

Dear Friends of The Harbor:

Christmas, 2015

On my recent Russia trip, I officially turned over my role as Executive Director; conducted the first meeting with our new Advisory Board; met with staff, new residents, and graduates of The Harbor; and painted, cleaned and helped to get the new Vocational Training Center up and running. But the highlight was functioning in my new role, training workers in trauma informed care for at-risk-kids. I am trained in a specific therapy, TBRI (Trust-Based Relational Intervention), developed by Dr. Karyn Purvis and Dr. David Cross at TCU. Initially, they developed TBRI to be used by adoptive and foster parents, but quickly realized it was applicable to a much broader audience. In Russia I had the opportunity to experience the breadth of its effectiveness. Although I have my MA in Counseling Psychology and have worked in the field for years, this training has given me a new paradigm by which to help people.

First, I was invited by the leaders of our Young Mothers program to observe their work and supply recommendations. These young mothers are all former orphans, lacking healthy parenting role models. I was able to help our leaders create a whole new program that will give more focused and practical skills training in the areas these young mothers need. Of particular importance, I was able to help point-out specific behaviors of the moms that were already having very significant negative consequences for their children. The behaviors were subtle enough that the leaders had entirely missed noticing them.

Next, I had the opportunity to train a group of leaders from the far eastern city of Khabarovsk. They are planning to open a program this year based on The Harbor model, and flew to St. Petersburg to learn from our staff and receive my training. After each day, I asked them, “Is this practical? Is this helpful?” Tatiana said, “For the first time in my life I am beginning to understand myself, why I do the things I do and feel the way I do. And, yes, this is very practical help for me to know how to work with the kids.” Svetlana told me, “All of Russia needs this! You need to build a conference center here in St. Petersburg, so that all parents and social workers, everyone, can come and receive this training!” I had to laugh, even though she was serious.



The Harbor Advisory Board



Training Group in Kursk

Finally, I was one week in the city of Kursk to train staff of The Harbor program there, as well as, several other leaders of other ministries to at-risk-kids in the region. I asked Nastya and Lena to go with me, because I am hoping they will be led to take on this training in the future. On the first day, one of the participants did not want to join in the exercises. She expressed not wanting to engage the orphans, but,

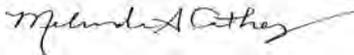
rather, just tell them what to do from an emotional distance. On the last day, she invited us to dinner and shared how the training had helped her see her own deep wounding and its affect as a mother and worker. She was deeply grieved by the parenting choices she had made and was moved toward change. It was the same story with another single mother at the training. Her husband, tragically killed five years prior, had left her a single mother to two beautiful daughters. Basically, she had checked out from parenting, but the training deeply moved her to choose to re-engage, once again. She was so grateful that she invited all of us to her house and spent way more than she could probably afford in hosting us.

I am honored to be taking on this new role as a consultant and trainer. Our original vision was to expand the influence of The Harbor way beyond St. Petersburg, as the Lord gave opportunities. He is opening many doors at this time. The St. Petersburg program is in good hands with Oleg, National Director, a very capable Board of Directors, and a committed Advisory Board. Alex and I have been developing and identifying these leaders for several years. They are ready, willing, and able.

Thank you for your continued partnership in “Anchoring lives. Launching hope. Restoring nations.”

As this Christmas season approaches, may you more deeply enjoy the relationships with those you love and appreciate anew the coming of Emmanuel; the Father’s proof of wanting to be in relationship with us.

Merry Christmas!



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