



# be all **THERE**

*by Amy Rogers*

DOINGOOD Foundation

*While working on marketing materials* for a newly established family foundation called, DOINGOOD, I happened across a quote by the famous missionary, Jim Elliot. It went like this, “Wherever you are – be all there.” That resonated with me as I contemplated how to explain what it is I do these days. When asked to fill out forms for typical things like life insurance policies or back to school registration it is required to list your occupation. More often than not, I list “homemaker”. However, that never seems like the right adjective to describe what I do on a day to day basis. I worked in the technology sector until my oldest daughter was nearly three and have not been officially employed since that time nearly fifteen years ago. It was a blessing to have the opportunity to stay home and “be all there” for my three little girls. It was a gratifying as well as demanding season of life.



working 24/7 devoted to their families or doing the difficult job of balancing both. There are so many choices and ways to incorporate global awareness and serving others in a mother's day that my story should only serve as an example. There are many women doing incredible things with their individual gifts and talents while balancing various demands of life on their shoulders. The challenge for each of us is to accept wherever we are at this season of life and "be all there". Some times I fall desperately short of others expectations but for the most part I have learned to allow myself to be less than perfect while at the same time depending on God to carve out the time necessary to also be a mother figure to some precious Ugandan children who are imbedded in my heart. We have photos covering our refrigerator, my children know each of them by name, and we spend a lot of table talk discussing when we can return and who we can take with us on our next trip to Uganda.

In 2004 my husband and I decided to be purposeful about teaching our children stewardship. After all, we had been incredibly blessed in our careers and certainly had many comforts in our lives. Demonstration of sacrificial giving was difficult to teach our young girls because it consisted mostly of writing checks to various organizations. It went unnoticed for the most part. I decided to start to investigate how planned giving could be accomplished in a way that would be meaningful for our children. As a family we narrowed our selection to five organizations that we felt exemplified wonderful service to those less fortunate. We interviewed representatives to understand their mission and to share our heart for a family project that would allow direct participation from time to time. It was a great learning process and a great way to teach children generosity. We landed on a small non-profit organization called, Africa Village Ministries, and decided to work with them to design a school in Wamala, Uganda, for children who had been directly impacted by the AIDS pandemic. The journey started with a school building which allowed us to meet face to face some incredibly bright and loving children who now allow us to visit frequently and be part of their lives as they grow and have hope for a brighter future. Certainly our participation in Uganda has provided hope for many children there but it has also deeply impacted the lives of our own daughters and their friends. We didn't stop with one building and we continue to share in this ministry as a family unit. We have recently founded the DOINGOOD Foundation where we can funnel resources to specific projects that will enhance the lives of Ugandan children. As C.S. Lewis was once quoted, "Love is unselfishly choosing for another's highest good". That is what we are attempting to do not only for children on the other side of the world but also right here at home. We started with our children but by the grace of God we found a lot more families that care and want to put their faith in action while including their own children as helpers. We are a small organization and it can be difficult to harness the energy but we have been faithful to do a little bit every day and it gradually makes a difference for those that need it the most. May God inspire you to start a project or join a project through a local church, school, or organization. Wherever you happen to be today – be all there!

As my daughters grew, I decided to remain a "stay at home mom" but I also realized I could start to squeeze in additional activities that helped alleviate the part of me that missed the demands of my previous career. Adult conversations, collaborative team work, traveling to new places, and studying technology, were still of great interest. However, the desire to "be all there" for my daughters with an age span of nearly 10 years between the oldest and youngest required me to contemplate how I could do my very best at parenting while stretching myself to try new things. I think most women struggle with balance and each mother has to find the path that works best for her family. There are hundreds of books on this topic and I certainly don't have any answers whatsoever. I can tell you that getting to where I am now was a gradual process and my hope is that it will inspire others no matter if they are in full time careers outside the home or



# Interview with Amy Rogers

September 8th, 2008

**FW: Amy can you tell us at this point in your life how is God using you as a Mother?**

**AR:** I am a mother to three daughters. Camryn is in elementary school, Addyson is in junior high, and Lauren is a senior in High School. The age spread is sometimes challenging because the girls are at such different stages in their growth. While I have been a stay at home mom for nearly 15 years; I actually don't "stay at home" most days. I am involved in our church, school, community, family business, as well as the ministry we founded nearly 5 years ago that has evolved into a family foundation. Since the time the girls were little Jeff and I purposefully guided them towards caring for those less fortunate. The tragic loss of my only brother to AIDS led us on a journey that would lead to Uganda where we would build a school in his namesake, The John T. Miller II Primary School. We have worked tirelessly ever since 2004 to bring care and education to the most needy children. It is a family project that engages each one of us individually and collectively. The girls helped design the layout of the facility, chose the color of the school uniforms, assisted in designing a logo, and have traveled to Uganda to personally serve the children. My daughters continue to speak at school chapels, raise donations, and create pen pal programs to get Bellevue students engaging with children on the other side of the globe.

