



FamilyLife® Global

News and information
from FamilyLife partners
around the world

Hope for Families Everywhere

China—Reaching Thousands through Video

Although they couldn't do large group teaching, maybe God could give them another avenue in which to teach..... Page 1

UK: Bringing Hope to Farsi-Speaking Communities

We can see their pains and want to bring Jesus's healing to them. ...Page 3

Calendar of Events.....Page 4

New Resource.. Page 5

US Hispanic Ministry— A Tale of Two Couples

Two couples, two stories, one great God at work Page 5

China—Reaching Thousands through Video

by Suzy Brown

Jennifer and Abe, FamilyLife volunteers and trained Weekend to Remember® Mandarin speakers, have felt the void in the past two years with COVID restrictions and strong religious persecution in their country. But what to do? With the number of divorces reaching over 41% in Shanghai alone, and many people feeling the drift of isolation, they wondered how the Lord might use them since being in-person is still not an option. But with new recent restrictions on religious content, they wondered how they could reach people with the good news that God can help hurting hearts.

Beginning March 1, China established new, tighter regulations for religious internet content. Content not inside the Chinese firewall is not accessible, and any content inside must be approved before broadcasting. Religious content from unapproved sources is banned. This has left the fate of many sites, including the FamilyLife Mandarin site jiatingshenghuo.com, uncertain.

After attending a Weekend to Remember (WTR) when they were a young couple, Jennifer and Abe were blessed by the conference and continued to have a passion to see their own marriage thrive as well

as marriages of their friends and coworkers. Over the years they have led many small groups and trainings for marrieds and singles. Their love for the Savior naturally flows out of their relationship, and they long to see others experiencing the goodness of God in their relationships. They are often contacted by others for help in their marriage, and they do a lot of marriage coaching and mentoring.

Last year a city asked them if it were possible to do a video presentation of a WTR.

They jumped at the chance and held a live question and answer after

China—Reaching Thousands through Video

the event. In their estimation, it was a very good conference and an easy way to get material and resources out to many in need.

Jennifer pondered how they could continue to do this on a larger scale and began to realize that although they can't do large group teaching, maybe God could give them another avenue in which to teach. With Abe's technology and video capability to broadcast, Jennifer had an idea. Why not produce relationship videos that touch on the issues so many are struggling with and then host a chat group to answer questions and follow up?

So began "HuaJie's video channel." Abe and Jennifer converted their basement into a broadcasting studio from where they produce relationship videos to be shown online. Because of the March 1 restrictions, they use self-censorship to tailor their videos to have them approved. So far, 30 videos have been approved and uploaded to a public WeChat video channel as well as XiGua (Watermelon), a social media website.



Abe and Jennifer's mascots are their little black dog, Yoyo, and little white dog, Doudou. Many people tune in to see their dogs and then stay tuned to learn about marriage and life.

Their videos have had 30,000 views in a four-month period. Each video is about 20 minutes long. The target audience is around 30 years old, and roughly 70% are single. Many are non-Christians looking for answers to some of life's most important decisions. One young man, Mr. Huo, was looking for such answers and stumbled upon the video series. He watched all the videos because he said he felt he deserved a good marriage after dealing with a broken relationship. He said he learned he needed to improve himself and become a better person instead of just looking for the right person.

Within smaller chat groups on WeChat and Watermelon, Jennifer is

able to tackle some tough issues and help people find resources they need to improve their relationships as well as tell them about the greatest relationship teacher, Jesus.

Abe and Jennifer consider their training with FamilyLife to be invaluable. The teaching that has most influenced them came from the talk at the WTR called "From Isolation to Oneness." It has helped them in their marriage, and they want to use what they've learned to help others. As they prepare each video as a couple, it helps them to see how together, they reflect God's image. They want to reflect that in their teaching as they encourage each other to be more like Christ and have a Christ-centered marriage. Their dream for the coming year is that more people will see the videos and experience God's love.

UK: Bringing Hope to Farsi-Speaking Communities

by Christine Daniel

Kia and Negin, born in Iran and now living in the UK, are passionate about helping people from the Farsi-speaking community. Their story has had its ups and downs, but they've seen God's faithfulness in their lives and ministry.

