

Third Culture Kids: A Mother's Perspective

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As the Boeing 747 sped down the runway, Erika sat inside the seatbelt secure, her chin propped against a clenched fist, staring out the window until the final sights of her beloved Singapore disappeared from view. *How can it hurt so much to leave a country that isn't even mine?* Erika closed her eyes and settled back into the seat, too numb to cry the tears that begged to be shed. *Will I ever come back?* For nearly half of her twenty-three years, she had thought of Singapore as home. Now she knew it wasn't- and America hadn't felt like home since she was eight years old. *Isn't there anywhere in the world I belong?* she wondered.¹

This excerpt, which serves as an introduction to David Pollack and Ruth E. Van Reken's book, *The Third Culture Kid Experience*, seems to encapsulate the emotions felt by thousands of Third Culture Kids on any given day. Caught between a familiar host culture and an often unfamiliar home culture, the third culture kid is forced to wade through a multitude of conflicting emotions.

The term third culture kid (TCK) refers to a person who has lived outside of his or her parents' culture for a significant portion of his or her developmental years. "The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background."² The designation TCK emerged out of the research of two social scientists, John and Ruth Hill Useem, who first developed the term third culture in the 1950's to refer to Americans who were living in India and the lifestyle that they had formed as an amalgamation of their home and host culture.³

The topic of TCKs is extremely salient to this writer who is a mother of two TCKs as both of her children have lived the majority of their lives overseas. As such, I am keenly aware that their lives bear the indelible mark of cross-cultural life. The various writings in the field of

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cross-cultural nomads suggest that the TCK life yields a number of benefits; however, it also presents TCKs with a number of possible hurdles that they must learn to navigate throughout the course of their lives.

As a Pentecostal mother and missionary, I rely heavily on the Holy Spirit to work and guide my family and myself. I pray for my children regularly and I look to God for guidance in developing their God-given gifts and talents. I am keenly aware that it is only God's spiritual empowerment that will enable me to face the inevitability of sending my kids back to the U.S. for college, while my husband and I remain behind (which has recently happened with our eldest child). However, I also see it as my parental responsibility to pair my faith with informed action in terms of preparing my children for the likely obstacles of adjusting to life in their "home" culture. While the lifestyle can present significant challenges to the TCK, experts are also confident that the ill effects of these challenges can be mitigated if the TCK and parents of TCKs are well-educated and adequately prepared to meet them.

The purpose of this essay is to delineate those characteristics that define a third culture kid and his or her life experience. First, the essay will address the origins of the term TCK. Second, the various benefits and corresponding challenges of the TCK lifestyle will be outlined. Next, this writer will address the two issues of rootlessness and restlessness and the difficulty of maintaining close relationships as the most significant threats to adult third culture kids (ATCKs). Then, this essay will explore attachment theory and its possible implications for the counseling of ATCKs, as well as, how attachment theory can assist missionary kids in their attachment to God. Finally, this writer will explain how TCKs can benefit from interaction with other TCKs as a way of establishing normalcy and how successful reentry can be facilitated.

What is a TCK?

Prior to WWII, children from the United Kingdom represented the largest majority of children living outside of their home culture because of the U.K.'s extensive colonial holdings around the world. However, the end of the war brought an influx of U.S. parents to foreign lands as they were called upon to aid in the reconstruction of Europe and to assist with the various needs of developing nations. Consequently, the number of internationally mobile children rose exponentially with these developments. What's more, the end of the Cold War marked a turning point toward greater globalization as still larger numbers of families relocated abroad to assist in

the management of global economic markets.⁴ Of course, the opening of heretofore closed countries attracted a number of missionaries as well.