**FW: As a Mother of three daughters, how do you plan and find the time to take on this kind of responsibility?**

**AR:** Most days at the Rogers house are total chaos. Both Jeff and I like order and it is difficult to achieve on a daily basis but like most families we somehow make it work. At the end of each day, I am usually exhausted but I really wouldn't want it any other way. I feel incredibly fortunate to have the opportunities we have had to travel and expose our children to the great needs of others; particularly other children. I could not do this without the love and support of both my husband, Jeff, as well as my daughters. This is definitely a family passion and we will always keep it that way. All three girls serve as Junior Delegates on the Board of Directors, for the DOINGOOD Foundation. They are involved in decision making and proactively seek to help support our cause to care and education children impacted by the AIDS pandemic.

**FW: Can you describe your greatest joy and your biggest challenge over the last two years?**

**AR:** A good friend who is a successful CEO of a large non-profit recently told me, "ministry is like rocket science". Putting my faith into action and helping AIDS orphans has not always been easy but it is worth the sacrifice. Our ministry has evolved over the past few years and at times it was difficult to gain consensus with those who were volunteering their time and just as passionate about making a difference. There are many paths to choose and it can be difficult to bring all of the good intentions of others into focus. Coming from a business background I like to plan and strategize. Defining leadership and managing balance in ministry has been my greatest challenge. However, with the creation of the DOINGOOD Foundation we can funnel the enthusiasm with the help of our Board of Directors. Besides Jeff and the girls I have many wonderful friends, families, and experts around to help these days. I enjoy dreaming big and being part of a collaborative effort. I have learned a great deal since the inauguration of John's school several years ago and prepared for the opportunities and challenges that will inevitably lie ahead of us. My greatest joy has been witnessing the transformation of lives both here at home and in Uganda.

**FW: What do you see ahead for the next two years?**

**AR:** I see the potential for so many things. I have learned to really trust God and not expect that through my own efforts I can have an exact plan and timeline. However, there are many developments in play right now that it is hard for me to keep up with the momentum. For example, Bellevue Christian School (BCS) has sent travel teams the past two summers. It has been incredibly rewarding to watch "kids helping kids". It appears that through the support of a local foundation BCS will have the



opportunity to continue a World Perspective/Global Reach course allowing students hands on experience in our community and around the globe. Wouldn't it be great if that idea spread to other schools so that all students interested in helping those less fortunate had the chance to participate in meaningful work? That gets me very excited. We are already planning for 2009 travel teams. Two of my favorite things to do are 1) speak at schools, clubs, and churches to encourage moms and families to get involved in whatever place they feel called to make an impact and 2) taking teams to Uganda and being witness to the joy and hope just being present can evoke in another life.

We have an opportunity, like never before in the history of Africa, to evangelize millions of children who are waiting to hear the truth of the Gospel. It is a powerful time to be a Christian in Global Missions. We all have skills that can transcend miles, language barriers, and cultures.

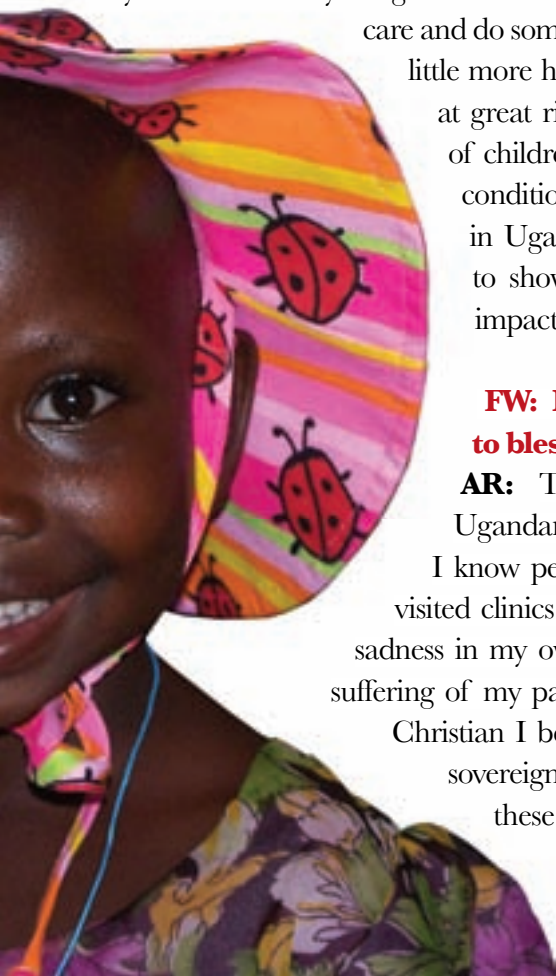
**FW: What do your daughters think of this work?**

