

Educare June 2017

Index Page 1 New Books
 Page 2 Summit Conference for TCKs in Korea
 Page 2 Eurotck 2017 Report

New Books

'Serving at the ends of the earth; Family life and TCKs' by Steve and Gill Bryant;
WEC International/Lightning Source publishers (2017)
ISBN 9780900828942



The book was launched at recent TCK and education conferences in Germany and the UK. This is the first new English-language book of its type for several years since Ruth van Reken's 2009 revised edition of 'Third Culture Kids' and the first one from the UK since Marion Knell's 'Families on the Move' in 2001.

There are sections on:

- The TCK lifestyle and characteristic features
- Transitions from first departure to longer-term 're-entry' and everything in between
- Family life; including issues such as nationality, cross-cultural marriage, healthy Christian families and multilingualism
- Safety in a dangerous world covering growing up in restrictive and/or dangerous societies, child protection including internet safety, and safeguarding from cults
- Special concerns for Asian, European and Latin American families
- Educational issues such as long-term planning, comparisons of different education options, and how different high school qualifications prepare for university entrance around the world
- A thorough resource list in the appendices

Two resources in the book – a long-term planning questionnaire and a family review guide for organisation member care staff – are copyright free.

Price £7, €8 or US\$9, plus postage by mail order from mk_tck@yahoo.co.uk
The postage price per unit is lower if multiple copies are ordered. We aim to make the book available via on-line bookstores, but do not expect the overall cost of this to be lower.

For readers in The Netherlands we would like to promote the Dutch translation of a previous version of this book. The second edition was available in English as an electronic file only, but has now been published as **‘Overal en Nergens Thuis’** by Jean Barnicoat and Steve and Gill Bryant, (translated by Kezia Schoonveld 2016); WEC Nederland Publications
ISBN 9789463188449.

This book can be obtained from www.jongboek.nl or www.bol.com

MK Summit Conference, South Korea

Following the first MK Summit Conference last year in Seoul, there will be another large-scale TCK conference from the 1st – 4th November, also in Korea. The conference explores issues relevant to agencies and families coming from various mission sending countries in Asia and Latin America. It is relevant both for those that have been established for some time and have developed family support infrastructures, and others where the sending role has grown more recently.

Website <http://www.mksummit.org/en/>

Location: Pilgrim House Retreat Center <http://www.pilgrimhouse.co.kr/> near Gapyeong in South Korea (about 70-80km east of Seoul)

Speakers include Janet Blomberg, Keith Eitel, Ulirike Ernvik, Stephen Kim, Steve Moon, and Sky Siu in plenary and workshop sessions plus Alicia Macedo, John Barclay (former principal at Hebron School in India), Polly Ho and several others in panel sessions.

Cost – free of charge .Global Mission Church is sponsoring this event and will provide the following without cost to registered participants: lodging, food, leisure time and transportation (airport pickup/drop off). Participants are responsible for all other expenses such as travel expenses to/from the Summit (e.g. flights, mass transit, rental car, car fuel, etc) and any other personal expenses not mentioned above.

Bookings <http://www.mksummit.org/en/online-registration>

This promises to be an excellent conference and resource.

Conference Report Eurotck 2017

The latest Eurotck was held last month in Friele near Stuttgart. Many familiar themes of TCK life were covered such as pre-departure training (for parents and

children), re-entry, debriefing families and teenagers, resolving grief, internet safety and general child protection, and several educational themes.

Many of these subjects have been covered in previous editions of Educare; in some sessions past Educare articles were used as hand-outs or as a basis for case studies.

Plenary sessions and grief resolution

The plenary speaker was Christian Quartier, formerly of Le Rucher, a ministry which specialises in transition support, family counselling, and third culture issues. His sessions focused on the need to resolve the most important issues rather than trying to bury or bypass them. For example, pretending that the issues do not exist, seeking to move on and get busy doing something else, advising people to 'forgive and forget' superficially, focusing too quickly on the new situation, are all measures which are less than helpful.