To meet the needs of an increasing demographic of internationally mobile students, international schools were established in numerous population centers around the world.⁵ It was in this international school environment that Ruth Hill Useem first went to study expatriate families in India. She was working for The Institute of International Studies in Education at Michigan State University, which served to research the needs of overseas schools. At that time, the 1960 Census reported that 200,000 American school-aged children lived outside of the country; however, little data or resources were available to service these children or the schools that educated them.⁶ From that time on, Useem devoted her life to the study of TCKs and traveled to over 70 countries for the purpose of staying abreast of overseas education and expatriate children. As mentioned earlier, Useem and her husband coined the term TCK to refer these children. Useem speaks of her special affection for TCKs, "I have a continuing love affair with Third Culture Kids (TCKs). They are all my children because they carry my name. They are the most interesting people because their rich inner lives belie their often bland, dull, and sometimes wary, presentation of themselves to others."⁷

At the end of the 1990's, the number of Americans living abroad had grown to an estimated 3.2 million according to the US State Department.⁸ Undoubtedly, this sizeable number indicates the importance of understanding those people who are impacted by their experience of living abroad as most TCKs eventually return to their home country as adults. It should be noted that TCKs typically fall into four subgroups: military, diplomacy, business and missionary or non-profit work.⁹ As such, differences do exist in terms of their acculturation level and their exposure to Western sociocultural norms; however, research does suggest that despite their differences they also share a great number of similarities.

In 1993, Useem, along with her husband Dr. John Useem, Dr. Ann Baker Cottrell and Dr. Kathleen Finn Jordan, conducted a study of adult-TCKs (ATCKs) for Newlinks, the newspaper of International Schools Services. The study was conducted on ATCKs who were between the ages of 25 and 90 who currently resided in the United States. The researchers were overwhelmed when nearly 700 people responded to their lengthy questionnaire. The study was designed to determine what trajectory the ATCKs' lives took after their overseas experience and it uncovered some notable trends.¹⁰

First, TCKs are four times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than those children who come up through the typical American educational system. While only twenty-one percent of the American population attends college, eighty-one percent of ATCKs finish college with half of those continuing on to graduate and post-graduate degrees.¹¹ Nonetheless, it should be noted that a considerable percentage of respondents reported changing colleges or majors two or three times. Furthermore, though many said that they felt well or better prepared educationally, they often felt out of synch with their American peers in most other aspects of life.¹²

Secondly, the study revealed that many of the ATCKs experienced prolonged or delayed adolescence; prolonged in the sense that many found it hard to decide what to do with their lives and delayed in terms of rebelling against conventional roles later in life. For example, the ATCK may resign from a high-paying position to go back to school to become a teacher. The researchers noted that this prolonged/delayed adolescent behavior usually suggests that the ATCK is attempting to bring order out of what he or she perceives as chaos.¹³

Thirdly, the ATCK respondents reported that they often have some problem relating to their own ethnic group. In fact, ninety percent felt that they had a greater awareness and understanding of other people and cultures than the average Americans. Most felt that they were more adaptable and more equipped to solve problems because of their overseas experience. While most did not feel isolated from their American culture, they did feel markedly different and unable to fully identify with others of their home culture.¹⁴

Finally, the study revealed that the majority of ATCKs continue to maintain a global dimension throughout their lives. Forty-three percent said that their TCK experience affected their choice of a major in college. Some made choices based on their experience in other countries, such as choosing economics because of one's exposure to poverty in less developed nations; however, others made their choices solely out of the desire to get back overseas again.¹⁵ This tendency to want to move on to other things speaks to the feeling of rootlessness that is so prevalent among TCKs. We will explore this tendency in more depth later in this essay.

