in the Spirit*, 24)

well—requires a level of deconstruction that effects one’s body, mind, spirit, and emotions. Sherwood Lingenfelter explains:

We must consciously release our attachments to home, income, security, and convenience, significance in work or ministry, and even comfort of family. We must enter a new community of strangers...and begin as children, learning at the feet of those we have gone to serve.... Our bodies will get sick, our minds will suffer fatigue, and our emotions will sweep us from ecstasy to depression.¹³

The spiritual crisis one faces when adjusting to a new culture resembles what the ancients called a “dark night of the soul,” or what author Pete Scazzero calls “the Wall.”¹⁴

Scazzero contends that “failure to understand [the Wall’s] nature results in great long term pain and confusion.”¹⁵ One can add to this the challenge of arriving in a new country where one does not speak the language and has few support networks. Even if the missionary immediately connects with a local church, it takes months of language study before he or she would have the ability to participate in worship, understand a sermon, or join a Bible study. This leaves the missionary spiritually isolated and vulnerable.

In the book *Too Valuable to Lose*, Rudy Geron explains, “Spiritual formation is essential throughout the overall development of a missionary. It does not end when the missionary arrives on the mission field either. On the contrary, a new level of spiritual development begins at this point.”¹⁶ Nevertheless, missionaries often discover that the tried and true spiritual disciplines that once served them well no longer suffice when they

¹³ Lingenfelter, 25.

¹⁴ Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It’s Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature*, Updated edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 97.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁶ Taylor, 31.

are confronted by the stresses and challenges of ministering abroad. A spiritual formation process specifically tailored to missionaries who are transitioning to the field would provide missionaries with the resources they need to build healthy and suitable spiritual habits.

Finally, how one arrives on the field affects sustainability. “Longevity on the field may be directly related to how a missionary enters the field... Most agree that the first three to six months are vitally important to the physical, mental, and spiritual longevity of the missionary.”¹⁷ The spiritual disciplines a missionary establishes when he or she arrives on the field may have a lasting impact. Furthermore, God will often refine and clarify a missionary’s calling in those first few years on the field. Special attentiveness to the work and Word of God during the transition period will help the missionary discern the call of God and pursue ministry activities that will be both fruitful and sustainable. Therefore, arriving missionaries would benefit from a spiritual formation process that addresses transition and culture shock.

How Spiritual Formation Leads to Mission With

Mission With requires a high level of self-awareness and spiritual maturity. While missionary training programs tend to focus on navigating culture shock, managing stress, and clarifying roles, little attention is given to the spiritual growth and development of the individual missionary.¹⁸ Author and missionary Andy McCullough writes, “I am persuaded that the aspect that needs training, more than any other, in cross-cultural

¹⁷ Phil Bartuska, “7 Ways Missionaries Can Aim for Longevity Overseas,” *International Mission Board* (blog), April 18, 2018, <https://www.imb.org/2018/04/18/7-ways-missionaries-longevity/>.

¹⁸ Examples taken from the website of the Center for Intercultural Training. “CIT - Center for Intercultural Training Courses,” *Center for Intercultural Training* (blog), accessed April 9, 2019, <https://cit-online.org/adult-program/courses/>.

workers, is *humility*....”¹⁹ In the book *Humilitas*, John Dickson explains that “Humility is *the noble choice to forgo your status, deploy your resources or use your influence for the good of others before yourself*. More simply, you could say the humble person is marked *by a willingness to hold power in service of others*.”²⁰ This definition of humility exemplifies the attitude needed for *Mission With*.

Humility is not something that can be taught in a workshop or achieved by reading a book. It requires deep surrender to and cooperation with the work of the Holy Spirit. Kibeom Lee and Michael C. Ashton, authors of the book *The H Factor of Personality*, explain that while one’s capacity for humility has been proven to be an aspect of one’s personality, it can be increased through genuine efforts.²¹ However, cultivating Christ-like qualities such as humility takes time, commitment, and spiritual friendship. Those who cultivate humility are more likely to seek to serve national partners and collaborate with their projects.

Humility is just one Christ-like quality that contributes to *Mission With*. Lovingkindness, perseverance, temperance, and patience are also critical to building and sustaining collaborative ministries with national partners. In an article entitled, “The Spiritual Formation of Mission Leaders,” David Teague writes:

As mission leaders, many people look to us as being great spiritual role models. The reality is that we all struggle with our humanness. I’ve never met a leader who was “crack-free,” so to speak. Let’s face it: our roles also tend to separate us from our souls. But when we truly become

¹⁹ McCullough, 9.

²⁰ John P. Dickson, *Humilitas: A Lost Key to Life, Love, and Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 24.

²¹ Kibeom Lee and Michael C. Ashton, *The H Factor of Personality: Why Some People Are Manipulative, Self-Entitled, Materialistic, and Exploitive - and Why It Matters for Everyone* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 164.

spiritually formed, the presence of Christ grows within us, transforms us, and gradually heals our inner brokenness.²²

Through spiritual formation, missionaries do the soul work needed to cooperate with the transformative work of the Holy Spirit, building habits and disciplines that enable an ongoing responsiveness to the call and the work of God in their lives for the duration of their ministry.

Mentoring by a National Partner to Build Cross-Cultural Bridges

Mission expert Rodolfo Geron states, “Regardless of a missionary’s refined level of education, he or she must be willing to be taught by the host culture or the host church.”²³ Cultural integration happens through small, incremental movements—some intentional, some unintentional—towards another culture’s way of thinking, doing, and being, while willingly letting go of one’s original cultural identity. One can learn about culture in a classroom, but one can only integrate into a culture through experience. Mentoring by a national partner would provide missionaries with a tangible way of being taught by the host culture.

Mentoring in a Cross-Cultural Context

In Jesus’ parable the guest arrives and the host directs the seating arrangement. It is not the guest that takes the lead, but the host. Inviting national partners to mentor missionaries enables missionaries to have a concrete experience of entering the culture humbly and taking the “least important place” while giving the national partner the opportunity to practice hospitality. In a survey of French partners who work with foreign

²² David Teague, “The Spiritual Formation of Mission Leaders,” *Missio Nexus*, April 1, 2012, <https://missionexus.org/the-spiritual-formation-of-mission-leaders/>.

²³ Taylor, 36.

missionaries, several made comments like, “It seems to me that foreign missionaries should join indigenous teams.”²⁴ Mission agencies have their own vision and mission, and as explained in Section 2, the current approaches to missions show little evidence of consultation with national partners before implementing their projects. Lack of cooperation with national partners typically results in duplicated efforts and/or wasted resources, not to mention frustration on the part of national partners. In taking time to be mentored by national partners, the missionaries would learn the spiritual landscape of the country and see where God is already at work before pursuing their own God-given vision. Missionaries need to invite feedback from national partners, and perhaps even look for ways to support national-led projects and initiatives rather than importing their own agendas.

Understanding of what culture is and how culture works can and should be (and typically is) addressed in pre-field training, but understanding the nuts and bolts of culture in general and adapting to a specific culture are not the same thing. Mentoring by a national partner not only brings the cultural adaptation process out of the classroom and into the real world, it also places cultural adaptation into the context of friendship, providing missionaries and national partners with the opportunity to build cross-cultural bridges. Regi Campbell, author of *Mentor Like Jesus*, says “You can get dirty mentoring people. They bring real issues to the table. And those issues require mentors to get personal, transparent, and exposed.”²⁵ It is in the messiness of life-on-life relationships

²⁴ Unpublished survey of French national partners. Spring 2016. Personal archives. The quote as it appears is: « Il me semble que les missionnaires étrangers devraient intégrer des équipes autochtones. »

²⁵ Regi Campbell and Richard Chancy, *Mentor like Jesus* (Nashville, TN: B & H, 2009), Kindle loc 553.

that missionaries will be best equipped for the challenges and joys of cross-cultural ministry while national partners will appreciate the value of working with foreigners.

How Mentoring by a National Partner Leads to Mission With

In general, most missionary cultural adaptation programs aim at equipping the missionary to integrate into the culture so that he or she can thrive and build an effective ministry.²⁶ In these programs, experienced missionaries train those who are launching to the field. In his Doctoral Dissertation entitled *Crossing the Great Divide: Advocating for Cultural Intelligence in the Training of Missionaries to Navigate the Missiological Implications of Globalization*, John Mitch Arbelaez insists on the importance of Cultural Intelligence (CQ), but concludes, “It is advisable to implement a CQ learning program headed by one individual of an agency.”²⁷ He does not mention the possibility that CQ could come through mentoring by a national partner. Keeping the cultural adaptation process as an internal program prohibits mission agencies from capitalizing on a critical opportunity to demonstrate humility and build cross-cultural bridges. Mentoring by a national partner can equip the missionary for ministry while fostering cross-cultural collaboration. Cultural expert David A. Livermore postulates, “. . .as U.S. leaders posture themselves with a spirit of openness, collaboration, and even compromise, not only will it

²⁶ For example, see the “CIT - Center for Intercultural Training Courses.” <https://cit-online.org/adult-program/courses/>

²⁷ John Mitch Arbelaez, “Crossing the Great Divide: Advocating for Cultural Intelligence in the Training of Missionaries to Navigate the Missiological Implications of Globalization” (Doctor of Ministry, George Fox University, 2016), 95. <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/dmin/122>.

change their one-on-one interactions, but it may also begin to slowly change the global view of the United States.”²⁸ The same could be said of U.S. missionaries.

A mentoring relationship would not only give the missionary the chance to build a friendship with a national partner, it would also give the national partner the opportunity to learn the missionary’s personality, gifts, and calling. Over time the national partner could introduce the missionary to existing networks, ministry leaders, and projects that might benefit from the missionary’s participation. At the same time, missionaries should be encouraged to be careful observers of cultural differences, to ask questions, and to adapt to and honor the local cultural norms wherever they can. The national partner/mentor will act as an advocate for the missionary and tour guide of the spiritual landscape of the country, inviting the missionary into his or her world and offering the missionary ways to make significant contributions. Most importantly, both will grow in understanding and appreciation for the other, strengthening each other’s calling and faith, and discovering the value of intercultural collaboration.

In the book *A General Theory of Love*, Doctors Lewis, Amini, and Lannon explain how the plasticity of the human brain allows for lifelong learning through the rewiring of neuropathways. They discovered, “Who we are and who we become depends, in part, on whom we love.”²⁹ As missionaries and national partners grow in genuine love for one another, their brains are rewired to be more willing collaborators. Mentoring

²⁸ David A. Livermore, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence: The Real Secret to Success*, Second edition (New York: American Management Association, 2015), 62.

²⁹ Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon, *A General Theory of Love* (New York: Random House, 2000), 144.

encourages *Mission With* by providing missionaries and national partners the opportunity to build genuine, lasting friendships rooted in mutual trust, respect, and love.

Coaching to Establish an Effective Ministry

Anyone moving to the field for the first time is not only navigating a new language and culture, but a new ministry. While a national partner can mentor a missionary in the ways that ministry is done and connect the missionary with existing networks that are aligned with the missionary's call, a coach can support a missionary in other important ways. A coach can help the missionary to develop sustainable ministry effectiveness by providing regular accountability and feedback. The coach will also assist the missionary to build a strong work-ethic and to cultivate self-evaluative habits into the missionary's ethos.

Coaching in a Cross-Cultural Context

James E. Plueddemann, former international director of Serving In Mission (SIM), tells of advice that he received from a sage colleague: “[T]here are two kinds of missionaries—those with twenty years of experience, and those with one year of experience repeated twenty times. The difference between these two kinds of missionaries is that the first learns from experience.”³⁰ Plueddemann remarks, “[My colleague] helped me to see that *experience without reflection is not necessarily educational*.”³¹ Becoming effective on the mission field requires the ability to be a reflective practitioner, a skill that coaching strengthens and develops. Donald A. Schön,

³⁰ Jim Plueddemann, *Leading across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 32.

³¹ Plueddemann, 32. Emphasis his.

author of *The Reflective Practitioner* explains, “It is this entire process of reflection-in-action which is central to the ‘art’ by which practitioners sometimes deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict.”³² Coaches Logan and Carlton explain why “reviewing” is an important part of the coaching experience: “Too often we are all action—and action without reflection generally amounts to a great deal of wasted energy.”³³ Coaching for ministry effectiveness will help missionaries to evaluate their experiences and incorporate their learning into future endeavors.

Keith Webb, author of *The Coach Model*, defines coaching as “an ongoing intentional conversation that empowers a person or a group to fully live out God’s calling.”³⁴ Unlike the mentor, the coach would not necessarily need to be a national partner, the coach could even be internal to the sending agency. New missionaries, particularly millennials, are eager to make a difference; however, they also “crave — and respond to — a good, positive coach.”³⁵ According to a 2015 article in the “Harvard Business Review”, “most Millennials want feedback at least monthly, whereas non-Millennials are comfortable with feedback less often.”³⁶ As the Millennial generation launches onto the mission field, coaching could make a critical difference to their effectiveness and sustainability.

³² Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 50.

³³ Robert E Logan, Sherilyn Carlton, and Tara Miller, *Coaching 101: Discover the Power of Coaching* (St. Charles, IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2003), 89.

³⁴ Keith E Webb, *The COACH Model for Christian Leaders: Powerful Leadership Skills for Solving Problems, Reaching Goals, and Developing Others* (Bellevue, WA: Active Results LLC, 2012), 28.

³⁵ Karie Willyerd, “Millennials Want to Be Coached at Work,” *Harvard Business Review*, February 27, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/02/millennials-want-to-be-coached-at-work>.

³⁶ Ibid.

