

LITTLE HANDS MAKING BIG DIFFERENCES

Spring 2020 Issue

Where We Are Now

BY JODY MATTENA
Tabibu Africa - President/Founder



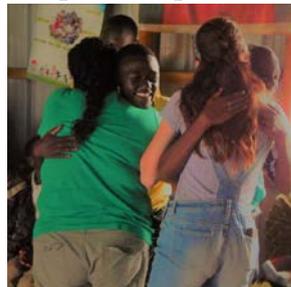
2020 has come in like an angry lion, charging after anything or anyone that attempts to go forward. With political turmoil across the globe and now a pandemic that has touched every single person on the planet. It seems a bit odd that the one thing united us now is a virus by the name of COVID19.

What I have witnessed however, is a unity that is beautiful and beyond measure. Communities and groups have been coming together to sew face masks to keep people safe, neighbors are checking on and getting supplies to their elders and those at risk, children are writing letters or brightening up their sidewalks with bright colors. Families are spending more quality time together without electronics, playing card games, writing in journals, playing board games, reading books, learning and growing together.

Until the pandemic has passed and we can begin to find our new “normal” we will be raising funds to go towards COVID19 relief in Kenya to go towards food baskets, hand sanitizer, and hand washing stations in the areas we serve. Please feel free to take a look and consider donating what you can to this acute cause at www.tabibuafrica.org/covid19-aid

I know that I can speak for all of us at Tabibu Africa, Inc and express our heartfelt condolences to all of those who have lost loved ones to this virus or who have suffered because of it. We all seem to know someone touched by this and we will continue to reach out and keep that deep connection, the human connection, which we all need.

Asante sana (Thank you very much)



IN THIS ISSUE

Where Are We Now?
Page 1

Medical Director
Page 2

The Horse that Ranaway
Page 3-5

Current Projects
Page 6

Our Mission Statement
& How you can help
Page 7



From the Medical Director:

By Corrie Goodier; Secretary and Medical Director



Exciting news is coming down the pipes, so stay tuned for that! We are gearing up for another expedition this fall and I couldn't be more excited to get my eyes, ears, and soul back on the ground over in Kenya.

The students at Candlelight Primary and Peak Academy are learning and growing so much! What a beautiful group of students, teachers, and advisors! They've kept up with their albendazole (de-wormer) every six months and have been checking in healthy during well-child checks.

We are blessed!



“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”
– Martin Luther King Jr

The Horse that Ran Away:

By Kurtis Short; Treasurer



This is a story I received while at a meeting and it has stuck with me so I will pass it onto you-

“Long ago, in a country where the mountains are among the world’s loftiest, there lived an old farmer and his son. The boy spent his days attending to the work of the farm and their one old horse—a beautiful white stallion. After years of careful training, the horse ran swifter and smoother than any other in the region. But one day, father and son awoke to find their cherished animal missing.

The son was heartbroken. Neighbors gathered around the two and lamented their great loss. But the father gazed calmly past the villagers to the surrounding high peaks. “We shall see,” he said. “We shall see if this is good or if this is bad.” After a week, the magnificent horse returned, followed by an equally fine wild mare. Father and son soon tamed the new animal. This time, the neighbors praised the old man’s remarkable luck—he was now the wealthiest man in town! He owned the two very best horses! But the farmer simply smiled and remarked, “Oh, of course I am pleased. . .but who knows if this is lucky or unlucky?”

And so it came to pass that one day, while racing their splendid horses across the field, the son fell off and broke both legs badly. While the boy’s wounds were cleaned and splinted by the doctor, the villagers bemoaned the family’s terrible misfortune. But the father, calm as ever, took comfort in his boy. “He is alive; that is all that counts,” replied the old man. “His legs will heal in time. I cannot know if these injuries will turn out to be something good or something bad.”

The very next week, a battalion of soldiers marched into the village. A war to the north was underway, and all young men of fighting age were needed immediately. Mothers and fathers gathered food and warm clothes for their boys. With sorrowful good-byes they let their sons join the soldiers.

But there was one boy in the village left behind in his bed—for it was obvious his wounds would take many months to heal. The neighbors envied the farmer’s good fortune! Of all the young men in town, his son was the only one not taken to war! The old farmer looked out across his fields at the two fine horses grazing. He looked at the lovely way the sun caught the tops of the jagged peaks in the distance, smiled and said nothing at all.

I have heard and told several versions of this story but let’s work with this version, from a collection titled: Kindness, a treasury of Buddhist wisdom for children and parents, by Sarah Conover. First of all, can anyone relate to a life of ups and downs? A life of days of seeming good fortune and days of awful, horrible, terrible fortune? If this might be our story, let’s look at the lessons.