Benefits and Corresponding Challenges

Pollock and Van Reken's book, *The Third Culture Kid Experience*, is viewed as the premier resource for understanding TCKs. The authors point out a number of benefits and corre-

sponding challenges of the TCK experience. Many of these will echo the findings of the heretofore mentioned research project. The life experience of TCKs gives them an expanded worldview, which allows them to view life from different philosophical and political perspectives.¹⁶ Since their overseas experience gives them another perspective, TCKs may face the challenge of confused loyalties when they return home. Unfortunately, this can cause others to view them as unpatriotic and even arrogant.¹⁷

Additionally, TCKs typically have a three dimensional view of the world that allows them to see, touch and smell situations that other Americans can only view on the television. As such, they are often able to breathe life into their work because of their well-informed life experiences. This is especially true for those who are gifted in writing. Nevertheless, this ability to see past the television screen also brings the painful reality that suffering exists. What's more, many TCKs have experienced pain and suffering firsthand and find their recollections hard to take.¹⁸

Cross-cultural enrichment is yet another benefit of the TCK life. Many TCKs feel a sense of ownership of other cultures and have learned the deeper reasons behind why other cultures operate the way they do. However, while they are often more versed in other cultures, they can be quite ignorant of the cues and morays of their own home culture. For example, humor often does not translate across cultures, which can cause the TCK to feel extremely isolated if everyone is laughing but them.¹⁹

Cross-cultural living lends itself to adaptability. TCKs often use the term chameleon to refer to their ability to observe and quickly change their appearance, way of relating, speech and cultural practices to better fit those around them.²⁰ Obviously, this ability is a necessity as they are often required to move back and forth between their home and host culture several times during their adolescence. In the past in one three-year period, my own children have lived in three countries and have attended three different schools. However, this lifestyle of continuous transition can also lead to a lack of cultural balance as some TCKs can find it hard to figure out their own value systems in the multicultural mix.²¹

Why is it Important to Identify a Person as a TCK?

TCKs are typically members of well-educated and high achieving families and thus have the potential to become leaders on national and international scales.²² However, in order to reach

their highest potential they must navigate past certain obstacles that are inherent to the TCK experience. A recent graduate gives words to some of the potential problems that TCKs can face when he writes, "I was born in Switzerland. I lived in Spain, Sweden, and Brazil. My dad's Swiss. My mom's American. I'm not Brazilian, Swiss, American, Spanish. I'm eighteen. I'm lost."²³ While several benefits and challenges have already been mentioned, there are two characteristics that prove most challenging to a TCK's adjustment to adult life: feelings of rootlessness and restlessness, and difficulty in maintaining close relationships.

A number of the respondents in the aforementioned ATCK study noted that they continue to feel rootless and alienated, and that these feelings make it difficult for them to commit to places and people.²⁴ TCKs often develop a migratory instinct that can stay with them throughout adulthood.²⁵ There can be a constant expectation that the next job, the next school or the next home will be better. TCKs may hold an unrealistic attachment to the past or the persistent expectation that the next thing will be better than the current one.²⁶ What's more, while TCKs may adapt well to whatsoever situation they encounter, it is quite likely that they will never fully integrate.²⁷ Van Reken explains this feeling of alienation in her book *Letters Never Sent*, "No one else here grew up with cement floors, non-flush toilet receptacles that were emptied every day by a trap door to the outside, or lizards running through their homes. Will the feeling that I come from a different world ever completely die?"²⁸

Pollock and Van Reken explain how the simple question "Where are you from?" can strike fear in the heart of a TCK.²⁹ This question is often difficult for TCKs to answer because the idea of home portrays an emotional place- a place of belonging. Unfortunately, many ATCKs eventually come to the realization that they can never go home because they have lived in so many different places, attended a variety of schools and never had the opportunity to become fully attached to any one of them.³⁰

A research study was performed on the families of forty-five 8th grade students who attended a private, international school in Southern England. The purpose of the study was to determine the impact of globalization on the lives of internationally mobile families. The findings of the study suggest that TCKs are rootless in a geographical sense; therefore, the family unit must serve as their anchor. Consequently, it is incumbent on the family to provide the grounding or rooting for the child.³¹ However, this strong sense of a family unit may elude the TCK who must attend boarding school away from his or her family.