Coaching, like mentoring, offers structure and support to missionaries as they navigate ministry in a new country. Traditionally, mission agencies “put all of the training and investment in the individual up front,” meaning before they arrive on the field and in the first years of language learning.³⁷ In a cross-cultural context, coaching would be best suited for year three or four on the field. If the first years are given to language learning and spiritual formation, followed by mentoring by a national partner, the missionary will finally be equipped to develop a viable missionary plan of action. Ideally, that plan of action would include collaboration with national partners and would be validated by both the missionary’s sending agency and a national partner. Having a robust plan, the missionary would be prepared to benefit from coaching, which “can help people take steps that move them toward the completion of the work God has given them to do.”³⁸

How Coaching Leads to Mission With

National partners are hesitant to collaborate with missionaries who appear incompetent. According to the book, *Too Valuable to Lose*, every long-term missionary who fails to become effective, “undermines the expectations of each subsequent generation of missionaries.”³⁹ The same might be said of the expectations of national partners. When French partners were asked to rate foreign missionaries on their “ability to progress or develop their ministry,” 54% gave the missionary a rating of four or lower on a scale of one to ten. In the same survey, 46% of French partners did not consider their

³⁷ Taylor, 21.

³⁸ Logan, et al, 18.

³⁹ Taylor, 22.

collaboration with a foreign missionary to be “fruitful.”⁴⁰ Coaching will support arriving missionaries as they build ministry capacity in a new country so that they can be an asset to collaborative ministry endeavours.

Missionaries who are life-long learners, always growing in their capacity for ministry, will be able to make valuable contributions to collaborations with national partners. *Mission With* assumes that both missionary and national partners are committed to excellence for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

CONCLUSION

As missionaries and mission agencies move beyond the time of *mission to* and *mission for* to *Mission With*, they will need to build in structures and strategies that support this ideological shift. Such strategies would include a tailored spiritual formation program for arriving missionaries which builds healthy spiritual habits to equip the missionary for spiritual and ministerial thriving. Mission agencies that are intentional about encouraging new missionaries to participate in a spiritual formation process will create cultures of spiritual health, where members believe that soul-care and personal integrity are shared values. Mentoring by a national partner as part of the cultural integration process will build cross-cultural bridges, strengthen friendships and increase collaborative networks. Coaching will provide new missionaries with additional support structures to ensure that they begin their ministries with a capacity to be both fruitful and sustainable. Any one of these elements could help move towards *Mission With* while strengthening effectiveness and reducing attrition, but a successive combination of the three would be ideal. Missionaries who have developed Christ-like qualities and self-

⁴⁰ Unpublished survey of French partners.

awareness through spiritual formation will be more receptive to the mentoring process, and those who have been mentored by a national partner will create stronger and more viable ministry plans of action. With strong plans of action, missionaries will get the most benefit from a coaching relationship.

SECTION 4: THE ARTIFACT

ELAN: LAUNCHING MISSIONARIES FOR *MISSION WITH*

The artifact is a three-year program called Elan¹ that is designed to help missionaries transition to the field in France by offering spiritual formation, mentoring by a national partner, and coaching for ministry effectiveness.² All aspects of the Elan program contribute to training and developing missionaries to practice a missiology of *with*, while exemplifying *Mission With* from development to implementation.

Elan helps arriving missionaries to develop a Christ-like character by offering a spiritual formation program developed specifically for those entering a cross-cultural ministry setting. During Year One the missionary will be exposed to a variety of spiritual disciplines, culminating in the development of a Rule of Life to encourage sustainability. In Year Two Elan pairs the missionary with a national partner who has a similar ministry focus. The national partner acts as a mentor for the missionary, introducing the missionary to existing ministries and national ministry leaders, helping the missionary to understand the spiritual landscape of the country while learning to value cultural differences. Working with their mentor, the missionary will develop a ministry action plan which will be validated by the missionary's sending agency and by a national partner. In Year Three, the missionary is given a coach to support the implementation of the ministry action plan.

¹ Elan means momentum in French. In English it is defined as, "energy, style, and enthusiasm." It was chosen because of its positive and relevant connotations in both French and English.

² This artifact is specific to missionaries serving in France; however, the program could be adapted for other mission fields. The three components of spiritual formation, mentoring, and coaching would be relevant in any setting, but in order to both promote and exemplify *Mission With*, the ELAN curricula would need to be specifically tailored to each country through a collaborative process that would include seasoned missionaries and national partners.

The Elan program includes weekly reading, exercises, and forum discussions, monthly one-on-one meetings with an Elan partner, and an annual four-day retreat. The artifact will include the Year 1 and Year 2 retreat programs, Year 1 and Year 2 curricula, and the program for the mentor training retreat. Links to the Elan website (elanmission.org) and access to the course site will also be provided.

SECTION 5: ARTIFACT SPECIFICATIONS

INTRODUCTION TO ELAN

Most missionaries are required to do some sort of cross-cultural training before leaving for the mission field. The Elan program is unique in that it is designed to accompany missionaries once they have arrived on the field, engaging national partners to participate in the enculturation process. Elan was established as French association by a consortium of foreign missionaries and French partners. It is not meant to replace pre-field training, but rather augment it. The mission of Elan is “to encourage, equip, and empower arriving missionaries to develop a Christ-like character, cultural intelligence, and ministry capacity.”¹ Not only does Elan provide support and encouragement during the cultural adaptation period, it also introduces missionaries to national leaders and national-led initiatives and networks, thereby inspiring collaborative work with national partners from the moment the missionary arrives on the field of service.

Most mission agencies require arriving missionaries to spend their first one to two years on the field in full-time language study, followed by a year in some sort of apprenticeship.² Elan intends to enhance this process by offering the components of spiritual formation, mentoring by a national partner, and coaching for ministry effectiveness. Having worked closely with both missionary sending agencies and national partners through the development process, the Elan program is designed to enhance existing processes and complement what agencies are capable of doing themselves.

¹ “Elan,” accessed June 20, 2019, <http://www.elanmission.org/en/>.

² Based on conversations, observation, and surveys of ten mission organizations serving in France.

Structure

Three Years, Three Tracks, Three Venues

Each year of Elan’s three-year program has a specific emphasis, with corresponding desired outcomes; however, the years also have continuity and build on each other. For example, it is not designed for a missionary to opt into Year Two of the program without having participated in Year One. The three tracks of the Elan program are spiritual formation, cultural adaptation, and ministry effectiveness. These tracks are the focus of Years One, Two, and Three respectively, although there is some natural overlap. Within each year, there are three learning venues—online interactions with a cohort, monthly one-on-one meetings with an Elan partner, and an annual four-day retreat.

Year One: Spiritual Formation. The goal of the first year of the Elan program is to help missionaries abide in a transforming relationship with Christ while building and strengthening spiritual habits that are critical to missionary effectiveness and sustainability.³ When missionaries first move to a foreign country and engage in the language learning process, they naturally experience a time of deconstruction. In describing missionaries who have recently transitioned to the field, Member Care Consultant Ronald Koteskey writes, “They often feel vulnerable, fearful, depressed, and ambivalent.”⁴ There are losses to grieve, challenges to overcome, and a sense that one is no longer capable of the most basic tasks. It is a prime time to reflect seriously on one’s

³ Elan, “Are You a Missionary? – Elan,” accessed June 20, 2019, <http://www.elanmission.org/en/missionary/>.

⁴ Ronald L. Koteskey, *Missionary Transitions* (Wilmore, KY: n.p., 2015), 89, http://www.missionarycare.com/ebooks/Missionary_Transitions_Book.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0dGV97F_AunIEappQUPCSuBQS-7j3rO6_Wa_xTDLpVnxjDv_trhj2EvZ4.

identity in Christ while establishing healthy and sustainable spiritual disciplines for their new context. The Elan program has carefully crafted a one-year spiritual formation program to meet missionaries in this space of transition.

The participating missionaries complete weekly readings that build on their knowledge of spiritual formation, do a weekly exercise to draw near to God by employing different spiritual disciplines, and participate in an online forum where they discuss with their cohort what God is teaching them through the readings and exercises. In addition, each missionary is assigned a spiritual director to meet with monthly for an hour of spiritual direction. This meeting happens face to face when possible, but may also be done via Skype. Finally, in the second month of the first year, there is a 4-day spiritual retreat, bringing together the missionaries in the cohort with the spiritual directors who will be directing them and interacting with them in the online forum. This retreat includes teaching on spiritual disciplines such as Lectio Divina, the Prayer of the Examen, and silence, as well as opportunities to experience, practice, and discuss these disciplines.⁵

The curriculum of Year One includes (but is not limited to) the following resources:

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, by Peter Scazzero; *Christ-Shaped Character: Choosing Love, Faith and Hope*, by Helen Cepero; *Self to Lose, Self to Find: A Biblical Approach to the 9 Enneagram Types*, by Marilyn Vancil; *The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery*, by David Benner; and *In the Name of Jesus*, by Henri Nouwen.⁶

⁵ For a complete Spiritual Formation Retreat Schedule, see Appendix E.

⁶ The complete Year One curriculum is located in Appendix C.

The capstone project for Year One is that each missionary will develop a Rule of Life that includes healthy and sustainable daily, weekly, monthly and yearly spiritual rhythms. This Rule of Life will reflect the self-awareness that they have gained over the year as well as knowledge of and familiarity with a variety of spiritual disciplines. In his book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, Scazzero compares a Rule of Life to a trellis that enables one to “abide in Christ and become more fruitful spiritually.”⁷ A Rule of Life will equip the missionary to be intentional about abiding in Christ and creating space for ongoing spiritual growth and transformation. At the end of Year One, the missionaries will translate their Rule of Life into French and share it with the French mentor that has been chosen for them.

As the Elan team gets acquainted with the participating missionaries through the retreat and online exchanges, they will begin to prayerfully consider and recruit a suitable French mentor for each missionary. The mentors will be chosen based on their ability to help the missionary pursue his or her calling in France. A recent study revealed that “lack of freedom to pursue calling” is one of the main preventable reasons that missionaries are leaving the field.⁸ The Elan mentoring process will empower missionaries to freely pursue the calling that God has placed on their heart in a culturally respectful and relevant way. Elan will also advocate for missionaries (as appropriate and/or needed) with their sending organizations to reaffirm the call of God on a missionary’s life and encourage the (re)assigning of ministry accordingly.

⁷ Scazzero, 191.

⁸ Rowe.

Elan mentors are required to participate in a training weekend, where they learn about the logistics of how the Elan program works and the specifics of their commitment.⁹ Though the mentors do not begin accompanying their missionary until Year Two of the program, they are recruited and trained while their missionary is still in Year One. Elan mentors are recruited out of a pool of French ministers who have already attended a general mentor training weekend, but the mentoring of a foreign missionary has some unique challenges and specific goals.¹⁰ Mentors are required to read *Missionnaire en culture étrangère: le défi de l'intégration*, the French translation of *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, to familiarize themselves with some of the challenges related to the cultural adaptation process.¹¹ (The missionaries will read and discuss this book in Year Two of the program.) The mentors will discuss the book during the training weekend, where they will also analyze various case studies that highlight some of the complications and cultural complexities that missionaries face in France.

Finally, at the end of Year One, each missionary will write a letter of introduction to their mentor, which is delivered at the beginning of the mentor training weekend. This allows the mentors to know a little about the person they will be accompanying while they go through the training process. At the end of the training weekend, the mentors

⁹ For a complete Mentor Training Retreat Schedule, see Appendix G.

¹⁰ The general mentor training weekends referenced here are facilitated by the author and her French partner Alain Stamp. Both have participated in Leighton Ford's Mentoring Community and model these training weekends on that experience.

¹¹ Sherwood Lingenfelter, Marvin Keene Mayers, and Richard Berney, *Missionnaire en culture étrangère le défi de l'intégration* (Charols: Excelsis, 2009); Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin Keene Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003).

write a letter of introduction to their missionary, which is delivered in the first week of Year Two of the program.

Year Two: Cultural Adaptation. The goal for Year Two of the Elan program is to familiarize the missionary with the French culture in general and the Christian landscape in France in particular, while continuing to offer support and encouragement for spiritual growth and personal development. When it comes to cultural adaptation, Koteskey notes, “Just crossing the border into your host country does not mean that you have really entered the culture. It takes time and energy to enter the culture and become a part of social groups there.”¹²

In Year Two, each missionary is partnered with a French mentor. The Elan mentor is concerned with the whole person, remaining mindful of the fact that the missionary is seeking to be equipped to make a meaningful, culturally relevant contribution to the Kingdom of God. To that end, the cultural adaptation offered by Elan is tailored to the ministry calling of each missionary. For example, a missionary who is primarily a musician will be paired with a French mentor who has an established music ministry. The French mentor will thus be able to introduce the missionary to Christian music networks, conferences, and key musical influences in France.

Year Two follows the same basic structure as Year One—weekly assignments and discussion forums, monthly one-on-one meetings, and an annual retreat—with the main focus shifting from spiritual formation to cultural adaptation. The facilitation of forums and one-on-ones transfers from spiritual directors to French mentors. Since most mentors only speak French, the forum exchanges, mentoring meetings, and retreat for Year Two

¹² Ronald L. Koteskey, 79.

are all done in French. In France, strong French language skills are critically important to cultural integration and to ministry effectiveness, so while this switch to French represents a challenge for the missionary, it is critical to their transition process. Nevertheless, some of the assigned reading is in English due to a lack of resources available in French at this time.

The retreat is planned for early in Year Two so that the mentors and missionaries can meet and get acquainted. Since it may be necessary for the monthly mentoring meetings to happen by Skype, it is critically important that the mentors and missionaries have time face to face at the beginning of the year. The mentoring retreat offers bonding experiences, times of spiritual reflection and encouragement, group interactions, cultural training, and one-on-one time for each missionary with his or her mentor.¹³

In Year Two, the missionaries have reading assignments every other week. The proposed reading includes, but is not limited to *Global Humility*, by Andy McCullough, *Missionnaire en culture étrangère*, by Sherwood Lingenfelter, et al, and *The Path*, by Laurie Beth Jones.¹⁴ Many French articles and videos are also part of the curriculum. During the alternate weeks, each missionary completes a cultural exercise assigned by his or her mentor. These exercises are designed to address the missionary's ministry, current need, or passion, and are meant to help the missionary go deeper into his or her understanding or experience of the French culture. Examples of exercises that mentors have proposed include hosting a wine-tasting for neighbors, interviewing a French evangelist, and listening to and analyzing three famous French songs.

