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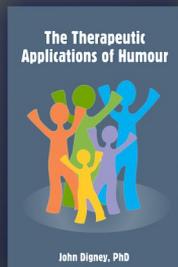
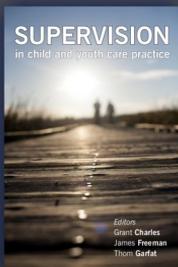
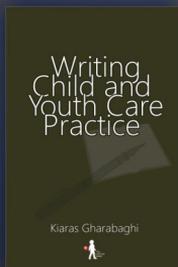
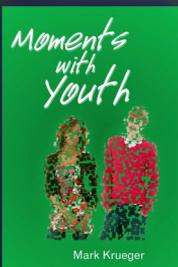
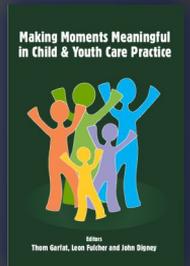
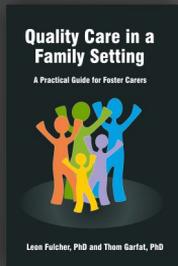
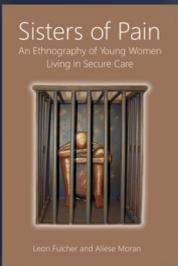
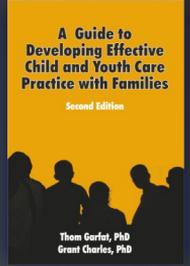
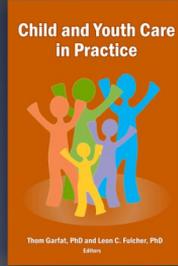
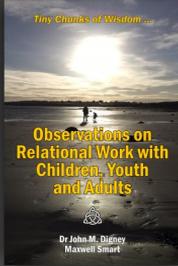
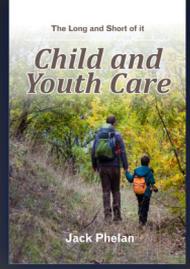
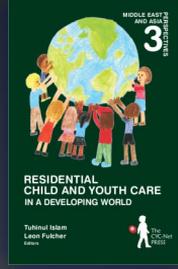
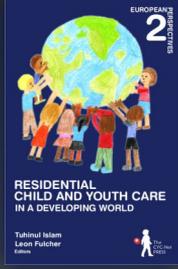
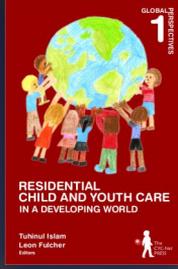
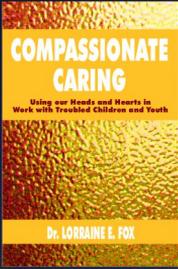
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The Drive to Thrive In the Midst of a Pandemic

Mark Strother

Over the last 30 years I have found it interesting and often helpful to use a model when reflecting on behavior and situations involving humans. The model has morphed over time and I often change the language to allow slightly different perspectives on the basic core concepts. Previously, I had been introduced to models such as Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, but, while they gave a framework, I never was able to apply them in a way that I found useful. I stumbled across the *Circle of Courage* (Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern, 1990) in 1992 and its application seemed more useful. This model identifies the four basic growth needs of *Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity* and it provided a major leap in my effectiveness in working with youth. After several years of looking at behavior through this lens and becoming more familiar with emerging brain science and trauma, I started stretching the model a bit for my own purposes and curiosity. The subtle shift of seeing them as drives as well as needs was helpful to me. Needs must be fulfilled. Our needs create a state of arousal or drive. As we are driven to fill our needs, we are motivated, and this is manifested in behavior. When presented with a behavior, it is often helpful to review the list of needs or drives and make connections. Simple, yet helpful. Looking



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at behavior through the lens of neuroscience and trauma, safety quickly became central to my preferred model. My observation of adolescents called for a counter drive to safety which led to the addition of the drive for adventure. As I played with variations of the model, I also found it extremely useful in my management roles. Using a carrot and stick management model to motivate staff to be strength-based and transformational versus transactional always seemed ludicrous. A model that mirrored the same principals and concepts when working with youth, families, or staff was much more appealing. At Cal Farley's a version of this model became safety, belonging, achievement, power, purpose, and adventure, and was labeled the Model of Leadership and Service. When the elements of the model are met, children, youth, families, and staff are more likely to thrive. If a child or youth's needs are met for safety, belonging, achievement, independence, purpose, and adventure, it greatly enhances their ability to grow and thrive. If an employee feels safe at work, feels connection among co-workers, has expectations that match their skill sets, is provided the resources and authority to achieve their objectives, and feels the mission provides a sense of purpose, they are more likely to be engaged and possibly feel a sense of adventure.

The model has proven no less helpful as we now deal with a pandemic. The following are observations and reflections through the lens of this model during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Cal Farley's Boys Ranch in Texas. (Boys Ranch is a residential campus/community for up to 300 children and youth located in the northern panhandle of Texas.)

Most obviously, when COVID-19 arrived, it challenged the safety of residents and staff. Staying healthy and safe was challenged by the virus as was the sense of "felt safety." Often without effort and sometimes without awareness, situations and events are processed for understanding to give a



greater feeling of predictability and control. With this sense of understanding, action can be taken which brings a greater feeling of control. This is all driven by the need for safety. Even when it was learned that most people carrying and spreading the virus did not have a fever, the monitoring of temperatures continued. Why? Was it to continue to identify even that small percentage who registered a fever or to have some action to take that gave some feeling of control? The need for understanding, predictability, and control was further exacerbated by the seeming randomness of the virus. There were parameters given by the medical authorities to show who was most vulnerable based on age and other factors. As peers in the high-risk end contracted the virus and breezed through it, there was a great sense of relief. Then, when those understood to be at the safer end of the spectrum became extremely ill, it was quite unsettling. When the recommendations changed based on the current understanding of the virus, that tended to undermine felt safety.

In the past, I have generally viewed someone's behavior in relation to safety as a response to that individual's safety. That has not been the case with COVID. Certainly, I would assume most have some concern for themselves, but what I have seen most is concern for other's safety. Whether it be their children, their significant other with a compromised immune system, or a friend or coworker in the higher risk bracket.

To reduce exposure, at times, all employees who can work from home have been asked to do so. The inequity of requiring some to work safely from home while others were required to face exposure to the virus or even operate an isolation home with positive cases, remains a major challenge. However, the inequity was not just with the exposure to the virus. Those who were expected to work on premises found more opportunity to directly support the campus outside of their normal duties while those



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working from home were challenged to maintain their normal contribution. Some employees working from home are feeling lonely and isolated, while others are feeling overwhelmed by family and homelife and miss their regular escape to the office.

As the virus kept many regular large meetings used for mass communication from happening in the community, leadership was pressed to increase communication to provide vital information as well as a sense of connectedness and bit of added security. Most effective was a regular video post by the Chief Program Officer that brought a more personal touch to the updates and information. Besides the presentation of a familiar and trusted face, it also showed the emotional up and down effect of the pandemic on leadership while they still maintained optimism.

No reflection on the pandemic would be complete without masks. We are hardwired to constantly read faces and the emotions presented. Hardwired to the point that most people often see faces represented by inanimate objects. Even without awareness, faces are constantly being scanned for emotion and, more basically, threat. We do this by constantly scanning the eyes and mouth. So, what is the effect of so many faces now covered by a mask? Does it cause a higher state of arousal and raise our level of anxiety?

Rhythm, ritual, and routine provide comfort and a sense of safety. The pandemic has played havoc on these. It has been interesting to see how new routines are established, rituals are regained, and rhythm restored under new circumstances and a sense of comfort reestablished.

It seems so long since the campus could gather as was once regularly done with rodeos, sports, cardboard boat races, and the like. However, even with the imposed separation, there seems to be a strong desire to get through this crisis as a community. Within the community there are many



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challenges. While some families have found new depths of connection while sheltering at home, others are isolated. Sons and daughters have been challenged in visiting elderly parents and some grandparents are missing time with their grandchildren. Young singles who would normally have a significant social life are extremely challenged. There are co-workers unable to visit loved ones fighting the virus, co-workers who fall seriously ill and are isolated in the hospital, and co-workers who have lost loved ones to the virus. The need for belonging is deeply stressed.