Besides rootlessness and restlessness, TCKs can find it hard to maintain close relationships. Gerner and Perry report that many international communities abroad experience a thirty percent turnover each year, which means that an average of 100,000 students a year return to their home countries or move to another country.³² Of course, this yearly transition of children speaks to the fact that TCKs are constantly saying goodbye. Because of these frequent, painful goodbyes, some TCKs can become unwilling to risk emotional involvement.³³

Pollock and Van Reken point out three ways that TCKs learn to respond to protect themselves from the pain of losing a relationship. Some attempt to limit their vulnerability to impending grief by refusing to admit that they care. Until these persons become willing to feel the pain of loss, they often are left to feel the pain of isolation that can be much worse to take. Van Reken writes of this unwillingness to feel the pain of loss prior to marrying her husband David, "As much as I love David, inside there is a holding back. If I stay prepared for him to be taken, it won't hurt so much when it happens. And if I hold back, maybe God won't notice that I'm almost totally happy and He'll let me keep Dave."³⁴ Still others develop a quick release instinct whereby they let go too soon when a separation is impending. This tendency may even carry over to dealing with temporary separations; such as, the wife who regularly picks a fight with her husband before he leaves on a short business trip. Finally, others will refuse to feel pain at all and thus they fail to acknowledge the pain of others. This refusal can result in a flat emotional response, which can transfer to all areas of life. The authors point out that this withdrawal from emotion can devastate a marriage relationship when the person seems unwilling or unable to respond warmly to external demonstrations of love.³⁵

Attachment Difficulties: Considerations for Counseling TCKs

David Pollock regularly conducted seminars to educate persons about the unique issues surrounding the Third Culture lifestyle. He writes about how after seminars directed toward members of the psychiatric profession, therapists have often redefined the topic by reframing it in psychological terms. One therapeutic model that often surfaces is attachment theory.³⁶ Attachment theory was formulated by John Bowlby after he had studied the effects of separation on children who were orphaned in postwar Europe. His theory suggests that infants are social from the beginning and form attachment behaviors that are focused on particular individuals or a small group of individuals.³⁷

Attachment theory provides a useful link between development and counseling because one's attachment relationships become an integral part of one's interpersonal behavior.³⁸ When a person develops insecure working models, attachment theorists believe that person can develop emotional and behavioral difficulties in adolescence and adulthood.³⁹ Bowlby maintained that a developing person requires an appropriate interchange between systems that are stress-reducing and familiar-preserving and those systems that are novel and information-seeking. "The former (e.g. systems regulating attachment to conspecifics or to a home base and systems regulating fear of the strange) increase safety whereas the latter increase available information but may put the individual at risk."⁴⁰ Undoubtedly the nature of the TCK lifestyle as one of constant change can upset the interplay between familiar, normalized practices and novel, information-seeking practices leaving the TCK vulnerable to relational difficulties.

One research study was performed to determine how one's attachment orientation affects one's coping processes in relation to current distress. The study of fifty-five college students concluded that insecure attachment orientations can dispose a person to less effective coping, which in turn can cause even greater levels of distress. Furthermore, the researchers determined that a significant amount of some students' distress likely had developmental roots in their orientations toward intimate relationships and how close or distanced they managed those relationships.⁴¹ As mentioned earlier, TCKs can have significant relational problems due to the many painful goodbyes during their developmental years. Undoubtedly, relational difficulties can cause stress for them in every other area of their lives as well.

In terms of counseling a TCK who is experiencing difficulties, Bowlby points out that one's perceived irrational responses are better comprehended when viewed from the perspective of that person's life history.⁴² Consequently, the more versed a counselor is in the issues of TCKs the more likely he or she will be able to frame a TCK's behavior. Bowlby was aware that societal supports aid in the development of secure attachment relationships.⁴³ Obviously, the awareness of one's TCK status would alert the counselor to the possibility that the counselee may have grown up in a country with vastly different cultural and relational norms. "What counts as social competence varies substantially from one culture to another."⁴⁴