¹³ For a complete Mentoring Retreat Schedule, see Appendix F.

¹⁴ The complete Year Two curriculum is located in Appendix D.

The missionaries and mentors engage in a weekly forum, which is either a discussion of the assigned reading or a reflection on the cultural experiences proposed by their mentors. This way the missionaries might also learn something from the others' cultural exercises. The forums are also be a place for sharing their experience of what Rachel Pieh Jones calls "culture stripping": "Culture stripping is the slow peeling back of layers and layers of self."¹⁵ The intention of these exchanges is to foster an environment where the mentors and missionaries can grow in love and friendship, appreciating differences and discovering points of similarity as well.

The monthly one-one-one mentoring meetings allow the missionary to ask questions of the mentor and to debrief certain ministry and cultural experiences in a safe environment. There is no preplanned agenda for these meetings; they are tailored to the missionary's need. These meetings, as all Elan one-on-ones, are confidential.

The desired outcome for Year Two is that the missionary will develop a contextualized ministry action plan validated by a French partner and corresponding to the vision and mission of their sending agency. In Year Three the plan of action will be shared with a coach, who will offer support and feedback as the missionary implements his or her action plan.

Just as mentors are recruited for each missionary, coaches will be recruited by Elan. Elan recruits certified coaches and requires a one-day training session to familiarize the coaches with the logistics and goals of the Elan program.

¹⁵ Rachel Pieh Jones, "Beyond Culture Shock: Culture Pain, Culture Stripping," *A Life Overseas* (blog), January 4, 2013, <http://www.alifeoverseas.com/beyond-culture-shock-culture-pain-culture-stripping>.

Year Three: Ministry Effectiveness. The goal for Year Three of the Elan program is to support the missionary in establishing fruitful and sustainability ministry practices. The year begins with a coaching retreat, with lessons on leadership development, self-management, and setting benchmarks. The missionaries will meet their coaches face-to-face, and there will be some relationship building activities, as well.

There are no longer weekly forum engagements, but monthly “check-ins,” where each missionary prepares and submits a self-report to the other missionaries in his or her cohort. This self-report includes an analysis of their time-management and an assessment of their ministry activities and of their personal and spiritual well-being. It will ask each missionary to reflect on his or her plan of action (with the ability to make modifications) and provide a place to share prayer requests. The self-report will be shared, giving the missionaries group accountability and feedback. It will also act as the launching point for their monthly meeting with their coach. Following the coaching session, the missionary will be asked to submit a “coaching response,” reporting his or her key take-aways from the one-one-one meeting.

The desired outcome from Year Three is that the missionary will develop healthy work habits and the ability to self-manage as well as an appreciation and desire for ongoing accountability, evaluation, and reflective practices. Missionaries need to have the capacity to create and stick to a plan of action. Furthermore, regular feedback and evaluation can be hard to come by. Through the coaching year, the missionary should learn to structure a healthy ministry and be equipped to build the support structures he or she needs.

Potential Participants

The Elan program is designed for missionaries to begin within their first six to eighteen months in France. To accommodate a range of arrival times, a new cohort begins in January of each year. Elan serves missionaries from any sending country; however, Year One of the program is only offered in English, as most arriving missionaries have not yet mastered French. At this time the association is not capable of supporting missionaries in other languages.

Key Collaborators

Each track of the program has a designated Key Collaborator who works closely with the director to oversee their track of the Elan Program. The Key Collaborators are instrumental in curriculum development, the planning and implementation of the training retreats, the planning and implementation of the participant retreats, and the structure of the monthly one-on-ones. The Key Collaborator is also responsible for recruiting and training of the Elan partners for their track of the program.¹⁶ For example, the Key Collaborator for the Spiritual Formation Track recruits spiritual directors for the missionaries in Year One of the program.

The current Key Collaborator for the Spiritual Formation Track is Anne Meynier-Schweitzer.

Since 1987 Anne Meynier-Schweitzer has been on staff with Agapé France (known as CRU in the States) where one of her primary roles is training Christians to fulfil the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). Convinced that a deep personal relationship with God is essential to our ability to answer His call on our lives, in 2010 she helped to establish the organization Friends on the Way, which trains and develops Spiritual Directors. She and her husband Louis also offer spiritual retreats that enable Christians to draw closer to God.¹⁷

¹⁶ Spiritual directors, mentors, and coaches are considered Elan partners.

¹⁷ Elan, "Our Team – Elan," accessed June 20, 2019, <http://www.elanmission.org/en/team/>.

The current Key Collaborator for Cultural Adaptation Track is Alain Stamp.

Alain Stamp is the president of France Evangelisation, of BLF Editions, and of Chantre. Through his experience in leading a French ministry that works closely with foreign missionaries, Alain became aware of the challenges related to cultural integration. Alain is dedicated to empowering the next generation by mentoring emerging and developing leaders.¹⁸

The Key Collaborator for the Ministry Effectiveness Track is Matthieu Ducrozet.

Matthieu has worked full time with Agapé France (Cru) since 2002, leading the Sport and Faith mission for 8 years. It was during these years that he discovered the power of coaching. In 2015 he became responsible for the training and development of the leaders of Agapé France and was involved in various initiatives and partnerships for training and coaching French leaders. He spent two years in the United States, earning a Master's in Leadership and Missiology.¹⁹

These Key Collaborators are well networked in the country and recognized as experts in their track area. They bring credibility to the organization in the eyes of sending agencies and national partners.

It is important the leadership of the organization be shared between foreign workers and national partners. While the program requires all of the mentors to be national partners, the spiritual directors and coaches could be foreign workers or national partners, as could the Key Collaborators and the Director. In this way, the Elan organization reflects the outcome it is hoping to produce in the missionaries that it serves—*Mission With*.

Culture

The Elan program is predicated on a culture of hospitality. The national partners embody hospitality in welcoming missionaries into their networks and ministries while

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

the missionaries embody hospitality by welcoming the French language and culture into their hearts. One of Keillor and Littlefield's best practices for "promoting an adult's readiness to learn" is to "Create a culture of empathy, respect, approachability, authenticity."²⁰ Elan's four core values were chosen to establish such a hospitable culture. They are unity, integrity, humility, and joy.

Unity. As Christians, we recognize that we are one in Christ. For this reason, the Elan program fosters a spirit of unity between French and foreigners, men and women, the older and the emerging generations, and all Christian denominations. This value is reflected in that we serve missionaries and recruit partners from all Christian denominations. Similarly, spiritual directors, mentors and coaches must be willing to accompany both men and women from any nation and any denomination. Every aspect of the program is rooted in relationship, with the hope of building genuine unity characterized by deep respect, abounding love, and mutual submission.

Integrity. Elan wants to cultivate and model integrity with both its national partners and its participants, giving glory to God and building strong foundations for *Mission With*. A recent study on missionary attrition revealed that "lack of team member integrity" was one of the main reasons for missionaries leaving the field.²¹ Besides reducing attrition, increased integrity in both mission agencies and missionaries could also contribute to the gathering and reporting of accurate data, giving a clearer picture of missionary effectiveness. Since Elan seeks to launch missionaries who are authentic and

²⁰ Carrie Keillor and Jane Littlefield, "Engaging Adults Learners with Technology," presented at the Library Technology Conference: Macalester College, 2012, https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1236&context=libtech_conf.

²¹ Rowe.

transparent in their ministries, we strive to model integrity in all our interactions. We are clear about our expectations for participants and collaborators, we are transparent about costs, and we do not promise more than we can deliver.²²

Humility. Elan encourages participants to benefit from the wisdom of their colleagues, to listen to the stories of their national partners, and to unpretentiously serve those they meet, no matter who they are. In the book *Global Humility*, author Andy McCullough writes, “The mission of Christ is humble mission.”²³ Through a mentoring relationship with a national partner, missionaries are given the opportunity to practice humility and teach-ability as they enter a new culture. In the same way, French mentors are encouraged to be receptive to the gifts and abilities that missionaries offer.

Joy. Elan seeks to be known as an organization made up of people who work hard and laugh often. We never forget that it is both a privilege and a delight to serve Christ. Living and ministering cross-culturally is a grand adventure, and while there are many pressures and challenges, there are also many joys. Elan encourages both national partners and foreign missionaries to cultivate lives of gratitude, appreciating the deep satisfaction that is found when we join Jesus in *Mission With*. The fun-factor is most evident during the retreats, where games and team-building activities provide opportunities to laugh together.

²² French partners have expressed a frustration with USAmerican missionaries who talk big and deliver little.

²³ McCullough, 15.

Budget

The start-up costs associated with the Elan program included web-design, administrative fees for forming the organization, travel expenses to meet with and recruit Key Collaborators, room rentals for initial planning meetings, etc. These expenses came to about 5 000€ (\$5,700) and were covered by a generous grant from The Maclellan Foundation.

Missionaries pay to participate in Elan. Year One costs 1 200€ (\$1,350), Year Two is 900€ (\$1,000), and Year Three is 600€ (\$675). Program fees include the cost of the retreat and all books and materials. They also cover the cost of recruiting and training the mentors and coaches, as well as general on-going expenses for the program such as website maintenance, program development, and the rental of a desk for the Director of Elan. In addition, participant fees pay the wages of Elan's only paid position, a bi-lingual Communications Director, who works five to ten hours per month for Elan. The Communication Director updates the website, oversees all communications with the members of the association, and maintains a presence for Elan on social media sites. The program is sustainable providing there are an average of eight to ten paying participants enrolled. The Maclellan grant also helped to off-set the operating costs of the first two years, when we had fewer than eight participants.

All spiritual directors, mentors, coaches, and Key Collaborators of the Elan program are unpaid volunteers. In addition to participation in training and retreat weekends, an Elan spiritual director, mentor, coach, or Key Collaborator will be asked to invest from three to five hours a month in their work with Elan. While they are not paid, Elan does cover all of their expenses related to training, retreats, and travel for Elan.

Spiritual directors, coaches, and mentors also receive a small honorarium of 100€ (\$115) each year. We currently partner with three spiritual directors and three mentors, and are in the process of recruiting coaches.

The three current Key Collaborators are all full-time or retired Christian ministers who are financially supported through other means, but whose mission and calling fit with the Elan vision. Their respective organizations/employers have approved of their partnership with Elan and support their investment in the program. Elan also has a volunteer board of directors, which consists of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. This board meets regularly and oversees all aspects of the Elan program, including building partnerships with sending and receiving organizations. The current President of Elan also acts as the Program Director and two board members are also Key Collaborators.

Standards

According to research on best practices in adult faith formation, training programs should target “the times of transitions and change in the lives of adults.”²⁴ A geographic relocation is considered one such transition.²⁵ As missionaries adjust to a new life, a new culture, a new language, and a new ministry, Elan provides the resources, support structures, and learning environment that will set them up for fruitful and sustainable engagement for the Kingdom of God.

²⁴ John Roberto and Cathy Minkiewicz, “Best Practices in Adult Faith Formation,” *Lifelong Faith* Vol 1.3 (Fall/Winter 2007), 91, https://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/lifelong_faith_journal_1.3.pdf.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 92.

The missionaries who participate in Elan are juggling language school and/or working in a ministry, not to mention the emotional and family stresses of moving abroad. E-learning expert Christopher Pappas writes, “[A]n instructional designer needs to create a flexible program, accommodate busy schedules, and accept the fact that personal obligations might obstruct the learning process.”²⁶ The three different learning venues and rhythms of Elan—the *weekly*, written, asynchronous online forum, the *monthly* oral one-on-one meeting, and the *annual* group retreat—were chosen to enable missionaries to participate in the program while engaging in other activities.

These three venues also appeal to the different ways that people process information and experiences. In her book *Conversational Intelligence*, Judith Glaser explains, “When we create conversational rituals that enable us to honor and respect others’ views of the world—especially when these views are very different from our own—we create a space for better conversations and for new ideas to emerge.”²⁷ The Elan weekly forums fulfill the need for “conversational ritual,” as missionaries process and discuss what they are learning and applying to their ministry context with other missionaries and Elan partners. Since the missionaries and Elan partners come from diverse denominations and cultures, these exchanges expose missionaries to different world views, which broadens horizons and results in the emergence of new ideas.

The one-on-one monthly meetings provide a space for reflection and feedback. Education expert David Kolb explains that learning happens in a four-stage cycle:

²⁶ Christopher Pappas, “8 Important Characteristics of Adult Learners,” *eLearning Industry*, May 8, 2013, <https://elearningindustry.com/8-important-characteristics-of-adult-learners>.

²⁷ Judith E Glaser, *Conversational Intelligence: How Great Leaders Build Trust and Get Extraordinary Results* (Philadelphia, PA: Routledge, 2016), 63.

Effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences.²⁸

The Elan one-on-one meetings create the space for observation and reflection on the missionary's experience, a critical piece of the learning cycle.

The annual retreat enables Elan participants and partners to gather together for a shared experience, which builds relationship and the sense of community that is vital for a collaborative learning environment. The retreat element takes Elan from an entirely online experience to a hybrid or blended program. Research on blended learning reveals that "A sense of community is...necessary to sustain the educational experience over time [and] essential to move students to higher levels of thinking."²⁹ Garrison and Kanuka explain that "at the beginning of a course, it may be advantageous to have a face-to-face class to meet and build community."³⁰ For this reason, the Elan retreat is held during the first weeks of each year.

The content of the Elan program was chosen to achieve the desired outcomes while employing best practices for adult learners. In an article entitled, "How to Engage and Inspire Adult Learners," on the eLearning Industry website, Pappas writes, "Adult learners need to be able to see the relevancy of what they are learning."³¹ The Elan

²⁸ Saul MacLeod, "Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Cycle," *Simply Psychology*, (2017), <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>.

