

The Power of Love

The day we arrived we pulled into the yard of the small medical clinic. The area was lined with villagers hoping to have a chance to see our doctors. As the van stopped, Deanna recognized a woman named Waritti sitting nearby and quickly left to greet her.

As we watched them embrace tenderly for several minutes, we learned that she was a mother who was dying of AIDS. Deanna had been trying to get her proper medical care, but there was no hope for her recovery, and she was in the last stages of her illness. Deanna held



this frail woman as if she were her own daughter.

Our last day in the village we visited Waritti outside the door of her hut. She was so weak, she had to be carried inside. We could see her time was short and her son age five and daughter age two would soon be orphans.



She laid on her mat on the floor of the hut and the two children sat at the end of the mat. I had such a helpless feeling. All I could do was give them a bag of crackers from my purse.



We left Deanna with her and she held this woman for two hours until we returned. They do not even speak the same language and could not converse but Deanna just wanted her to feel love.

Two weeks after our return to the United States, I received an e-mail from Deanna saying that Waritti had passed away.

Deanna expressed her love for Waritti and her gratitude for the bond she felt with her. The love and compassion that Deanna had for this woman from another country with whom she did not share a language was a vivid example of how to love another.

Geri Beck
October 2002
Humanitarian Expedition Member

The Power of One Family
A Model for Change

IT TAKES A
FAMILY TO
RAISE A
VILLAGE



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The
Difference.

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*The Power of One Family:
A Thank You Letter*

Dear DeAnna,

Thank you for the privilege of joining you as we visited your family's neighborhood.



Walking between the yards, over and under the fences, being greeted every step of the way by friends and neighbors of Lon and Deanna Kennard enabled me to see how very 'at home' you are in this meek village. Thank you for sharing your family with me.



You showed me in one statement your real intent for your Kersa family. I captured it on film but more importantly my heart felt the depth of the desires of your heart when you said,



"There isn't a day that goes by in Heber, that I take a drink of water that I don't think of you, here, and the water that you drink."

Even though I had come prepared to teach lessons for the village children at Kersa's school, it was I who gain the most from the lessons the children taught me.



...about how the quality of life for your family depends of the quality of water.



I learned that 'binding up wounds' is literal. Comforting the weary and strengthening the weak is your errand.

I learned that love wraps her arms around a dying woman and that that love comforts her as she lay dying 'under one of your blankets'. I know who alone can wipe away her final tears. I now understand why it is so important to cheer and to bless in humanity's name.



I see you rely on divine tuition to give you the wisdom to truly succeed. You are truly honoring your commitment and devotion to humanity's labor of love.

Your gentleness and devotion touch and bless an entire village for good.

Naomi Harper
Humanitarian Expedition
Member, October 2002



The Kennard family continues to introduce other families, medical, and education teams to the villagers in Kersa Illala, Ethiopia.

Through humanitarian service, lives are changed.



"It takes a family to raise a village."