Pollock suggests that therapists can help TCKs in a number of ways. First, they can help TCKs to uncover their hidden losses. Many ATCKs do not realize that the many separations that they have experienced throughout their lives contribute to their feelings of grief and loss.⁴⁵ The

therapist can help the ATCK to chart his or her patterns of childhood mobility to pinpoint times of transition, separation or loss that he or she needs to readdress to receive healing. Secondly, the therapist needs to recognize the impact of the system in which the TCK may have grown up. Organizational systems, such as military, mission or business, can have a huge impact on the ATCK's outlook. Some ATCKs may react with anger at the policies that they believe took away their choice or freedom, while other ATCKs may mourn the safety and comfort that these systems provided. Finally, the therapist can help the ATCK to work through the paradox of the TCK lifestyle. It can be hard for the ATCK to acknowledge the pain that he or she feels as a result of his or her life experience because he or she may feel that doing this would negate the many good aspects of his or her cross-cultural experience. The therapist can help by affirming the positive elements, while helping the ATCK to pinpoint the stressful points as well. "It is also helpful to remind them once more that if there hadn't been so much good to lose, there often wouldn't have been so much grief at its passing."⁴⁶

As mentioned before, missionary kids (MKs) are one subsection of TCKs who possess their own unique set of experiences. For example, missionary kids by nature often possess strong religious convictions. However, some international schools can be quite hostile toward Christian influences because they are attended by students from a host of religious backgrounds.⁴⁷ This was the case for my children when they attended an international school in Vientiane, Laos. The school would often go overboard to safeguard itself from any appearance of religious preference; however, this often meant that the Buddhist practices of the host culture were overly promoted as cultural, educational opportunities.

Consequently, MKs not only grapple with the issues of being TCKs, but they must also determine how to navigate their faith as well. Maureen Miner points out that our subjective experience of God is influenced by situational and cultural factors.⁴⁸ In fact, psychological theories suggest that our attachment to God is often shaped by our early relationships. Therefore, it is incumbent on the parent to provide a consistent loving example to his or her MK in the face of numerous moves and transitions. By promoting secure attachments with their children, parents of MKs are performing a spiritual task of developing a means by which their children can experience a relationship with God.⁴⁹

Establishing Normalcy and Facilitating Reentry

Reentry stress surfaces as one of the primary adjustment hurdles for TCKs who have reached the age where they must return to their home countries, possibly for good. In the ATCK study many reported that felt like they didn't fit in with their peers when they returned home to attend college.⁵⁰ Many experience reverse culture shock when they are forced to re-adjust to their home culture after living in a foreign environment.⁵¹ In fact, sociologists who have tracked the experience of TCKs contend that re-entering one's birth country is often more difficult than living as a foreigner in another country. Van Reken explains, "When I was in Nigeria, I knew who I was—I was a foreigner, and everyone knew that....When I came back to the States, everyone looked at me and thought I was American. I was expected to be like everyone else. I looked like the people in my community in Chicago, but I had learned a different set of rules."⁵²

In fact, in some areas of the United States, such as the American Midwest, people can actually resent attempts to raise international awareness. As such, TCKs can find it hard to share their experiences of living abroad. People who have lived in one locality for generations can be quite inward-looking and even insensitive to the differences of other cultures.⁵³ When a TCK answers the question, "Where are you from?" by listing off the various countries in which he or she has lived the home country peer may interpret his answer as strange or bragging. Then, the TCK may be labeled as strange or weird.⁵⁴

It is essential that parents and professionals help TCKs work through the pressures of reentry because failure to validate their feelings can result in significant stress or worse can lead to clinical levels of depression and alienation. Gerner and Perry suggest that school psychologists should know the pressure points and intervene constructively when a student has been internationally mobile.⁵⁵ While professionals can play an important role in TCK adjustment, the direct involvement of parents is most crucial. "The delicate 'root system' of the global nomad's life- based on relationships, not geography-needs to be tended."⁵⁶