²⁹ Randy D. Garrison and Heather Kanuka, "Blended Learning: Uncovering Its Transformative Potential in Higher Education," *The Internet and Higher Education* 7, no. 2 (2004): 99.

³⁰ Garrison and Kanuka, 97.

³¹ Christopher Pappas, "11 Tips to Engage and Inspire Adult Learners," *eLearning Industry*, October 3, 2014, accessed June 30, 2019, <https://elearningindustry.com/11-tips-engage-inspire-adult-learners>.

curriculum has been developed through this lens of relevancy. The assigned readings are connected to the missionary's experience through the online discussion questions, where missionaries are asked to appropriate what they have learned from the reading and exercises to their context and circumstances. Pappas also explains that, "Adult learners accumulate knowledge most effectively when they are active participants in their own learning process."³² During the first two years of the Elan program, missionaries are assigned regular exercises that provide them with the opportunity to apply the lessons they are learning to their own life and ministry. Elan also offers the means to evaluate and debrief these experiences through both the online forum and the monthly one-on-one meeting with their spiritual director, mentor, or coach.

Teams of experts, led by the Key Collaborators selected all resources and training materials. Because Elan works across all denominational lines, an effort was made to choose materials that would stretch all potential participants without alienating any particular group. While there is a balance between male and female authors, the current curriculum does not yet include the desired level of ethnic diversity, lacking insights from the global south. Priority was given to resources that were available in both French and English, so that Elan partners could be familiar with all the resources; however, this was not always possible, as some resources only exist in English. Resources were also chosen based on their availability for purchase and delivery to France at a reasonable cost.

While the key components of spiritual formation, mentoring by a national partner, and coaching for ministry effectiveness could be easily replicated in other contexts, it is critical that any Elan-like program be developed collaboratively with national partners.

³² Ibid.

Thus anyone wishing to launch an Elan program in their county would first be required to find Key Collaborators and ensure that their board of directors and Key Collaborators are comprised of both foreign workers and national partners. This collaboration in the development of the program will give the Elan program validity for both missionary sending organizations and the national partners that receive missionaries.

Oversight

Besides overseeing the recruitment process, Key Collaborators also provide ongoing support to the Elan partners in their track. For example, the mentoring Key Collaborator meets with the Elan mentors every other month to ask about how the mentoring relationship is progressing and to discuss any challenges or issues that may have surfaced. These regular check-ins allow for minor course-corrections and give the Key Collaborator the chance to encourage the Elan partner.

The President/Director of Elan is accountable to the Board of Directors and the members of the association, and must provide a written annual report of the Elan budget and all activities. The members of the association meet annually to discuss the state of the association, its projects, and future endeavors. The Key Collaborators are required to be members of the association and to be present at this annual meeting. Elan partners are welcome to become members of the association, but not required to do so.

Evaluation

Recognizing the need for stronger measures of missionary effectiveness and sustainability, the Elan program strives to create a culture of evaluation that is multi-layered. First, participants are asked to evaluate each aspect of the program, including their one-on-one experience, the retreats, and the weekly reading and forums. Evaluations are completed immediately after the retreat and at the conclusion of each year. The

Director, the Key Collaborators, and their teams review the evaluations. Suggestions for improvements or modifications of the program are discussed and implemented as needed and in a timely fashion.

Second, spiritual directors, mentors, and coaches are asked to evaluate the progress of participants every six months. The Director and Key Collaborators review the evaluations to ensure the objectives of the program are being realized.

Third, the Elan partners are asked to evaluate the program and their experience as volunteers. They, too, complete retreat evaluations immediately following the annual retreat, as well as year-end evaluations. This is to ensure expectations have been clearly articulated and accurately reflected, and to learn from the experiences of those who are working one-on-one with the missionaries in the program.

Fourth, Key Collaborators are asked to evaluate the Elan partners in their track. These evaluations help Elan leadership to know how well the Elan partners are fulfilling their commitments. Ultimately, Elan would like to have established pools of trained spiritual directors, mentors, and coaches from which partners could be recruited according to enrollment in the program. However, it is important that Elan ensure that these partners are able to meet standards.

Finally, all Elan participants are asked to complete surveys aimed to evaluate their own spiritual health, cultural integration, and ministry capacity at various intervals: at intake before beginning the program, during Year Two, at the completion of Year Three, and two years after finishing the Elan program.³³ Over time, these surveys will enable the Elan leadership team to determine if the program is attaining its desired outcomes.

³³ A sample of this survey is found in Appendix H.

Next Steps—Post Graduation Considerations

Accreditation

Once fully developed and tested, the Elan program will seek accreditation with a Christian college or university to be able to offer credit towards certain degree programs. Accreditation may encourage participation by those who are pursuing advanced degrees or seeking ongoing education. Affiliation with a university may give Elan more credibility in the eyes of some partners.

Expansion to Other Fields

Elan has already been approached by some French missionary sending agencies to discuss the need for a program such as Elan in the countries to which they are sending missionaries. Believing that spiritual formation, mentoring by a national partner, and coaching for ministry effectiveness would be beneficial to missionaries from any nation going to any nation, the opportunities for partnerships and expansion are endless. The author would like to be able to facilitate conversations between missionaries and national partners in other countries to help them develop an Elan program within their context.

SECTION 6: POSTSCRIPT

LOOKING BACK

Providence

Going to the mission field was a midlife move for us. At first, it seemed odd that God called my husband and me to move to France when we were 40 and 39 (respectively). Having the benefit of age and experience allowed us to enter the transition process with some humility and self-awareness. We were conscious of how little we knew, and were not quite as driven to prove ourselves as we might have been, were we fifteen years younger. We also had teenage sons to consider—and a desire to find educational options suitable to their unique needs. This “consideration” of our son’s needs turned out to be providential.

Though we had been commissioned as “church planters” by our sending organization, neither one of us had ever planted a church, much less a church in France. Rather than launch out and muddle through (as our younger selves may have been prone to do), we asked for training. At the same time, we were looking for an international school for our boys. That search led us to a private Catholic school in a small town in the center of France. Believing that this school would be the best option for our high schoolers, we asked our sending organization if they had any French contacts in the area with whom we might partner. It just so happened that a French-led church planter training program was launching that year, in the very town where the international Catholic school was located. We moved to the town of Loches, and began our church planter training with a French evangelist who became my mentor.

Over the course of four years, that mentoring relationship launched me into many fruitful ministry opportunities within French-led networks. My mentor, Raphaël

Anzenberger, is an author and practitioner who is well networked within the French Evangelical world and active in facilitating church planting movements, training evangelists, and expanding the Kingdom of God throughout Europe and the francophone world. He continually challenged me to invest in ongoing language learning, while pushing me out of my comfort zone into places ministry. He significantly shaped my understanding of and integration into the French culture. Without realizing it, Raphaël and I began to do *Mission With*.

Missionary colleagues and leaders were baffled by the national scope of my ministry after so little time on the field. Realizing that my trajectory was unusual, I began to wonder why. Looking back over my experience, I now know that having a French mentor was the catalyst that made the difference.

Questions

As I began to move more and more within French circles, I heard French Christian leaders discuss missionaries and their ministries. I learned that while these French ministers were deeply grateful for the investment of foreign missionaries, they were also disappointed by the lack of cooperation and collaboration with French-led initiatives. At the same time, I often heard frustration from missionaries, who were struggling to recruit national partners to participate in the training programs and evangelistic efforts that they were proposing. At a gathering of the Foreign Workers Field Leaders Conference¹, I learned that not a single agency present—according to their own

¹ The FWFLC is a group of predominantly North Americans who lead the French field of their respective missionary organizations. They gather annually to share resources and training.

assessment—was working at or above a collaborative level with French partners.² For me, this represented a problem. How often were we recreating the wheel? How much learning was not being shared? How many opportunities for synergy were being missed? How many Kingdom resources were being wasted? And what could happen if national partners and foreign missionaries learned to work together for the sake of the Kingdom and the glory of the King? Might the Gospel finally get some momentum in France?

In the spring of 2016, these questions had already been stirring. So with the help of a French colleague, I developed a series of three different surveys—one for foreign missionaries serving in France, one for mission agencies who worked in France, and one for French partners who worked with foreign missionaries. The results of these surveys have been referenced in Sections One, Three and Five of this paper. Several French partners told me that this was the first time that they had been asked to give feedback about the effectiveness of foreign missionaries. I looked for other similar studies and discovered that they were non-existent. The fact that foreign missionary organizations had never formally requested the feedback of national partners indicated that the lack of collaboration between foreign missionaries and national partners was a global issue, and not just a problem in France.

These experiences, coupled with the results from the three surveys, sent me on a journey of discovery. What started as a question about collaboration evolved into a question about missionary effectiveness and sustainability, and the sense that perhaps they were all connected. I began to sneak questions about experiences with foreign

² The various levels of partnership were explained using the descriptions found on page 98 of the book *Body Matters* by Ernie Addicott, with collaboration and constitution being the highest possible levels of engagement. This was in March of 2017, three months before the founding of Elan.

missionaries into conversations with all my French colleagues, looking for others who either had insights or shared my concerns. Similarly, I asked fellow missionaries about their experiences in working with French partners. One colleague would refer me to a friend, pastor, or ministry partner, and off I would go to meet another potential collaborator, hear another story, and ask my nagging questions. I also had some exchanges with the Director of the National Council of French Evangelicals (NCFE), an umbrella organization in which both French denominations/ministries and missionary sending agencies are participating members. For a full year, I listened, and networked, and invested in relationships. This was a long, hard process, but one that bore much fruit. I grew more and more convinced that mentoring by a national partner was the linchpin of both missionary effectiveness and collaboration between foreign workers and French ministers. My research and experience also pointed to the need for *intentional* and *structured* spiritual formation and ministry coaching to be added to the mix.

In June of 2016, with the blessing of the NCFE, I invited twelve stakeholders, six of whom were French partners and six of whom were foreign missionaries, to participate in a one-day exploratory gathering. Most participants had interest and/or expertise in spiritual formation, mentoring, or coaching. In addition, I invited two missionaries who were newer to the field and two French partners who were under thirty years old. All of the stakeholders were people with whom I had been meeting and building relationship over the past year. We met to consider the challenges and benefits of creating and launching an association that would help missionaries transition to the field in a way would that not only improve their effectiveness and sustainability, but also equip them to work collaboratively with French partners. During that gathering, our French participants

recognized a need to train and encourage French partners to be better at inviting and integrating foreign missionaries into their ministries. After a full day of lively discussion and prayerful reflection, Elan was born.

Getting Started

For the next year and half, I dove into my research and worked closely with the Key Collaborators (all of whom were also founding members of Elan) to begin to develop the three- year program. I sought and received start-up funds from The MacLellan Foundation through a collaborative grant request with the NCFE. The grant money enabled me to hire a website developer and a communications director. Anne Meynier-Schweitzer, the spiritual formation Key Collaborator, offered to lead the Elan team on a spiritual retreat to allow us to experience and evaluate the retreat that would be offered to the Elan participants in their first year. The Elan team bonded through that experience, and the founding members grew in love and respect for one another. Our website was launched shortly thereafter, and we began to actively recruit participants.

In 2017 I began my doctoral work, which intensified and focused my research efforts. I looked more deeply into the challenges that missionaries faced, including obstacles to collaboration. I studied previous approaches to foreign missions and learned about the strengths and weakness of each one. This research informed the development of Elan, as well.

Originally we had planned to launch a pilot cohort in the fall of 2017, but the timing did not work out because we needed a few more months to develop the curriculum and recruit participants. We officially launched the pilot cohort with four missionaries in January of 2018. After initial frustration over the delay, we discovered that the January

start date works better. Typically, missionaries arrive on the field in France in the fall to start language school. They need time to simply adapt to that rhythm before they add in the Elan program.

We currently have two cohorts with a total of seven participants. The retreats, curriculum, and online forums for Years One and Two of Elan have been completely developed, and I am working closely with Key Collaborator and coaching expert, Matthieu Ducrozet to recruit coaches and finalize year three of the program.

LEARNING AS WE GO

Elan continues to be a work in progress. We are flexible enough to adapt to lessons learned from our context, our partners, and even ourselves. The following are just a few of the lessons learned.

Lesson 1: Collaboration is a slow process

The well-known African proverb kept coming to mind throughout the development of Elan: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Each time I considered the next steps I needed to take in the project, I had to ask myself, “Can I do this myself, or should I seek the input of others?” I did not always get it right. For example, when it came to selecting a logo, rather than send out the three options proposed by the graphic designer to the Elan board for their consideration, I simply chose my favorite. Besides wanting to save time, I was afraid of asking too much of my all-volunteer board and did not want to pester them with trivial issues. At our next gathering, one of the board members politely said, “I like the logo well enough, but I would have liked to have seen the other options.” It was then I realized they were invested in the project and eager to contribute.

Working collaboratively means seeking, valuing, and even submitting to the ideas and input of one's partners. Having learned my lesson with the logo, I worked closely with Key Collaborators and Elan partners (i.e. spiritual directors, mentors, and coaches) to select the reading materials for the program and build the curriculum. Of course, this meant creating work groups and coordinating schedules, all of which takes time. The program is stronger and better for this effort, as many learning styles and personalities gave input into the design. More importantly (to me at least), having gone through this process together not only gave the Key Collaborators and partners genuine ownership of the program, it knit us together as a leadership team. I've discovered that people support what they help create. Though all volunteers, these faithful co-workers are committed to each other and to the success of Elan. But that level of collaboration required an enormous investment of time. In my original timeline, I had planned one year to build the team and the program. It ended up taking three.

