



February  
2017

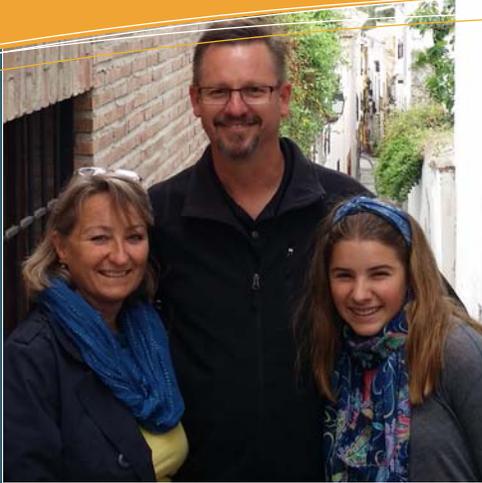
Monthly  
News and Updates  
for Partners of  
The Drum Family

# Connect

## Connecting all the Pieces

After a pretty extensive and intense training last week about leadership and personalities and strengths and skills and what each of us brings to the table as an individual on a team (whew!), the question was asked, "What do you think God has to say to you now, after doing all the exercises and talking through all of this?"

I don't often get 'words' from God, I don't hear a particular phrase, nor does He reveal himself in a particular scripture. What I do usually receive is a picture or an image. And the image that answered that question was an image of pixels. Pixels are the tiny digital elements of a bigger picture. When you look at the big picture, you don't see them because they all fit together and work together to make the whole. The only time you notice a pixel is when it's not working... when it's burned out or out of place. I think we're like that... when we are working within our giftings and calling and personality and strengths, everything fits and the team functions and the big picture emerges. **I'm so glad to be working with a team that fits!**



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## Connecting People and Resources

On Tuesday, we shared a lunch table with people from 6 different countries. Last week, we did bible study in a group of 50 people that represented India, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Kenya, Turkey, Costa Rica, Spain, Colombia, Panama, Brazil, Liberia, and more. We introduced our awesome leadership team in Spain to our TMS Global peers. Our Spain team is multinational / multicultural (Puerto Ricans, Texans ☺, Spaniards) and multigenerational (30s– 60s) with varied career backgrounds (a teacher, a pharmaceutical rep, a horticulturalist, an economist with a law degree, an author, a pastor, a former monk, and more). As I think on this, I realize just how diverse my life and my world has become!

This diversity is sometimes tough to navigate, but it has the potential to bring such beautiful benefits to everyone who engages and connects! In connecting and building relationships with so many different people, we have the incredible benefit of getting a glimpse of what The Kingdom of God is really about. We are also helping others make connections. By introducing our Spain team to our TMS Global team, we helped connect the Spanish church and leaders to resources and a world of possibilities that they never dreamed possible. We helped to connect them to a whole new world of stories and people that they never would have known otherwise. They are now thinking 'outside the box' and looking at a bigger picture than they were seeing a week ago. They have now sat at the table and listened to the stories of their Christian brothers and sisters who are serving in other parts of the world. They are now connected to the son of a tribal chief in Africa who lost his son to Ebola last year. They are connected to a young pastor in Kazakhstan who is forbidden to have a church or preach, so he opened a sports center and connects to people via soccer and gym time. They had conversations with a Brazilian pastor and were able to ask him about the best ways to connect to our Brazilian immigrants here in Spain. And they were able to begin conversations about how to receive more training and help, and how to bring in trainers who can build up the pastors and churches here in Spain and mobilize people here for outreach and service.

Thank you for connecting with us so that we can connect others, so that we can help others partner with the right people and the right resources to grow in The Kingdom!



# Connecting is Life-Giving

"I needed this. I really needed this time." Those words were spoken so many times in the last two weeks that I started to feel like God was trying to make a point. We've had a really full, really stressful and hectic few weeks of trying to prepare for a conference (actually 3 concurrent conferences that happened in one week!). Once the date had finally arrived, I was so ready for it to be over. Do you ever feel like that? Like you're so excited for a thing to happen, and you're also so ready for it to end? I was thrilled to see my colleagues from all over the world, and I was so ready to reconnect with people, and I was really looking forward to some productive strategy meetings that would set the stage for the year to come. But at the same time, the getting ready and the build up and the logistics and the output of energy just exhausted us and I was ready for it to be over before it even started.

Then they arrived, and within hours, I was renewed and refreshed and on my way to that special therapeutic healing that can only come from connection to people who 'get it' and understand you and want to listen and love deeply. "Ahhhh... I needed that. I really needed that." My soul was happy and finding peace.

It wasn't just me saying it, though. It was people who sat down to dinner and had good conversations and shared what's going on in their lives - and at the end of the meal there were hugs and those words, "I needed that. Thanks for listening. That was great." There was a night of playing games and telling stories and laughing till our sides hurt and tears were streaming down our faces - and then, when the time came to break up the fun, the words, "Oh my goodness! That was awesome! I haven't laughed like that in ages. I really needed that!" There were some particularly difficult, vulnerable conversations about the tough stuff, about when LIFE happens and you're broken and don't know how to get back up again, when empathy and love are the only things that will help, when hearing someone say, "you're not alone... I've been there... I'm here for you... I got your back" - at the end of that, there is a deep sigh and a relief and deep healing and those words, "I needed that. I needed to talk about that. I needed this time. Thanks for listening."