Research shows that there are a number of ways that parents can significantly impact their TCK's successful reentry into the home culture. Retaining a house in a one's home country can help to stabilize an internally mobile child and build a sense of permanence.⁵⁷ Obviously, this option is not economically feasible for many; especially missionaries who often are some of the lowest paid international travelers. However, McLachlin does suggest actively cultivating roots with one's extended family. She quotes Dr. Elmore Rigamer, Director of the Office of

Medical Services, U.S. Department of State, who says, "...A sense of roots...a sense of connection with the extended family and the home are all very important. You cannot give these up. The children really need to be rooted or grounded in their home culture. They need to spend time with their extended family."⁵⁸ This writer has found this to be especially true for her own two TCKs. Although, my husband and I have never owned a home in the U.S., we have always spent our furlough years and vacations in the same location near grandparents and a home church. Consequently, my children identify very closely with that area and have grown up alongside other kids from the church who always know them and remember them even when we have been away for years at a time.

Emily Hervey conducted a study of 109 missionary kids (MKs) to determine what effect their childhood transitions had on their adjustment to college. She found that MKs who had had negative or traumatic experiences in their earlier years of development had a more difficult time adjusting to college. Moreover, those who grew up interacting less with their American/Canadian peers had more adjustment issues in reentry, while those who maintained closer contact felt more connected to current trends and individual relationships when they returned to their home country.⁵⁹

Hervey suggests that parents take steps to help their children make smooth transitions when leaving one place for another. They can do this by establishing traditions and allowing their children to openly express their feelings of sadness. Furthermore, parents should strive to decrease their children's isolation as much as possible and allow their children to embrace their home culture via e-mail, phone calls, packages and letters. Finally, parents can facilitate the reentry process by briefing family and friends on their MK's cultural perspective.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, Hervey contends that the majority of stressors remain for years after the TCK reenters his or her home country. So, parents must continue to offer support to their children, rather than assuming that they will fully adjust after their first year home.⁶¹

Besides the reentry process, the establishment of normalcy can also be extremely important for the TCK's adjustment back in the home culture. As one TCK explains, "I just want to fit in...I don't like to be pink in a green field."⁶² Hervey suggests that TCKs are greatly benefited when they come to understand that their feelings of foreignness to their own home culture are normal. What's more they are empowered when they are offered useful tools to help them navigate the change and build relationships in spite of their considerable differences.⁶³

Brice Royer, himself a TCK who lived in seven countries before he turned eighteen, founded the TCKID website to give TCKs a sense of belonging. Started in 2007, the website currently has over 21,000 members and operates local groups for TCKs in over fifty countries worldwide. In addition, TCKID offers teleconferences through TCK Academy where people can sign up to receive insight from various experts in the field, such as Ruth Van Reken, Robin Pascoe (author of *Homeward Bound* and *Moveable Marriage*) and Donna Musil (director and producer of *Brats: Our Journey Home*). Royer believes that TCKs have the potential to impact our globalized world if they are allowed to reach their fullest potential. As an example, the website lists a host of famous TCKs, such as: Barack Obama, Reese Witherspoon, Glenn Close and Keanu Reeves.⁶⁴

Why is this website and others like it so important? Because TCKs need to know that, "they are not victims of being raised in another country."⁶⁵ As Matthew Neigh of Barnabas International explains, they do need to understand that they have choices.⁶⁶ Like TCKID, there are a considerable number of organizations that exist to help TCKs cope. What's more, the increased modernization and availability of the internet, worldwide news networks and Western media also help to ease the TCK's transition. However, TCKs still need to actively prepare themselves for the transition to their passport country, because they are often not accepted like the mainstream and those people that do readily offer them friendship may very well be those who themselves are not part of the mainstream.⁶⁷