Lesson 2: Some resist collaboration

There was a moment when my husband looked at me and said something to the effect of, "Somehow you have managed to make everyone mad!" I had just come home from a conference where I had presented Elan to a group of North American mission leaders, and was surprised by some of their reactions. Many feared that collaboration with French partners would mean too much compromise and even sacrificing their own vision. They were worried about reporting structures for missionaries who would participate in Elan, and fearful of losing their authority. I had not considered that mission agencies would be resistant to fostering greater collaboration. I had to reassure certain leaders that neither Elan nor its French partners were seeking any positional authority

over their missionaries, and that the program would simply equip missionaries for the mission to which God had called them. At the same time, I had to challenge these leaders to broaden their thinking and consider the potential Kingdom impact of collaborative efforts, stronger partnerships, and greater trust between French and non-French entities.

Additionally, I had French colleagues who had unrealistic expectations for cross-cultural workers, giving me broad opinions, such as, “missionaries just need to be more French and fully integrate if they want to work with us.” They did not think they needed to make any concessions for foreign workers. I asked our French partners to read books about cultural adaptation and to seek to understand some of the challenges and benefits of building multi-cultural teams. I explained foreign missionaries are not called to become French—which is, in fact, impossible—but rather, to become pertinent to the French and to love and serve alongside them.

Then there were those on both sides who did not see the need for a year of spiritual formation, believing that if one is called to be a missionary, he or she should already have a sufficient spiritual foundation. There were concerns over doctrinal leanings and resistance to the idea of “formation.” This reaction revealed a lack of understanding of spiritual formation as a lifelong process as well as a lack of appreciation for the spiritual challenges related to crossing cultures. I spent a lot of time explaining why the transition period was a critical time in one’s faith journey and how the added support and structures of a carefully designed spiritual formation program could contribute to a missionary’s long-term effectiveness and sustainability. I also clarified that we had gathered resources from a broad scope of Christian traditions, but we were not teaching theology. We were eager to work with missionaries from any denomination.

It was a surprise to learn the spiritual formation aspect of the program was most scrutinized by both French and non-French partners.

Lesson 3: Collaboration is a two-way street

As a missionary myself, my focus in beginning my research was to discover what needed to change on the part of foreign missionaries in order for there to be greater fruitfulness. I was concerned with how foreigners could better adapt and better serve French-led initiatives, believing that these efforts on our part would lead to effectiveness in ministry and better collaboration. However, I only had half of the puzzle.

What emerged during the exploratory gathering that launched Elan was the realization on behalf of our French partners that they had been resistant to welcoming and incorporating foreign missionaries into their projects. This resistance stemmed from having known missionaries who left the field prematurely at critical junctures, creating disappointment and destroying trust. They were also skeptical at North American mission agencies' expectations of fast results. Recognizing their own prejudices, Elan's French partners began to ask how they, too, might adapt in order to be better at fostering cross-cultural collaboration.

Thus, Elan became a program that not only aims to help missionaries arrive well, but also seeks to help national partners become more gracious hosts and willing collaborators. The training Elan provides for French mentors addresses cultural differences and biases, building empathy and helping mentors to recognize some of the challenges that foreign missionaries confront. Elan mentors are also briefed on the types of expectations that missionaries have from their sending agencies and supporters, enlightening them to the complexities of cross-cultural mission work. During the mentor

training we read and discuss case studies to highlight some of the typical conflicts arising between French partners and foreign missionaries, giving French mentors the opportunity to think through and discuss various scenarios they could encounter when accompanying a missionary.

In retrospect, it was rather pretentious of me to believe the problem could have been solved without efforts from both sides. By the same token, it would have been equally inappropriate for me to make demands of my French partners. The necessity to train French partners needed to come as a request from the French side, and not as an imposition from an outsider. This is precisely what happened as a result of the exploratory gathering. The two-sided approach to the program satisfies both mission sending organizations and French partner organizations. It was not what I set out to do originally; it is the fruit of a genuinely collaborative effort.

STILL STUCK

There is one major challenge that still has me stymied. We need understand how to serve arriving missionaries that are not Anglophones. Early on in the project, aware of an influx of missionaries from non-traditional sending countries, such as South Korea and Brazil, the NCFE implored me to build Elan in such a way that we could serve missionaries arriving from any country, not just the United States. This was, in fact, my intention, and still is. However, there are several challenges with this ambition—all of which are related to language.

When missionaries first arrive of the field, they typically spend one to two years in language school. After a year of language learning, most missionaries are conversant, which is why Years Two and Three of Elan are in French. But Year One of Elan is

offered in English, which was chosen as the language for Year One for several reasons: first, because it was the first language of most of the sending agencies with which Elan was partnered; second, because it is the most common second language; and finally, because of the many spiritual formation resources that are available in English. We sought out partners from other sending countries, and while we have connections with people who could offer spiritual direction in several different languages, including Portuguese, we do not have the resources available in different languages.

While we could envision how to offer translation during the spiritual formation retreat in Year One, we cannot figure out how to facilitate an online forum where participants do not share a common language. One possible solution would be to have different cohorts for different languages, but the reality is it would be difficult to recruit enough missionaries from each language group to constitute a cohort.

We could potentially offer Year One in French, and encourage missionaries from other sending countries to begin the program once they have learned French; however, it is very hard to have heart-level conversations when just learning a second language. I fear this would hinder the effectiveness of the spiritual formation process. In addition, as the first year of Elan is designed for those who are learning language and adapting to the culture, the program may miss the mark for those whose participation is delayed.

Elan does have participants from countries other than the United States. Cohort Two has a Dutch woman and a Canadian woman participating. These participants are helping us to learn if the resources and curriculum produce the desired outcomes in those from non-USAmerican backgrounds. Because they are both fluent in English, there were no barriers to their full participation.

FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Do Elan-type Programs Work?

It would be interesting to track Elan participants five and ten years into their missionary service, comparing their ministry engagement with missionaries at the same length of service who did not participate in Elan. It would be important to compare their levels of personal satisfaction as well. I am curious to know if five to ten years after beginning the program, Elan alumni would say that they are abiding in Christ and practicing healthy spiritual disciplines (the Year One objective); if they are culturally integrated into a local community and collaborating with French partners (the Year Two objective); and if they are effective in their ministry (the Year Three objective). Have they remained on the field, engaged in fruitful ministries, despite circumstances that typically cause missionaries to leave the field?

Re-Thinking How to Evaluate Missionary Effectiveness

As missionary organizations are neither churches nor corporations, understanding what constitutes “success” and how to measure it is tricky. As explained in Section One, there is an ongoing debate as to whether missionary effectiveness should be measured by fruitfulness (counting the number of churches planted or people baptized) or faithfulness (counting the efforts made rather than results). After looking at the various approaches to missions through the ages, from contextualization to indigenization, I have begun to explore whether effectiveness could also be measured by counting national partners and collaborative efforts. This would require clear definitions of what constitutes a collaborative effort, but even a quick perusal of the Apostle Paul’s letters reveals a high priority on working with local partners.

There is a current trend towards the idea of missionary as “mentor” or “coach” to nationals, which may be appropriate in countries where there is no established church or Gospel witness. But as most North American missionaries are serving in countries where there is at least a small Christian presence, perhaps the idea that the nationals need mentoring or coaching is a bit presumptuous.³ What would happen if missionaries committed to collaborating with national partners to set their mission agendas and strategies?

Another related question, in light of present realities, is why foreign mission agencies do not prioritize collaboration. Even when they seek out partnerships, they seem to be seeking to further their own agenda rather than seeking to offer their resources, human and otherwise, to locally led efforts.

For missions to effectively move forward into the 21st century, research will need to include a global survey of missionary receiving countries, asking them to evaluate the efforts of foreign missionaries. The survey should clarify: What have been the successes and failings of Christian missionaries according to those they went to serve? From the perspective of nationals, what works and what doesn't work? How would the responses differ among different people groups?

CONCLUSION

Through Elan, I desire to foster relationships between missionaries and national partners that are defined by mutual respect and love. In the end I cannot help going back to the words of A. Z. Azariah, whose appeal to foreign missionaries over a century ago

³ Newell, 58.

was “We ask for *love*. Give us FRIENDS.”⁴ Given the present realities of the 21st century, particularly global connectivity, the emerging Millennial mission force, the shift of the global center of Christianity, and the changing funding priorities for donors, collaboration with national partners presents the best way forward. This requires a major paradigm shift from sending the missionary as leader or instigator to equipping the missionary for fruitful partnerships. The Gospel will advance when missionaries and nationals unite to discern God’s direction, strategy, and agenda for each nation and then cooperate to do the work. As Christ-centered multi-cultural teams work collaboratively, doing *Mission With*, we will see God’s Kingdom come and will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

⁴ Dana Lee Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*, Blackwell Brief Histories of Religion Series (Chichester, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 55.

ILLUSTRATIONS
ILLUSTRATION A

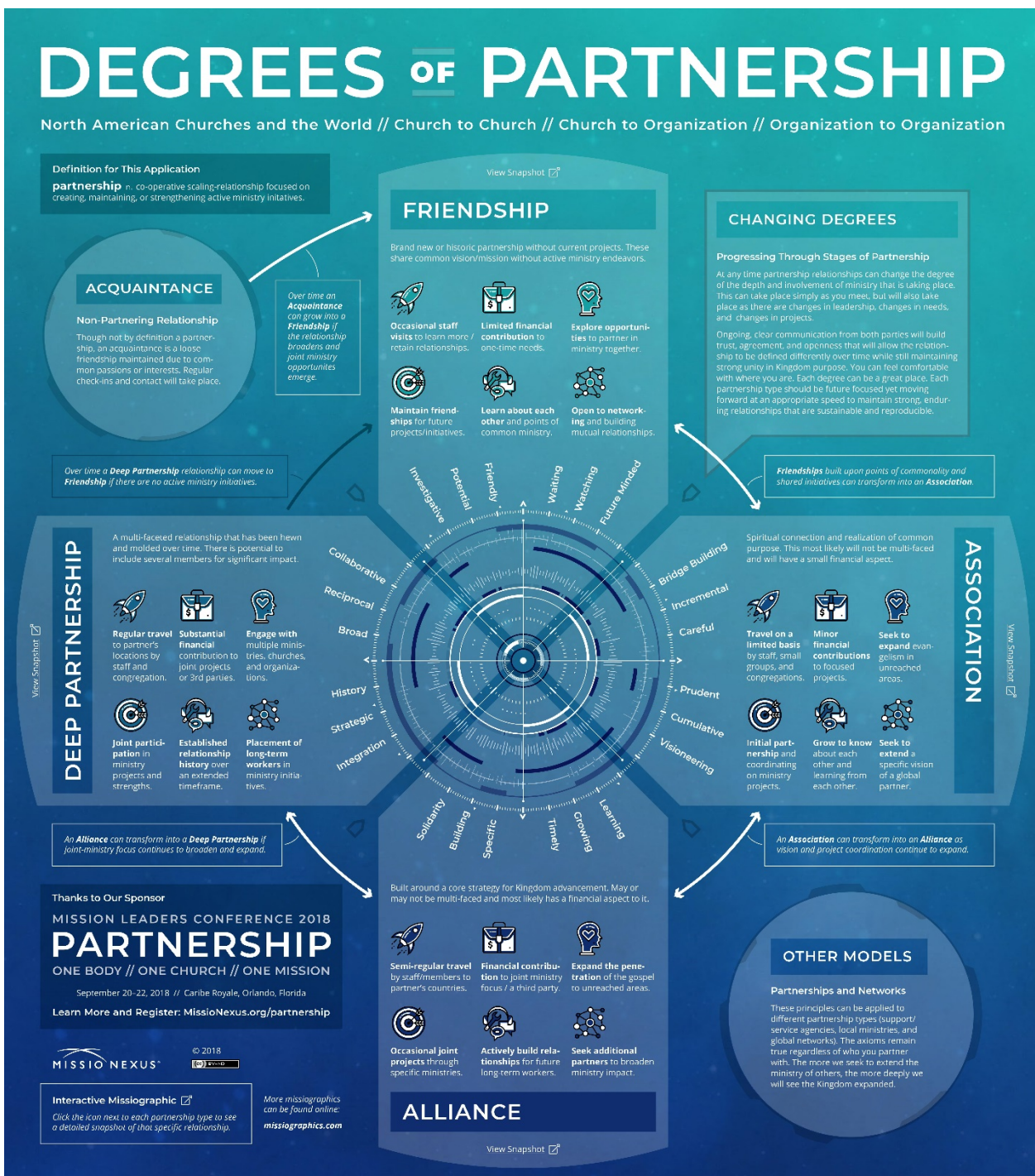


ILLUSTRATION B

DEGREES OF PARTNERSHIP

Find the full, interactive missiographic at MissioNexus.org/degrees-of-partnership/

DEEP PARTNERSHIP

A multi-faceted relationship that has been hewn and molded over time. Potential to include several members for significant impact.



Regular travel to partner's locations by staff/congregation.



Joint participation in ministry projects and strengths.



Substantial financial contribution to joint projects or 3rd parties.



Established relationship history over an extended timeframe.



Engage with multiple ministries, churches, and organizations.



Placement of long-term workers in ministry initiatives.

Ministry Examples: joint worship services; combined short-term teams; shared leadership of projects; jointly-developed curriculum.

Bridge Building

Incremental

Careful

Prudent

Cumulative

Visioneering

APPENDIX A
LINK TO THE ELAN WEBSITE

The Elan website can be found at the following address:

<http://www.elanmission.org>

All information on the website is available in both French and English. The desired language is selected by clicking on the appropriate flag on the upper right-hand corner of the page.

