



Lizzie* joined Tumaini in 2022 after decades of living in French overseas territories. Whilst in the UK she trained in Creative Therapies and worked with women with complex PTSD. In 2019 she qualified as a psychotherapist and counsellor, and has worked with addiction recovery and trafficking survivors. She offers counselling in English and French.

Tumaini's website holds a gem of a video, the message? Maintenance is essential for good mental health, like an MOT for a car, it is even more important if there has been an accident or mechanical failure.

Adversity, ongoing or sudden, from childhood to adulthood is part of being human. Christians are encouraged to approach God and each other and ask: 'Help'.

If in addition as missionaries we live across languages and cultures, the different religious, political, social and economic systems of our host country – and of our colleagues – wear unfamiliar faces that need adjusting to, and under stress old wounds can surface. Phone and internet access and improved team care may decrease isolation, but in the initial years, much is confusing and alien, while over time repetitive strain, wear and tear occurs.

For medical workers risk of injury to morale from insufficient resources, high workload and avoidable deaths is high. And what of illness, unexpected life-changing events for the missionary – their children?

All good reasons to ask: 'Help'. Caring for others is in missionaries DNA, but do they know how to look after their own needs? It is important that they are resourced to stay healthy in normal and abnormal times on the field so they can keep serving.

Ephesians 2:10:

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Tumaini's resources include help with creating a personal health plan, and they are waiting for people to say: 'Help', to provide someone alongside, listening, supporting, to find a way through.

* name changed for security



*"What is the bravest thing you've ever said?" asked the boy.
'Help,' said the horse.
'Asking for help isn't giving up,' said the horse.
'It's refusing to give up.'*

Charlie Mackesey 'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse.'

One of the joys with Tumaini this last year has been working with those who have never wavered in their sense of call, but in saying 'Help' are starting to discover new freedom, renewed hope and joy in being and doing.

During my family's first 11 years as lone AIM missionaries in our country, annual visits from AIM leaders, participation in occasional AIM conferences were our MOT's; our relationships with God and those with us – all daily fuel in our tanks.

Whispers of Tumaini came through a book I read: 'Honourably Wounded: Stress among Christian workers' by Marjorie Foyle. It fascinated and appalled me – things could get that bad? Then suddenly they were. I staggered to the next MOT/visit, but the oil top-up from the book helped me hold on till I could start to move through, God assuring me he was big enough for my emotions.

Tumaini helped with their interventions to keep us on the field and journeyed with us through the ensuing years. That journey is part of why I am now on the staff at Tumaini.



READ MORE ABOUT TUMAINI AND LIZZIE* OR CONSIDER JOINING THEM

➤ tumainicounselling.net

They are currently looking for male counsellors for children and adults.

ABOUT TUMAINI

Tumaini is a Swahili word meaning "hope". Their Counselling Centres are staffed by mental health professionals who serve AIM, and missionaries from over 160 like-minded agencies throughout Africa. Their mission is to provide preventative and restorative mental health services to enhance missionary resilience and fruitfulness. They accomplish this through on-site care, distance counselling and other services, occasional travel, seminars, a loaning library, and other resources.