Colleges and universities are also beginning to take notice of TCKs and their potential; however, they are also becoming aware that they differ greatly from their domestic counterparts.⁶⁸ For instance, Lewis & Clark University now includes TCKs in its two day international students' orientation. They explain that they do this for two reasons. First, they feel it is important that TCKs see that they have a peer group on campus. Secondly, they believe that it is essential that the staff and faculty know that they exist.⁶⁹ Gerner and Perry contend that colleges and universities must not only help TCKs network with others, but they should also explain how they should relate to others who do not share their international experiences. What's more, they can assist them in choosing courses of study that affirm their interests and help them to connect with organizations that understand their particular situation, such as Global Nomads International.⁷⁰

Pollock and Reken point out that the act of putting a name to their past gives many ATCKs a whole new perspective. Often, the concept of normality frees them to make changes and begin the process toward self discovery because they gain a sense of belonging. Once a TCK understands that his or her present has been influenced by his or her past experiences, he or she is free to make an honest assessment. The authors suggest several areas that TCKs can explore: their behavioral patterns, their fears, their losses, their wounds and their choices.⁷¹

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the TCK lifestyle is full of unique experiences and opportunities that indelibly shape the TCK's personality. TCKs grow up with an expanded world view and a deeper understanding of the world than those from their home country who have never lived abroad. However, their cross-cultural experiences can also affect their ability to readjust to their passport countries after years abroad.

Frequently, TCKs feel like they don't fit in when they must reenter their home culture. They often experience feelings of rootlessness and restlessness that can manifest in a number of ways. Manifestations of these feelings are felt most by the ATCK's close family members. Parents can help to mediate these feelings by establishing roots for their TCK children during their development through encouraging regular contact with people and trends from their home country and establishing the family unit as the child's root system.

Additionally, TCKs typically bear the affects of multiple painful goodbyes throughout the course of their lives. Consequently, parents must actively facilitate their TCK's transitions so that these goodbyes are dealt with and grieved over at the time that they occur. Allowing the TCK to grieve over lost relationships keeps him or her from internalizing the pain and carrying it into subsequent adult relationships.

TCKs can benefit significantly from contact with other TCKs. As the definition of TCK suggests, the TCK's sense of belonging is found only with those who share his or her experience. Consequently, the concept of normalcy is extremely valuable for the TCK. Once TCKs realize that their feelings are normal and shared by a host of others who have also grown up cross-culturally, they are free to examine how their present lives and outlooks have been shaped by their past experiences.

TCKs are full of potential in our increasingly globalized world; however, their potential can only be realized as they successfully navigate the hurdles that threaten to disrupt their full adjustment into life back in their home countries. Parents, educators and therapists can successfully bridge their transition from host to home culture if they are properly educated to their unique characteristics and viewpoints. As such, Pentecostal missionary parents should look to the knowledge and resources that experts in the field have accrued as valuable gifts and seek ways to integrate and utilize this important information with their children. This does not mean that the TCK is ever molded or becomes like others from his or her home culture, rather he or she gains the necessary tools to adjust and live productively in a new culture. What's more, spirit-filled TCK's are better enabled to see how God has uniquely molded them and fashioned them through their cross-cultural experiences and how the Holy Spirit can continue to develop their unique insights for ministry and Christian life in various arenas.

¹ David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken, *The Third Culture Kid Experience: Growing Up Among Worlds*, (Yarmouth: Intercultural Press, 1999): 5.

² Ibid., 19.

³ Ibid., 21.

⁴ Debra Ann McLachlan, "The Impact of Globalization on Internationally Mobile Families: A Grounded Theory Analysis", *The Journal of Theory Construction & Testing* 9, no. 1: 14 (14-20).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ruth Useem, "Third Culture Kids: Focus of Major Study," [Http://www.iss.edu/pages/kids.html](http://www.iss.edu/pages/kids.html), 2.

⁷ Ibid., 3

⁸ David Holmstrom, "Strangers in Their Own Land", *Christian Science Monitor*, (November 1998): 1 (1-3).

⁹ Emily Hervey, "Cultural Transitions During Childhood and Adjustment to College", *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 28, no.1 (2009): 5 (3-12).