APPENDIX B

LINK TO THE ELAN COURSE SITE

The Elan course site can be found at the following address:

<http://elanmission.org/moodle>

To access site as a visitor (in order to evaluate the artifact), use the username “visitor” and the password “GFV1\$1t0r” (Capital G,F,V, number one, dollar sign, number one, lower case t, number zero, lower case r)

APPENDIX C

ELAN YEAR ONE CURRICULUM

Term 01: Winter Session

Book: Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, by Pete Scazzero

Week #	Reading Assignment	Exercise	Forum Question
0	Introductory ZOOM CHAT with all participants and spiritual directors		
1	Mark 3:13-14 and Article By Anne Schweitzer	<p>Take time to discuss the following questions with God. Journal your reactions and thoughts.</p> <p>How do you feel knowing Jesus not only chose you but wanted you fully knowing who you are, talents, frailties and all? Is it easy to accept?</p> <p>How do you feel knowing Jesus wants first you to be with him... before being sent? What is your reaction to that?</p> <p>What do you think it could mean for you during this year? Can you imagine how it could take place and what it might look like? What might be some obstacles to practicing being fully present with God, without any agenda?</p> <p>Side question: What little boat could you use to not be crushed by the demands of this year? What form could this little boat take for you? Margins in your schedule, a little peaceful nook at home to retreat to, walking in nature, switching off</p>	Share some of the thoughts you had as you reflected upon the exercises for this week.

		connected laptop, tablets...? Can you ask the Lord what this little boat could be like in this season of your life?	
2	The Jesus Way Article	Peterson writes about Jesus and Way - a personal name, Jesus and a metaphor, Way. He says that the metaphor only works when we enter the conversation. Take time to reflect, pray and perhaps journal about how you have or have not entered into the conversation.	Peterson suggests we all have our own ideas of what we want God to be like and that we search for a spirituality that gives some promise of that. He calls this Idolatry. Instead he says: "I want to grow up fully human. I want to be human as Jesus was human. I want to live the Jesus Way, robustly human." Dialogue with each other about how moving into a new culture and the process of learning a new language, is helping you to be more fully human? What does that look like for you?
3	Scazzero, Into, Ch. 1 The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality, and appendix B	Review the Top Ten Symptoms of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality (pp 22-36). Which of these symptoms have you experienced? In a journal, describe one or two examples of how you have observed these symptoms in your life and interactions. Reflect on these symptoms in prayer.	In the section entitled "Trying Different Approaches to Discipleship," Scazzero talks about the many ways he has been encouraged to draw near to Christ, i.e. "more Bible study, community, Spiritual warfare, worship, service, etc." He then writes, "There is biblical truth in all of these perspectives. I believe all of them have a place in our spiritual journey and development. ... The problem, however, is that you inevitably find, as I did, something is still missing. In fact, the spirituality of most current discipleship models often only adds an additional protective layer against

			<p>people growing up emotionally.”</p> <p>Do you agree or disagree? Give some examples from your own life to support your response.</p>
4	Scazzero, Ch. 2 Know Yourself That You May Know God: Becoming Your Authentic Self	<p>Scazzero says, awareness of yourself and your relationship with God are intricately related and that the challenge is to shed our “old false” self in order to live authentically in our “new true” self is key to the core of true spirituality.” He emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between our reason (intellect) and feelings (heart). He then outlines three temptations that lead us to a “false self”.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I Am What I Do (Performance) 2. I Am What I Have (Possession) 3. I Am What Others Think (Popularity) <p>Which of the above temptations do you struggle with the most? Focus on that temptation and process this through journaling.</p>	<p>Scazzero highlights the importance of differentiation, the ability to hold on to who you are and who you are not. Look at Scazzero’s adaptation of Bowen’s scale of differentiation in this chapter. Where do you place yourself on this scale and why?</p>
5	Rice Ch. 136 Self-Awareness/God-Awareness (exercises are built in to the reading) (Optional)	<p>Do the “Reflection Pauses” that are spread throughout the chapter as your exercise this week. You may do most of them mentally, just thinking through the questions. But please journal your responses to</p>	<p>What challenges and advantages does living abroad bring to the process of becoming self-aware? What value does self-awareness have to your spiritual growth process? Are there any risks</p>

		the questions in the final reflection pause on page 175.	associated with greater self-awareness?
6	Retreat. No reading, no forum.		
7	Scazzero, Ch. 3 Going Back in Order to Go Forward: Breaking the Power of the Past	<p>Create your own genogram following Scazzero’s model and the attached template.</p> <p>For further resources you can see Scazzero’s work sheet page 1 and 2. (Click the link above this page for access to the worksheets.)</p>	<p>Did you feel any resistance to doing your genogram?</p> <p>Did you discover anything new? Has any pattern, habit or trait been amplified since you moved to France?</p> <p>Share one area of concern that has come to focus from this chapter that you would like your cohort to pray with you about</p>
8	Scazzero Ch. 4 Journey Through the Wall: Letting Go of Power and Control	<p>According to Scazzero emotionally healthy spirituality requires that you go through the pain of the Wall – “the dark night of the soul.” He contends that emotionally healthy spirituality helps provides guidance on how to get through the Wall and what it means to be living on the other side. Looking at the Six Stages of Faith listed by Scazzero in this chapter reflect upon your own life so far. What stage of faith do you believe you are currently in? Have you ever hit “The Wall”? If so, have you been able to push through the wall? Take time to reflect upon these six stages and journal about where you believe you are at in that spectrum.</p>	<p>Share with your cohort where you believe you are in relation to the Six Stages of Faith and why.</p>
9	Foster, Prayer of the Forsaken	<p>Read and then pray through one of the Individual Psalms of Lament listed in footnote 4 of this chapter.</p>	<p>In the section entitled “Purifying Silence,” Foster talks about being stripped of our dependence on exterior</p>

		Personalize the psalm to fit your circumstances. Write out your personalized version.	and interior results. What has been your experience of being stripped of dependence on interior and exterior results since arriving in France?
10	Scazzero Ch. 5 Enlarge You Soul Through Grief and Loss: Surrendering to Your Limits	<p>Scazzero asserts that, “There is no greater disaster in the spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality. In fact, the true spiritual life is not an escape from reality but an absolute commitment to it.” In referring to Job, Scazzero points out that “most of us experience our losses more slowly than Job, over a lifetime, until we find ourselves at the door of death, leaving everything behind.” Often Christians deny or minimize their loss.</p> <p>What has been the most difficult loss that you have faced in your life? Take time to prayerfully contemplate and journal about this loss in your life.</p>	<p>Good grieving is not just letting go, but also letting it bless us. Scazzero encourages following Job’s path when facing loss and grief.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Attention • Wait in the Confusing In-Between • Embrace the Gift of Limits • Climb the ladder of Humility • Let the Old Birth the New...in his time <p>How does this apply to your new life in France?</p>
11	Rolheiser Ch. 7 A Spirituality of the Paschal Mystery	Christian spirituality does not apologize for the fact that, within it, the most central of all mysteries is the paschal one, the mystery of suffering, death and transformation. In Christian spirituality, Christ is central and, central to Christ, is his death and rising to new life, so as to send us a new Spirit. The key thing that Jesus did for us was to suffer and die, but we seldom understand what that means and how we	<p>The Paschal Mystery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins with suffering and death (Good Friday), • Moves onto the reception of new life (Easter Sunday), • Spends some time to adjust to the new and to grieve the old (The Forty Days), • Letting go of the old and letting it bless you, the refusal to cling, (Ascension)

		<p>might embrace this within our own lives.</p> <p>The Paschal Mystery is the mystery of how we, after undergoing some kind of death, receive new life and new spirit. Jesus, in both his life and in his teaching showed us a clear paradigm for how this should happen.</p> <p>Have you experienced the Paschal Mystery in your life prior to moving to France? In your journal name a particular “death” and write about how you experienced the cycle of the Paschal Mystery in that particular situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And finally, only after the old life has been truly let go of, is the new spirit given for the life that we are already living. (Pentecost) <p>Share how you are presently experiencing some aspect of the Paschal Mystery since your arrival in France?</p>
12	<p>Scazzero Ch. 6 Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath: Stopping to Breathe the Air of Eternity</p>	<p>Matthew 11: 28-30 The Message</p> <p>“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me-- watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”</p> <p>Create a Daily Office to try for a week (you can use Appendix A on page 207-210 as a reference).</p> <p>Take time to think about how to take a Sabbath day.</p>	<p>ZOOM CHAT</p>

		Be creative and use the four principles: 1) Stop 2) Rest 3) Delight 4) Contemplate	
13	Rice Ch. 134 Regula and Rhythm (exercises are built in to the reading) OR Ch. 1 of The Attentive Life by Leighton Ford.	Do the “Reflection Pauses” on pages 154 and 156 of Rice.	Describe your hopes and dreams for entering this new season with healthy spiritual practices. What does it look like to be intentional? What might need to change? What ideas occurred to you during this week’s reading?

Term 02: Spring Session

Book: Christ Shaped Character: Choosing Love, Faith, and Hope, by Helen Cepero

Week #	Reading Assignment	Exercise	Forum Question
1	Cepero Ch. 1 Choosing Life: Living as God’s Beloved	On page 22, Cepero writes about taking care of our inner critic. If you have not already done so, follow Cepero’s instructions by taking your journal and listening to the inner critic without judgement; simply record what you hear as a journalist might quote a particular source. If it helps to give the voice a specific name, do so. Now reflect back over the past 24 hours: • Which of your actions were motivated from the voice of that inner critic? • Which of your actions were motivated by a response to God’s love? Each time our desire and actions are formed out of the	Cepero begins her book by recounting the story of watching her daughter’s Beginners’ Band. As you read this story are you reminded of something that mirrors God’s love for you as you become established in France? Share with your group how this story relates to the process you are experiencing in establishing your life and ministry in France.

		<p>inner critic’s voice, we are moving away from God and his love. Every time we are responding to God’s love, we are moving closer to our true identity as God’s beloved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now ask yourself: What is the longing I hear underneath the critic’s negative message? 	
2	Cepero Ch. 2 Compassionate Hospitality: Receiving the Other	<p>If you haven’t already, take the time to journal through the reflection that Cepero offers on the bottom of page 42:</p> <p>Most of us have known somebody who received us without criticism or judgement or even qualifications or questions. Take a closer look at your own life and see what gifts you received from those encounters as the other. What did it feel like for you to be the other, the outsider? Describe the situation and your feelings, thoughts and reflections. How did the sense of belonging change the way you saw yourself, others or God? How are those changes still alive in you? Where are you being asked not simply to be for something or someone but to be one with others?</p>	<p>Respond to this question from page 48 in the context of your ministry in France: “What is the difference between doing for others and being with others? How might your own encounters with others be different if you actively sought to be with them?”</p>
3	Cepero Ch. 3 Forgiving as we are Forgiven: Learning to Love the Unlovable	<p>Remember a time when you struggled to forgive someone or forgive yourself. Do you agree with the author, that “forgiveness is part of a long healing process”? “A craft learned over time”? Journal what this might mean for you. How did this chapter affirm or</p>	<p>Share your thoughts on the following: (From Listening to Loves Continuing Story, page 65)</p> <p>How might forgiving someone as you are forgiven be an invitation to the imagination? What does it mean for you to be given a</p>

		<p>change the way you look at forgiveness?</p> <p>Practice the Lord's Prayer using the gestures and example given on pages 60-62.</p>	<p>ministry or message of reconciliation because God has "reconciled us to himself through Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)?</p>
4	Cepero Ch. 4 Following Jesus: Learning the Language of Desire	<p>On pages 79-80 Cepero presents the prayer practice "praying with Jesus," and then explains that imaginative meditation on a gospel story (the same that Anne led us through at the retreat) is one way to pray with Jesus. Do the imaginative meditation in the "Listening to the Bible Story" section on page 84.</p> <p>In Luke 18:35-43, Jesus stops along the road to respond to someone's cry and asks a question. Hear this story again, and with your imagination "see" the story in your mind's eye. Notice the road, the crowd, the beggar and especially the gaze of Jesus as he stops and asks his question. What is stirred in you as you hear this question from Jesus? Whether you feel challenged or comforted, puzzled or excited, allow a conversation with the risen Jesus to unfold, speaking friend to friend.</p>	<p>When Jesus called you to France, how was that a journey of faith? What do you understand now about that step of faith that you did not understand when you first "stepped out of the boat"?</p>
5	Cepero Ch. 5 Embracing Vulnerability: Finding Strength in Weakness	<p>Was there a time in your life when you felt vulnerable because of what you did not know, or did not understand, or because your personal limitations were exposed in some other way? Reflect on what that felt like and what your response was at the time. How do you feel about this response now?</p>	<p>Share with the group your thoughts on how embracing your life with all its joys and sorrows, vulnerabilities and weaknesses, faithfulness and inconsistencies, can help make you stronger and better able to be available for others.</p>

6	Cepero Ch. 6 Living With Integrity: Sustaining a Life of Commitment	Where am I now? Where am I at ease? Where am I striving in the wrong direction? Where might I be struggling with integrity because I am taking on a role that I see as “missionary”? Use the Personal compass to help you identify your “true north”.	How does your identity in Christ lead to a transparency that allows others to see Christ in you? Where did you identify with the author’s words in this chapter? Where might you struggle?
7	Cepero Ch. 7 Paying Attention: Watching for God	Recall a time when you were asked to “pay attention”. What were the circumstances? What helped you to wake up and see or hear or feel or understand something in a way that surprised you?	How can paying attention lead toward hope? Share how you might begin to live in more conscious awareness of God’s presence in your relationships, your community and your world.
8	Cepero Ch. 8 Seeing Blessing: Living in Possibility	On pages 143-145, Cepero writes about the prayer practice of blessing. Try to live intentionally for one full day in the practice of blessing: “To learn to look with compassion on everything that is; to see past the terrifying demons outside to the bawling hearts within; to make the first move towards the other, however many times it takes to get close; to open your arms to what is instead of waiting until it is what it should be; to surrender the justice of your own cause to mercy; to surrender the priority of your own safety for love—this is to land at God’s breast.” (Barbara Brown Taylor, cited by Helen Cepero, p. 145.)	ZOOM CHAT
9	Cepero Ch. 9 Trusting Christ: Improvising a Life	On page 162 Cepero asks, “In what area might God be asking you to ‘agree and say yes’?”	Share about your “agreeing and saying yes” experience.