**AR:** From the youngest to the oldest they all enjoy being part of our effort to help children who without outside involvement would have little hope for a future. On our first trip to Uganda my oldest daughter witnessed orphans who were precariously holding onto life. It is hard to describe what it was like to stand with Lauren in a remote village out in the bush and look into the vacant eyes of children who were basically living on their own and scrounging for food. Their entire village had been decimated by AIDS. We looked upon a group of old and young but so many of the children had no parents left to call their own. Again, I am not eloquent enough as a writer to explain what I witnessed that day but I know it changed both of our lives. I can't say for sure that my daughters will do exactly what I do but I know they will

care and do something somewhere to leave this world a little more hopeful for all children; especially those at great risk. There are millions upon millions of children who are orphaned and in desperate conditions today. There are over 2.5 million in Uganda alone. We can all do something to show our care for the innocent children impacted by war, disease, violence and famine.

**FW: Do you really believe God can use a tragic event to bless others and be glorified?**

**AR:** There is no question. Absolutely. I have met many Ugandan's who suffered atrocities under dictators like Idi Amin. I know people who escaped the genocide of Rwanda. I have visited clinics where children die of AIDS daily. I have witnessed sadness in my own life such as the death of my only sibling and the suffering of my parents. Through it all, I am a hopeful person. As a Christian I believe in the truth of scripture and I believe God is sovereign over all things. By the grace of God, I have faith in these things.





I pray I never have to suffer as much as others; it would surely be a true test of one's faith. However, those that have suffered the most seem to also have the greatest faith. I am in awe at how many Uganda friends show such joy in knowing for certain that they have a redeemer in Christ Jesus. Another Ugandan once told me that perhaps the joy I see in them is because they have no where to look but "up". God is being glorified in many ways. For example, the orphans Lauren and I first met in 2005



are all safely placed in boarding school, eating a healthy diet, attending church, and some have been reunited with family members whenever possible. We will continue to search for ways to help children have access to basic care which will give them every opportunity to become Godly future leaders of Uganda.

What started as a tragic loss for my mother sparked a vision for a school so that two other mothers could travel to Uganda and bring hope to those less fortunate. What started as a tragic loss for my mother sparked a vision for a school so that another mother could travel to Uganda and bring hope...



Amy Rogers along with her husband Jeff and three daughters, Lauren, Addyson, and Camryn, established The Doinggood Foundation to direct their family charitable giving goals. Amy's early career focused on the technology sector and then she spent the next several years at home focusing on her daughters and helping her husband start a new business. Gradually time allowed Amy to volunteer her time at church, school, and in local ministries, which inspired her to develop the vision for The Doinggood Foundation that keeps her busy today. You can contact Amy by emailing her at [amy@doinggood.net](mailto:amy@doinggood.net).

**FW: So what do you think is changed for the orphans and all those around them watching what God has done through mothers they never knew before?**

AR: That would be a fun question to ask them. Their lives have been full of trauma and yet most children are resilient. It is fun to travel to Uganda these days because I am affectionately called, Mamma Amy. The children don't cry as much when we leave because they trust we will be returning. My youngest daughter, Camryn, is adopted from China, and the Ugandan orphans were fascinated by her presence. While we can't bring home all of our beloved Ugandan children we can still "adopt" them in prayer and sponsorship to help care for them in the absence of their own parents. My middle daughter, Addyson, is ready to pack up and move to Uganda. She loved caring and playing with the children and thinks of these children as part of our family. They are interwoven into every aspect of our lives. Just ask our friends and family who never tire of hearing the stories we bring home about Gideon, Hannah, Joshua, Nikuze, and so on.

"Religion that God our Father accepts is pure and faultless is this: to look after the orphans and widows in their distress..."

James 1:27

**FW: If someone wanted to find out more about how they could make an impact for orphans, what would you recommend they do?**

AR: If they have a club or organization where I could share my story that is always a good place to start. I am available to speak when I am not on the side lines of a soccer game or volunteering at school! I can also be contacted directly at [amy@doinggood.net](mailto:amy@doinggood.net). We have a website under construction for the DOINGOOD Foundation but it is not available just yet. Please watch for us at [www.doingood.net](http://www.doingood.net) in the near future. In the meantime, donations can be made through the Seattle Christian Foundation/Doinggood Fund at 601 Union Street, Suite 4900, Seattle, WA, 98101-3906. You can view the Seattle Christian Foundation website at [www.seattlechristianfoundation.org](http://www.seattlechristianfoundation.org).