It has been interesting to see students yearn to return to the classroom. While the drive for mastery and achievement has been challenged for those struggling to work, educate, and learn virtually, the challenges of the pandemic have also offered a variety of opportunities to excel. The culinary opportunities have exploded. The ability to sew a mask is now highly regarded. Students and mentors tackled problems like 3D printing face shields for local health providers. As the new world demanded virtual capabilities, technical learning was pursued like never before. This allowed opportunities for students to assist teachers and houseparents with technology issues. IT took on the challenge to support the shift to virtual and the huge demand on technology overnight. Staff with little relevant technical experience were suddenly faced with turning regular events and activities such as graduation, rodeo, and Christmas celebrations into virtual events.

I have heard over and over the feeling of powerlessness many feel. Has this been the main drive for those who deny the real nature of the pandemic? Has the pandemic exposed a missing need or drive for cleanliness? Or, more likely, could the sudden disappearance of toilet paper and cleaning supplies from store shelves been caused by a need for power and control? It certainly seems plausible. There have been many



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efforts to create as much normalcy as possible, but sometimes, the efforts bring further frustration as nothing feels normal. As businesses are told to close and the masses are told to stay home, power is challenged. As we work hard to do our part to stem the pandemic and see others flaunt the opposite, it challenges our sense of power to stem the tide.

Early on, sloppy language and definitions wreaked havoc and unintended consequences upon ranch staff. Without a doubt, a residential facility for youth is an essential business and was deemed so by authorities. Within that essential business, all staff are essential. However, some roles can be conducted from home while others are required to perform their duties on the premises. This difference was unfortunately occasionally labeled by some as essential versus non-essential. If one is deemed non-essential, then the sense of purpose derived from work is greatly diminished. For the many who were required to work on premises, their sense of purpose kept them going day to day and even bolstered their willingness to take on tasks outside of their normal job and experience.

Individuals on ranch who have always maintained a reputation as generous and caring souls ramped up their efforts to bring smiles to all facing dire circumstances across the ranch and an anonymous group formed and labeled themselves as the “Difference Makers” to recognize others on ranch with touching surprises. Breakfasts, lunches, surprise packages of goodies for Christmas and Halloween, movie night gift baskets and spa scrubs to pamper homelife staff and school administration, deliveries of groceries to homes, meals and supplies for the quarantined and the sick, homemade sweets and coffee, and staff making and gathering PPE – it has been a torrent of generosity and caring.

As so many opportunities were put on hold and sheltering in place made the day to day more mundane, the drive for adventure was



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underscored. The news and day to day reality of a pandemic made distractions even sweeter. Adventure offers a perspective. We are living through something not experienced for generations. How are we going to accept the challenge to thrive rather than just survive? Adventure provides a tool for making the most of new challenges. The out of doors and the ranch setting offered escape from the isolation of the homes. Activities such as culinary classes, crafts, and yoga were taken outside. The ranch garden was perceived with new interest. The most unique offering may have been “drone flying” offered to resident homes.

The pandemic has both challenged and provided new opportunities for safety, belonging, mastery, power, purpose, and adventure. Has it also called for a new basic need to be added to the model? The need for normalcy?

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Good Practice Makes Theory: Torey Hayden's Relationship-driven Practice

Michael J. Marlowe

This article puts the successful relationship-driven practice of Torey Hayden into theory. Hayden, a special education teacher and therapist, has authored a series of nonfiction books which chronicle her day-to-day work with troubled young people. Seven theoretical principles that inform and underpin her relationship-driven practice are delineated: 1) relationships are a process, not a goal; 2) there is a difference between a person and a person's actions; 3) no one chooses to be unhappy; 4) misbehavior is a teaching opportunity; 5) everyone can change; 6) personal change is hard; and 7) the world is complex. Thoughts on Hayden's personal style are offered.

Keywords

Torey Hayden, relationships, practice, theory

Many practitioners in the human services, including child and youth care workers, are interested in building theories from the practice of successful practitioners rather than just putting theory into practice (Anglin, 2003). There are signs of a renewed respect for



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the importance of practice wisdom in building a knowledge base of professional child and youth work. The influential psychologist David Hunt (1987) challenged researchers to get their “little professor” under control and abandon the pompous notion that “in the beginning was the blackboard” in favor of “in the beginning there was experience.”

Hunt coined the maxim: “There is nothing so theoretical as good practice” (1987, p.29). What this assumption implies is that in order to develop a substantive theory, one must have access to instances of good practice.

Thus, in an effort to blend good practice into theory, I have drawn upon the successful practice of Torey Hayden, a special education teacher and therapist who, since 1979, has chronicled her day-to-day work with troubled children and youth in a succession of bestselling books. “Torey,” as the young people call her in her stories, first penned *One Child* (1980), the story of six-year-old Sheila, who finds herself in Torey’s self-contained classroom after being accused of critically burning a neighborhood toddler. Over the course of the next five months, Torey and Sheila form a relationship that transforms both of their lives.

One Child was followed by *Somebody Else’s Kids* (1982), *Murphy’s Boy* (1983), *Just Another Kid* (1986), *Ghost Girl* (1992), *The Tiger’s Child* (1995), the sequel to *One Child*, *Beautiful Child* (2002), *Twilight Children* (2006), and *Lost Girl* (2019). Torey’s books have been translated into 37 languages, sold tens of millions copies worldwide, and appearing as films, stage productions, opera, and even kabuki (classical Japanese) theatre.

All of Torey’s true-to-life stories are particularly helpful in understanding relationships. They stress the interpersonal dynamics and emotional connections involved in working with children and youth who are resistant and hard to reach and emphasize relationship skills, intuition, and the



social milieu. Her stories underscore the active use of interpersonal relationships as a means of changing behavior.

I became aware of Torey's practice in 1992 when I adopted three of her books as texts for training child and youth service practitioners (e.g., special educators, residential group care workers, and psychologists) to serve children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders (Marlowe et al., 2017); we subsequently met in 1998 just as the Internet was finding its feet. Since then we have had many discussions about educational and child and youth care methods, trends, and philosophies, and these extensive conversations lead to our collaborating on a book describing the relationship-driven methods Torey used in her practice augmented by my own observations and commentary from the perspective of a professor of special education (Marlowe & Hayden, 2013).

Here are seven theoretical principles that underpin and inform all action taken in Torey's relationship-driven practice. These highly personal principles evolved from her immediate experience and day-to-day interactions with the children and youth in her care rather than being a theory she applied to her work (Marlowe & Hayden, 2013).

1. Relationships are a process, not a goal

Torey has stated many times in many places why an understanding of the difference between goal orientation and process orientation is important to using relationships as a means of changing children's behavior. Both orientations are a normal part of human behavior.

Goal orientation is when your focus is on the outcome. You do what you do for the ultimate outcome. With a troubled child, for example, you work with her because you have expectations of making her better and more capable of living a fulfilling life. Fulfillment comes when you reach the goal.



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Process orientation is when your focus is on the act of doing it, i.e., the process. You do what you do for the process of doing it. With a troubled child, for example, you work with her because you enjoy the act of being with her. Fulfilment comes from an awareness and appreciation of having the experience while it is happening.

Torey emphasizes that relationships are by their very nature, process oriented. We can remember or dream about a relationship, but we can only experience a relationship now, in the present moment. Thus, in order to use relationships as a means of changing behavior, we need to be oriented to the present process as opposed to a future goal. In other words, the relationship we have with the child *now* is used to change behavior. We are working with the environment modifying what is happening *right now* by relationship skills, intuition, and the social milieu, all of which exist in only the present.

Torey considers “being in the process” when working with the child akin to riding a raft down the river. If you lose focus, if you do not pay attention, if you do not stay in the moment, and start thinking about the child’s misbehavior from yesterday or errands to run after work, these distractions are like little tributaries that drain the water off, and if there are too many, soon your river will be too small to raft on, and you won’t go anywhere.

Torey is an experienced meditator, and meditation and “being in the process” work on the same principle. All meditation involves is learning how to be aware of what is happening right now in the present, such as the inhalation and exhalation of breath, without getting distracted by thoughts and following them, as thoughts lead us away from the present moment and into the future or the past. Meditation is nothing more than practice at staying fully in the process.



Process is Torey's main orientation. She works with children because she thoroughly enjoys the process itself. She loves the act of being with the children. While she is open to the fact that improvement for her children is desirable, this is not what guides her work. Her pay-off, her fulfillment in working with children comes during the time spent together, during the interactions, during the moment itself.

