

MemCa Update: Member Care Training **Developing Competence, Character, and Compassion**

Kelly O'Donnell, WEA Mission Commission *Connections* June 2005

*This update outlines a one-week course, covering 10 member care topics.
Feel free to use/adjust it for your own purposes.*

In member care, training involves imparting both our skills and our life (I Thes. 2:8). We want to *go broadly* into different regions and *grow deeply* in competencies, character, and compassion (I Tim. 1:5). Two main avenues for developing member care skills include a) formal training in health care fields often leading to certification, complemented by cross-cultural/mission experience; and b) non-formal training which is modular and intermittent, building upon one's life experience. In either case, member care workers are committed to life-long learning and to providing quality care in line with recognised good practice principles. Some examples of organisations providing training include: Narramore Christian Foundation; OM, Heartstream, YWAM South Asia, YWAM's University of the Nations, Columbia International University, Operation Impact, International Training Partners, and Mobile Member Care Team (see descriptions at www.membercare.org).

Lesson 1—Overview of Member Care in Mission

Defines the nature, scope, relevance, and current status of member care.

Readings: **MC chapter 1**; **DMCW** chapter 1; **DMCW** chapter 2

Lesson Two—Biblical Foundations of Member Care

Explores how member care is both a Biblical responsibility and a key strategy of mission.

Readings: **EMV chapter 7**; **MC** chapter 3; **DMCW** chapter 4

Lesson Three—Worker Stress and Adjustment

Overviews the main challenges facing mission/aid workers and maintaining a good life/work balance.

Readings: **MC chapter 8**; **TVL** chapter 6; **DMCW** chapter 23

Lesson Four—Mission Families

Reviews challenges, strengths, and resources for healthy families in cross-cultural work.

Readings: **TVL chapter 23**; **DMCW** chapter 7; **DMCW** chapter 41

Lesson Five—Personnel Selection and Assessment

Identifies the qualities needed to work in mission/aid, and "good-fit" and "at-risk" people.

Readings: **TVL chapter 13**; **MC** chapter 6; **DMCW** chapter 29

Lesson Six—Consultation and Counselling

Discusses member care teams, assessment tools, brief counselling, and field consultation logistics.

Readings: **EMV** chapter 21; **DMCW chapter 30**; **DMCW** chapter 46

Lesson Seven—Ethics in Worker Care

Outlines common ethical issues in member care and ethical principles for quality care.

Readings: **MC chapter 19**; **EMV** chapter 54; **DMCW** chapter 26

Lesson Eight—Team Development

Highlights team cohesion, multinational teams, team building tools, and conflict resolution.

Readings: **DMCW chapter 38**; **DMCW** chapter 39; **MC** chapter 11

Lesson Nine—Crisis and Contingency Management

Describes four steps for preventing and managing crises affecting personnel and organisations.

Readings: **MC chapter 10**; **DMCW** chapter 43; **DMCW** chapter 44

Lesson Ten—Preparation for Member Care and Future Directions

Considers training for working well in member care, plus trends and directions for this growing field.

Readings: **MC chapter 21**; **TVL** chapter 26; **DMCW** chapter 48

Member Care Course 2

MC: O'Donnell, K. (1992). (Ed.). *Missionary care*. Pasadena, CA, USA: William Carey.

TVL: Taylor, W. (1997) (Ed). *Too valuable to lose*. Pasadena, CA, USA: William Carey.

DMCW: O'Donnell, K. (2002). (Ed.). *Doing member care well*. Pasadena, CA, USA: William Carey.

EMV: Powell, J., & Bowers, J. (2002). (Eds.). *Enhancing missionary vitality*. Palmer Lake, CO, USA: Missionary Training International.

Notes:

Course description

This course overviews several facets of the *member care field*. It is based on a graduate-level course taught initially at Fuller Seminary's Graduate School of Psychology in California, USA. It explores four broad areas of member care, drawing on the experiences of many colleagues and the extensive literature in this field, along with contributions of clinical psychology, human resource development, and missiology: (a) the current status and future direction of this field; (b) the adjustment challenges of mission/aid/development personnel; (c) the different helping roles in missions for caregivers including mental health professionals, mission leaders, and missionaries themselves; and (d) the development of innovative approaches to missionary care, such as field teams, crisis care, radio programs, the internet, and interagency consultations.

Course format for face to face training

Our time together will involve lecture, group discussion, and case studies. We encourage participants to interact with the teacher(s) as much as possible. To get the most out of this course, it would be helpful to do as many of the suggested readings as possible prior to the actual seminar. After the course I encourage you to do an optional summary back home, which involves writing a brief description of 50 key member care principles based on the readings and lectures.

Non-formal training where English is English is not the first language:

I suggest five key articles to translate; and that participants read these five chapters and to answer the questions in writing prior to attending the course: MC chapter 1, EMV chapter 7, DMCW chapter 23, DMCW chapter 30, and DMCW chapter 38.

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