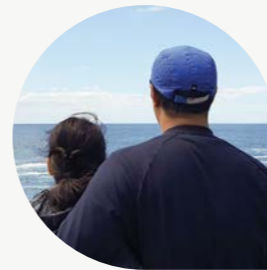


EVERYWHERE TO EVERYWHERE



Geoff Maddock is our VIC/TAS State Leader, and Simon and Widya are preparing to serve with our team in South East Asia.



For the Everywhere to Everywhere series of our Missioning podcast, Geoff Maddock sat down with Widya and Simon to discuss the power of multicultural teams, their unique experience as local team members and the diverse future of mission.

Here is an abridged version of their rich conversation.

Geoff: Widya and Simon, great to meet you! Can you tell me a bit about yourselves?

Widya: Hi Geoff! Simon and I were both born and raised in South East Asia. Separately, we came to Adelaide to study, and that's where we met.

Simon: My background is in business and management, while Widya's is in nursing education. We both grew up in Christian families and connected in with the Baptist Mission Australia team in South East Asia. Widya started working at the team's Education Foundation and then after a period of discernment, we decided to join the team... which is what we are preparing for now.

Geoff: Being from South East Asia, how do you see your experience being different to your teammates?

Simon: Our experience will be both easier and harder for us compared to our Aussie-born teammates. It will be easier in the sense that we do not need visas, which are a big hurdle for intercultural team members. Secondly, as locals we understand the language and culture, and so we can easily blend in.

Widya: Yes, we know the social rules, but this is one way that it will be harder for us. As locals, we have to follow the rules 100%. Whereas our Aussie-born teammates are given the benefit of the doubt. The locals assume that foreigners don't know any better and that all westerners are Christians anyway, so to a certain degree, foreigners can 'get away' with more than Simon and I can.

Geoff: Your team is quite multicultural, what do you see as the keys to working together across cultures?

Simon: To harness the power of a multicultural team, Widya and I believe it is vital to have cultural intelligence and humility to navigate cultural boundaries. Without this, the differences in culture can become a weakness rather than a strength.

Widya: One strength that we've seen in a multicultural mission team is that we bring different perspectives when solving problems. Of course, any decision will take longer, but when it is done right, we've seen that our decisions are more complete.

Geoff: As you think about a future of mission where more diverse voices are embraced, what comes to mind?

Simon: The question for us is, when people from different cultural and religious backgrounds share their unique understanding of God, are we ready to listen to their stories? Are we open to learning from them? Having the humility to admit that we don't know everything about God is the start to harnessing the power of the polyvocal nature of polycentric mission.

Geoff: Let's finish with a big one... What is the future of mission?

Widya: In the future, we will see more multicultural teams where word and deed work side by side. We will see more 'disciples of Christ' rather than religious 'converts'.

Simon: We will see more business as mission ministry platforms as an identity to share the Gospel. We will see more people building authentic relationships as the foundation of Gospel sharing.

Geoff: A future we can all get excited about! Thank you Widya, thank you Simon.



Want to hear to the full conversation?

Head to: www.baptistmissionaustralia/Missioning