2. There is a difference between a person and a person's actions

Torey is unequivocally on the child's side. This doesn't mean accepting everything the child does, but it means making clear that the child herself is acceptable. The difference between the child and her actions is another way of saying it. Torey does this by focusing on the child, showing an interest in the child, being present, paying attention, listening to her, communicating to her that she can see her point of view, and making it apparent that she cares enough about the child to correct her behavior. Torey conveys to the child you are valuable just for being who you are.

In Torey's experience understanding the difference between the person and the person's actions is at the heart of developing a tolerant and nonjudgmental attitude toward children's ability to change. If a child's actions were as unchangeable as his identity, then there would be little scope for his learning new or more adaptive behaviors because "he will always do that," or "he won't change." Understanding that a person is not their actions regardless of the number of times he has engaged in a certain action, allows us to recognize he has the capacity for different actions. A person cannot change his identity, but he can change his thoughts and actions, so Torey works with these to make changes.



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3. No one chooses to be unhappy

Torey believes we all want to be happy. *We all* want this. No one wakes up and says, "Geez, I want to spend the day being depressed and miserable." No one *wants* to be unhappy. Everyone wants to live a fulfilling life full of love and connection. So if a kid continues to do something that repeatedly makes her unhappy or everyone else unhappy, you can pretty much rest assured it isn't because she wants it that way. It's because she doesn't have another way of behaving securely in her repertoire.

Torey postulates if practitioners accept the notion that no child chooses to be unhappy, then they must also recognize it is no longer the child's responsibility to sort the problem out, but it is the adult's as well. There are many things the adult can do to help ranging from teaching, role modeling, therapy and supervision to just plain old caring. As Torey's stories attest, an amazing amount of change can be brought about by one person caring enough about one single other.

4. Misbehavior is a teaching opportunity

Torey sees inappropriate behavior as a teaching opportunity. It is her experience that an enormous amount of misbehavior occurs because the child simply does not know to behave differently, because he has misconceptions about how he should behave, or because he has misconceptions about himself. These situations are not corrective occasions. They are teaching opportunities. They are chances to permanently change misbehavior by teaching the child to behave differently. Consequences are often quite inefficient at this (Kohn, 1998), so Torey wants a wider repertoire.

Many if not most children and youth in programs for emotional and behavioral disorders will have considerable familiarity with dysfunctional



adults and dysfunctional relationships. In contrast, they will have little experience of functional adults relating appropriately. Torey believes it is both unrealistic and unfair to expect young people to disengage from difficult cycles of behavior on their own without first gaining experience of the functional behaviors they need to emulate. She actively teaches functional behaviors via her relationship with the young person. Some aspects of appropriate behavior (e.g., honesty, fairness, and responsibility) are taught through active modeling, while others are taught to the youth directly, such as how a functional person manages her emotions, how a functional person responds appropriately to others, and how a functional person handles negative situations.

5. Everyone can change

It is Torey's opinion that everyone, regardless of who they are and what they have done, can change. To her this is simply a practical attitude. We don't know everything.

Pollyanna says, "Everyone will change." This statement is just as black-and-white as, "He will never change." What Torey wants to cultivate is the ability to stay positive about the possibility of change, and the recognition that we are not omniscient. It is easy to fall into using black-and-white terms like "never" or "always" in regard to difficult behavior, but in doing so we are implying that the children and situations we are dealing with are fixed, and discreet, and therefore entirely predictable when they are, in fact, constantly changing and connected to and affected by an infinite number of other things that we have no knowledge of, insight into, or control over.

Torey cautions we can't see the finish line. None of us is all seeing. So we just need to keep running the race and keep assuming that things can



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change. It is her opinion if you do not believe change is possible, you are totally in the wrong business, and you should go now.

6. Personal change is very difficult

In Torey's experience permanently changing ingrained personal behavior is very hard to do. There are many reasons for this. Genetic make-up and environmental circumstances factor in, as well as motivation and consequences. Oftentimes, these factors all interact to a point where it is difficult to tease out just what exactly is standing in the way of personal change taking place.

The important thing to recognize is that it *is* very hard. For everyone. As a consequence, it is normal for the individual who is trying to change to make many approximations before managing the right behavior. It is also normal to slip up or fail many times before eventually achieving the behavior. Torey recognizes that slips and failures are part of the process and not the outcome.

Consequently, when one attempts to change a child's behavior it is normal for the child to try but fail, to backslide, to slip up, to miss, and sometimes to totally fail and come off the program. This does not mean that change is not taking place or that change is impossible. It simply means the child hasn't got there yet.

7. The world is complex

Black-and-white thinking – the tendency to perceive things as all-or-nothing and thus able to be put in to discernible, discreet, and permanent categories – seems to be a hard-wired trait for humans. We categorize and generalize by nature.



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In Torey's view this way of looking at the world gives people a false picture because all things change over time and almost all behaviors occur on a spectrum and not at the two (black or white) extremes. Recognizing the process of change and the spectrum nature of behavior makes it much easier to accept approximations of appropriate behavior and to see positive movement toward the wanted behavior because we can see what is being done is further up the spectrum than the previous behavior. Black-and-white-thinking allows us only two outcomes: success or failure.

Black-and-white thinking also tends to ignore time and the fact that all things change over time. We are not at all static creatures. We are never really the same twice. Skin has sloughed off and cells have regenerated while you are reading this. You have breathed in different molecules of air and exhaled others. You are now very slightly different than you were at the beginning of this sentence. Recognizing this continual process of change allows Torey to recognize the potential for things to be different than they are right now. In contrast, black-and-white thinking assumes permanence and looks for opportunities to reinforce that. Thus, once someone is in a category, the black-and-white thinker looks only for evidence that reinforces that category and ignores evidence of change, for example, "Once a bully, always a bully."

Thus, it is important to Torey that one have a clear understanding the world *is* complex, and, life itself is never black-and-white. It is one of the most crucial attributes for success in the dynamic realm of relationships.

Closing Thoughts

Torey works on a very personal level. This is her natural style. She finds it easy to love people – anyone, literally – if this person's care is given to her. She finds it easy to get up close and personal and stay there until the job is



done. She finds it easy to care in a very real way. To have Torey as a teacher or therapist is to get this aspect of her.

Torey's personal style tended to be effective, and yet it could be very hard if the treatment timeframe or school year ended before the youth was ready. She has developed a philosophy of loss and attachment which threads through her stories. Forming relationships is central to her work, but it inevitably implies eventual loss, just the way birth inevitably contains within it the guarantee of eventual death. A favorite quote of Torey's is "A ship in the harbor is safe, but that is not what ships were made for." In other words, the only certain way to stay safe from loss is never have attachments, but attachments and forming relationships are an essential part of what it means to be human. We are a social species. The need for attachment is designed into our DNA (Szalavitz & Perry, 2010).

That Torey formed relationships, which she ultimately knew would end, simply meant that she was able to be objective almost all times, to keep her personal needs out of the picture, to keep an eye on the timeframe, and to know at all times where the boundaries are. Part of what she teaches in forming an attachment, is how to cope with loss, and loss comes to all of us. The trick is in learning how to come to grips with losses, which is probably as great a lesson in life as learning to attach.

Torey's goal in forming relationships with young people is to help more than she hurts. That's all any of us can aim for, since the perfect person or perfect relationship does not exist. Torey remains committed to the idea that we all do need to know in a very real way that we matter to someone, someplace, even if we cannot be together. And she genuinely believes real love expressed is never wasted.



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Professional CYC Issues

Jack Phelan

There always is a clear difference between professional practice and well-intentioned actions by untrained people. If this was not true, then we would have no need for the professional.

Last month I wrote an uncharacteristically long column describing relational practice as something that requires professional training, which I hope that people read, but I will revert to my 400 words or less style this month.

Professions typically include knowledge that have the characteristics of *Threshold Concepts*, (see the January column), which are not understood by the general public. Professional CYC practice includes several of these ideas, today I will explore self-awareness about our presence in the helping process.

New CYC practitioners share the self-awareness ability of many untrained people who engage in helping others. We generally believe that if we create a strong connection between ourselves and the other person, based on being attractive in some way, a bond, a need for being together, will emerge. The focus of the helper is on his/her own characteristics and behavior which gradually builds a useful presence because the other person likes him/her and will be influenced by the helper.

