



Editor:
Tyler Drosdeck

"The story of each stone leads back to a mountain." — W.S. Merwin

SPRING 2020

PAPA'S UPDATE- Letter About the Coronavirus (Covid-19)



March 21st 2020:

I suppose I should begin with the Coronavirus and its presence in Nepal. To be honest I have not heard of a case of it; some loose talk from unreliable sources, but nothing confirmed. However, the government is being very proactive, which is a good thing and a surprising thing. They have been doing border screenings for about a month now, and they disallow folks from other (highly publicized infected) countries from coming into Nepal. Two days ago, they closed all schools and colleges, but since yesterday was our children's last exam, they were allowed to attend to complete that. We had made the hard decision to send as many of our children who have relatives in remote areas to those homes. Most of these kids live in very hot regions where the virus may be less likely to survive. Also, their villages are small and social distancing is natural to effect. The villages do not get many passing through, so it is already sort of a quarantining.

It is almost 6 pm. The morning started as usual, but then government announcements of shutdowns (preventative measures) had us scramble a little. We had a bus scheduled to leave at 5 pm, but the

bus driver called and said, "We leave in one hour or we do not go at all." So, at 7am all the children were informed, and everyone was ready, a little harried but ready, by 8 and on the bus. The bus was filled with over 60 kids, another 20 were leaving throughout the day in different directions, 7 will be staying in Papa's House, and 5 others are leaving from the boys' house at 5 am tomorrow. Supplies are being run upon. I went to Bhat Bhatini (the primary grocery store) in mid-morning and was very happy to see all the cashiers wearing plastic hospital gloves and masks. In addition, 80% of the people there were also wearing masks.



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I tried to fill a 20-liter gas container, but was told it was not allowed because of rationing. That was fine as I will not have many places to go and will prefer the walking. There are many rumors about what is coming, little truth likely to any of it. We have sufficient rice, dhal, and other staples to last a month, and vegetables seem readily available early in the mornings. Some suggestions are the the military will patrol the streets and advise people outside to go home. Of course, this is at best partially true. What is true is that the highways will be closed and travel between districts not allowed, except for food and petrol transports. So, all is well, I am proud of the measures Nepal has taken.

The seven children left with us we will keep close and entertained as creatively as we can and have them wear masks should anyone come calling. All the staff except for Anita Chaudhary, manager of Papa's Harmony House, Mrs. Pandey our Director, and I have left. The government has said one month for closings and then we'll see.

Supplies will be tightening up (we have witnessed that in cooking gas already) and it has been suggested that rice and some other staples that come from India will be in short supply. We always seem to manage though, and sometimes having to think about eating and cooking is a healthy thing. The Coronavirus became part of our thinking in January. We had 5 of our children in Beijing, China, in a work study program. Each day presented new information, often contradictory, but in the end, we brought them home. It was the last flight out, supposedly, and at a premium. But the children were back on terra-firma and very relieved. One day, when the all clear has been given by the Chinese government and the hotel industry recovers, the children will go back and resume this wonderful opportunity.



March 22nd

I have just received a letter from our son Chham. He is stuck in the Delhi Airport. Last night he and our friend Rui Pires went to the airport at midnight to be present, as India has called for a complete shut down for today (March 22nd). They had just wrapped up two weeks of an anthropological documentary shoot on a remote island off India. Chham has assisted Rui once a year for the past few years. Rui was flying out first, and in a letter, moments ago said he made it out and was in transit. Chham on the other hand is unable to fly out as the flight to Nepal was cancelled. He will have some adventure as he tries to make his way to the Nepal border in non-commercial vehicles. There is one pretty porous border crossing, unfortunately, although one's perspective might change on that according to need.

Chham will see all of this as a fun puzzle to solve; he loves challenges, and in my mind I see him smiling, his eyes twinkling as he throws his duffle bag over his shoulder and marches out of the airport.

Calls received from some of our children this morning let us know that they are all settled in their villages, that it is quite hot, and the roads empty. These are tough measures, but may be effective ones. I would guess that everyone's greatest fear is India exploding in masses of infection.

People all over the world are experiencing something they will never forget. We are fighting an invisible enemy, and to win, it is imperative to follow all the health experts' guidelines. Let us hope that when it is over, the world will be a more tolerant, understanding, and helpful to one another place.

Good luck wherever you are.