Negin grew up in a Muslim family in Iran. Her father died when she was thirteen; she was lonely, and life was hard. At twenty-seven she left everything and everyone she knew and went to Germany because of an arranged marriage. After two months of married life, her husband left.

Negin recalls, "I was shocked, deeply rejected, and didn't know what to do next. My brother who lives in London asked me to come to the UK and claim asylum. I arrived in 2006. I was hopeless, depressed, and lonely for a few months, and then I met some Iranians from Agapé [Cru's ministry in the UK] on a bus, inviting me to come to church. That was a divine moment, as I was searching for hope and a place for comfort."

Kia also had a dramatic entry to the UK, travelling illegally underneath a lorry.

"When I arrived in the UK in 1999, I claimed asylum and told lies to the government. I attended a church to gain knowledge about Christianity to support my asylum application, but what I learned changed my life completely.

"In 2000 I received a revelation from Jesus. He asked me to trust in Him fully and said He would set me free from my sin. Through His teaching I



understood that I could lie to anyone, but not Him. Jesus was offering me the freedom that I was looking for. His teaching and character changed my life. I repented from my sin and made my decision to follow Him.

"At the end of 2000, I wrote a letter to the government saying that I was a liar. I told them my true life-story and waited for their response. After two weeks they allowed me to stay in the UK as a refugee. That was a miracle. Jesus not only showed me His grace but also gave me a purpose to live."

Kia joined the staff of Agapé in 2003. He met Negin at church, and they were married in 2010.

Negin has a passion to help families. "God gave me His love and compassion towards women and couples from Iran. I have a desire to introduce Jesus to them. As I experienced hopelessness and rejection in my first marriage, I want to help others to have a godly marriage."

Kia explains, "Initially we ministered to those who needed help to cope with life in a new country and who needed the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we have seen firsthand the pressures that married life brings. We have seen lots of Iranian couples struggling in their relationship. However, there do not seem to be many people or Farsi resources available to help them."

Kia and Negin have been busy connecting with people from Farsi-speaking communities, including church leaders. They've also been working hard to make FamilyLife UK resources available in Farsi, such as the *Together* discipleship material for couples. This resource has been printed in an Islamic country as well as in Turkey and the UK last year.

When COVID lockdowns started, Kia and Negin built a recording studio in the dining room of their home, and they are working with Mohabbat TV, which provides biblical teaching and broadcasting services to Farsi speakers internationally. Their gospel-focused relationship ministry is reaching Farsi-speaking homes all over the world. They are currently in discussions to develop a 13-episode series on relationships. This opportunity will provide enormous reach and will be a great launch pad for the Farsi version of *Together*.

"We want to see each family of Farsi-speaking couples receive this teaching in Farsi and be blessed in their marriage," Kia and Negin express. "We can see their pains and want to bring Jesus's healing to them."

2022 Events Calendar

Please note that events may be cancelled or delayed due to COVID-19

Europe (Eastern)

Croatia	May 6-8, 2022	Weekend to Remember	Baška
Croatia	May 25, 2022	Parenting workshop	Zagreb
Croatia	May 27-29, 2022	Men's retreat	Gorski kotar
Slovenia	June 24-28, 2022	Men's hiking retreat	
Slovenia	June 27-July 1, 2022	Men's hiking retreat	
Slovenia	July 25-29, 2022	Men's hiking retreat	
Slovenia	July 28-Aug 4, 2022	Family camp	Veržej
Slovenia	Aug 5-12, 2022	Family camp	Veržej

Europe (Western)

Germany	May 7, 2022	Marriage seminar	Breitscheid
Germany	May 14, 2022	Marriage seminar	Burgstädt
Germany	May 21, 2022	Marriage seminar	Fulda
Germany	Jun 16-19, 2022	Bike and paddle tour	
Germany	Jul 1, 2022	Candlelight dinner	Mülsen
Germany	Aug 27, 2022	Marriage mentor training	(online)
Germany	Oct 8, 2022	Marriage seminar	Heinebach
Germany	Oct 15, 2022	Marriage mentor training	Burgstädt
Germany	Nov 12, 2022	Marriage mentor training	Giessen
Switzerland	May 14-15, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Zurich
Switzerland	May 20, 2022	Marriage course	
Switzerland	July 2-3, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Zurich
Switzerland	Sep 8, 2022	Marriage course	
Switzerland	Sep 16, 2022	Parenting course	
Switzerland	Sep 16-18, 2022	Weekend Getaway	Wildberg
Switzerland	Sep 19, 2022	Prepare/Enrich seminar	Zurich

North America

United States—Phone 1-800-358-6329 or www.familylife.com for a complete listing of conferences.

