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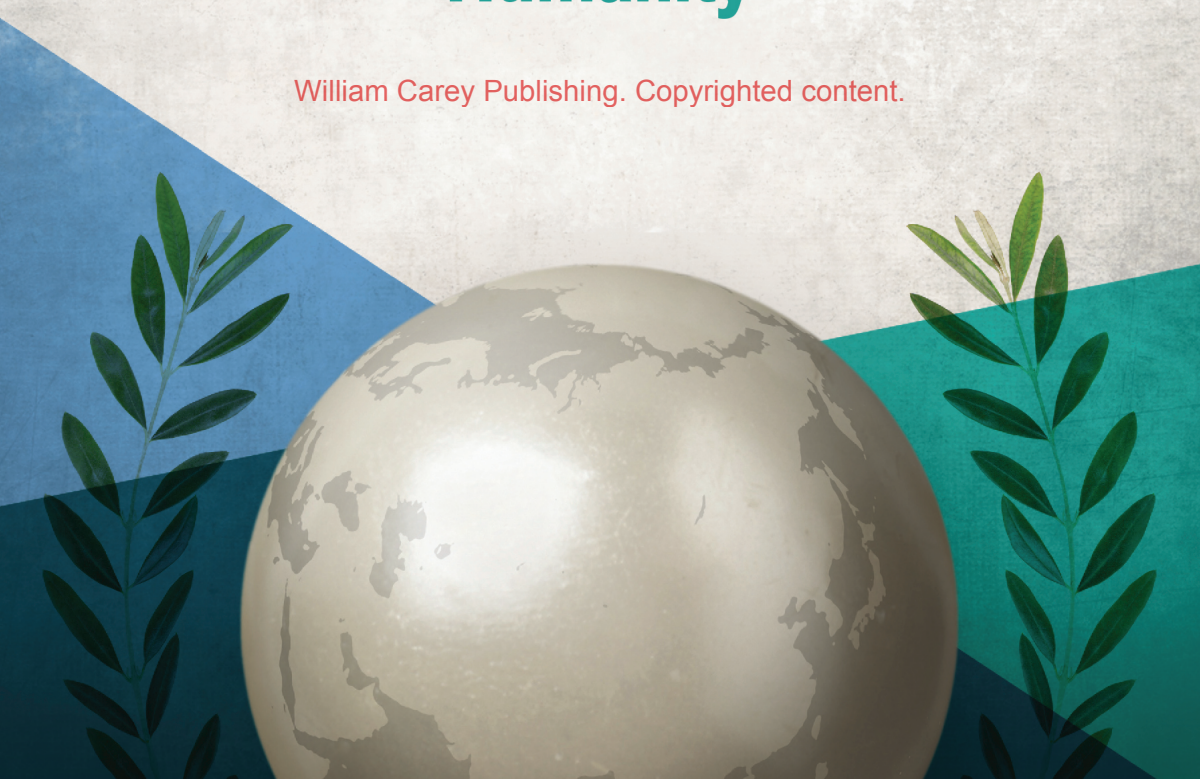
– EDITORS –

GLOBAL MEMBER CARE

VOLUME TWO

Crossing Sectors for Serving Humanity

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Global Member Care: Crossing Sectors for Serving Humanity
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CHAPTER 1

Crossing Well

David Mazel

There was so little of me
that I just couldn't count
on being taken that seriously.

I was standing on the curb, looking right and left, waiting for the cars to go by so that I could cross the street in the crosswalk. I was only six years old, and quite little, so I was afraid to venture across unless the coast was clear on both sides. It was true I had seen people more ample in size and years step out into the striped path and bring traffic to a grumbling halt, almost as if they possessed magical powers. But there was so little of me that I just couldn't count on being taken that seriously.

Finally the traffic cleared to the point where there was only one car coming from my right. It was a very old car, a rusty gray station wagon, with all sorts of household belongings piled in the back. Its tires were bald and so crushed under the weight of their load that they looked almost flat.