		Decide to “agree and yes” somewhere this week in way that will require some “improvisation” on your part. After you have done this, prayerfully reflect on what you did, on how you felt doing it, and ask God what He would like to say to you about that experience.	
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Term 03: Summer Session

Book: *In the Name of Jesus*, by Henri Nouwen

Week #	Reading Assignment	Exercise	Forum Question
1	Nouwen Prologue and Introduction (pp 11-24)	<p>In the Prologue to his book, <i>In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership</i>, Nouwen tells the story of leaving the world of academia where he was internationally known for his writing and for his intellectual and theological abilities, to answering the call to be a priest for the mentally handicapped and their assistants. As he moved away from teaching courses on ministry to actual engagement in ministry among the mentally handicapped he began to ask himself how his thoughts about ministry would affect his everyday words and actions. He realized that the more willing he was to look honestly at what he was thinking, saying, and doing, the more in touch he would be to the movement of God’s Spirit within him, leading him to the future.</p> <p>Write out what you most deeply feel about your present</p>	<p>In his Introduction Nouwen asks himself the question, “Is getting older bringing me closer to Jesus?” Reflect on this question for your own life.</p>

		life in your current ministry setting. Which of your own experiences and insights could speak to those to whom you seek to minister?	
2	Nouwen Part I From Relevance to Prayer (pp 25-48)	Nouwen says that the antidote to the temptation to be “relevant” is contemplative prayer. This is also known as silence. It is the kind of prayer we practiced in the chapel during our spiritual retreat. It is being still before God, and simply soaking in God’s presence. Take 20-30 minutes to practice contemplative prayer this week.	<p>Could you relate to Nouwen’s description of how he felt in moving to L’Arche? He writes: “Not being able to use any of the skills that had proved so practical in the past was a real source of anxiety. I was suddenly faced with my naked self, open for affirmations and rejections, hugs and punches, smiles and tears, all dependent simply on how I was perceived at the moment. In a way, it seemed as though I was starting my life all over again. Relationships, connections, reputations could no longer be counted on” (28).</p> <p>How is “starting all over again” helping to free you from the temptation to be relevant?</p>
3	Nouwen Part II From Popularity to Ministry (pp 49-70)	<p>Using the Study Guide in the back of the book, answer the questions on page 105.</p> <p>Take time to look back prayerfully into the past for examples of being vulnerable and separated from community. What was going on?</p>	<p>Nouwen writes that “Christian leaders are called to live the Incarnation, that is, to live in the body, not only in their own bodies but also in the corporate body of the community, and to discover there the presence of the Holy Spirit” (68).</p> <p>What could that look like for you? What posture is needed? When do you notice you are not living the Incarnation in community?</p>

			<p>What would it take to return to that?</p> <p>Dialog with each other about what it looks like to live the Incarnation here in France. What are the difficulties? What might make it easier?</p>
4	Nouwen Part III From Leading to Being Led (pp 71-90)	<p>Nouwen said, "Jesus has a different vision of maturity: It is the ability and willingness to be led where you would rather not go." Think of the last time God was calling you to make a change in your life. Was it difficult to let go of your own wishes and follow God's direction? Journal your response.</p>	<p>"...the Christian leader thinks, speaks, and acts in the name of Jesus." Nouwen (86)</p> <p>Can you think of three specific ways your own vocation can be enriched by teaching "in the name of Jesus"?</p> <p>How can you integrate prayer as a part of this direction?</p>
5	Nouwen Conclusion and Epilogue (pp 91-102)	<p>Use some kind of art form to prayerfully express something that has deeply touched you during the course of this book.</p> <p>(You may upload a picture, audio, or video file that is under 20MB to share with the cohort.)</p>	<p>Sometimes the things that are unplanned and maybe even embarrassing are the things God uses to set the posture of hearing what God wants people to hear. Nouwen - a popular, experienced speaker, teacher and leader - DID NOT know at the beginning what it meant to "Do it together" with Bill. Even in the process of the evening he had thoughts of, "What is Bill going to do or say? Will I be embarrassed?"</p> <p>Is there an invitation here for you? What are your fears or road blocks to being in such a situation? What kinds of things would make you uncomfortable?</p>

Term 04: Fall Session

Books: *The Gift of Being Yourself*, by David Benner

***Self to Lose, Self to Find: A Biblical Approach to the 9 Enneagram Types*, by M. Vancil**

Week #	Reading Assignment	Exercise	Forum Question
1	Vancil Ch. 1 A Tale of Two Selves	<p>Make a list of all the names that describe you, for example: Mother/father, daughter/son, friend, artist, etc.</p> <p>When you have exhausted your list, ask God the question “Who do you say that I am?”</p> <p>Sit quietly and open to hear His response. Can you receive it? Take time to savor the moment.</p>	<p>How many times have you heard someone say (perhaps even yourself) “I want to be the person God created me to be”? Could you relate to Vancil as she walked through her struggle to figure out how to be that person?</p> <p>She defines the human dilemma as living with the conundrum of our two selves, our worst and best versions. “In order to grow into wholeness and fruitfulness with God, we must release one to allow the other to flourish.”</p> <p>Dialog with each other on how the “Terroir” here in France has been for allowing you to flourish. Has it been helpful in softening that protective coat so that it might fall away when it is no longer needed? Or do you find your adaptive self hunkering down in defense mode? What have you noticed about yourself?</p>
2	Vancil Ch. 4-6	After reading chapters 4, 5 & 6 take the Enneagram Inventory.	Share with the group a brief resume of the results of your Enneagram test, noting your main personality type. Share with the group your immediate reaction upon

			examining the results of your test.
3	Vancil Ch. 7-9	Take time prayerfully reflect on the basic components of your enneagram type. What resonated as true? What are the parts you struggling with to accept?	Share with the group your “aha!” moments when you first read about your enneagram type and what are some insights that you have gained about yourself.
4	Vancil Ch. 10-16 + selected readings (according to type) from Rohr and Vancil	Continue to prayerfully reflect on the basic components of your enneagram type. What resonated as true? What are the parts you struggling with to accept?	OWN-UP: observe, welcome, name, untangle and possess. Share with the group what you discovered working through this process. Was it difficult? Did you hit a wall? Was it insightful? There is no judgment here. You can help each other process and learn more from this exercise.
5	Intro to <i>Global Humility</i> (PDF) (We'll be working through more of this book in Jan/Feb)	Write a letter of introduction (In French!) to your new French mentor. In this letter please include basic family information, your ministry focus, maybe a story about your call to France, and what you are most hoping for in a mentoring relationship. (Email a copy of this letter to elanmission@gmail.com. It will be delivered to your mentor during their training retreat this month.)	Humility is often commanded in the Bible (Proverbs 6:3, James 4:10). What does it look like to "humble yourself"? How is having a French mentor an opportunity to grow in humility? How would you rate yourself in terms of your level of humility as a missionary?
6	PDF Instructions for Developing a Personal Rule of Life	Journal responses (in detail) to questions 1-3 in the PDF Instructions for Developing a Personal Rule of Life.	ZOOM CHAT
7	Reread Scazzero Ch. 8, Cepero Ch. 6, and Rice 134: Regula and Rhythm (PDF)	Using tools you already have, or Shigamatsu's Trellis (PDF), create a Rule of Life.	Share your Rule of Life with the group. Offer feedback to each other.
BREAK			

Toussaint Vacation			
8	Benner Ch. 1 Transformational Knowing of Self and God	Take 15 -20 minutes to sit in God's presence practicing in centering prayer.	<p>What have you learned about yourself as a result of your experience with God? And what do you know about God as a result of genuine encounter with yourself?</p> <p>What was a glimmer of light? Were there any "ah-ha!" moments? Did anything make you uncomfortable?</p>
9	Benner Ch. 2 Knowing God	<p>Surrender – Thomas Merton writes that "we must know the truth, we must love the truth we know and we must act according to the measure of our love. Truth is God himself who cannot be known apart from love and cannot be loved apart from surrender to his will." Is there an area in your life where you are resisting surrendering to his will? Take time to prayerfully ponder this question and to journal what God brings forth.</p>	<p>Benner writes that spending time with Jesus allows us to ground our God-knowing in the concrete events of a concrete life. He believes that Spirit-guided meditation on the Gospels and prayerful review of recent experience helps to deepen our knowledge of God.</p> <p>Honestly share how you are doing at practicing this. What is one step you can take to help strengthen this area of your spiritual life?</p>
10	Benner Ch. 3The First Steps Toward Knowing Yourself	<p>Read the story of the Samaritan woman. Ask God to help you be in a place to use this holy imagination to speak to you. Now re-imagine the scene with you at the well. What does Jesus reveal to you about yourself? Take time to reflect in your journal and pray.</p>	<p>"The more I have courage to meet God in this place of weakness, the more I will know myself to be truly and deeply loved by God."</p> <p>Benner states that "we are all much more like Nasrudin than we would like to acknowledge. We search for missing spiritual keys, but we tend to look for it outside of ourselves where it seems easiest to search. But the key is inside, in the dark."</p>

			Take time to prayerfully reflect what you need to write about in this post. Where has this chapter struck a deep cord?
11	Benner Ch. 4 Knowing Yourself as You Really Are	<p>On page 65, Benner writes, “If all we know about ourselves is the specific sins we commit, our self-understanding remains superficial. Focusing on sins leads to what Dallas Willard describes as the gospel of sin management – a resolve to avoid sin and strategies to deal with guilt when this inevitably proves unsuccessful. But Christian spiritual transformation is much more radical than sin avoidance. And the knowing of self that is required for such transformation is much deeper. Knowing our sinfulness becomes most helpful when we get behind sins to our core sin tendencies. Now we shift our focus from behavior to the heart.”</p> <p>Are you ready to look more deeply at who you really are and allow God to reveal areas of core sin tendencies that drive your everyday behavior? Prayerfully ask God to reveal what may be at the core of sin tendencies in your life and journal about what comes forth.</p>	<p>Carefully review the section entitled “Prayerful Reflection” on pages 72 & 73. Benner says that genuinely knowing yourself as you are known by God can be quite frightening, but that genuine self-knowledge is available to all who</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Genuinely desire it 2. Are willing to prayerfully reflect on their experience 3. Have the courage to meet themselves and God in solitude <p>Which of these three prerequisites to self-knowledge is most deficient in your life? Share your reflections with your colleagues.</p>
12	Benner Ch. 5 Unmasking Your False Self	Basil Pennington suggests that the core of the false self is the belief that my value depends on what I have,	Prayerfully reflect on the image of yourself to which you are most attached. Consider how you like to

		<p>what I can do and what others think of me (page 81). Benner believes that the more we identify with our psychologically and socially constructed self, the more deeply we hide from God, ourselves and others. As Benner suggests on page 89, ask God to help you see what makes you feel most vulnerable and most like running for cover. Allow yourself to feel the distress that would be present if you did not avoid these things. Then, listening to God's invitation to come out of the bushes in which you are hiding, step out and allow God to embrace you just as you are.</p>	<p>think about yourself, what you are most proud of about yourself. Ask God to help you see the ways you use these things to defend against feelings of vulnerability. Then ask God to prepare you to trust enough to let go of these fig leaves of your personal style.</p> <p>Share with the group the nuggets of truth about yourself that come forth from this exercise.</p>
13	Benner Ch. 6 Becoming Your True Self	<p>Benner writes about vocation and calling in this chapter. Do the two exercises that Benner outlines at the end of the chapter (pp 106-107). Make sure that your Rule of Life is aligned with your Mission Statement.</p>	<p>ZOOM CHAT: Sharing Mission Statements</p>

APPENDIX D

ELAN YEAR TWO CURRICULUM

This curriculum appears in French on the course site. It has been translated into English here for the sake of Anglophone readers. All of the online forum discussions are done in French.

Term 05: Winter Session

Books: *Global Humility*, by Andy McCullough; *Missionnaire à l'étranger*, by Sherwood Lingenfelter

Week #	Reading	Exercise	Forum Question
1	<i>Global Humility: Moral Humility</i> (Ch. 1-5)	Translate your Rule of Life into French.	Share two things that stood out to you from your reading.
2	<i>Global Humility: Public Humility et Semantic Humility</i> (Ch. 6-10)	Ask a French friend to review your Rule of Life and correct any linguistic errors.	Share two things that stood out to you from your reading.
3	<i>Global Humility: Intercultural Humility</i> (Ch. 11-14)	Fill out the <i>Personal Development Plan</i> (use the link to the online form).	Share two things that stood out to you from your reading.
4	<i>Global Humility: Incarnational Humility</i> (Ch. 15-18)	Prepare two questions to ask Andy McCullough, author of <i>Global Humility</i> .	Share two things that stood out to you from your reading. Also share the questions that you plan to ask Andy McCullough.
5	<i>Global Humility: Theological Humility</i> (Ch. 19-23)	Do the «Chemin de vie » exercise. (Life Map).	ZOOM CHAT (Interview with author Andy McCullough)
6	Mentoring retreat. No reading, no forum.		
7	Lingenfelter, Ch. 1	Think about Jesus as the first cross-cultural missionary. • Read Philippians 2:5-11	Lingenfelter believes that a missionary can become a “150% person.”

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List everything that Christ abandoned in the incarnation • List everything that Christ had to accept in becoming incarnate. 	How would you evaluate yourself today, in terms of your enculturation? How much of your home culture do you still possess? How French have you become? Do you want to become a “150% person”? What do you still need to abandon or accept?
8	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
9	Lingenfelter, Ch. 2	<p>Complete the “Basic Cultural Values” inventory on pp. 29-35.</p> <p>Using the PDF file, invite a French friend to complete it as well.</p> <p>Compare your results.</p>	Share the results of the inventories. What did you notice about yourself? What did you learn about your French friend?
10	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
11	Lingenfelter, Ch. 3	Do Lectio Divina on John 11. Do you think Jesus was time oriented or event oriented?	Share at time when you noticed a tension with your French friends or national partners based on the time/event continuum.
12	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
13	Lingenfelter, Ch. 4	<p>Lingenfelter writes, “One of the biggest problems in our families, churches, and missions, is that we often insist that others think and judge in the same way we do.”</p> <p>Take an hour alone with God and invite God to search your heart. Ask God if /where this is true of you.</p>	As you develop a plan of action for your ministry in France, where should you give special attention to the differences in how you judge/think?

