

Living It Out

Facilitator: Jackie and Jen

- Today is an opportunity for everyone to share how we all do things in our home countries- how we live out the Hands culture ourselves.
- Relationship groups in a snapshot are a continuation of what happens after the Maranatha workshops. There is one day during Maranatha dedicated to this, where care workers share their stories and are vulnerable in sharing their own pain with each other. However we are aware that we can't start this sharing process and open up all these wounds without continuing the process. We talk about having regular times to come together and share stories in a regular meeting.
- The goal is to hear, to pray, and to care.
- The sharing that we are expecting these care workers to do is actually more difficult because their stories are often very similar to the children.
- As people that go out to care for others, it is important that we also know how to care for ourselves.
- As Jackie visits families and walks with them, *how does this affect Jackie?* She would carry their pain and it can be easy to get into a routine where you shut down rather than share with the people around you.
- God has brought us into this community for a purpose, and we have the opportunity to reach out into the community. We have the option of creating a circle of support with the people that God has put around us.
 - o Our Rock – person who is steady and will firmly support you whatever the situation
 - o Our Wise Person – wont just give personal opinion but knowledge that supersedes good advice
 - o Our Teacher – person we can learn from
 - o Our Advocate – someone who has your back and speaks on your behalf
 - o Our Helper – help to pick you up
- Sometimes we know what our wise person, or our rock would say, but we need to hear it from them. It's easy to give our lives to what we do and forget ourselves in the process. In the long run, instead of making us better, it can have negative impacts on us.
- Having an understanding of how our lives can be, using a relationship group structure, we can see how we need to receive the care, but also to give that same level of care to the people God has placed around us.
- Being at the HUB, it can seem that these supports could be easier as we all live in community but that's not to say that even though you're thousands of miles away Kristal couldn't be Jen's wise person. That's an encouragement to us here at the HUB and you in the int'l offices, as we are still part of the same wider Hands community.
- It's more about the structure; it's not necessarily healthy to have just one wise person, but it's more about recognizing those people in your life that you do turn to in difficult situations and knowing how to use those people wisely. *Is it just about doing work, or is it about doing life with the other people in your Int'l Office?*
- We want to live in the light; so that we know even when we're separated we still shine. This attitude has to start with us as Hands leaders. We want to use healthy, functioning relationships to bring that light, but *how do we live that out practically?* It doesn't just happen; we need to recognize that we need each other in our lives.

- Jen shared her story about what living it out looks for her family.
 - o Jen's 3 boys are involved with going to community and going on community stays where they become more aware of the work that is going on.
 - o The boys are involved in aspects of community life that are accessible to them, like the Holy Week program
 - o The Waspe family has instigated Tuesday nights as family time – retaining one evening a week to connect as a family rather than focusing on the community.
- The balance will look different for everyone and different people will have different ideas about what works in creating a healthy balance. It's important to share these things that are working well, in addition to the challenges.
- We need to acknowledge that we have a life of interruptions. It's in how we deal with those interruptions, especially if we're very task oriented, because those interruptions may well be those God moments that we are waiting for. It's important to take the time to spend together to find out more about how we each live it out and to share our experiences.
- It's amazing what your children will pick up on; whether it's the way you interact with roadside beggars; asking their names and stories, or in other ways that you live your life doing what you would do anyway.
- When you're both equally called, it brings security but there is an extra dynamic of making sure that the family understands.
- We do have to identify our strengths and weaknesses, as couples to make sure that you don't drop the ball or push the boundaries because children see.
- It can be easy for us to assume that the people leading us have all the answers. However those in charge still need people around them to support them and pray for them.