The car was chugging up the slight incline so slowly that I could easily have dashed across the street before it reached the crosswalk. But, taking no chances, I waited for it to chug by.

To my amazement, the old car stopped just short of the crosswalk, its brakes squeaking so loudly I almost plugged my ears. A middle-aged man at the wheel, with a face worn and homely as the moon, motioned for me to go ahead and cross, and he smiled encouragement.

This was the first car that had ever stopped to let me cross the street in the crosswalk, and I couldn't move for a few moments. It was crazy, I thought. When I

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needed cars to stop, so I wouldn't have to wait forever to cross, they zoomed on by. But when all I needed was for one old car to chug by, it stopped.

Finally I headed across, not merely walking but skipping. This was a bit of bravado, but I didn't want the man to think it was my first crossing, solo, while a car waited for me. And besides, I wanted to repay his patience with speediness.

As I passed in front of his car, I turned and gave him a shy smile. His smile in return rooted me on, but there was something in his eyes that confused me. I could have sworn I saw two brightnesses there that looked like tears. How could he be smiling and crying at the same time?

I reached the other side of the street; I at a skip and the car at a chug kept pace with each other for several moments. I was about to break into a run and show the man how I could tear around the corner ahead when he pulled up alongside a mailbox. I went over and tapped on his window. He rolled it down, and I held out my hand to take his letters and mail them for him.

This offer simply sprang out of the goodness of my heart, though it was not without a desire to show the man that I could operate a mailbox as well as use a crosswalk.

"You want to mail my letters for me?" he asked.

I was too shy to speak, but I nodded.

"You are very kind," he said, handing me the letters. "Thank you."

Just for a moment he looked as if he might cry. I was too young then to know that there are people who have taken such a beating in life that when someone is nice to them, good to them, they feel like crying. But instead he held back the brightnesses in his eyes and smiled at me. "You make me feel very important," he said.

I mailed his letters, and as he drove away we waved good-bye. I was sorry I hadn't told him that that's how he'd made me feel in the crosswalk—important. As if my life, young as it was, was entitled to the same stopping of traffic as anybody else's. But before his car disappeared, I did an absolutely spectacular run round the corner toward home, the run of a somebody; and if he was looking in his rear-view mirror, he saw me.

Source

Mazel, D. 1985. A Crossing. In *My Heart's World*, 15–17. Wild Rose, WI: Phunn Publishers. More stories by David Mazel: http://www.ufollow.com/search/fulltext/mazel/facet/author/david.mazel/. Reprinted by permission. For copies of this book, contact: Phunn Publishers, S5707 US Highway; Viroqua, WI 54665–8606 USA.

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CHAPTER 2

Charting Your Course through the Sectors

Kelly O'Donnell, Member Care Associates

> Can we really offer justice and freedom from want to a mid-twenty-first-century earth of perhaps nine billion people, one-third of whom may live in squalor and desperation? [Surprises and setbacks] should not deter us from responding as best we can, using our talents to improve this always mixed record of trying "to save generations from the scourge of war," "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights," and to promote "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom." The original Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations had it right. The question is, can we do it? (Kennedy 2006, 279, 289)

This chapter is designed to help orient you to the process of crossing sectors. I discuss the nature of sectors and their relevance for member care in mission/aid. I also present ten lessons that I have learned and three suggestions for crossing sectors. You are encouraged to refer back to the suggestions at the end of this chapter periodically as you make your way through the material in this book. So have a go at charting your course through the sectors, serving humanity with good practice.

What Is a Sector?

Sectors are fascinating. But what are they exactly? Mathematically, a sector is the area of a circle bounded by any two radii. (Think of a sector as being a triangular piece of pie cut from a round pie.) From this geometric definition emerges the concept of human sectors, or specialized groupings of *people*. For our purposes a sector is a

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distinct part of society (analogous to the area between two radii in a circle or a piece of pie) with a special albeit broad purpose. It is a large, amorphous yet recognizable block within the international community that provides different types of services and products to people. Each one is comprised of a wide array of people who are part of different organizations; influenced by various disciplines, practices, and goals; and intertwined with many related networks. A sector fundamentally is a *human* entity.

