



"The greatest gift you can give another is the purity of your attention."
-Richard Moss

Hope & Haiti

March 2014

Hello! I hope this finds you doing well and enjoying the last few weeks of winter! The weather here has been absolutely beautiful with temperatures in the low 90's and a light breeze. I'm already dreading the humidity and high temperatures that are to come in the next few weeks! I suppose it is hard for me to complain though considering the crazy amount of snow you have received this winter! I am pretty thankful that the Lord called me to a place where it is warm and sunny year round!

I have started writing this newsletter at least a dozen times. I've even changed the edition from February to now March. Each time I start writing I find myself at a loss for words. Over the last few months I've felt a peace about being here. I've felt very at home and just settled. And yet, as much as I know I'm where I am called to be, it is hard.

The longer I live here the more Creole I learn and understand. The more I understand the harder it is because I actually *hear* what my friends and patients are saying. There is always someone with a need or want in front of me. There is never a lack of work to be done. By the end of each and everyday I'm mentally exhausted. It wasn't until I read my devotional that I realized why I have been feeling so overwhelmed.

"Your gravest danger is worrying about tomorrow. If you try to carry tomorrow's burdens today you will stagger under the load and eventually fall flat. You must discipline yourself to live within the boundaries of today. It is in the present moment that I walk close to you, helping you carry your burdens." -Jesus Calling

My devotional literally struck home with me. I worry too much and mentally I try to carry it all. I know that I can't change anything by worrying and I am thankful that the end result isn't up to me and is out of my control. I am beyond thankful that I serve a God that is just and has a plan for each of my friends. I don't know why it is so hard for me to simply walk close to Him and to allow Him to carry it all. I know when I do step back and enjoy the small moments that He has planned it is beautiful. (continued).



Prayer requests!

-The spring will be busy on campus- please pray for the teams that will be coming to serve with NVM. Also please pray for the interns that will be coming to spend the summer with us in Haiti.

-For the American staff I'm serving with to grow in friendship and community.

-That I would remain present and faithful. Taking everything one day at a time and at His pace.

-For Nehemiah Vision Ministries. Pray that our organization would love and serve our community well. That the staff here would seek to follow the plan He has for this community.

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This morning I found myself sitting with just Daniella in the village. Daniella is full of energy and really struggles in school. I told her that I had a surprise for her, but that I needed her to find two rocks before we could get started. She quickly ran off in search of two rocks. When you are five years old homework is a big deal! All of the older children have actual homework everyday. Daniella love the idea of having "homework" that she has to do. We smoothed out the dirt and then I started writing the numbers 1-10 with my rock. I asked her to write the numbers right below my examples. It started out pretty rough as she wrote a lot of the numbers backwards. Each and every time she wrote a number incorrectly I took her hand and together we spent time retracing the examples that were already written in the dirt. After several practice rounds she finally got it and was barely making any mistakes. She got faster and faster and before long I wasn't able to stay very far ahead of her. When we were finished the ground was literally covered with her homework. Daniella stood back and was so very proud of all her hard work.

Having a moment with just Daniella is very rare. Typically the children are all fighting over my attention and it is all I can do to even acknowledge each of them. This morning she needed that time with just me. She needed me to be present and to focus solely on her and in that moment she thrived. She went from being frustrated to proud and excited about how well she did. I am thankful that I chose to follow His plan for my morning with Daniella instead of allowing my mind to run with the other million things it wanted to.

A very good friend of mine visited recently. She is a friend that constantly encourages me spiritually. She reminded me of a poem she once had read about footprints in the sand. I laughed and told her that my mom used to have a picture with this poem on the wall in our home. She challenged me to seek God and to walk closely with Him. I know that so many of the moments when I'm overwhelmed are moments when I've walked off on my own. Moments when I've chosen to take the lead. I might not know or understand where the Lord is leading me but honestly none of that really matters. It doesn't matter what will hit me as soon as I open the door of my home. It all boils down to how closely I'm walking with Him. So this is my prayer, that I wouldn't let my mind wander and run with the list of things that are wrong, but rather that I would walk closely with my God.

Love, Brooke



Medical Clinics

Part of my job in Haiti is helping to coordinate for the mobile medical teams that come to serve with NVM. The medical teams spend months before coming to Haiti preparing. Once they arrive in Haiti the team literally hits the ground running. They sort all of the medications that were ordered and begin to pack and prepare for the mobile camps. Each clinic location is different and special to me for multiple reasons. One of my favorite locations to take teams is up the mountain to a small town called Fond Cheval. The weather in Fond Cheval is much cooler and the people are very laid back and reserved. In Fond Cheval the medical clinic is ran under a huge avocado tree. Not too many medical providers can honestly say they have treated patients under an avocado tree⇒) The big tree is perfect for providing shade. The only complication is during avocado season when the avocados start to fall. One team learned to move quickly when they heard the snap of one falling! I love that I get to watch and work with medical teams from all over the US. The medical teams provide excellent care and spend time getting to know each patient. The teams also are a huge blessing to me. They encourage me and I have gained so many new friends through serving with them.



mealtime!

I love Haitian food! Typical Haitian food includes chicken, goat, rice and beans, plantains, potatoes, and lots of different sauces. My favorite sauces are chicken sauce (has peppers and onions in it) and a bean sauce (which is literally just pureed beans). There is nothing quick about preparing Haitian food. The women spend many hours kneeling over a small charcoal fire preparing the food for their families. Because of a lack of extra money and refrigeration, most food is purchased just as it is needed for each meal. It isn't an uncommon thing to see a child running off with a small empty bowl in search of some oil, rice, or whatever ingredient is needed for the meal. The children are never far from the home when the food is almost finished. I am always amazed at how the women divide the one pan of rice and beans between all the members of their families. If I am visiting during the mealtime, my friends will also give me a portion of the meal. At first I felt really bad about eating their food when I had access to all the food I needed in my own home. Now I realize that they love nothing more than to serve me. The children love when I eat with them and for some reason they think it is absolutely hilarious to watch me eat!