

CYC-Online

Online journal of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)



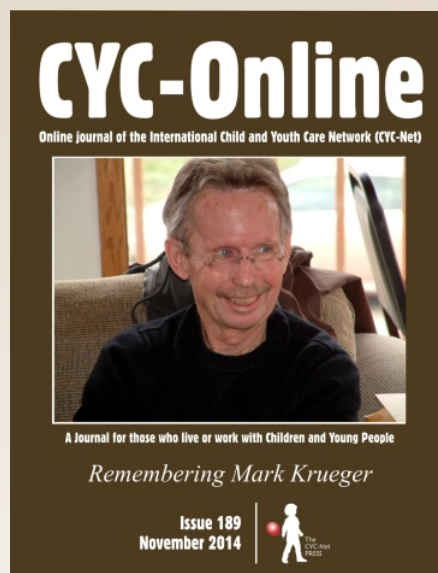
A Journal for those who live or work with Children and Young People

Remembering Mark Krueger

Issue 189
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I have had the great pleasure over the past few weeks of cooking with some of my male friends. I love cooking with guys – it gets us into a whole other world of pleasure and interaction that we do not normally have in our daily lives. Wrist deep in simmering pots, fingers covered with sauce and spices, steaming our faces over the boiling water we share a world of aroma, creativity and exploration while trading secrets none of us knew the other had (like the importance of a thumbnail, how to get the meal ready on time and the key ingredient in seafood linguine).

In this cocoon of culinary craziness we discover our relationships anew, deepen friendships and open up other possibilities.

Last weekend I had the chance to cook with my friends Kiaras and Grant. It was Carla's birthday so Grant decided to prepare the meal for a dozen friends and he invited Kiaras and I to cook with him – truth be known, confession time, they did the cooking and I was delegated to the position of potato chopper and rice washer. Which was probably a good idea as the two of them actually knew what they were doing – or at least they could read the

cookbook better than me.

It was an interesting 'guys world' for while we were still 'guys being guys' (complete with bad jokes, searing cynicism and a level of intellectual repartee which would have scored us high marks in the 4th grade) we were also guys indulging in the enjoyment of another part of ourselves (especially after someone opened the first bottle of wine).

The week before Leon had come to stay with Sylviane and me for a few days

on one of his whirlwind global trips. Leon is addicted to the BBQ (or Braai, or Barbie, or whatever one might call it) so most of the 'cooking' with Leon



involved long lingering conversations while building the charcoals, preparing the salad or slicing the veggies – yes, when you BBQ with Leon, everything but the salad is done on the Braai. Now, you have to know that I have every man's dream BBQ – big enough to cook a goat, built into a structure at the end of the patio, it has a firebox to make your own charcoals and is solid enough to turn into a roaring fire when the cooking is done. So Leon and I lingered over the coals, shared stories, solved all the problems of the world and enjoyed the ritual of

two-men-and-a-barbeque.

Now, as I said, I learned many new secrets – but I will only share the ones that have to do with cooking.

From Kiaras I learned the ancient trick of deciding how much water to put in for the rice, always a question depending on the type of rice, whether you have soaked it, how you want the texture. But apparently the answer is... add water until it is one thumbnail over the top of the rice. Now, I was sceptical – after all, ‘how long is a thumbnail?’ is very close to the old question ‘how long is a piece of string?’ I mean what if you bite your nails, or what if you have long curved nails? Apparently, it does not matter – the rice and water know how to adapt to the length of thumbnail being used. Now, there’s a secret worth knowing: rice and water are self-adjusting in the right circumstances. Who knew about this collusion, this evidence of sedentary intelligence? See what secrets one learns in the kitchen.

From Grant, I learned one of the greatest secrets of all times: do not open the wine while there is hot food simmering or boiling on the stove. Now this is an old family secret shared here for the first time, so don’t be surprised if you find yourself resisting it. It does improve the outcome of course as once the wine is open the guys tend to pay more attention to the wine than to the recipe but more importantly it improves efficiency as the guys rush to finish the preparations so as to get to the libations. This trick, easily learned but extremely difficult to implement, especially with good friends, actually ensures

the meal is ready on time – always an issue when the guys are in the kitchen. Of course, one of the important aspects is to monitor your buddies to make sure they are not taking dangerous culinary shortcuts in their rush to ‘get the meal ready on time’. Grant also claims this secret also applies to cold meals but I am not willing to accept this yet.

From Leon I learned the secret to a great seafood linguine. It goes like this: First you notice that your friend has an amazing jar of canned lobster (given to him by another friend – thanks Tina) sitting on the counter. You keep this noticing to yourself, not mentioning it to your hosts. Then you subtly raise the issue of seafood linguine, extolling its virtues, while explaining how easy it is to make. Having convinced your hosts that it should be on the menu, you mention the jar of lobster and your hosts, being ever genial, agree to sacrifice it to the amazing seafood linguine they are now imagining. Then, ingredients gathered – oh, found some prawns in the fridge, shall we add them, you say to your host – you and your buddy gather in the kitchen. Now here comes the secret.