Term 06: Spring Session

Book: *Missionnaire à l'étranger*, by Sherwood Lingenfelter

Week #	Reading	Exercise	Forum Question
1	https://www.alifoverseas.com/beyond-culture-shock-culture-pain-culture-stripping/	Pieh-Jones describes what she calls “culture pain” and “culture stripping.” Where are you in this process?	Summarize for your French mentor the article, “Beyond Culture Shock.” What is one thing that you would like your national partners to understand about the process of adapting to a new culture?
2	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
3	Lingenfelter, ch. 5	Reflect on how you handle crises. Pay attention to your fears and any resistance you might have. What does the Lord want to say to you about this?	<p>“We must ask whether it is more important to do it our way, or to work together with the people around us, building mutual understanding and cooperating to make decisions and solve crises in a manner acceptable and beneficial to the entire community” (74).</p> <p>Easier said than done!</p> <p>In your opinion what risks must one take to collaborate in such a way?</p>
4	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
5	Lingenfelter, Ch. 6	<p>Make a chart of the past week like the one found on page 87, noting which activities in your agenda were more people oriented, and which activities were more task oriented.</p> <p>In general, are you more people oriented or task oriented?</p>	<p>Are you pressured by either your sending church or your mission organization to be more task oriented or more people oriented? How do you respond to this pressure? What would you need to do to establish a healthy balance in your ministry plan of action?</p>
6	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.

7	Lingenfelter, Ch. 7	Lingenfelter asserts that “we continually measure our performance vis-à-vis that of others around us” (99). To whom do you tend to compare yourself? Why? Talk to God about this.	Where do you look for your personal value and why is it essential for a missionary to find his or her value in Christ?
8	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
9	Lingenfelter, Ch. 8	Meditate on the vulnerability of Christ.	As a missionary, where do you feel vulnerable? How might you benefit from this vulnerability to make Christ known?

Term 07: Summer Session

Week #	Reading	Exercise	Forum Question
1	Article: Is it love or colonization? https://religionnews.com/2018/11/27/missions-is-it-love-or-colonization/	How would you rate your level of love towards the French? Ask God to refine your missionary motives.	Do you think missionaries in France still act like colonists? Why or why not?
2	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
3	Watch the final presentation of Bill, winner of “Grand Oral.” https://www.facebook.com/france2/videos/2639982396042230/	Write a short poem or essay to describe your experience as a foreigner in France.	Read the piece that you wrote aloud on our WhatsApp group.

4	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
5	<p>Read these two articles:</p> <p>Why Missions Experts Are Redefining 'Unreached People Groups'</p> <p>and</p> <p>France, (de nouveau) terre de mission ?</p>	<p>Think about the intersection of what these articles are saying and your missionary call to France. Journal your thoughts. Spend some time in prayer about this.</p>	<p>Summarize the main points of these two articles, and then share your reaction to them.</p>

Term 08: Fall Session

Book: *The Path: Creating Your Mission Statement for Work and Life*, by Laurie Beth Jones

Week #	Reading	Exercise	Forum Question
1	Jones, pp 3-47	Respond to the questions on page 47.	Since you have moved to France, which of your gifts are getting the most use? Have any been buried?
2	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
3	Jones, pp 49-70	<p>Following the method that Jones proposes, write your personal mission statement.</p> <p>If you did not write it in French, translate it into French and share it with your mentor. Ask for feedback.</p> <p>Share it with the person to whom you report in your</p>	<p>Jones writes, "If your mission statement does not match or closely relate to mission statement of the place where you are employed, prepare yourself for ulcers, sleepless nights, and countless hours of complaining...." (68).</p> <p>How is (or isn't) your personal mission statement connected to the mission statement of your sending organization?</p>

		mission organization as well. Ask for feedback.	
4	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
5	Jones, read ONE of the case studies found on pp 115-168.	In your journal, respond to the questions that correspond to the case study that you read.	Which case study did you choose and why? Share an insight from either the case study or your responses to questions that followed.
6	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
7	Read the article, “Closer to the Truth about Missionary Attrition.” https://www.alifoverseas.com/closer-to-the-truth-about-current-missionary-attrition-an-initial-analysis-of-results/	Rowe identifies “lack of freedom to pursue calling” as one of the main reasons missionaries leave the field. Take time to remember and reflect on your missionary calling. What was that call? How does your personal mission statement fit with your call to France? In what way are (or aren’t) you current ministry activities aligned with your personal mission statement and you call to France?	Describe for your cohort and your mentors your call to France.
Toussaint Vacation			
8	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
9	ZOOM Chat: How to develop a ministry plan of action	Using the worksheet provided, begin to develop your ministry plan of action.	
10	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.

11			
12	Do the reading/exercise proposed by your mentor.		Describe the exercise that you did and what you learned from it.
13			

APPENDIX E
ELAN SPIRITUAL RETREAT SCHEDULE

Day One	
14h30	Welcome Introductions Tour of the facilities
15h	Reflection Exercise: With what did I arrive?
16h	Break
16h30	Teaching on <i>Lectio Divina</i> +Guided group <i>Lectio Divina</i> exercise on Mt 14:22-33
18h30	Pause
19h	Dinner
20h30	Personal <i>Lectio Divina</i> exercise on Ps 131, Lm 3:17-26, or Jn 4:7-14
Day Two	
7h30	Breakfast
9h	Worship and devotions
9h30	Debrief on the <i>lectio divina</i> exercise from the previous evening +Teaching on <i>Ignatian Imagination</i>
10h30	Break
11h	Guided group <i>Imagination</i> exercise on Jn 13:1-17
12h30	Lunch
14h	One-on-one spiritual direction
15h30	Written prayer by personalizing a biblical text using John 21 or Isaiah 61
17h	Break
17h30	Teaching on the prayer of <i>Examen</i>
18h30	Break
19h00	Dinner
20h30	Individual <i>Ignatian Imagination</i> using Jn 20:19-29
Day Three	
7h30	Breakfast
9h	Worship and devotions
9h30	Debrief on the individual <i>Ignatian Imagination</i> exercise from the previous evening.
10h00	Break
10h30	Teaching on <i>Listening Prayer</i> + <i>Listening prayer</i> exercise
12h30	Lunch
14h	One-on-one spiritual direction
15h30	Teaching on <i>Silence</i> and <i>Contemplative Prayer</i>
16h30	Break

17h00	<i>Contemplative prayer</i> exercise (15 mn) with a quick debrief. Begin time of <i>Silence</i> (17h -09h, depending on how participants are doing)
18h30	Break
19h00	Dinner (in silence)
20h30	Individual spiritual exercise—participant’s choice
Day Four	
7h30	Breakfast (in silence)
9h	Worship and devotions
9h30	Debrief of time of <i>Silence</i> + Group <i>Lectio divina</i> on Isaiah 25 :6-9a (perhaps using a different method than the first time)
10h30	Break
10h45	Introduction to reflection exercise +time of reflection on the spiritual retreat
11h45	Group sharing on the “fruits” of the retreat
12h30	Lunch

APPENDIX F
ELAN MENTORING RETREAT SCHEDULE

Day One: Getting Acquainted	
14h30	Welcome Introductions Tour of the facilities
15h	Expectations Exercise—What are your expectations for this retreat?
16h	Pause
16h30	Presentation of the Vision and desired outcomes for Year Two of Elan (Rule of Life, Personal development plan, forum expectations, exercises, and mentoring)
18h30	Break
19h	Dinner
20h30	Mentor/missionary: One-on-one informal conversations, followed by the opportunity to play board games.
Day Two: Listening to God Together	
7h30	Breakfast
9h	Worship and devotions Passage: John13:34-35 Theme: Unity
9h30	Teaching: <i>Listening to God as a group</i> One of the mentors demonstrates how to share the <i>Life Map</i> (exercise to be completed by all participants—both mentors and missionaries—prior to arriving)
10h30	Break
11h	<i>Life Map</i> Presentations/Group Listening Exercise
12h30	Lunch
14h	<i>Life Map</i> Presentations/Group Listening Exercise, continued
17h	Break
17h30	Personal time for reflection on what God spoke during the <i>Life Map</i> exercise
18h30	Break
19h00	Dinner
20h30	Debrief on the Life Map listening exercise
Day Three: Bonding by getting out of our comfort zones	
7h30	Breakfast
9h	Worship and devotions Passage: 2 Tim 2:15 Theme: Integrity

9h30	Mentor/Missionary: One-on-one conversation: <i>Given what you heard from God and others during the Life Map exercise, are there any modifications that need to be made to your Rule of Life or your Personal Development Plan?</i>
10h30	Pause
11h	Seminar: Elsie Pomier, Fashion Consultant <i>Imago Dei: What does fashion have to do with bearing the image of Christ?</i>
12h30	Lunch
13h30	Team/relationship building outing Exalto: <i>excursion to a trampoline park</i>
16h	French cultural experience Musée de L'Antiquaille : <i>Museum dedicated to the martyrs of Lyon</i>
19h00	Cross-cultural experience Dinner in the city of Lyon: <i>Messob Ethiopian Restaurant</i>
Day Four: Getting organized	
7h30	Breakfast
9h	Worship and devotions Passage: Eph 4: 1-3 Theme: Humility
9h30	Case Studies
10h30	Break
10h45	Mentor/missionary: One-on-one time to schedule monthly meetings
11h45	Sharing/prayer time
12h30	Lunch

APPENDIX G

ELAN MENTOR TRAINING RETREAT SCHEDULE

Day One		
19h15	Dinner (Participants introduce themselves)	Le Châtelard
21h	Presenting the vision of Elan	Jenn
21h30	Distribution of letters from missionaries to mentors. After the letters are read, we have a time of prayer, inviting the mentors to pray for the missionary that they will accompany.	All
Day Two		
8h	Breakfast	Le Châtelard
9h	Devotions: Luke 14:7-14	Jenn
9h30	Discussion of the book <i>Missionnaire à l'étranger</i> by Lingenfelter	Flo
10h15	Break	
10h45	How Elan Works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retreat dates • Monthly mentor/missionary training • Expectations for mentor participation in online forums • Type of exercises the mentor might propose for the missionary (2 time/month) • Feedback through bimonthly conversations with the Key Collaborator • Resources 	Jenn
12h30	Lunch	Le Châtelard
14h30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips for mentoring a missionary • Definition and Objective of Mentoring • Consider the sacrifice and commitment of missionaries and look for ways to honor that • Be aware of your own prejudices against foreigners • Realize the challenges and risks that missionaries face and be prepared to listen and care 	Alain
16h30	Break	Le Châtelard
16h30	Interactive Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the narratives • Consider what questions the mentor might ask the missionary • What trainings, meetings, or opportunities could the mentor propose? 	All

18h	Mentors get into pairs and pray for/encourage	All
19h15	Dinner	Le Châtelard
Day Three		
8h	Breakfast	Le Châtelard
9h	Devotions	Alain
9h30	Mentors write a letter of introduction to the missionary that they will accompany	
10h15	Break	Le Châtelard
10h30	Question and Answer time Retreat evaluations Closing prayer time	
12h	Lunch	Le Châtelard

APPENDIX H

SURVEY OF MISSIONARY'S SPIRITUAL PRACTICES, CULTURAL INTEGRATION, AND MINISTRY EFFECTIVENESS

Spiritual Practices

1. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being perfect) how would you rate your own spiritual health?

Unhealthy 1 2 3 4 5 Healthy

2. How important is your spiritual health and well-being to your ability to minister in France?

Unimportant 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

3. On average how much time per week do you dedicate to personal spiritual disciplines?

_____ hours/week

4. How often do you practice the following spiritual disciplines?

Discipline	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Never
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Personal prayer	
Community prayer	
Contemplative prayer/silence	
Intercession	
Sabbath/rest	
Scripture reading	
Bible meditation	
Imagination	
Lectio Divina	
Solitude	
Communion/Eucharist	
Spiritual retreat	
Fasting	
Tithing/financial giving	
Family devotions	
Evangelism/witnessing	
Speaking/praying in tongues	
Bible study groups	
Accountability groups	
Spiritual direction	
Serving	
Other (describe)	

5. In the past year, how have you experienced personal transformation into the likeness of Christ?

Cultural Integration

1. Check your current level of French language acquisition according to CEFR levels:

- A1 – Breakthrough (or beginner)
- A2 – Waystage (or elementary)
- B1 – Threshold (or intermediate)
- B2 – Vantage (or upper intermediate)
- C1 – Effective Operational Proficiency (or advanced)

C2 – Mastery (or proficiency)

Has this been certified by an official language school? (YES NO)

2. How often do you speak French in your ministry setting?

100% of the time

75% of the time

50% of the time

25% of the time

Never

3. I serve on a ministry team lead by a French person. (TRUE FALSE)

4. In how many French-led conferences, trainings, or annual meetings have you participated in the past year?

5. List any French associations in which you are a member:

6. How many books have you read in French in the past year?

7. List up to three movies that you have watched in French in the past year:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

8. How often do you visit your country of origin?

9. In general, do you feel at home in France? (YES NO)

Ministry Effectiveness

1. Do you have a current, active ministry plan of action that details your weekly activities?

(YES NO)

2. To whom are you accountable for your ministry activities?

3. Describe your call to mission.

4. How do your current ministry activities demonstrate obedience to that call?

4. What fruit have you seen from your ministry in the past year?

5. Where do you feel stuck?

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