Canada	May 7, 2022	Marriage ministry workshop	(online)
Canada	May 13-15, 2022	Weekend to Remember	Moncton, NB

Oceania

Fiji	May 28, 2022	I Still Do	Suva
Fiji	Jun 18, 2022	Stepping Up	Suva
Fiji	Aug 20, 2022	Before You Leap	Suva
Fiji	Sep 17, 2022	I Still Do	Suva
Fiji	Oct 15, 2022	Art of Marriage	Suva
Fiji	Nov 19-20, 2022	Art of Marriage	Suva

Quotes from a recent event in Slovenia:

“Thank the Lord for these hours of grace. I haven’t heard so many encouraging and feasible pieces of advice in my daily life for a long time.”

“I really warmly recommend the seminar. It is full of testimonies of how God works in the life of every human being, no matter the circumstances.”

“Your seminar is something that fills the soul, something that helps to infuse strength for the days to come.”

New Resource

FamilyLife Online Courses

Creating lasting change in your most important relationships just got easier!

Check out our online courses for individuals or couples to help you elevate your marriage, parenting, and faith. How will you grow, together?

Pricing varies; visit <https://www.familylife.com/learn/> for more information!



US Hispanic Ministry—A Tale of Two Couples

by Jayna Richardson

When Paola Jairala received Christ in 2005, she began hoping and praying that her husband would have the same experience. She didn't have to wait long—one month later, Javico met the Lord as well.

"We both thought everything was going to change and that we would be happy forever!" says Paola. But they continued to face difficulties in their marriage just as they had prior to their conversion. Now they were following Jesus, but they didn't have tools to help them thrive in their marriage—until they learned about FamilyLife.

Through meeting FamilyLife volunteers (now staff) Eduardo and Diana Rivadeneira, the Jairalas began to experience FamilyLife's events and small groups for the first time. They listened as the Rivadeneiras shared their own testimony and pointed Javico and Paola to resources that had helped in their marriage.

"We got to know this beautiful FamilyLife ministry in which we were able to learn to improve our communication as a couple and to heal what was damaged in us," says Paola.

Over time God's Word convicted them of the things they needed to correct in their marriage to have the kind of relationship God intended. As they saw their marriage improve, they wanted to find a way to carry what they'd learned to others. They attended a FamilyLife training and began ministering throughout Fort Pierce, Florida, to other Spanish speakers (the Jairalas are originally from Ecuador) using tools such as The Art of Marriage®, The Art of Parenting®, and HomeBuilders®.



Although they've ministered to many individuals over the years, one stands out: their niece, Cristina. A few years ago, the Jairalas invited Cristina to come live with them and attend school in the US. She saw a difference in their marriage and saw the ways they were reaching and serving others with the help and hope of the gospel. Thanks to this, Cristina gave her life to Christ, too.

After graduating, Cristina won a scholarship to Germany, where she met Maximilian Hars. When they began dating, she told him that the most important person in her life was God. Cristina wanted to have the kind of relationship she had seen in her aunt and uncle. She and Max began praying together regularly.

"We've had many, many blessings due to that," says Cristina. "We've really felt that God was with us, giving us guidance for our future."

Cristina and Max got married on a beautiful boat in Miami. The wedding was a celebration of everything God had done—first in Paola and Javico's lives, and now in Cristina and Max's lives.

Regarding FamilyLife's influence, Cristina says, "FamilyLife has helped my family through rough years, and that led me to find a way to connect with God and have a deep relationship with Him. And now, it's helped us in our home."

Two couples, two stories, one great God at work!