The helper strives to create a role modelling influence as they attempt to build capacity and awareness in the other. The intention of the helper is to get the other person to like him/her, which seems to create good results. I have spoken in other columns about the limitations of this approach,



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since we really should be helping people to like themselves more, not merely to like us.

The professional awareness which clearly challenges this model about use of self emerges through good supervision and theoretical understanding. Basically, professionals gradually believe that the focus must move away from the practitioner, since the person being helped will never truly identify as needing to model the helper. Actually, most people being helped by us don't believe that we could survive in their world.

By letting go of our self focus, we will stop identifying strengths that we value for ourselves and begin to clearly see the strengths that exist already which have enabled the other person to survive successfully. Behaviors such as rudeness, neglect, selfishness, lack of future planning and many others will be framed very differently once the self awareness of the practitioner shifts from themselves, and when we begin to clearly listen to the other without filtering everything through our personal values, it will be obvious to the person being helped.

This ability is not easy to create and requires a reduction in "common sense" which clouds our perception of what is needed.

If this idea interests you, reread my January 2021 piece in *CYC-Online*.

JACK PHELAN is a regular contributor to *CYC-Online*. He is the author of *Intentional CYC Supervision: A Developmental Approach* and *Child and Youth Care: The Long and Short of It*, both available through the *CYC-Net Press*. Jack teaches *Child and Youth Care* at *Grant MacEwan College* in Alberta, Canada. Learn more at <https://cyc-net.org/People/people-phelan.html>





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The Hill We Climb

Hans Skott-Myhre

The last few weeks have been a roller coaster of political expectations and anxieties. The American election with the false allegations of electoral fraud and the resultant attempted insurrection at the capitol building was more than a little bit crazy. I found myself in an odd position politically under the conditions of what might well be called a right coup attempt. Of course, over the past four years, this has not been unusual. I have been flummoxed to find myself (as a good commie left wing political analyst and agitator) supporting the FBI and the NSA, the traditional structures of the U.S. government, the sanctity of the electoral process, the rule of law as a vehicle for seeking equity and reducing corruption, and during the right-wing insurrection – hoping for the National Guard and the Police to intervene.

To say that I have felt highly ambivalent about these positions is a profound understatement indeed. Under the presidency of the liar in chief, I found myself wanting to claim the necessity of absolute truth, which is something I have argued against in almost everything I have ever written or argued. The anomalous nature of the times has even had me feeling very supportive of an incoming president who I would characterize as a capitalist, corporatist, republican running as a moderate democrat. It has been a time of strange bedfellows indeed.

In my own defense, I could well argue that the fight against the kinds of fascism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, misogyny, anti-Semitism, and white supremacy of the last four years requires whatever alliances are



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necessary to leverage the force required to reverse the trends so intimately and horrifically familiar to the American psyche and political landscape. The threat to equity and justice in the United States has never been from the left. It has always been rooted in our history as slavers, purveyors of genocide, patriarchs of war and conquest, and masters of exploitation and theft. Of course, I would prefer to be fighting from the left against the prevailing values of the American state, but under the current circumstances, the fight is to recenter the project towards its less reprehensible, but still egregiously brutal, form of traditional governance. It is, as it always is, a question of tactics, as well as a nuanced understanding of what composes the forces within the contemporary historical moment.

As I contemplate this, I begin to think about how difficult it is for those of us in CYC who work in institutions and agencies that operate daily in ways that we find ethically and morally dubious or even reprehensible. Overall, the places we work are not overtly racist, homophobic, xenophobic, or sexist. Instead, our workplaces are composed of a myriad of micro-fascisms that reinforce contemporary modes of bigotry against the young people and staff who are struggling to get good CYC work done. It is very probably not unusual to witness an ongoing display of micro-aggressions and unintentional acts of oppressive enforcements of social control under the guise of benevolently modifying behavior or ensuring safety. Under such circumstances, what is the role of CYC workers who develop the kinds of critical consciousness that make these acts of minor brutality extremely painful to witness?

I am reminded of how difficult it is politically to maneuver between the actual material engagements of young people with workers and the administrative demands to be ever increasingly accountable to the corporate capitalism. Of course, there is no ideal position here. One is



always in a compromised position and, as we know, this is far more responsible for burnout than a lack of “self-care.” Finding ourselves, as I did recently, supporting practices that are just enough “better” can be horribly frustrating to say the least. Continually negotiating for the least worst situations for the young people we encounter in our work lacks any real satisfaction. At some level, this continual betrayal of our desires for actual justice and equity grinds at us and can wear us down, day after day.

And yet compromise is a necessary tactic under conditions in which the opposition holds far more cards than we do. True social change cannot be forced but requires the ongoing assessment of locating the pressure points that will be most effective in moving in the direction we wish to move. Patiently building alliances built on the affirmation of life, rather than the politics of resentment, is what makes political action the art of the possible. That said, it is very difficult to realistically assess the capacity of any act of resistance and its possibility for success. Are we hoping for a short-term gain in the life of a single young person or a long term shift in the way our institutions operate? Often, these take very different tactics. Are we willing to lose battles in order to advance our project long term? Are any losses acceptable?

These are really hard questions that I don't think we ask ourselves enough in the struggle for equity and justice in our work. I think it is important to remember that none of us are innocent in all of this. We all participate in and contribute to the existing system to varying degrees. It is very probably not a viable strategy to build our project of justice on a platform of judgment and resentment. And yet, there are times when it is imperative that we refuse fascism at all levels, including in ourselves. In many ways it is always a question of which tactics at which historical moment. The ability to stay mobile and flexible in what do and what we say



is crucial to our long-term success. Small actions that go unnoticed can have massive effects over time, while large and noisy acts can fizzle out with little impact. It is a question of constantly watching for what works and where we need to go next.

It was with all of this in mind that I watched the inauguration of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. To see Kamala Harris sworn in by Justice Sotomayor was quite moving. Two women of color on that stage in key positions of power would have been unimaginable not long ago. It was a visible slap in the face to the forces of rising white supremacy. There were quite a lot of such moments in speech and actions during the ceremony. But, for me, perhaps the most powerful came in the voice of Amanda Gorman, who is the U.S. Youth Poet Laureate.

First of all, I was chagrined, as a long-time youth worker, academic, and advocate that I didn't know we had a Youth Poet Laureate. As it turns out, there have been four since 2017, Patricia Frazier, Kara Jackson, and Meera Dasgupta and Amada Gorman. The program that selects the Youth Poet Laureate is rooted in spoken word and hip-hop traditions and the fact that this was form of poetic expression that was honored in the process of inaugurating a president of the United States was not without political force. In addition, the act of valorizing the words of a young women of color in a ceremony watched around the world was a powerful statement repudiating the ongoing disparagement of millennials and their contributions to our society.

It is not without significance that Amanda Gorman shares a speech impediment much like the president's and chose take up spoken word in order to overcome that barrier to her ability to articulate her world view in spoken language. And articulate she did, in nuanced and powerful



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politically inflected poetry that spoke volumes about the hopes, anxieties and aspirations of this moment in history.

At the time, I was caught up in the moment. I heard her words speak to the nation about struggle and vision. However, the more I reflected on her poem, the more I was struck by its pertinence to those of us in CYC who are working at the cliff face of a society in apparent collapse. Even the title seemed highly appropriate, "[The Hill We Climb](#)." She begins with,

*When day comes we ask ourselves, where can we find light
in this never-ending shade? The loss we carry, a sea we
must wade. We've braved the belly of the beast, we've
learned that quiet isn't always peace and the norms and
notions of what just is, isn't always justice. And yet the dawn
is ours before we knew it, somehow we do it, somehow
we've weathered and witnessed a nation that isn't broken
but simply unfinished.*

Of course, she is speaking about a moment in the history of the U.S. when we enter a new day and wonder how we can find hope under severely adverse conditions. But, when I think of this, I am reminded that CYC workers, young people, their communities, families, and institutional leadership enter each literal day with this task in mind. How do we find "light in this ever present shade." Certainly, it can seem that there is a darkness that permeates our social relations with violence, inequity, and painful struggles for survival. And as Gorman puts it, there is loss that we carry, many of us before we ever enter the work. This history of loss is both personal and institutional and is made of people as well as dreams. All of us who are involved with the world of young people have experienced to



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varying degrees the literal deaths of friends, colleagues, family members, mentors, and students. In times of social crisis such as the current pandemic, these escalate, and the ripples are more pronounced and spread more widely.