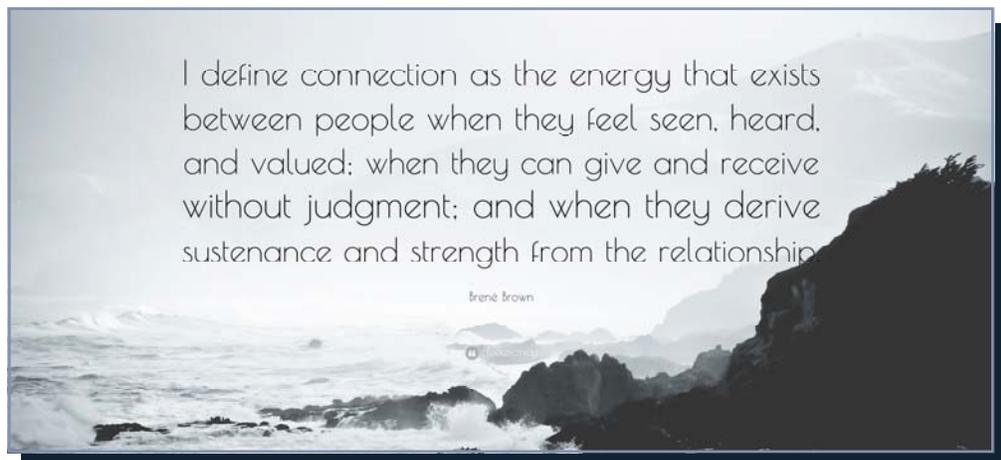
Yesterday, we took four of our colleagues up to one of our favorite places and we went on a long hike. It's a beautiful place, yes, but it's also a place where deep connection always happens. There's something beautiful that happens when people walk alongside each other and talk. Somehow, the daily stuff of the world melts away and the real stuff bubbles up and comes to the surface. Suddenly you find yourself talking about the deep longings of your heart, the wounded places, or telling the stories that you've never told each other before. And pretty soon, the awesomeness of being connected and sharing and listening occurs... and you feel lighter, you feel like burdens are being lifted, you feel like you're not alone, you feel heard, and you feel like healing is possible... like you can keep going another day because you just found a piece of your soul that you were missing.

"I needed that. I really needed that."



I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.

Brene Brown



# Connecting via listening and love

*The following is one of the many stories I have collected and recorded from our time in the refugee camps in Lesbos, Greece.*

I notice that with each day, Tiago\* is looking more and more down-trodden. Each day I give him a hug and try to have a cheery conversation during his infrequent breaks from the work. But each day it is more and more difficult to see happiness in him.

“How are you today, Friend?”, I ask.

“Fine. Well, actually not. Do you really want to know?”, he says, looking at me with eyes that are about to burst with sadness today.

“Really. I really want to know. Tell me. How are you?”

“I am bad. Very bad. My health is not good. This work is very hard. Psychologically, I’m a mess.” He takes a couple of deep breaths to try to keep himself composed. “I’ve been here for 3 months. It’s too long. Too much. Everything I see and hear and know – it’s all too much.”

He can no longer look at me to speak. To look at me would surely start his tears, so he looks away, he looks down, he looks past me. But he can’t look into my eyes.

When he finally regains his breathing and his voice, he says, “But I can’t stop. I can’t stop as long as they are here (gesturing to the refugees behind me). Someone has to care for them.

Someone has to cook.”

And with that, he stands up and goes back to the kitchen. Back to prepare another 1000+ meals for the next round of feeding.



Giorgos Kosmopoulos @GiorgosKosmopoulos

*Since our time working with the refugees in November, the numbers in the camps in Greece have not improved. They continue to host over 60,000 refugees who are stuck within their borders. The winter has been extremely harsh, with water supplies frozen solid and refugees living in tents and tarps covered in snow. There have been deaths and extreme illness. Greece has even posted naval vessels off the coast of Lesbos to help house refugees on-board to keep them from the extreme temperatures.*

*We will be returning to help in the Moria camp on Lesbos island at the end of February. They are short on workers to help cook and serve, and the full-time workers are emotionally and physically exhausted. We will go in and help out for awhile. A special thank you to those who sent in special designated donations to help fund this work!!! It takes all of us working as a team to reach out and help! Thank you.*



## Connecting with friends!

Sarah had the awesome opportunity this month to reconnect with several of her friends who also serve with TMS Global!

These kids have grown up together, but on different continents and in different cultures. They all are connected via TMS and the unique lives that third-culture kids lead. They only get to see each other once every year or so, but they stay connected via social media

(Facebook, Instagram, etc) and the occasional Skype call. This month, several of them arrived in Spain when their parents came to attend conferences being held by TMS Global. So it was PARTY TIME for these awesome friends!!! They never skipped a beat... they just picked up right where they left off last time! Lots of laughter and hugs and game playing and long walks together... and ice cream!



## This Month’s Prayer Requests

Please **pray with Centro Cristiano** (the church we work with in Spain) as they work toward a focus on GROWTH this year... personal growth, growth in community, and growth as The Kingdom.

Please **pray for TMS Global** as the agency and individual CCWs work toward training, mobilizing, and service around the world. We ask you to **pray for our refugee friends** and family who are facing the challenges of the snow and extreme temperatures while they continue to wait on the next step in their journey. Pray that we can continue to find ways to love them and serve well in that situation. **Pray for Sarah** and her studies, her friendships, her training with her horse, and being a teenage girl in Spain. And **pray for our boys, Ryan and Miles:** Miles is currently working in Florida. Ryan is in Corpus Christi working running a courier business. And **pray for us (Billy and Laurie)** as we work to find healthy balance and boundaries and margin in a busy schedule this year. Pray that we stay healthy physically, emotionally, spiritually, and relationally.

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- Sharing the Love of Christ with the least, the lost, and the left out... immigrants, displaced peoples, the lonely, the abandoned, those who need a friend.
- Nurturing and developing people to be healthy spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally - because "care" is not just an emotional feeling word, "care" is a verb - an action. That's who we are... the care-givers!



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Dear Billy and Laurie,

I will pray for you.  
 As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Per month / quarter / year for \_\_\_\_\_ years.



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