Thanks, Papa

Adventures in China

by Ram Chaudhary

First of all, I want to thank the Papa's House family from the bottom of my heart for everything. Now that I am in Nepal, I am going to share some good and bad adventures while I was in China. My

major subject is Hotel Management and I hoped to learn something useful in my life while I was in Nepal. I went to China on the 12th of November 2019 for further study and for practical experience and internship, as well as to learn the Chinese language.

It was good journey by plane because of the beautiful mountains and I could see different scenery. When we reached China it was exciting to see new things there. Before going to the hotel, we stayed in the Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication (BIGC) College hostel for three weeks.



During those three weeks we had to manage everything by ourselves. Everybody feels difficulties in new places and likewise we also felt difficulties, but our senior students helped us. We could go in a group if we went outside like to the market or to use metro etc. It was difficult to communicate with Chinese people because we didn't know how to speak Chinese language and they don't know how to speak the English language, because priority is given to their own language rather than other languages. All of us friends shared food which we had brought from Nepal. I made a good friend from Thailand who was my roommate.

After three weeks we went to Wyndham Hotel for our internship. There were other Nepalese students there too. I was placed in a Japanese Restaurant and I got a good manager who taught me each rule and regulation of the restaurant. He even taught me Chinese words used in the restaurant. Slowly it became interesting to work there and learn the Chinese language. In my department every staff was good, and I was enjoying them.

My duty hours were 10 am to 2:30 pm and then 5:30 pm to 10 p.m. I worked in the hotel one and a half months and again we went back to BIGC college hostel in order to get our visa extension. We waited for one month and February 1 was our date to begin work again.



This year we had bad luck: the coronavirus came, so we were unable to go to the hotel. It was difficult

to stay in the hostel because we could not go outside to buy vegetables. In the market everything was expensive and there were shortages of items due to the virus. There was only one market in the college compound where we could go to buy something, but it was too expensive. It was difficult to get green leafy vegetables. Most of the Nepalese students are used to eating noodles, bread, and sometimes chapatti during this situation. Due to the virus, our days were getting worse so many Nepalis were leaving China. So we also started planning to leave by putting different queries to our college sir, the manager of BIGC College. When we shared our situation in China, Papa's House managed our tickets on the last flight out for Nepal. Thank you for giving me opportunity to share about my experience in China.

A Special Thanks to Supporting Foundations

Nepal Orphans Home is profoundly grateful to three foundations that have steadfastly supported our mission over the years:



NOH Board of Director Toni Thomson's Possible Worlds Foundation, based in Canada, has been integral in raising awareness and generating funds for our mission for over a decade. Consistent with its mission of providing education and support to children affected by poverty, trauma and abuse with a goal of enriching their lives for a future filled with possibilities, Possible Worlds Foundation has supported the education of Papa's House children, art and music classes at the Chelsea Center, as well as funded the Valentine's Day celebration at Papa's House each year. Toni's documentary film about Michael Hess and the children of Papa's House, *What It Takes to Be Extraordinary*, which debuted at three film festivals in the fall of 2016, beautifully portrays the NOH mission and has helped us spread the word about our organization.



Aakriti's Kids Foundation was founded by Anne Zrenda Murphy, who first volunteered with Nepal Orphans Home in 2010, with a mission to provide financial assistance for the dignified and humane care of orphans with special needs who live in Nepal. The foundation has generously supported our blind girl, Aakriti, who lives with her sisters at Papa's Harmony House along with a special caretaker, and attends a local school for the blind. Before closing in early 2019, Aakriti's Kids Foundation made a large grant to NOH for Aakriti's future care.



Nepal Orphans Home is grateful to Life's Handy Work Foundation, founded by Laura and Justin Handy-Nimick, for its support of the higher education costs of our older children in college and university. Laura began volunteering at Nepal Orphans Home in 2009, which inspired them to co-found Life's Handy Work, a non-profit organization in Washington State, committed to improving the lives of impoverished children in Nepal by providing educational opportunities as they transition out of Nepal Orphans Home and into adulthood. Laura also serves on the NOH Board of Advisers and she and Justin have continued to volunteer with us in Nepal.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Nepal Orphans Home receives no government support and relies on the contributions of individuals sharing our mission to provide for the welfare of children in Nepal who are rescued from slavery, orphaned, abandoned, or otherwise not supported by their parents.

Please help support our amazing kids by [making a donation](#) in any amount at [our website](#). Get an inside look at Nepal Orphans Home for [donation ideas](#).

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