But even when a significant percentage of the country is at relative peace, the losses continue for us. They constitute “ a sea we must wade.” Implicit in Gorman’s words here is the actuality and materiality of loss. Loss lingers and we encounter it not just in our thoughts and prayers, but in our bodies, which must move through it and persist in motion across the days and hours we share together. It is part of who we are collectively, which is why it is a sea; a broad expanse that must be crossed. A pool of a million tears, inestimable gallons of blood and sweat. And because we have few miracles available to us, we must wade. We cannot walk upon the waters of our losses nor split the waters like the red sea and walk between the walls of painful memory.

These are the resonances of the world of all our relations. For those who take the work of CYC seriously enough to suffer productively and transformatively, life in the “belly of the beast” is a daily encounter. Gorman’s biblical reference to Jonah’s days in the belly of the whale are very fitting for the world of CYC. We have been swallowed by a society that is largely indifferent to our interests and reside within in the belly of the beast that is global capitalism. Like Jonah, however, our pathway to being vomited up by the beast on the shore of a new world beyond the logic of capitalist relations requires that we learn that “quiet isn’t always peace.” The [Marxist scholar Clech Lam](#) suggest that we must become indigestible to capitalism. One pathway to doing just that is to become an irritant and refuse digestion. In the bible, Jonah beseeches God for delivery. He



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commits himself to being thankful and to being true to what he has vowed in God's name. He is noisy and persistent in his prayers.

I would argue that a secular radical reading of the text would propose that the act of praying within the belly of the beast of our contemporary society consists of a reconnection to the world of life. To insist on life affirming material action rather than immersion in the digestive juices of the simulated world of virtual capitalism. We must not be quiet, but that doesn't mean necessarily verbalizing. Sometimes the loudest noises are our actions and not our words. There is no peace to be found in extinction and entropy which are the hallmarks of the current social trajectory. In our encounters in the work, we hold a prayer for the lives of all of us. We have the capacity to stand against the "norms and notions of what just is." We have a real time understanding that "what just is, isn't always justice."

The rest of Gorman's poem is just as rich and powerful as what I have sketched here in the opening. It is well worth a read. At the end she offers us the moment after the darkness has passed, after we have been delivered from the belly of the beast. She reminds us of the truth that is so hard to remember under conditions of brutality and adversity. She tells us that "the dawn is ours."

To remember that the capacity for the emergence of a new day belongs to us is a powerful reminder that we create the capacities for new worlds and new peoples. We are not condemned to hopeless cynicism and narcissism. We are composed of and compose sheer living force. Gorman tells us that "the dawn is ours before we knew it." That is to say that the new world which we are creating is already here, we just need to seize it and share it in our every action. The coming world is ours to shape. Indeed, we are already shaping it. The force of those who would affirm end enforce the worst in us is always in direct proportion to the proximity of a new



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world emerging. Gorman tells us, “somehow we do it.” And do it we do. In every action we take as CYC workers that affirms life and living relations.

It is hard to remember this in the face of ongoing pain, trauma, death, and brutality. But we have “weathered and witnessed” and we are still here. Like Gorman’s nation, the world of CYC, and all of our relations within it, are not “broken but simply unfinished.” So, in the powerful words of [Nina Simone](#) “let’s finish it.”

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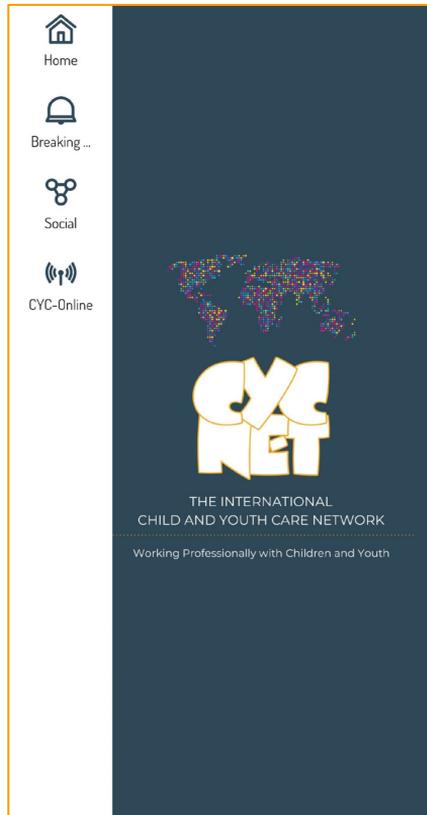


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Futurism, Afrofuturism and a Future for Child & Youth Care

Kiaras Gharabaghi

What is the future of child and youth care? It occurs to me that we have never constructed it, at least not as far as I can tell. In fact, we seem rather unconcerned about constructing a future for our field, seemingly content to dwell in the present. But what is the present? A world that is more dystopian than even the most pessimistic thinkers, artists and writers imagined. Orwell's 1984? We passed that horrendous freak show long ago. How about his terrifying Animal Farm? Well, that annoying and scary pig in a suit certainly has a strange resemblance to some of the characters who just exited the scene in the United States, and perhaps even some who are still in the scene, such as a certain Senator from South Carolina. While we are preoccupied with this ongoing pandemic, our present is hardly a place to dwell. Between climate change and global warming, political corruption everywhere one looks, an unabated exploitation of workers, xenophobia, racism, misogyny, white supremacy, and the power of the digital corporation to exercise surveillance and control over us all, our relational practices seem a little banal. Are we simply feeding bodies to the machine? Is our success on the dinner menu in the halls of power?



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I digress. Lately I have been spending some time exploring the phenomenon of futurism, largely because of my interest in Afrofuturism, of which I will speak in a moment. The word 'futurism' appears to have its genesis in the Italian world of the visual arts around the early 20th century. A group of artists wanted to express their dissatisfaction with the conventions of visual art inherited from the grand traditions of the renaissance and the impressionists. The world is changing rapidly, they argued, and whatever past conventions may have existed are no longer adequate representations of our future. These particular Italians were driven by their profound admiration of the machines that were appearing at that time; specifically, the machines of industrialization and the rapid industrial fortification of the state. They loved the factories, the new production methods and the speed and power of modern transportation, especially cars. The future, they argued, must be constructed to reflect the dynamic fluidity and the movement embedded in the coming muscles of the industrial super state. Not surprisingly, they quickly became caught up in the rise of fascism first in Italy and then across many parts of Europe, and the movement died when the state swallowed it. A brief revival in Russia, itself undergoing a massive industrialization leading to the brutality of Stalinism could not save the idea of futurism in this context.

For the first half of the 20th century, the world was largely a mess. Two world wars, several genocides of horrific proportions, and the retreat of colonial powers carried out with such utter destructive zeal laid the foundations of most of our social problems today, although admittedly, some such problems find their foundations much earlier in the major periods of European narcissism (such as, for example, the Enlightenment, which appears to have largely dimmed the lights for most of the world). One might have thought at the time that a few hundred years of rape and



pillage, cultural genocide along with several incidents of mass killings for which the term genocide does not do justice, would have at least resulted in a somewhat more responsible retreat from colonialism. Sadly, this was not so. Entire continents randomly divided into play zones for white people, a last-ditch effort to take whatever wasn't nailed down, and a parting gift of the seeds of tribal and religious conflict to last a few more generations as those finally 'free' from the yoke of colonial incarceration were left to fight it out for whatever scraps of survival materials remained.

So this is our present. A long view of the present would see a beginning of where we are today sometime after the Second World War, and perhaps dated right around the independence movements of the 1960s in Africa and Asia, the height of Apartheid in South Africa and Indian Residential Schools in Canada, and the civil rights movement in the United States. In other words, roughly the time when child and youth care started emerging through the work of people who had transitioned through the wars, the end of formal colonies and the start of the American empire as one of two, and eventually the only superpower – I think of Aichhorn, Lewin, Redl, Treischman and Bettelheim amongst others. We ran with the present in developing our field. We centered the present in developing our field. And even when we realized (but rarely acknowledged) that the field we developed mirrored in every possible way the social injustices of the world around us, including the racial exclusions, the celebration of men and masculinity, the dismissal of those labeled disabled or retarded, and the bewildered response to those who dared to move beyond gender binaries, we continued to center the present. And so we build our field to be about a particular version of care and caring, a specific perspective on relationships and relational practices, and a diehard orientation toward the supremacy of the interpersonal space. This is not really a surprise; our present is what



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we are trained in, what we are comfortable in, where we thrive. By 'we', I mean some of 'we'; inclusion wasn't actually part of the present in our field anymore so than it ever was in the present of this world we live in.