Where is the story set? In a land where the mountains are among the world’s loftiest. The metaphoric interpretation of mountains is fairly universal; the place of higher thoughts; the activity of lifting our spiritual vision above the level of our human experience. Relying on our physical senses, what do we know about the view from a higher place? You can see more from an elevated spot. The old farmer doesn’t need to travel to the mountain but he moves his attention to the mountains. He pauses and lifts his awareness beyond the level of his human experiences. And what affect does this have? In the story he remains calm and centered, no matter what the calamity, joyous or sorrowful, is that is occurring in the manifest world around him. Do we have the ability to lift our thoughts and awareness higher than the level of consciousness around us? YES! Do we exercise that ability? Sometimes, yes; often no. I invite you to think about an event that might have happened this past week or two weeks. It can be either an event you judged as bad or an event you judged as very lucky and fortunate. Did you pause to move to a higher place of awareness than our human ego response to the event? If yes, how did that affect your experience? If no, how **might** that have affected your

experience?

Notice that the old farmer does not judge. In his place of calm centeredness, he reserves judgment. Everyone around him, even his son when the horse runs away, expresses views of whether an event is good or bad. So what do you think the old farmer represents metaphorically? The Buddha nature, the Christ of our being; that higher self who can become the observer of activity without taking on all the emotional baggage of our human experiences. As humans, we are judging machines. We are meaning making entities who exercise our right to an opinion beginning early in the morning. Most of us have some sort of morning ritual and based on the weather, our schedule, or something that happens early in the morning, we decide if it's going to be a good day or not. Think about it. How many of us begin every day with the assumption it will be a good day no matter what the weather is, the things on our to-do list or what is going on or not going on in our household? How many of us can even begin our day curious about how it will turn out; open to the infinite possibilities? It is a challenge and behavior we have to cultivate because it is not the behavior most of us have been taught or seen modeled.

Not only did the old farmer reserve judgment, he was not swayed by the opinions of those around him. Have you ever found yourself in a situation everyone else thought was awful and you were quietly, maybe even secretly okay with? How brave are we about staying centered when everyone around us is angry, afraid or critical? Rudyard Kipling has the line in his poem, If, that says, "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs." In the Risk Management field we had a way of finishing that line that said, "If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, you simply do not understand the situation." Kipling ends the poem of multiple "if" situations with "Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And--- which is more---you'll be a Man, my son!" I believe this story tells us and Kipling is telling us, "Staying centered is an act of spiritual maturity". The ability to stay centered is a mastery demonstrating the ability to **be** a spiritual being in this human experience. It is not a misunderstanding of danger but a practice of lifting awareness beyond the fear to the assurance of spiritual order. However, this is a practice we must cultivate; because most of the time we simply judge.

There is a trap in judgment, whether our judgment comes from within us or from those around us. Once we adopt a judgment of a situation, we close ourselves to different possibilities. We lose our perspective and sometimes the opportunity to create different outcomes. If we judge a day as bad, it sometimes becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy because we live and react out of the belief that it is a bad day. We make matters worse by our attitude; we ignore positive experiences and fail to notice opportunities for joy.

Well, ok, Reverend Joy, that may be true for the bad things but what about the good things? Isn't it ok to judge things good? Don't we say, "God the good, omnipotence"? Well. . . There is a divine paradox in the way Unity uses the concept of spiritual good. The spiritual good has NO opposite. Good is a measure of accepting the possibilities always inherent in every interaction and situation. If we judge something good, as a measure of it being the opposite of bad, we have taken the meaning out of the spiritual and into the material plane. What can happen when we judge things "good" as the opposite of "bad"? Sometimes we become fearful of losing our good, because that would be bad. Sometimes we become boastful and prideful about the good that is ours; possessive and unwilling to share. What about the old farmer? In the story, good things happened. He became the wealthiest man by having two fine horses. He quietly says, "Of course I am pleased." He does not deny his good but he does not become boastful and simply says, "We shall see if this is good or this is bad." How many Powerball winners have stories of woe and find themselves penny-less after the affects this sudden and immense wealth had on their lives? On the other hand, how many people live modest lives, content with what they have, and leave large sums of money to an organization they are quietly passionate about? The farmer's son is saved from serving in the army when all the other sons had to go but the farmer is quietly compassionate and would not speak of this as his good fortune.

What is the path out of judging; a simple way to lift our consciousness higher than the experience we are in? For me it is gratitude. No matter what is happening, there is something to be grateful for. For me this has to be a deeper understanding of the nature of our blessings, not just a superficial list. But a list can be the perfect place to start. If I find myself focusing on lack, feeling the Universe has taken a wrong turn or that God has simply neglected me, I can begin by finding something to be grateful for.

