

June, 2012

To our Colleagues in Personnel...

1) This monthly "resource tool" is designed to provide encouragement for personnel workers in ministry-related areas. If you would like to be removed from the list, or a friend would like to be added, please let me know -- kenroyer@linkcare.org or kenroyer@aol.com.

2) Link Care's Program of Restoration and Personal Growth: If we may come alongside and consult (no cost) or help by providing counseling services, don't hesitate to contact us. You might also check the web site, linkcare.org/restoration.

3) Next year's conference, "Building Skills for Member Care with Excellence," will be January 7-11, 2013. Hume Lake, California. Save the dates...

4) Personal note: Rejoice with us with God's goodness -- 50 years of marriage as of this coming June 30!

5) Focus the month: Summers are often times of "Home Assignment" with an opportunity to touch base with loved ones in one's passport country. How do we "tell our story" to those who love us, pray for us, and support us? I remember years ago Chuck Swindoll encouraging young men headed for the ministry, "Don't be afraid to let the cracks show." I believe the article below may help us to "tell it like it is."

Enjoy!

Ken Royer, for your Link Care Friends

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9 Benefits to Missionary Vulnerability

By Brian Stankich, who provides assessment, training, coaching and care for Converge Worldwide.

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How do you view vulnerability? Depending on your cultural perspective, vulnerability may be viewed in a positive light or in a negative fashion.

I'm promoting the idea that an appropriate level of vulnerability exists in healthy relationships, generally speaking. Specifically, missionaries benefit from being appropriately vulnerable in key relationships within their unique missionary context.

Our goal for missionaries is health and growth so that they will be effective in life and ministry. With health and effectiveness in mind, here are nine benefits to appropriate missionary vulnerability. I mention the opposites of the benefits to demonstrate that a significant downside exists when we choose to not be vulnerable.

Being Vulnerable or Lots of Bad Stuff

1. **Vulnerability establishes honesty**, rather than being dishonest. Wouldn't you rather be honest in your relationships than to cheat, lie or hide crucial truth?
2. **Vulnerability enhances trust**, rather than being full of distrust. Wouldn't you rather be trusting in your relationships than to not trust others or not be considered trustworthy?
3. **Vulnerability creates a sense of honor**, rather than shame. Wouldn't you rather be one who brings honor to yourself and others, than to be shame inducing?
4. **Vulnerability produces authenticity**, rather than fakery or shallowness. Wouldn't you rather be authentic than fake?
5. **Vulnerability promotes risk taking** for self and others, rather than being unadventurous. Wouldn't you rather take appropriate risks than to play it safe?
6. **Vulnerability enables healing** from past trauma, rather than stuffing down emotions. Wouldn't you rather feel relief than bondage?
7. **Vulnerability prevents hurts from piling up**, rather than stockpiling disappointments. Wouldn't you rather deal with life as it comes than to hold onto the pain?
8. **Vulnerability helps needs to be met**, rather than seeking attention in unusual ways. Wouldn't you rather be filled up and able to pour out to others than to always be looking to get?
9. **Vulnerability encourages responsibility** for self, family and others, rather than being irresponsible. Wouldn't you rather take care of the people and things around you than to be out of control or negligent?

Imagine Yourself Standing In Front of A Police Officer

Last week I was driving on I-494 in Minneapolis when I was pulled over by a policeman for a traffic violation. The officer let me go because he knew I was from out of town, in a rental car and ignorant of the law that I broke. My exchange with the officer was an excellent picture of vulnerability.

Image by [David R. Tribble](#) , used by permission.

When speaking with the officer I was honest and willing to answer any question. I wanted to help him do his job and I had no desire to hide anything from him. I knew that his place in the community was to protect himself, his fellow officers and the public (my offense was failing to move to the center lane when passing a parked vehicle on the shoulder). The officer had my best interests in mind as well.

Missionaries can be appropriately vulnerable with field leaders, mission agency personnel, missions pastors and committee members, friends and counselors. Vulnerability may look differently with each person but each of these key persons can be a tremendous help if the missionary allows.

A Friend Named Joy Who Is Experiencing Joy

Missionaries need not be vulnerable all the time with every person. That would be unhealthy. Being vulnerable in the right way with the right people will bring the benefits listed previously.

Recently Joy, a friend of mine, was appropriately vulnerable by sharing her story of the anniversary of her deceased husband. Joy articulated the fear she had as her anniversary approached with her second husband, a fear born out of her previous experience.

What encourages me about Joy's story is that it demonstrates a healthy process of grief and desire to live a life that is growing and joyful. Exploring the right time to be vulnerable by sharing her story with others shows her desire to live an authentic life.

Be Vulnerable or Isolate Yourself

Missionaries will benefit from being vulnerable with the right people at the right time. Choosing to isolate oneself apart from the missionary community, local friends and appropriate leaders and senders may seem to be the right decision but in most cases it is a form of self-protection that will lead to more pain, less healing and an inauthentic existence.

Thanks Brian for your insights, and for sharing them with us.

A few excellent resources...

- 1) Brian publishes a blog **entitled FULFILL: Helping Missionaries to Be Effective in Life and Ministry** <http://convergemissionary.com/> **You might check it out!**
- 2) Our friend Sue Moore Donaldson publishes a short, wisdom-filled blog. To check it out, go to www.welcomeheart.com. Her blog is daily food for body and soul. At least one good recipe a week. Sue was a former missionary, has red hair, and never practiced piano enough (I Ken r"oyer was her piano teacher – you can guess how un-interesting the practicing was!) An excellent women's speaker, Bible based, usually funny, always real.
- 3) For continuing encouragement regarding the Sabbath (last month's featur), you may want to consult last month's special author Mike Gaston's blog, <http://sabbaththoughts.wordpress.com/>. I found this very interesting – and encouraging!