

The skinny scrap of a teenage girl was 16. With bleached hair and the vocab of a slum gangster we sincerely wondered whether we had made the right decision agreeing to take her into our home and family. Her breath was as rotten as her language. From the mouth comes the treasures of the heart...and this kid was filthy. The result of a broken and abusive home, a mother who had to work fulltime to put food in the mouths of her two teenage children, and a society that exploits rather than loves, this kid was on death row with the drug traffickers in her area.

But her mother hadn't given up. She had prayed for Eyshila for years, sought her out and dragged her home from the slum alleyways and negotiated her life with the drug traffickers. In desperation she sought help through a missionary friend, and so ended up on our doorstep in the country in the middle of the Brazilian rainforest. What a change.... For the slums of the largest South American city into panther territory! But a physical change doesn't mean an interior transformation, and that was what this girl needed.

Eyshila had made up her mind though, and was ready to pay the price, high though it may be, to see her life turned around, and through months, and many battles, much prayer and the ever present Word of God we began to see the old habits, language and life all fall away, and a daughter of the King was born and began to grow, each day closer to Him.

Everybody suffered through the process. Many times we all wanted to throw in the towel and see this rebellious young lady as far away as possible, but the Lord is gracious and everyone persisted. Discipling means giving up your life and pouring out into that of another, and that was what we did, for ten whole months.

She passed her school year, did a beauty course and learnt to speak well, to live as part of a family, to dress appropriately, to accept authority and to walk with Christ.

Its now 8 months since she returned to her mother, and even this process was difficult, but when I visited her a few days ago my heart was filled with joy to see her well and thriving.

Yes, she needs a job, to carry on her studies and continue to grow in Christ, but she is well, healthy, without drugs, and getting on fine with her family. Praise the Lord for His transformation. This is a transformation only He can make.

Would I do it again? You know, you win some and you loose others. You never know whether the investment you make will bear fruit, but the question is not one of fruit, but of obedience, and I need to follow the Master. Not all of the lepers Christ cured returned to thank Him. But as for me, I will follow the Master.



Eyshila with missionaries Ruth and Samuel Oliveira when she returned to visit last week.