A prime example is the humanitarian sector, which overlaps with many other sectors, including the Christian mission sector. It would be accurate to refer to this sector as a *macro* sector (or even as the humanitarian *world*), which is comprised of many other sectors and subsectors. Just browse through any of the online issues of the *Humanitarian Exchange* from the Overseas Development Institute, and you will quickly see what we mean about the macrosector nature of the humanitarian world (http://www.odihpn.org). The humanitarian sector includes thousands of nongovernmental organizations, government and intergovernmental agencies, and groups from civil society including faith-based groups. These entities provide a myriad of worthwhile services such as medical care, military and civilian peacekeeping in conflict zones, relief response in natural disasters, human rights advocacy, HIV/AIDS prevention, childhood education, maternal health care, water purification, and so many other areas. Collectively they represent much of humanity's concerted effort to alleviate human misery and promote human well-being.

Sector Connectors

Trying to grasp *sectors* both conceptually and practically can thus be a bit of a challenge. It is akin to trying to grasp the sky. Both are readily observable. Both are highly influential. Yet both are hard to "contain," especially as they are so vast and full of variation. It can also be daunting and confusing entering into a new or even overlapping sector. It can feel very "foreign"—a bit like the proverbial fish out of water—as my wife, Michèle, and I found out in our initial efforts to connect and contribute to the global health (GH) sector.

Being psychologists with international experience helped us to enter into GH, of course. Yet coming from the faith-based mission sector with involvement in the humanitarian sector did not guarantee it would be easy to find our way into the mainstream of GH. Entering into different sectors is a dynamic process, not simply a static concept. It felt like a cross-cultural experience, exhilarating yet at times unnerving as we were stretched by our encounters with a variety of highly experienced people, challenging ideas, and new areas of learning. This diverse sector though,

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like learning a new culture or language, started to make more sense over time. We attended conferences, workshops, and webinars; learned about projects and research studies; read materials and watched videos; served on committees and task forces; asked lots of questions; and above all met and talked with people from many NGOs, countries, and disciplines within the sector. We built relationships and saw how much we all had to offer each other, highlighting our mutual emphases and goals.

In short, the global health sector, especially the global *mental* health (GMH) part of it, which lies within the much larger human health sector, gradually became more familiar, less foreign, and even less perplexing. So the moral of this short account is to be encouraged as you cross into sectors and subsectors. Maintain your core values and worldview, but be open to new ideas. With time you will learn to navigate your way around the relevant parts of the sectoral terrain—and the sectoral sky!

Member Care: Going Macro

Crossing sectors fits well with the macro member care model from Doing Member Care Well. This model is used internationally and includes five concentric spheres: master care, self/mutual care, sender care, specialist care, and network care (O'Donnell 2002, p. 16). I am updating it here to include a sixth surrounding sphere, sector care (see fig. 2). This sixth sphere (and its four sectors) is permeable and overlaps with all the other spheres. All spheres thus can potentially influence each other via helpful exchanges of information, resources, people, etc. for mutual support, learning, and collaboration. Bringing all six spheres together in this new way reinforces the global purview and relevance of the member care field.

Each sphere in the member care model is summarized with a one-paragraph "Good Practice Principle" (ibid., ch. 1). Here is the summary for Sphere 6, sector care: People with member care responsibility in mission/aid stay in touch with sectors that are relevant for their work. They are willing to cross into new areas—emphases, projects, disciplines, and fields within related sectors—for mutual learning, exchanging resources, and developing skills. Crossing sectors includes a continuum of involvement which is carefully considered in view of one's primary focus in member care: being informed by, integrating with, and/or immersing in a given sector or part of a sector.

I think that intentionally crossing sectors is the next developmental phase for the member care field. What are some resources/practices and challenges/problems within these sectors? What can we learn from each other? How can our experiences in these sectors help us improve our member care efforts for supporting and managing mission/aid staff? We are entering into some new terrain while at the

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