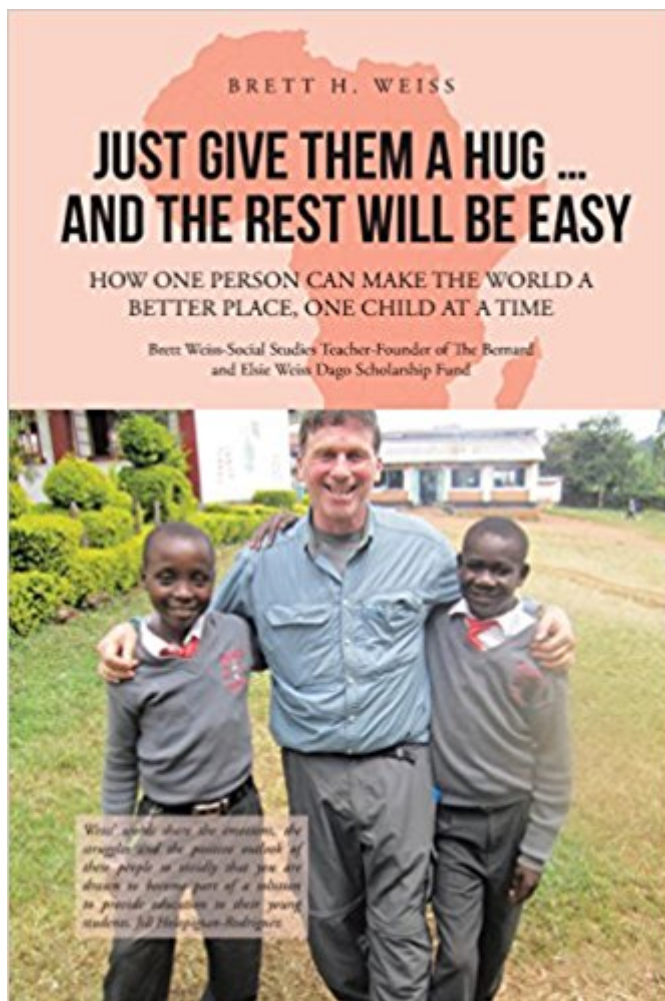


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# Just Give Them A Hug . . . And The Rest Will Be Easy



## Synopsis

In 2009, Brett Weiss decides he wants to volunteer in Kenya. A teacher in high school economics, US history, and international relations, he has a particular interest in experiencing immersion in a community where he will learn firsthand about the difficulties of the aftermath of colonialism. Determined to ask questions and listen, he makes his first trip to Dago, a small village in Western Kenya. As a teacher, his curiosity is riveted on the children and the education system. What he learns in Dago shakes his world and opens his eyes to the void that is eroding the potential success of the next generation. Brett returns to the US quite moved by his experience in Kenya, realizing that many of the children he met would never be able to get an education and escape abject poverty. This is the impetus for him to start the Bernard and Else Weiss Dago Scholarship Fund, named after his parents. His goal is to sponsor as many young people as he can through high school, and he sets out with the passion and sincerity that have made his program so successful. Brett's book implores readers to support this mission in whatever way possible. The need is enormous; the smallest token of interest or help can bring about the grandest results. He also encourages readers to take their own personal journey, asking: Is it your time to start this journey? For more information visit: [www.hopefordago.org](http://www.hopefordago.org). As I started to leave the classroom, the teacher came up to me and thanked me for giving the student the pen. When I asked him why the student began crying when the pen ran out of ink, the teacher explained that it was hard for these children to get pens, and the boy was worried he might never get another one. He was wondering how he would be able to continue going to school. Quote from the book - Brett Weiss

## Book Information

Paperback: 262 pages

Publisher: iUniverse (April 3, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1532019637

ISBN-13: 978-1532019630

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #268,735 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in [Books > Travel > Africa > Kenya](#) #197 in [Books > Travel > Africa > General](#)

## Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful tale of one man's journey to fill a void in himself which turns into him changing a small section of the planet. Brett Weiss' story resonated so strongly because my husband and I also started traveling to Kenya in 2009 volunteering in a center for street girls. These experiences were life-changing for us and Mr. Weiss' story brings back so many memories.....the food, the music, the friendliness and caring of the Kenyans and their hopefulness. I especially like the way he does his scholarships by having all 4 years of school paid for up front. The program we were with did one year at a time and sponsors tend to not continue after a year or two, leaving the young people stranded. Education is the key for all of us! As Mr. Weiss suggests, if you can, go on your own journey. You may surprise yourself and find your passion!

This is a compelling story about one man's efforts to make a practical difference. Weiss is "Everyman", a Chicago suburban high school teacher with wife and family, who combines an interest in Africa with a desire to make a personal contribution. After some years of making the excuses we all do, he signs up for a two week volunteer experience in the small village of Dago, Kenya. Here he encounters the local people who, despite extreme poverty, work incredibly hard to fashion better lives for themselves and their children. Weiss learns that very few children are able to afford the meager cost (by US standards) of a high school education. To help break the cycle of poverty, he decides to sponsor a deserving young person. Returning to the US, he casts about to find a way to help other students from the village. Ultimately, he establishes a scholarship fund that provides the means for more children to get the education that can alter their lives. Annually offering as many scholarships as funding allows, the effort has grown since 2011 to provide an opportunity to over a two dozen students. He returns to the village every two years (at his own expense) to personally check on the progress of the scholarship students and encourage the rising primary school children. In addition to its thought-provoking discussions of the differences between everyday life and values in rural Kenya and the modern US, Weiss offers, by example, a subtle challenge to all to step out of their comfort zone and have an impact.

I just retired, and a work colleague recommended this compelling and poignant story to further motivate me to give back to society with the free time I now have. Chicago-area high school history teacher Brett Weiss' tale about his volunteer work during summer breaks to further the education of the children in the impoverished village of Dago in Kenya is remarkable and truly inspiring! In a down-to-earth writing style, Weiss conveys his many exhilarating, often surprising and always uplifting experiences in vivid detail; it's like you're at the

author's side meeting the children, the educators and the community leaders. You witness first-hand the creation of Weiss's scholarship fund and how this program provides hope for so many of the youngsters who simply want to learn and better their lives. Another plus 50 percent of book sales go directly to fund scholarships.

Brett Weiss' personal mission to provide high school education to girls in Kenya Given a new lease on life due to a scare with cancer from a childhood malady, Brett Weiss makes a direct effort to benefit the lives of others. In this book, Brett chronicles his personal mission to provide full 4-year scholarships to high school girls in Dago, Kenya to foster equality of education. He provides an in-depth look into current poverty-level living conditions that make slums in America look like they are inhabited by wealthy individuals. He is impacted by the indomitable and positive spirit of Kenyans, who readily welcome strangers with dignity and politeness. He draws upon their strength to impart lessons from his own experiences as an educator in the Western suburbs of Chicago to enable their parallel efforts at gaining knowledge through experiential and academic learning. I heartily recommend this inspiring book.

This is the kind of book that inspires you to make the world a better place in your own way. It reads as if you were sitting down and having a heartfelt personal conversation with him the author who is incredibly passionate about his vocation of education. The author's enthusiasm for his scholarship program and the many unique and interesting people he meets along his journey is contagious. Highly recommend!

Amazing story of an incredible person changing the world. Education is so important. This story brought me to tears on occasion, and will inspire any reader to look differently at the world around them.

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