

A message from Jaiaen: April 24, 2005

Dear Nhimbe Friends,

It is so good to be able to write you from the soil here. I know that we all hold these people, their culture and troubles close to our hearts, and I am continually grateful for that. Its your ambition to make their lives somehow better that makes it possible for me to carry out our work here. Without that, I would be unable to move forward on any account, and be interminably frustrated. It is you and your commitment to our programs that makes the wheel move.

My trip here was so very uneventful and went by with great ease. I can say I have never had such an easy quick flight, landing on my feet the same day. I want to express my enormous gratitude to all of you who have been keeping my trip and work here in your prayers, sending us energy with Reiki and other such modalities and offering remote NMT treatments (see www.nmt.md) for the villagers and myself. I truly feel the difference, and am learning to be easier with the job at hand. Since I am here for such a short time and want to accomplish much, I have usually been running on a pretty ragged edge. I am internally listening better this trip to my personal messages particularly to relax and enjoy. Thanks.

Progress is a slow thing. It is an organism and its growth is an organic process, much like an orchard. It suffers setbacks just like a year with a bad frost after bloom, but then also turns and puts forward with new determination and perseverance the following year. So, Nhimbe too is in another season. We are all growing as part of this process, and learning much about our selves, our Nhimbe community, and the evolution of an organization of people all desiring fruit.

This last year has been one of the most difficult for our project, as many aspects of their lives here continued to deteriorate. This compounds not only their daily activities but compromises our ability to simply extend help. The complexities we faced in 2000 when we started are the same but exaggerated and intensified,

calling for radical changes in approach and delivery, while still maintaining the guts of what has made us successful. Many NGOs continue to leave as the situation here worsens.

In a metaphorical sense, it feels that we all must just wait for the bottom of the "V", with the knowledge that things will reverse and we will be in a true rebuilding phase of life, but as in any healing crisis, nothing can be forced before its time. So we watch and wait as the energy continues to plummet towards the v-point at the bottom. The world must wait for nature to resolve. During this process, we have had to become very insightful as to how to overcome the obstacles, and I can only say that it is coming, as a goat climbing a mountain knows it will reach the plateau at the top eventually. Obviously, prayers of peace, light, and enduring love, while holding *all* of these souls dearly in your heart, is a real medicine that cannot be measured but has profound results.

Having been in the village and now back in town, I can say that my concern with the health of the people has been validated in major ways. I am determined to offer everything possible in this trip to educate about health concerns. These issues have bothered me deeply for 5 years. My immediate family here has heard me so many times passionately trying to convince them to hear my plea for change. Some have listened. Some have not.

The most important thing for me is to stop focusing on the myriad of other problems (huts, stoves, etc.) because if they are not alive, there is no point in helping with the other problems, if you see what I mean. I know there are many of you very encouraged to financially help on many fronts and want us to revert to our original strategy, which was covering a broader sense of life activities. However, the difficulties we face require a narrowing of focus until something changes either here, or in receiving substantial funding to provide program and services on a whole new level. The bottom line is education, and with a focus on health, in a desire to stop the train before it is completely off the tracks.

We have not figured out all of the logistics of arranging meetings with the many people in all of the villages but I know I want to reach as many as possible of all ages in the shortest time. I know that I do not want to organize anything as large as our three HIV trainings from last year at this point with such a short stay and limited resources. My plan is simple and I am feeling confident it will be effective.

One of the keys is communicating the importance of hand washing as 70% of disease is passed through inadequate technique. I hope to buy each family one pair of gloves because they have no, I mean no, information about using insecticides, fertilizers, and rat poison for instance, with bare hands. I think they can provide their own bandana to prevent inhaling these powders. The idea of adequate covering of food to protect from flies is simple and sometimes overlooked. They all must know about the dangers of burning plastics. I am probably not going to say much about the paint they are eating from the chipped metal plates, as they cannot afford to buy something different. Explanations about water purification are also needed in a major way.

Teaching basics of boiling water seems simple, and if someone only stays in the rural area, it might be, but now things have progressed beyond complicated. When I was here last fall, there was an article in the newspaper which was horrifying – raw sewage and industrial wastes had leaked into the water supply for Harare. Everyone was upset because the treatment plants had run out of chemicals to treat the water. The problem is far worse than that as I understand that the fixtures for the system are rusted and compromised so that chemicals in themselves will not solve the dilemma. The most disastrous part of this is that heating certain industrial wastes makes them worse of a threat, and so boiling the city water is not a good plan either. People cannot afford to buy bottled water. I really do not know what to do. I wish I knew if iodine would help since this level of pollution is quite far beyond my normal area of expertise. Just the simple bacterial contamination is abhorrent and yet I know of no one who is consistently boiling their water in town. I know that

some people who can afford a filter use one. A charcoal filter would be inexpensive to help with some circumstances – I don't know about the industrial wastes though.

So there goes my little speech on drinking a lot of water to stay healthy. I really had planned on including that information as some great metaphors have come to mind, about being able to see that one's clothes and dishes need washing but not being able to see that the inside of our bodies also need that same attention. I am not sure how to advise them about drinking the 2 liters a day when they visit the city.

I just met with a homeopathic doctor here yesterday who had some great news about some experiments they were doing with a simple battery charge used to clear water of parasites etc. The idea is a takeoff on the information from a book called (I think) A Cure for all Cancers. This is hopeful and I will be following up on this as it might be helpful both in the rural situation and in town for water purification.

Discussing soil ph and body ph seems like another likely topic since the metaphor there is a good one. Many people really do not know that fruits and vegetables are really needed to stay healthy and why. Since they are all farmers, I think it will be easy to explain the concept that our bodies have ph too. It is the abundant, easy-to-grow items that nurture true health keeping that ph high. This is a re-education process for sure since heavy starches and meat helps keep hunger pangs at bay.

But then I have people tell me that they can't afford to buy various vegetables. The lack of funds is so desperate that is impossible to buy and they must eat what they can grow easily, which is usually covo (like spinach or chard). There is continued education here on television, reminding them of the foods that the elders were eating in the villages and that when they go to their rural home they should be eating those things. These are fruits and vegetables that grow wild and as long as there are enough rains they will be growing in the fields. I think that the critical thing is quantity and trying to increase

the amount is more important than variety, since long back the staple diet was good. Its only now with hunger always at the back door, and the introduction of so many modern options to spend money without value, that it makes this situation so hard.

I know that I'm sounding like a health fanatic looking for a podium, but really, you have no idea. For 5 years, I have held off doing anything dramatic in this area and have been just trying to help the immediate family get the idea about the various ways that health is affected by modern things, while offering my services as a healer in all windows of opportunity. But, it has really dawned on me recently, that with the NGOs continually leaving the country, I cannot keep thinking that someone will come and offer this training.

Then of course too the health of so many just continues to suffer with an unprecedented number of people dying. The situation here is a humanitarian crisis that deserves attention on some level far beyond what I can do, but if we can just help those in our villages, we will have done something. And maybe create some foundation for change at a deep level.

The 2nd weekend in May there is a meditation conference being taught by someone coming from S. Africa. I'm hoping to attend this, not only as a day off and much needed rest, but primarily to meet people in Harare who might be interested in networking with us or have other connections that could prove important. I really have been working here this entire time with little help from the local Harare non-Shona residents. Of course we have always benefited from the assistance from Spirit that knows no boundaries.

Well, that's all for now. Hopefully will have some more project details in the next update as we are moving forward in many ways.

Thanks again for listening - it makes a huge difference!

Jaijen