

Risking It All in Medical Missions: Lessons from Dr. Dave Stevens

This handout provides practical insights and actionable steps from a recent Global Missions Health Conference podcast episode, focused on faith-driven service and cross-cultural medical missions.

1. Lean Into Discomfort to Grow in Faith & Service

- **Step Out of Your Comfort Zone:** The most profound spiritual and personal growth happens when you serve or work outside your normal environments—whether another culture, country, or new ministry setting.
- **Take Risks for a Purpose:** Don't let fears or comfort hold you back from God's calling. Be willing to "get out of the boat" and step forward in faith.

2. Pursue Hands-On Experience

- **Go on a Mission Trip (Short or Long-term):** Firsthand cross-cultural work is life-changing. Start with a short-term trip, but longer-term service allows full immersion and learning.
- **Students: Seek Internships Abroad:** Proactively pursue opportunities to serve in medical missions overseas whenever possible.

3. Don't Do Mission Alone: Invest in Community

- **Find Mentors & Role Models:** Surround yourself with experienced missionaries, healthcare professionals, or leaders who can guide, support, and inspire you.
- **Value Your Team and Family:** Serving alongside family or as part of a team creates lasting impact and helps manage emotional and spiritual challenges.

4. Manage Hardships With Faith and Support

- **Self-care is Critical:** Emotional weight is real in the field. Stay rooted in scripture, pray regularly, and seek counseling or support when needed.
- **Prepare for Emotional Load:** Witnessing suffering and loss can deepen compassion; process it with others without letting it overwhelm you.

5. Innovate and Mobilize Resources

- **Be Creative in Problem-Solving:** Limited resources can inspire innovation—starting community health programs, building infrastructure, and leveraging unexpected partnerships.
- **Network for Support:** Tap into organizations, churches, and foundations, even outside the traditional missions world.

6. Legacy: Inspire the Next Generation

- **Share the Experience with Family:** Serving together can shape the next generation for a life of service and cross-cultural understanding.
- **Model a Life of Risk & Faith:** Demonstrating willingness to take risks encourages others to follow suit.

7. Action Steps for Students & Early-Career Professionals

- **Take Practical Steps:**
 - Research and sign up for a mission trip (longer if possible).
 - Find a mentor in medical missions or cross-cultural ministry.
 - Say “yes” to opportunities that stretch or challenge you.
- **Be Willing to Fail, Learn, and Try Again:** Failure is part of growth and can lead to unexpected successes and innovation.

Key Takeaway

If God has placed a calling or burden on your heart, don't let fear make decisions for you. Step out, seek guidance, prepare practically, and be ready to see how God can provide, surprise, and sustain you when you choose to "risk it" for something greater.

For more resources and practical opportunities, visit CMDA.org and attend the Global Missions Health Conference each year!