¹⁰ Useem, 3.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 4.

¹³ Ibid., 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵ Ibid., 10.

¹⁶ Pollock and Van Reken, 79.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 83-85.

¹⁹ Ibid., 86-89.

²⁰ Ibid.,92.

²¹ Ibid.,93.

²² Andy Fletcher, "The Homeless VIPs," *Christianity Today* 45, no.4 (March 5, 2001): 81 (80-82).

²³ Ibid., 80.

²⁴ Useem, 11.

²⁵ R. Pascoe, as quoted by McLachlan, 15.

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- ²⁶ Pollack and Van Reken, 125.
- ²⁷ H. Fail, as quoted by McLachlan, 15.
- ²⁸ Ruth Van Reken, *Letters Never Sent*, (Indianapolis: Self-published, 1988): 51.
- ²⁹ Pollack and Van Reken, 123.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 124.
- ³¹ McLachlan, 17.
- ³² Emily Gerner and Fred Perry, "Gender Differences In Cultural Acceptance and Career Orientation Among Internationally Mobile and Non-Internationally Mobile Adolescents," *School Psychology Review* 29, no. 2 (2000): 279 (267-283).
- ³³ Pollock and Van Reken, 141.
- ³⁴ Van Reken, 55.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 140-142.
- ³⁶ Pollack and Van Reken, 283.
- ³⁷ Inge Bretherton, "Bowlby's Legacy to Developmental Psychology," *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 28, no. 1 (Fall 1997): 33 (33-41).
- ³⁸ William Lyddon, Evan Bradford, and Jeanne Nelson, "Assessing Adolescent and Adult Attachment: A Review of Current Self-Report Measure," *Journal of Counseling & Development* 71, no. 4 (March/April 1999): 390 (390-394).
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 391
- ⁴⁰ Bretherton, 35.
- ⁴¹ Frederick Lopez, Anne Mauricio, Barbara Gormley, Tracy Simko, and Ellen Berger, "Adult Attachment Orientations and college Student Distress: The Mediating Role of Problem Coping Styles," *Journal of Counseling & Development* 79, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 459 (459-464).
- ⁴² Bretherton, 38.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 41.
- ⁴⁴ Fred Rothbaum, John Weisz, Martha Pott, Kazuo Miyake, and Gilda Morelli, "Attachment and Culture: Security in the United States and Japan," *American Psychologist* 55, no. 10 (October 2000): 1099 (1093-1104).
- ⁴⁵ Pollock and Van Reken, 284.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 287.
- ⁴⁷ Fletcher, 82.
- ⁴⁸ Hood, 1995, as quoted by Maureen Miner, "Back to the Basics in Attachment to God: Revisiting Theory in Light of Theology," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 35, no. 2 (2007): 113 (112-122).
- ⁴⁹ Miner, 120.

⁵⁰ Useem, 10.

⁵¹ Hervey, 4.

⁵² Darcia Harris Bowman, "Identities Blur for 'Third Culture Kids'," *Education Week* 20, no. 34 (May 9 2001): 3 (1-4).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁴ Michael Gerner and Fred Perry, 280.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ D. Pollack as quoted by McLachlan, 19.

⁵⁷ Pascoe as quoted by McLachlan, 17.

⁵⁸ Elmore Rigamer, as quoted in McLachlan, 18.

⁵⁹ Hervey, 10

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 11

⁶¹ *Ibid.*,10

⁶² Bowman, 1.

⁶³ Hervey, 11.

⁶⁴ Brice Royer, "How Do You Belong and Relate to People When They're So...Different?," <http://www.tckid.com/step2.html>, accessed on 20 October 2009.

⁶⁵ Holmstrom, 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁸ Recruitment and Retention in Higher Education, *International Education Report*, Magna Publications' newsletter, (April 2005): 1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷⁰ Gerner and Perry, 280.

⁷¹ Pollock and Van Reken, 271-275.