Don't get me wrong; we did, and continue to do, some really good work. But we did and we do that work in a particular context and there is no denying that in doing some really good work we reinforced and continue to reinforce that context. The context, as we know, are the institutions whose commands we abide by. The same institutions that somehow missed the memo that colonization is over – schools that *in our presence* and often thanks to our work exclude Black, Indigenous and racialized students at will; child welfare that has found nifty ways of continuing its legacy of moral determinism, carefully sorting Black, Indigenous and racialized youth into the carceral spheres of group homes and youth criminal justice while providing treatment, health care and individualized education to everyone else; child and youth mental health, that wonderful voluntary and therefore non-coercive sector where everyone is welcome and where we work not just based on our field's relational orientation but indeed, with the best available and scientifically verified evidence. Our complacency to why Black, Indigenous and racialized young people and their families don't come to this high end voluntary sector speaks volumes; one gets the sense that it isn't actually a 'complacency' but instead an intentional strategy to keep things as they are.

As you are reading this, you might wonder where it's going. Then again, you might not wonder, since we, as child and youth care practitioners, theorists, researchers and intellectuals, appear to spend no time at all wondering where things are going. Even worse, in what I think may well be an oversight of enormously tragic implications for future generations of practitioners (our students), we are not building a future for our field now.



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Nothing we are doing, writing about, talking about or even imagining provides us with a narrative that is set in the future. We know we have issues in the present, and perhaps it is fair enough that we may not know how to solve those issues. But is it also fair that we can't (or perhaps refuse to) articulate a future where those issues *have been* solved? Is it that we just haven't had time to do this? Or is it that we are resisting constructing a future that isn't linked to our oppressive past and ongoing deficits in the current present? One other way of asking the question: Are we, perhaps only semi-consciously, working to reproduce the present in the future, knowing full well that this condemns many people to the margins, the outside, the edge? Might we be that evil?

Due to the extraordinary circumstances affecting everyone in the world, we unfortunately have to announce that the 5th CYC World conference planned for June 2021 in Glasgow, Scotland has had to be cancelled.



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This brings me to Afrofuturism. Let me first acknowledge that I knew almost nothing about Afrofuturism until a few years ago, when I was dazzled by one of my greatest inspirations, Juanita Stephen, who gave a short but powerful presentation on this topic at a child and youth care conference in Vancouver. Since then, I have tried to understand, recognizing that the nuances of this movement are beyond my reach. But here is what I do understand, or at least imagine that I understand.

In 1853, at a women's conference in Acron, Ohio, a Black woman got on the stage and gave what to this very day is perhaps the greatest speech ever delivered. Sojourney Truth, mother of Black feminism for many, asked the question: Ain't I a Woman? And then she proceeded to imagine a future in which her womanhood exists as it should. A future in which her Black womanhood exists as it should. A future in which Black women can be mothers without being less. A future that transcends the patriarchal, racist and misogynist structures of the present she lived in. With this speech, Truth gave rise to a new idea. What if we stopped solving the problems of the present in ways that merely reproduces that present in the future? What if we stopped feeding the Beast, and bypassed it altogether? What if we created a future in which the Beast does not exist?

Afrofuturism departs from the scope of critical race theory, and also from the more general framework of Afrocentric theory. It departs from these specifically by moving beyond critique. Afrofuturism is not overtly deconstructive; it is constructive in its aims to construct a future of Black life that is free from the oppression of past and present and the shackles of coercive violence at its core. Of course, it doesn't entirely ignore the present or the past. In constructing the future, it relies very heavily on understanding the mechanisms of anti-Black racism. These must be understood in order to imagine a future without them. The preoccupation of Afrofuturism, however,



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is uniquely liberating, or even better, emancipating. It removes barriers, shackles, violence and representations of devalued humanity. It frees the soul, the spirit and the mind, as well as the body, to be its own humanity, to be in community, and in the process, to enact care, health, spirituality and well being in ways that correspond to the cultural ethos of being Black. It is Africa without the Belgians; it is life without fear.

The tools of Afrofuturism are the visual arts, digital arts, technology as a source of cultural revival, the spoken word and the world of fashion and aesthetics. The future lives in art and the mystic. Drawing on ancient and more recent traditions and cultural truths, Afrofuturism gives rise to a world in which the present as we know it does not exist. It incorporates Mandela's act of enormous generosity in reconciling the acts of the undeserving white oppressors; it presents the act of collective joy and collective grief as the norm. But what is perhaps most impressive, most notable and most important about Afrofuturism is that it reverses the dynamics of oppression, of all of the new forms of colonialism, of ever more sophisticated racism, and of the perpetuation of social injustice. For centuries we have tried to create the future through our present and in the process, we have merely reproduced what we already had. Afrofuturism creates the present through the future as a form of *immanence*. This is revolutionary in ways none of us had the foresight to contemplate.

So what about child and youth care? What future will we construct? I wonder about this a lot, especially after learning about the Italian futurists of the early 20th century. Like us, they were fascinated by progress. Their eyes opened wide in the face of the machines much like ours are opening wide as we discover the deep science of the brain, the latest knowledge about trauma, and advance, with new books and many commentaries our relational practice. But this is not constructing a future *per se*. The Italian



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futurists ended up as fascists. Their ideal collapsed, incapable of absorbing the shocks of war, influenza, economic turmoil, and European infighting. What fascinated them consumed them; the Beast won – again - and proceeded to wreak havoc on untold millions of human beings.

The Afrofuturists took a different approach. They were not blinded by progress in the present, because they understood *that progress* to be progress in the act of further oppression and social injustice. They are not now thrown off course by a global pandemic and the insanities of political turmoil in the superpower of the world; they are not distracted by the digital surveillance exercised by the corporate elite. They are still in the space they constructed – a future that is theirs, in which they are free but bound together in a collective force to be reckoned with. That future informs the present. Change now means learning from the future.

What future? Why are we staying silent on constructing a future for child and youth care? This field, my friend Thom often says, is 'a way of being in the world'. What world will we be in? The one that is birthing itself as I write this, or the one we construct ourselves?

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The Sampling Frame: Care on a Bicycle Path

Doug Magnuson

I bicycle to work on a trail called the Galloping Goose, a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle route. It is also a place where significant caring takes place, some of it with children and youth. The central part of my commute includes 5-8 kilometres with a remarkable variety of activity, even in my few minutes of this stretch in the morning and again in afternoon. I might see:

- Cantonese and Mandarin-speaking daughters leisurely walking their elderly parents, something culturally unique.
- Residents and staff of a group home for people with developmental disabilities walking to the bus – or just walking.
- A four-year-old helping her grandmother fix grandma's mitten.
- Homeless men, often binnners, looking after each other and entertaining themselves by greeting each passerby.
- Filipino care attendants, usually women and often privately hired, walking their wheel-chair bound clients and patients.
- School-children walking their younger siblings home from school.
- Parents bicycling their children to and from school.
- Hospital patients escorted by family members, often in wheel chairs with IVs and/or oxygen.



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- High schoolers sharing a last puff from a joint before school.
- Early childhood groups, with giant prams and children holding ropes.
- Groups of senior citizens exercising: some walking, others bicycling slowly, and some swift bicyclists with matching spandex and expensive bicycles.
- Most dramatically, a fire department and police department saving a teen in shock from jumping off a bridge, complete with ropes and gear.
- Oh, yes, and dogs of all types being walked by children, adults, and a fair number of elderly people on scooters.

This section of the path would make an interesting study of caring, with a diversity of professional and volunteer carers and cultural and age diversity. How do we make decision about what and when to study, that is, the sample?



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One way is to select first a sampling frame, made of up of the element, sampling unit, extent, and time. The element is the source of the data. In this case the element is the specific examples of what might be caring. In other studies the element might be a document, a person who is interviewed, or case files.

The sampling unit contains the element, and it is what we want to know about. In this case I am interested in the varieties of caring between and among people, and the sampling unit is identical to the element. In a different study I might interview people on the path, and the element would be each individual person while the unit would be the caring interaction.