One night shortly after I had arrived in the Valley, I was driving back to Wilma's house on 78, in the dark, in the pouring rain, when I had a tire blow. I got the car under control and managed to get off the road safely. For a moment I just sat there. In the rain. With my car rocking as each semi roared by. Sat there trying to figure out exactly where I was in this still foreign place. Sat there trying really hard not to cry. Then I began to think of blessings. I had a cell phone. I had AAA. There was an exit sign telling me where I was. No one got hurt. My car was ok. Eventually AAA found me, got the spare tire on and I made it safely back to Wilma's. In the moments when I turned to gratitude, I shifted from despair to expecting things to turn out ok. I opened up to a fuller range of possibilities. I shifted from being lonely and stranded in the dark and pouring rain to being safe and protected right where I was. It wasn't good or bad, it simply was. I guess my story would be waaaaay better if the story I was telling you included a wonderful, wealthy gentleman who stopped to assist me, fell in love with me and months later we were married. That blown tire changed my life. But this is a sermon, not a fairy tale. It could have been a possibility AND it wasn't a possibility that unfolded that night.

Sometimes what we need is not such much a fairy tale ending but peace of mind, hope, and a place to center. We **can** find peace of mind when we suspend judgment and allow our thoughts to move to a higher perspective. Centered in our Buddha nature or Christ nature, we are open to all possibilities; we want only peace, love and abundance for all beings.

The next time you find yourself judging a situation, pause and think of the farmer whose horse ran away. Lift your eyes and your awareness to a higher place. Find something to be grateful for and know that the next moment may hold something very different. From a peaceful place, you can be open to the infinite possibilities ready to unfold. Namaste.”





Current Projects

Sanitation & Hygiene

Tabibu Africa, Inc has found that the root of most medical and social issues is the lack of proper sanitation and hygiene resources.

Tabibu Africa provides sanitation & hygiene education and workshops. Depending on sustainability we aid in building water filtration units as well as proper waste disposal.



Medical Aid

Along with sanitation & hygiene workshops we also provide basic medical services. Tabibu Africa, Inc strongly believes that we can't properly provide aid with just one project because it's not sustainable. Empowerment, sanitation & hygiene, and medical aid together makes a long lasting, sustainable, difference.



Female Empowerment

We provide empowerment courses for girls in primary and secondary school as well as for women and mothers.

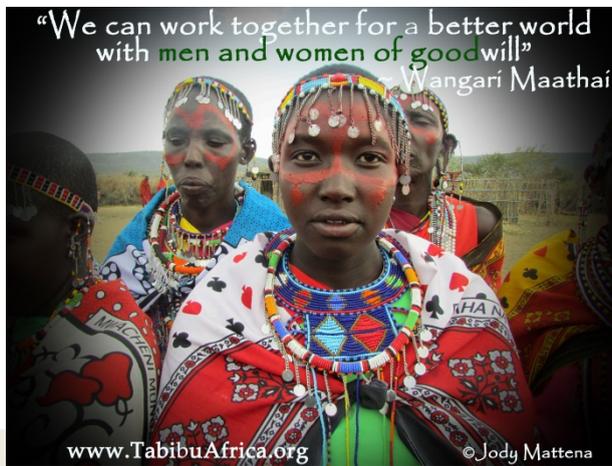
We have found that a simple course designed just for girls and women is all it takes for them to push hard to get through school or to start their own businesses. In our areas of focus we have seen dramatic increase of secondary school graduation, college entrance, and small business startups by girls and women.



Male Support

We can't just go to our areas of focus and only offer workshop courses for females; we must back it up with a male support course. We have found that due to disease, war, and other conflicts many generations have grown up without a male role model. We aim to close that gap by connecting elders with groups of younger boys and young men so that they can learn; work ethic, how to treat women, moral and ethics, and how to be a role model themselves. We also show that it's important for them to support and strengthen their other half, women. To create bridges.





Our Mission

The mission of Tabibu Africa is to nurture the needs of the women and children of East Africa through love and compassion. We do this by providing medical clinics for basic health care, education regarding HIV/AIDS and other preventable diseases, sanitation & hygiene workshops, and empowerment workshops for both young men and women at several schools, orphanages, and communities in Kenya, Africa.

We depend on citizens like you – people who understand the importance of having an independent voice for women and children. We ask you to support us in our fight to make our future generations the best that they can be. All of Tabibu Africa, Inc is volunteer based. We have NO paid staff, board members, or employees. Your continued support is necessary for us to persistently work towards change that improves children's lives.

Your support means you stand right there with us. You can make sure that our work of compassion, assistance, education, empowerment, and medical care continues to get to those who need it the most. Without this assistance and education we know just where some of these women and children will end up; on the streets, diseased, uneducated, abused, alone, or dead.

You can change the story for a woman or child who does not have basic nutrition to sustain life, does not have access to medical care, or simply is not safe. Instead, **you** can be the **hero** for a woman or child who is now able to attend quality workshops, can get medical care, and doesn't have to worry about clean water to drink. You can help to make sure that safety is not a dream. You can get Tabibu Africa there through your assistance. You can make all of the difference in the world!

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Or online through our "Donate Now" Page at:

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