

What would you say if you were asked to fly halfway across the world to serve in an underresourced, potentially dangerous country?

My kneejerk reaction was “Yes!”, starting with answering a group email from Dr. Dave Neubauer in December, a mere 6 weeks before the trip was to embark. And then to say “yes” again with more assurance, after my husband unhesitatingly said, “Yes, you should go! We’ll be fine!”

Little did I know how many more answers in the affirmative would need to follow: to prophylactic malaria medication, multiple overnight flights, sharing a room and bunkbeds with an unknown roommate, and to forgoing a second piece of luggage in favor of a giant duffel full of donated sports equipment. Some consternation accompanied the “yes” to the necessity of replacing a pair of shoes and some clothing with hastily donated books for elementary aged children to my one remaining piece of luggage, and weighing it to the ounce. Just say yes.



This trip, because of the vast benefits that I received day after day, remained easy to say “yes” to. The colleagues of Dreamweaver, the Kilimanjaro Mission Hospital, and the Kimana School of Leadership that I had the honor to work with and learn from are some of the finest humans I’ve ever met. Equally so were the people of Kenya: teachers and students in the multiple schools we visited; the doctors, staff and patients in the hospital at Loitokitok; the welcoming and jubilant congregation of the PCMA church on Sunday morning; and in the colorful traditional Maasai villages. All of these groups were not only open and receptive to our care, but were to the person kind and gracious hosts as the team of volunteers, chiropractors and medical doctors provided education and services. Their need and curiosity, combined with their unabashed surprise, happiness and gratitude when they felt the releases in their bodies, made them a joy to work with.



“Yes”, to the hospital administrator’s request for Dr. Bruhl to check an 8 year old child, spastic with cerebral palsy, who was struggling with a lung infection. “Yes”, to their request to check the premature baby boy Aaron, born at 28 weeks and weighing 900 grams at birth, who had been fully expected to die after his transport to the hospital as all babies born that early are in that region. Yes, to the aged Maasai “mama”, or “Coco”, with likely an infectious pneumonia, who received both medical and chiropractic attention in the aim of resolving her infection and stimulating her healing physiology simultaneously and all ages and conditions in between. Yes.

The teachers and the children at the Kimana Christian academy also said “yes”; to chiropractic care for teachers and students, to donated

books, and to exploring the best educational practices for elementary aged children. One of most personally rewarding aspects of the trip was to be able to play with, teach yoga to, and give chiropractic adjustments a class of small children, ages 5-8, in the shade of the acacia trees on the beautifully landscaped Kimana campus, with the weaver birds fluttering and chattering above. We taught each other songs around the adjusting table to pass the time as they waited their turn. By the second adjusting session of the week, every osseous release produced a giggle or outright laugh, and by the third, they knew "This Little Light of Mine" by heart. (As a side note, this may be one of the few times that during international outreach work, a group of patients receives follow up chiropractic care. If all of that isn't easy to say "yes" to...)

Chiropractic is all about connection: connecting the inner organized forces of a living system, via the nervous system, more efficiently and effectively to itself and to its environment. Chiropractors are doctors and teachers who seek to connect, treat and heal by offering our own physiology to the mix, using our hands as our primary analysis and treatment tools. With each adjustment, we create an opening a "yes" moment in the system, allowing for the healing or development needed for that person at that time. Here in Kenya, a country that effortlessly values such physical and spiritual connection, I found myself connected to others and to myself in each moment whether simply in discussion with Kenyans or my fellow practitioners, or applying my clinical training. Time after time, I was given to the opportunity to see past the veil of separateness, and was invited to join the dance of unity, again and again. Yes.



If ever you hear a whispered question, "Can I make a difference, in the face of so much adversity?" "Can I spare the time and the resources, and become a better person by giving of myself?" "Can I learn to love more freely from a child who doesn't even speak my language?" Whether it's in your practice, in your community, or across the globe...say "Yes". I am much richer for having done so.