I want a geographic boundary – the extent – and I might select the section of the trail between Watkiss, where the addiction treatment center is located, and Quadra avenue, where the bottle depot is. Between these two points are a hospital, group homes, three schools, and several residential neighborhoods. I'm going to bicycle the length of this section to catch as many examples of caring as possible.



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Finally, I want to be specific about time, first for the length of the study and, second, the time samples when I will observe. I might choose April through July, since this includes part of the school year and also because it includes better weather. The harder question is what time of day. It would be great if I could observe all day every day, but that is not realistic. One option is to split my days. Monday and Wednesday I could observe from 1 to 4 hoping to catch the warmer part of the day and also school release times, while Tuesday and Thursday I could observe from 6 to 8 pm for people after work. Fridays I might want to be there from 8 to 10, which seems to be a good time for some group homes and for seniors.

We now have a complete sampling frame for this study of caring, at least for the sample. This is a good start. These boundaries define opportunities and limits, which help focus our study and keep it on track.

There are two other uses of this idea. When we read about studies, we can ask whether these components have been specified. Often, they are missing, and it has some consequences for the validity of the study.

Second, our work is a sampling unit. There is a geography, a time setting, and both elements and sampling units to our choices about the work. Remembering this can help us focus on what is possible, on reasonable timelines, and on the limits of our work.

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The Duality of the Corporate Parenting Role: A Delicate Balancing Act

Kristina Moodie & Debbie Nolan

*This piece discusses the complexity of responding to incidents of offending behaviour in children's residential provision and the duality of roles experienced by our frontline corporate parents and residential childcare workers, in doing so. It draws on the findings of research into the decision making of such staff in responding to offending behaviour, as detailed in the report *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, Moodie & Nolan, 2016. This research addressed knowledge gaps about offending in residential childcare in Scotland. More critically, it helped to illuminate and better understand the decision-making process by giving voice to practitioners' experience about what it is like to have to make that often split second decision of how to react to offending behaviour. What we found was that there were multiple, often irreconcilable, factors influencing decision-making and tensions involved, which have been differentiated below.*

Keywords

Residential childcare, criminalisation, decision-making, complexity



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The 'Corporate' in parent

Staff were acutely aware of their roles and responsibilities as corporate parents, and the desire to provide as good quality and homely an experience as possible for the children in their care was tangible. However, this aspiration is tempered with the reality that staff are not the children's parents, nor is a children's house a typical family home:

We are corporate parents but it's not realistic, it's a double edged sword, in my house I wouldn't have six kids aged 11 to 17 and you wouldn't have a shift pattern of nine staff and social workers around ... it's 12 and a half hours on the floor, people can get tired, burned down and make silly choices and say the wrong things. – *Residential Childcare Worker*

Moreover, respondents were aware that this couldn't help but result in different responses to offending behaviour than would be made in a family home, feeling at times that they were being unfairly viewed for this. For example, in perceived criticism faced for contacting the police while being expected to quickly address such behaviour, even though this had often been learned or developed as a coping strategy over many years:

I hear about offending all [the] time... but that behaviour was prevalent before they came in here. We have to deal with that when they come in here, and we can't do that overnight. I don't know what people expect us to do –
Residential Childcare Worker



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I ask myself 'what would senior management think is an appropriate response?'... I would like to think it's okay to get it wrong, rather than I hope I don't get it wrong – *Residential Childcare Worker*

This situation was further complicated by the duality of the children's house as a home but also a place of work. For the young people this place as their home needs to be affirmed at every stage. Particularly when they are distressed or acting out, home is the one place individuals should feel most safe. But this has to include all the young people living there and simultaneously workers do have a range of rights at work, including to be safe themselves. This duality of home and workplace and corporate parent can be difficult to reconcile:

I have rights as a worker and a human. If someone has been assaulted or could potentially be assaulted, I have the right to contact the police just as anyone does (Residential Childcare Worker).

The dual responsibilities to the young people and their futures

Residential workers as corporate parents have a responsibility to the present and future outcomes of every young person they support, as per guidance from the Scottish Government in 2015. In terms of the present, young people will often have been placed in their care as a place of safety, either as a means of protecting the young person from the behaviour of others or indeed their own. It was therefore evident during the interviews that ensuring as far as possible safety of all the young people they had responsibilities to, as well as to each other as colleagues, was a paramount concern. However, ensuring immediate safety was far from straightforward and could present a range of conundrums.



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As a result of police contact, young people could become known to and enter formal systems, and this could be equally true of system contact for welfare reasons, such as missing person reports, as for offending behaviour. The theory of labelling predicts that when an individual receives the official label of 'offender' this affects both the individual's self-concept and the reaction of others around them, resulting in the further adoption of that role and therefore subsequent offending (Farrington, 1977). Similarly, 30 years later The Edinburgh Study took a longitudinal examination of offending among young people and identified the impact of entering criminal justice systems arguing: 'the deeper a child penetrates the formal system, the less likely he or she is to desist from offending' (Mcara and Mcvie, 2007, p. 315). Thus by the very nature of the response to promote and maintain the safety of young people, the impact on their future outcomes could be negative.

Moreover, in terms of supporting children's development, all risks cannot be removed and risk aversion is recognised as having an adverse effect on future outcomes. The need to recognise what is age and stage appropriate behaviour and that of 'typical' teenagers, while being aware that these are young people who are being scrutinised more than most teenagers are likely to be, are additional complicating factors. Therefore, the balance between achieving safety and managing developmentally appropriate risk-taking is a difficult task.

Staff were mindful of the long-term impact of police responding to offending and potential subsequent charge and conviction for the young person's future. As a result, it is unsurprising that throughout interviews they were clear that police contact and the criminalisation of young people was the option of last resort, although the data suggests that there is still



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disproportionate police involvement, particularly with regards to incidents of vandalism.

Staff were acutely aware of the negative outcomes of young people leaving care with a criminal record and the impact of this on future education, employment, training, and wider opportunities. Yet coupled with this was their acknowledged role in preparing young people for their future and the weight of teaching young people that behaviour has consequences. In doing so, respondents were mindful that young people needed to understand what behaviours would be acceptable and unacceptable beyond the parameters of the children's house and that would result in police involvement. Workers argued that where this was the case, police involvement could in fact have an important role in developing this understanding. Moreover, they would rather the young person experience those consequences within the relative security of the Children's Hearings System than in adult court.

I met a boy who is now in adult court and he said `you failed me when I was younger by protecting me from it ... I didn't learn much as a child', but we are trying to protect –

Residential Childcare Worker

The dual role of acting as carer and controller

The traditional quandary of care and control was evident during interviews but this was further complicated by the inability to separate these roles and to reconcile their impact on decision making in respondent's heads. It is clear that workers have a huge level of care, compassion, empathy, and understanding for, and of, the young people in their care. But as a result the personal and emotional costs of the dual care



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and control role are significant. Recognising and supporting staff to process and manage the personal impact of making these hard choices is key.

We are between a rock and a hard place... It's really difficult for staff who care a lot for young people and see them in crisis like, that the last thing [we] want to do is call police but at times [are] backed into a corner. If we don't follow procedures and someone gets injured ... it's about keeping ourselves right ... It is very difficult ... it's emotional for everybody, but young people are our main focus –
Residential Childcare Worker

Moreover, relationships and relationship-based care are of central importance in meeting young people's needs. For young people who have already experienced often multiple adversities that resulted in them being placed in care, they often have very negative experiences of adults, relationships and being 'cared for'.

These relationships are often difficult to build, inherently fragile and in need of constant reinforcement. Yet, when the carer has the option or indeed the inclination to involve the police in response to behaviour, with the range of implications this can bring (as detailed above) this can't help but create a relationship imbalance and indeed schism in that trust and subsequent relationship.

Future thinking

The young people who make up the looked-after population are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The behaviour with which some of



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them may choose to communicate their pain, anger or frustration may appear as antisocial or damaging, but it's important to remember that for many, this is the only language they know and what they really need is a consistent, loving and therefore safe response from the adults around them. Something, that it was clear from many of the responses from this study, residential workers were working very hard to give them. In doing so, the skills of staff and in supporting young people to understand the nuances of relationships and as necessary restoring relationships, as well as the reasoning for decision-making in responding to behaviours, is key.

