

Eyre Mail

Roy & Becky Eyre Mar 2012 Leading Wycliffe Canada in serving the minority languages



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While interviewing with the search committee last year, I (Roy) expressed my desire to achieve work/life balance in this new role. That's a popular buzzword these days, an attempt to recognize that my job is not my life. But one committee member challenged my assumptions about achieving balance. Instead, he asked me how well I rebound. "When work and ministry get stressful, what does it take for you to recover?"

In her book, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, Ruth Haley Barton says healthy leadership is all about "rhythms":

When we keep pushing forward without taking adequate time for rest and replenishment, our way of life may seem heroic, but there is a frenetic quality to our work that lacks true effectiveness because we have lost the ability to be present.... When we are rested, however, we bring steady, alert attention that is characterized by true discernment about what is really needed in our situation, and the energy and creativity to carry it out.

What it comes down to is a simple mantra: Work Hard, Play Hard.

Work hard

This role has certainly been a challenge. While many of my experiences have been groundbreaking for me, a few are somewhat familiar, such as building diverse teams. I'm attempting to distribute the workload for a variety of challenges to include staff who haven't had opportunity to participate in strategic initiatives. Some of these initiatives we're working on:

- An effort to spruce up our older office building and move departments to strengthen the sense of teamwork.
- Developing a program to help staff transition back to Canada from overseas and assist staff in building their financial partnership teams.
- Developing a vision for a greater investment in Toronto, building around Tyndale University College to better prepare staff for cross-cultural work.
- Assembling a Stewardship & Development team to re-launch our ability to raise funds and better serve our donors.

In addition, our Leadership Team has been working through a planning process that will position Wycliffe Canada as a catalyst to forge strong relationships between the Church in Canada and minority language communities.

But the biggest challenge by far has been an international debate over the best way to do translation, specifically impacting Bible translation in Muslim contexts. The controversy has been fueled by an internet and email campaign that has stirred some pretty outrageous accusations against Wycliffe and SIL, our main operating partner for translation and literacy work. At times, I have been immersed in it. I'm grateful for my three years working at one of the top public relations and crisis communication firms in Atlanta. I leaned on that experience in a radio interview in January. And I have leaned on that experience in consulting with other Wycliffe leaders on our best strategies moving forward.

Cutting past all the misinformation and emotion, the fact remains that there are

Continued



Bible translation has always been controversial. On a recent trip to Europe, Roy discovered a tribute to early English translator William Tyndale, martyred in 1536.

Work Hard (continued)

differing opinions on whether translations should use a word-for-word approach (such as the NASB or ESV translations) or a meaning-based approach (such as the NLT). There are scholars and Muslim-background believers on both sides of the issue.

On March 23, I will be in New York City to meet with the World Evangelical Alliance, who have agreed to put together an international panel of respected theologians, scholars, translators and missiologists who will review and make recommendations regarding Bible translation practices. We are hoping this neutral panel will guide us in making any necessary adjustments to translation practices that will resolve this disagreement within the worldwide Church.

Please pray for this panel and that, after all the dust clears, there will be unity. Pray also for Wycliffe Canada, who has an important role to play in bringing people with diverse viewpoints together and making peace.

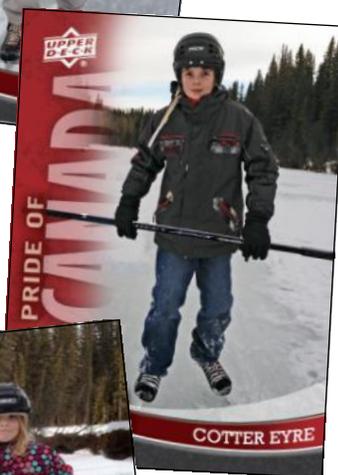


The kids have jumped into winter sports with both feet. Above and right: Kaitlyn strikes a pose at an ice sculpture exhibit on Lake Louise while Aidan and Cotter try the deeper powder we never got in Calgary this winter. Top right: Mom and Dad have no intention of becoming hockey parents. But it's fun to play around with Photoshop.

Play hard

One of the ways to balance the stress and hard work is to squeeze in a few mini-vacations along the way. We've managed to get out to the mountains a few times to introduce our kids to winter sports. In doing so, some of the differences between our kids emerge. For instance, Aidan enjoyed his brief exposure to cross-country skiing, while Cotter and Kaitlyn struggled a bit. Meanwhile, Kaitlyn absolutely loved the opportunity to skate on a frozen river, while the boys were more cautious; they have a longer way to fall! Recently we went for a visit to the finish line of Wycliffe Canada's adventure race, Race to 2025. Hiking out to view the racers climbing an ice waterfall, the kids took their usual positions: Cotter happily blazing our trail, walking stick in hand, and Aidan moving at his own pace, bringing up the rear.

Though I travel quite a bit, I try to find creative ways to bring my family along on my business trips when feasible. We're looking forward to a family road trip to Seattle and Vancouver at the end of March, where we'll combine work and play together, interspersing business meetings with visiting friends and fun sights along the way. We may not fully unpack our bags



when we return, because we're also looking forward to a trip to Atlanta and Orlando in late April. Becky and kids will fly to Atlanta while I'm in Thailand, and then I will meet up with them for a brief visit in both cities.

The kids are also practicing the "work hard/play hard" motto, making quite an effort to work ahead on their school work so they won't have to lug their books to Atlanta. Becky isn't complaining!

Please pray for Becky and the kids as they fly to Atlanta without me at the end of April and drive down to Orlando from there. And, please pray for safety as I travel to Thailand for Wycliffe's international conference.