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Meet A Scientologist: Sussex inventor Saves Millions of Lives with Special Syringe

In a video featured on the new Scientology Video Channel at www.Scientology.org, Marc Koska talks about his determination to make injection-transmission of HIV/AIDS a thing of the past.

Inventor Marc Koska is a man with a mission—saving lives. In 1984, as the world was learning of a new disease called HIV/AIDS, Koska, then 23, read an article predicting that unsafe injections would spread the disease like a plague.

That's when his life changed.

“Appalled at the prospect of such an avoidable catastrophe, I decided there and then to try and do something about it,” the father of three from Sussex, England, writes on his website.

He set out to invent an inexpensive syringe that could be used only once, thus thwarting the spread of the disease through repeat injections. Although his concept was in place, Koska had no idea how to go about it.

“My ignorance of healthcare systems and syringes was complete—and the only thing I had ever manufactured was excuses,” Koska says. But he went to work on the problem and after many years of research, the “K1” was born—the world’s first auto-disabled syringe. In a nutshell, the syringe self-destructs after one injection.

In 2001, the K1 was adopted by UNICEF for immunization. Auto-disable syringes have since become the norm for disease prevention, but immunization accounts for just 5 percent of injections.

Koska, though gratified by the UNICEF adoption of his technology, was still concerned about the 95 percent of injections that still put lives at risk from re-used needles.

Traditional syringes are disposable, but unscrupulous doctors and desperate people, particularly in the developing world, buy used syringes and use them over and over. Every year, according to The World Health Organization, 1.3 million people die from diseases caused by non-sterile needles and 22 million more are infected with hepatitis and HIV.

“That is precisely why I formed the Safepoint charity in 2005,” says Koska. Safepoint’s mission is to inform parents and children around the world of the dangers of non-sterile injections and how to avoid them.

“We teach them that the syringe must come in a packet, be used once and then must be destroyed, put in a safety box and discarded properly,” Koska says.

With the blessing of numerous health ministers, Koska has set up Safepoint centres in seven countries including India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia. Each centre trains and employs local staff who spread the message in schools, clinics and local communities.

Koska became a Scientologist in 1992. “I was always absolutely certain there was a system out there that would help Mankind and I was very eager to find it. My wife and I read many, many books and listened to hundreds of tapes trying to find the answer from motivational speakers, religious leaders, philosophers. It became a fantastic mission to try to find the right solution. Nothing really satisfied us and we knew that there was something better and bigger out there,” he says.

A friend introduced him to Dianetics. “I read the first 50 pages and knew that I’d found the answer. It literally answered all the very sophisticated questions I had about life—questions I thought no one else had ever thought of. I knew that I’d found what I’d been looking for,” Koska says.

“You read a piece of data which is very true to you and it just becomes part of you—you apply it on a continual basis. I suppose the easiest way to explain it is it’s just easier to get over problems. You can handle things a lot

better and if you confront a problem, you can get through it very easily and make progress very quickly.”

Koska feels Scientology has made it possible for him to accomplish his life-saving mission: “It’s being able to reach out and get in touch with people you would normally think wouldn’t be possible.”

He also credits the encouragement of those nearest and dearest to him. “I couldn’t have done any of it without the support of my family,” says Koska. “But parenthood only reinforces your determination to protect other families from what is an entirely preventable human tragedy. Preventable tragedy makes me angry. It’s a terrible waste, and there’s still so much more to be done.”

Koska was awarded an OBE in 2006 for his contribution to Global Healthcare, having successfully pushed to table legislation to prevent syringe re-use in over 15 countries.



View the Marc Koska video: www.Scientology.org

The popular “Meet a Scientologist” profiles on the Church of

Scientology International video channel at Scientology.org now total 150 broadcast-quality documentary videos featuring Scientologists from diverse locations and walks of life. The personal stories are told by Scientologists who are educators, teenagers, skydivers, a golf instructor, a hip-hop dancer, IT manager, stunt pilot, mothers, fathers, dentists, photographers, actors, musicians, fashion designers, engineers, students, business owners and more.

A digital pioneer and leader in the online religious community, in April 2008 the Church of Scientology became the first major religion to launch its own official YouTube Video Channel, which has now been viewed by millions of visitors.