

What we're learning... from our ~~mistakes~~



After 10 years in Mozambique, Bek and Scott know that stepping out and serving interculturally will lead to mistakes, misunderstandings and awkwardness! In this article, they share some of the mistakes they have made as well as some of the lessons they have learnt from them.

Be encouraged to take risks for the sake of the Gospel!

Three Mistakes

1. The message came that a nearby chief had died. Arriving to visit the family, I (Scott) was surprised to see no other mourners there.

After some time, a familiar looking man emerged from the house and walked towards me. As he approached I realised that either the deceased chief had a twin brother, or there had been a misunderstanding and this actually was the chief. "You're not dead?!" I blurted out in surprise.

2. We love opportunities to share Bible stories, and one day I (Bek) was invited to share a story with a group of girls by the Yawo leader. Wonderful! I shared the story and some reflections. Then, the Yawo leader retold the story and drew further reflections and applications... the only problem was, they were completely different, and sometimes in opposition, to the message I had been sharing!

3. Arriving to teach at the girls' coming of age camp, I (Bek) walked across the yard to get the drum the women used to accompany songs and dances. Starting to play the drum I saw a concerned look on our friend's face, which became gesticulations and a command to stop. It turns out Thursday afternoons are spiritually significant times, during which playing the drum is forbidden.

Three Lessons

1. **Sometimes we just need to apologise and laugh with others.** Moving into new communities and building relationships requires courage and humility. Courage to take risks, be uncomfortable and make mistakes. And the humility to listen deeply and live as a learner, recognising that we don't have all the answers (because we definitely don't!).

2. **Making no mistakes isn't the goal.** We may think that when we've been somewhere long enough we won't make mistakes. But that isn't the case.

We should seek to make fewer mistakes, but perfection is not the goal. Our goal is to reflect and reveal the Kingdom. And that Kingdom is one of grace, forgiveness and humility. It's one of entering other people's worlds, even when it's hard.

3. **Our mistakes actually help us build relationships.** Our mistakes give us opportunities to ask for forgiveness, to create relationships built on grace, to laugh with others, to remind ourselves and others that we're all the same and we're not God. So, lean into awkward and uncomfortable new things!

What might God be doing that He wants you to be part of? Are you willing to be uncomfortable for that to happen?