One of the big temptations is to deliberately try to bury hurts and past issues by becoming busy, as facing them is too painful. The problem is that those issues do not disappear and are not really buried: they will resurface in all sorts of different ways including displaced anger, problems with mental and emotional well-being, and damaged relationships. All too often well-meaning friends and advisers might offer short-term 'solutions' that do not allow the person enough time to process past issues and experience their grief. This needs to be done thoroughly, and not short-circuited by counter-productive encouragements to 'forgive and forget' or 'smile and carry on'. It may take longer to reach a thorough resolution than friends and advisers would wish, but it is important for the person concerned to complete the process at his or her own pace..

There were some similar messages in the 'Adult TCKs for life?!' workshop. The title for this one was left deliberately ambiguous – did it end with a full stop, a question mark, or an exclamation mark? The workshop considered different aspects of the ways in which adult TCKs are shaped by their mobile childhoods. There was a deliberate focus on both the positive, fun memories and on the challenges to overcome. In particular it was emphasised that pretending that every experience was happy and positive can lead to an unhealthy denial of grief. If the grief remains unresolved, problems are created for the future.

This message was again reinforced by the film 'Inside Out' which was used on one of the evenings. The film recognises that our memories cannot just be dominated by one emotion – in the story line the main character, a young girl called Riley, tries unsuccessfully to maintain all her core memories as happy ones. Those happy memories are shaped by one of five personifications of her emotions called Joy. However, the other four are Anger, Fear, Sadness and Disgust. Faced with a painful move across the USA and the loss of her friends and familiar childhood places, those other emotions come to the surface and affect her behaviour. Critically, they begin to make permanent change to her core memories. Eventually, Riley opens up to her parents and tells them that pretending to be happy in the face of such loss is not working and that she misses her previous home. Her parents also recognise their own emotions and tell her that they feel the same. Recognising that

truth and the fact that all their memories, including the deepest ones, are a mixture of happiness and sadness helps the whole family to resolve the pain of moving. This releases them from pretence that 'everything is fine', and that resolution allows them to start putting down new roots.

The film has many fans, has received excellent critical reviews and proved to be a major financial success for Pixar and Disney. From a TCK perspective it hits the mark accurately in the way that it describes complex emotions when faced with the losses associated with international moves and transitions. It has already been used in transition sessions and discussions with TCKs, and will continue to be a useful resource for some years to come.

TCKs in Marriage

There was a new session on TCKs in marriage and the speaker has written her research findings and conclusions in a blog article at this web link

<http://www.thirdculturemama.com/joys-and-challenges-facing-the-tck-in-marriage-10-survey-observations-and-trends/#.WTU0tca1vDd>

It has been recognised for some years that a TCK brings a cross-cultural element to marriage. This may be partially hidden early in the relationship, as it is possible that at first the couple do not realise what the cultural differences are. It is really helpful for TCKs and their spouses to explore and understand this dimension to their relationship, and to work through the important implications.

In the article the author proposes 10 general trends as listed below:

- Third Culture Kids find comfort in their mono-cultural spouse's rootedness.
- Third Culture Kids married to Third Culture Kids are kindred spirits but there are also two sets of grief.
- Mono-cultural people married to Third Culture Kids love the broad worldview held by the spouse.
- There are two distinct responses common in the effort to keep a cross-cultural marriage from being a constant fight of 'my upbringing versus yours'. One response is to attempt to keep harmony at all costs by avoidance, and the other is to engagement intentionally with the differences.
- Mono-culturalists can best understand their TCK spouse by entering into the third culture experience together, living in a third culture and raising TCKs themselves.
- TCKs can best understand their mono-cultural spouse by getting to know his or her family and 'walking in their shoes'.
- Communication, respect, forgiveness, and humility are the keys for thriving TCK marriages.
- Very few resources are available for struggling TCK marriages. Almost all marriage counselling is general in nature and counsellors are often unaware of the cross-cultural element.
- For TCKs who are looking for a relationship, it is normally best to settle into the 'new' or passport country first, appreciate and develop friendship, and choose the person before the culture.

- Marriage grows up at 15+ years.