Put simply, the job of residential care worker is not an easy one. It can be challenging, perhaps akin to managing spinning plates. What was stark in interviewing many of the residential workers was the sheer quantity of issues and pros and cons they weigh up in making the decision to involve the police, situations where often an immediate response is needed and the stakes are high. It was also telling that in reflecting on this thinking there was still a sense of making sense of the choices. Interestingly, the disparity in staff self-reporting that the police are rarely involved compared with the reality of police involvement underscores the importance of sharing ongoing and robust data, particularly to highlight areas of good or poor practice.

It is hoped that the recent report and this piece has helped to illuminate not just the complexities and daily balancing act experienced but also the fact that removal of discretion in this aspect of residential childcare is not realistic, not practical and indeed not possible. Sometimes calling the police to an incident will absolutely be the most appropriate response. It is important we can learn from what workers have stated aids this decision-making process and enables them to feel supported and empowered to make the right decision. This includes having a positive, shared, supportive,



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and respectful organisational culture; access to a range of managerial and colleague supports; and ongoing investment in, and the prioritisation of, staff training, induction and development. To support this, CYCJ and STAF are partnering to support the local and national practical implementation of these findings. If this is something you or your organisation are interested in participating in, please contact the authors of this piece.

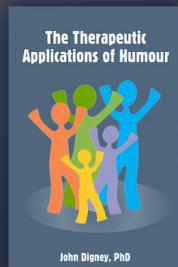
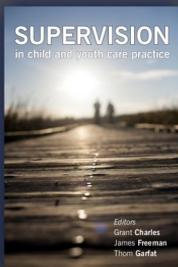
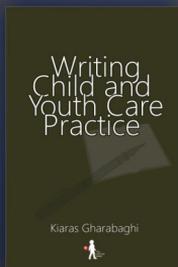
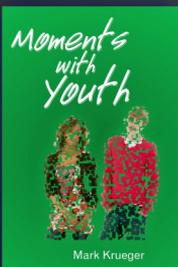
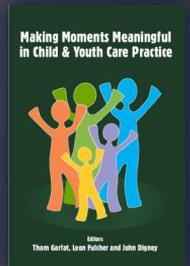
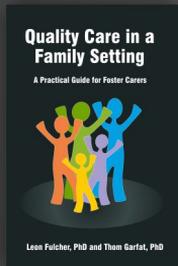
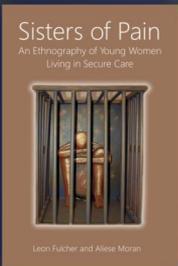
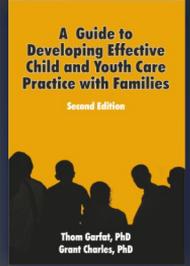
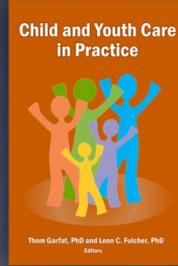
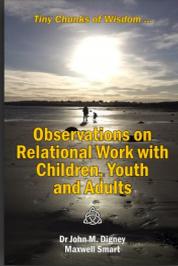
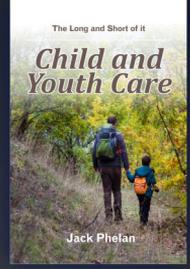
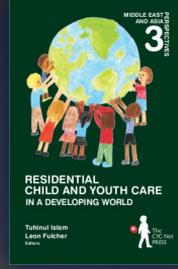
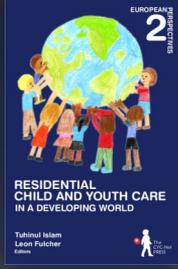
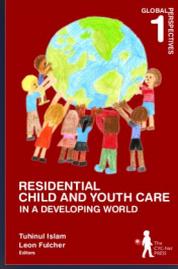
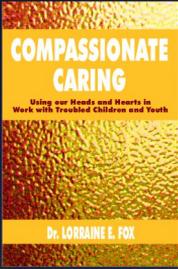
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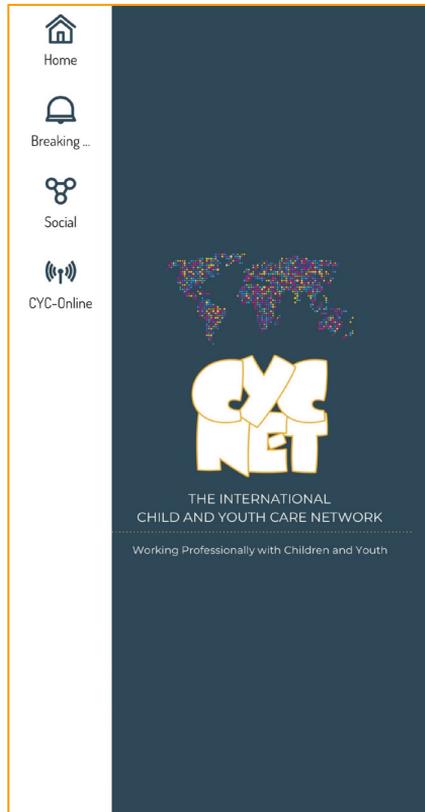
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Postcard from Leon Fulcher

From Blenheim in the heart of New Zealand's Marlborough Sounds

Kia Ora Kotou Katoa and Warm Greetings everyone! Where has the time gone? Here we are into February when New Zealand celebrates Waitangi Day when history records that the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 signalling the start of a new outpost in the British Empire. It was much later that New Zealand started to come to grips with its Maori history.

As one takes the Interisland Ferry from Wellington to Picton, it is only 3 hours before arrival in the South Island or Waipounamu where Maori legend has it that Māui was fishing and brought up Te



Wairau Bar - key archaeological site settled by East Polynesian explorers about 1280

Ika-a-Māui or the North Island. What is interesting about Wairau Bar is that this would seem to be the place where the settlement of New Zealand or Aotearoa actually began.



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Back in 1939, a 13-year-old school boy made the first discoveries at Wairau Bar, finding moa eggs, necklaces, a sperm whale tooth, and human remains. During the next 20 years, archaeologist

Roger Duff and Canterbury Museum-led expeditions unearthed 44 skeletons and hundreds of artefacts – and tension built up between the local iwi Rangitane o Wairau and the archaeologists.

It wasn't until 2009 that the tangata whenua were able to return their tipuna to their final resting place, but before the koiwi tangata were repatriated, iwi agreed that scientists could



A forlorn, windswept and barren place, bustling with people some 700 years ago



Some 2000 artefacts and 44 human skeletons were removed and examined

study the bones and take samples for genetic analysis. Archaeologists were also able to return to the site to excavate and to investigate the details of the village, in collaboration with Rangitane members.

University of Otago anthropologist Hallie Buckley has spent months inspecting the bones of the people who were buried at Wairau Bar, including a woman who is now known as Aunty. “When Aunty died, she was probably no older than 30, but she was a strong women. She had fine features and was gracile.” Her teeth tell of childhood stresses, possibly periods of food shortages or infections, during which the enamel stopped developing. They also hold clues of a diet that suggests



In 2009 the local Maori returned their ancestor's remains to their final resting place



The first people to arrive in Aotearoa probably included hundreds of women

that Aunty had grown up elsewhere. “She wasn’t born here. Her teeth had taken on a geological signature that’s very different from here so it’s likely that she was among the first group of people that came and settled in this area” from Eastern Polynesia.

At least four graves on the Bar belong to the first generation of Polynesian settlers. The latest scientific work has proven that these people were once children in East Polynesia.



Early Polynesians dug long channels to capture fish on the incoming tides

While current DNA research will hold the key to their exact origins, questions are still posed about where the first Maori immigrants came from and the location of their mythological homeland of Hawaiki.

So why might all these happenings in the South Pacific be of interest to child and youth care workers elsewhere in the world? It seems to me that family histories are of fundamental importance to our engagement in daily life events with children and young people. “Who am I?” and “Where do I come from?” are almost constant



Maori were almost indisputably the first people to arrive here

emotions that underpin many challenging behaviours that young people present. Where do your people cum frae?

The way that Eurocentric views of the world were carried to all parts of the globe has had a dramatic impact on the way indigenous people now live. This is not to ignore the contributions that Eurocentric ideas may have contributed. But on the whole, Eurocentric views of the world - like North American views of the world - have their own blind spots. Noticing it is essential!

Look around you and your world, then ask who were here first and how are they surviving? What can we do to facilitate better connections between then and now, and not ignoring history!



The oceans they sailed before settling here was hard for eurocentrics to accept



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