

Discover News-sheet – December 2014



We say that Christmas is a time of peace ...

.... but today there is so much conflict in the world.

A Kenyan lady said, “If you train your eye to see and celebrate the positive, you develop a different sort of consciousness and the ability to multiply that good:”

A Nigerian proverb says, “In the moment of crisis, the wise build bridges and the foolish build dams.”

I rejoice that many have had the experience that their training has built bridges between people who have experienced mistrust or even conflict: people of different tribes, people of different religions, even men and women!

The topics of nutrition, hygiene, organic gardening and the use of medicinal plants are important for everybody.

Visit to Ghana

In October I visited Ghana with Jutta Krauss. George Zokli, who is an agriculturalist and moringa expert, was with us the whole time.

We had many good experiences. I attach my report. Highlights were:

1. A visit to the CHIPS peace project. They run a herbal clinic, teach children to wash their hands properly and have set up tippy-taps outside the toilets in 25 schools! In an area of tension their work not only improves health but also helps to bring a divided community together.
2. Learning that a compress of charcoal and cornflour helps to relieve muscular pains and sprains. See below.
3. Seeing compost toilets. They use no water, do not smell and provide good fertiliser.
4. Our training group was visited by the Director of the Centre for Scientific Research into Plant Medicine. Ghana takes plant medicine seriously, and that institution takes our training seriously too.
5. This centre has produced an effective anti-malarial medicine from a locally growing medicinal plant – *Cryptolepis sanguinolenta*. There are certainly other very effective locally growing anti-malarial plants in African other countries waiting to be discovered, or rediscovered, and proven!



A saying from the Ewe tribe in Ghana and Togo, “No one person has all knowledge, just as no one person can put his arms round a baobab tree.

We learn from each other!

A poultice for relieving muscular pains and sprains

Quantities: 250ml water, 2 heaped tablespoons of cornflour and 3 of pounded charcoal. Heat water, stir in the cornflour and charcoal. Allow to cool.

Spread on a clean cloth, wrap around or place on the affected area, cover with very thin plastic sheet to keep the moisture in, and secure with a bandage. Leave for at least 2 hours, better 3 or 4. Charcoal is the active ingredient, it draws out the toxins. The cornflour gives the right consistency.

Did you know that cinnamon helps to give relief from arthritis?

Mix half a teaspoon of cinnamon powder with a teaspoon of honey and take every morning on an empty stomach for 7 days.

Training tip No. 2

Always bear in mind, we remember

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 70% of what we say
- 90% of what we say and do

What does this mean? It is clear – when training, we must make everything as visual and experiential as possible.

If people make soap and ointments in groups, they will remember almost everything. If they see a demonstration, they will remember a lot. Whatever a person says him or herself, they will remember it. But if they only listen to you – most things are forgotten.

In summary – make your teaching as practical as possible!

Kawira Njeru appeared on Kenyan radio and television

Kawira is Kenyan, lives in Germany and is Vice-Chair of Discover.

She believes passionately that African people must value their own skills, their tradition and their resources. She has written poems and stories which lament the loss of clean water in the streams and trees on the hillsides. She appeals to Africans to be true to themselves and their traditions.

Kawira appeals for a change in attitude in Africa. “We must believe in ourselves and cherish our resources, skills and traditions. Make nutritious traditional porridge instead of buying white bread, make sisal mats instead of buying cheap carpet imports, make traditional reed bags and refuse supermarket plastic bags, use the power of the sun to heat water and grow and use our wonderful fruits, traditional vegetables and medicinal plants!”

What is new in your work? Please let me know! Maybe others would be interested too!

Finally – I wish you all and your families a very happy Christmas and all the very best for your work in the New Year. I look forward to keeping in touch with you all.

Keith Lindsey

I wish to acknowledge a very creative organisation in Kenya for some ideas in this newsletter: TICAH (Trust for Indigenous Culture and Health <http://ticahealth.org>)