Some of this advice and these trends are true of marriage generally, regardless of any cross cultural element. It is an observable fact that there are normally far fewer pointless arguments after a few years because couples have developed a better understanding of differences and the ways that their partner functions. Any relationship, especially a marriage, is deeper and much more meaningful when communication, respect, forgiveness and humility are in place. The extra challenge is in learning to recognise and embrace the cultural differences. All too often one culture 'wins' (or seems to) against the other in a cross-cultural marriage, but something is lost for all concerned when this happens – both for the couple, their children if any, and the extended family. It is far better to engage with both cultures and for the couple to create their own blend that engages with and respects both. *Read the full article at the web link above.*

Educational Themes

In the educational session on multilingualism various points were made

- Parents should always speak to their children in the mother tongue. Consideration was given to some complex situations involving four or more languages. In cases like these, at least one of the parents may need to consider using a different language in order to avoid serious language confusion. However, these situations are the exception rather than the norm.
- Despite the overall picture of positive multilingual experiences, there are some children who struggle to master more than one language beyond basic conversation skills.
- Parents need to avoid using a language that they are unfamiliar with or not proficient in with their children. It leads to limited parent-child communication and the absorption of poor language skills.
- All reasonable efforts should be made to develop the mother tongue skills. A decision needs to be made about whether a child needs basic conversational skills (BICS) or academic language proficiency (CALP). The study required for academic language is much more demanding and good conversational skills can mask weak academic language knowledge.

We considered two case studies that have been recently published in Educare editions. Among other reasons, both of these were successful because of the intentionality and planning of the parents in ensuring that language skills were taught and making changes at correct pre-planned times.

1. March 2017 edition – Eleanor Harvey's account of attending a state-run school in Spanish until the age of 16, then studying for the final two years of school and university in the UK.
2. September 2016 edition – a Swiss family's schooling in French and German.

Another education seminar focused on post-16 and post -18 educational options. Most of the TCKs in families of Educare readers will be aiming for higher education.

However, the seminar raised awareness of other options such as apprenticeships, technical and vocational training, taking a gap year (or longer) before further study, and combinations of these.

There are now higher level apprenticeships in the UK, modelled on those in other European countries such as Germany and Switzerland. Initial indications are that these are a good option for careers in areas such as accountancy, ICT, engineering, although among TCKs returning to Britain these will probably remain still a minority option. Most students will still expect to go to university despite the enormous and escalating costs of study in England and Wales (the highest in Europe). Northern Ireland's fees are less than half those in England, and Scotland has retained free tuition for Scottish residents and other EU nationals (except from the rest of the UK). How the departure of the UK from the EU will affect this is one of many unknown factors at present.

In many cases, a good recommendation for a student re-entering the passport culture is to take a gap year in that country. It is not always possible for every student, but where feasible it is well worth considering. There are a number of advantages to this:

- It enables a student to re-enter the passport country and make his or her adjustments outside of the academic world pressures
- In countries where a definite course and subject is chosen before going to university it allows a student time to decide what he or she really wants to study. Where tuition fees are high and will leave considerable long-term debts this is even more crucial.
- The extra life experience and maturity of a well-planned gap year can be invaluable
- There could be an opportunity to earn some money towards future study or other expenses.

Some recent information was given regarding European university courses taught in English (outside of the UK and Ireland). For example, in Finland for some years free university tuition has been available regardless of nationality, but as of 2017 this is now only the case for Finns and other EU nationals. There are some countries such as Germany still offering free tuition for courses in English to all nationalities but the range of subjects on offer is limited. Reservations were expressed about the quality of English on some of these courses in other European countries.

The cost of tuition should never be the only or dominant factor in choosing a university. It is also worth considering other criteria in the overall university experience such as the support networks in the city of study, the suitability of the courses available, the need for the national language such as German or Dutch for daily life, the ethos of the university and much more.

More Information

The presentations can all be found on the Eurotck web site at this page <http://www.eurotck.net/presentations/2017-presentations/>

It is also possible to find back editions of Educare from June 2007 onwards on the Eurotck site at this page <http://www.eurotck.net/educare-publication/>

Educare is a free e-magazine for TCKs, their families, the agencies that send and support them, and anyone else interested in their education and welfare. It can be forwarded freely to anyone who would benefit from it.

For free subscription e-mail mk_tck@yahoo.co.uk

It is a ministry of WEC International