You confess to your host, buddy, guy friend, that you do not know how to make a white sauce, how to flavour it or even how long to boil the fresh linguine and then you sit back, wine open in this case, and allow him to make the dinner. That’s the secret to a great linguine seafood – manipulate your buddy into making it! Then over dinner you comment on how happy you are that your good friend learned how easy it is to make the dish.

So, the next time you are wondering what to do with the guys in your program, take them into the kitchen and prepare them for their future lives as cooking buddies. It will open up a whole new world of future possibilities. Oh, and you may just be amazed at how well they take to it and how much they will share with you as together you explore a different part of 'guys world'.

Mark Krueger talked about the importance of everyday activities, everyday life and the joy to be found there. You can find that joy in the kitchen with kids, as much as you can find it on the court. And don't worry if they burp and fart – as Mark would say, it is all a part of the experience – and in this case, the experience of being guys together exploring their current and alternative selves.

Miss you Mark!

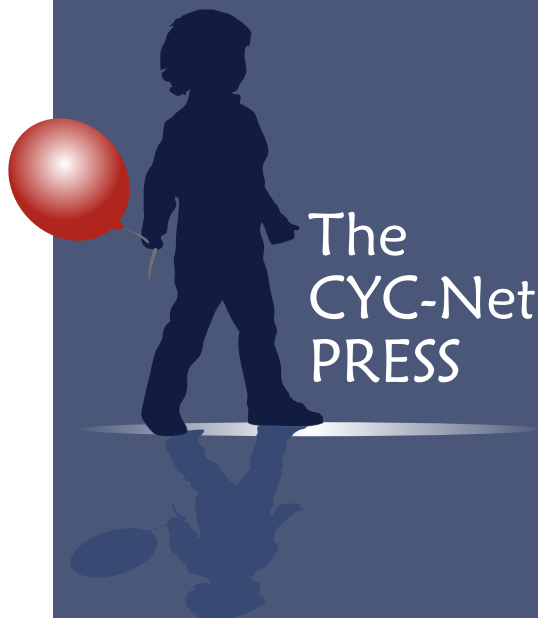
Anyone want to cook?

Thom

Note: Leon claims my linguine history is revisionist. Grant and Kiaras would likely claim the same. And that's one of the greatest secrets of all – cooking with the guys is not subject to any rules of reliable reporting – it is whatever you make it. And recreating history is an important guy skill (all women know this to be true).



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Memories of Mark

Mark Krueger died recently.

He was a leader, an inspiration and a mentor to individuals and to the field. Because of Mark's importance to us and the field, we have decided to run this simple chapter (Mark loved simple) as a recognition of respect.

We begin with a piece by a close friends of Mark, Gerry Fewster and Karen VanderVen, and then simply include comments from others, where we hear how Mark touched so many lives.

September 26, 2014

My buddy Mark Krueger is hooked-up to a life support machine in a Milwaukee hospital. I won't say he's "fighting for his life" because I don't believe he is. Anyway, Mark would never forgive me if I abandoned him with such a worn out empty cliché. Over the past few years I've been watching him dismantle the life he had created, with the same resolve that fostered our friendship and made him a legend in the ubiquitous world of 'Child & Youth Care'. Realizing there

would be no point in trying to dissuade him, I settled into the role of participant observer.

It would be easy to his attribute his decision to the medical condition and horrendous treatment interventions that left him distressed and dis-

figured, but I don't believe this either. One of Mark's most frequently stated beliefs is that true learning involves a conscious rejection of simplicity to discover 'the simple on the other side of complexity'. Anyone who knows him, or has studied his prolific writing over the years, will see how he has been carving out this pathway in his own unique and complex way.

For the past year or so, Mark has been closing the door on colleagues, family and friends. I've been saddened by this while selfishly hanging on to the hope that, for some reason, I would be an exception. I convinced myself that spending time with him during his medical ordeals, demanding regular email updates and offering uncon-

ditional availability would be enough to keep my foot in the door. Well it wasn't.

Perhaps I could have done more. Perhaps I should have gone down to Milwaukee two months ago when it was clear I'd been added to the list. Perhaps I should be there now, even though he's unable, or unwilling, to respond to anything or anybody. A week ago his actively caring brother-in-law reminded him about my persistent efforts to make contact and the response was a smile followed by, "ya, Fewster is probably going nuts." Well Marko, old buddy, you may be right but, as always, the ball is in your court. And, as always, I'll respect whatever decision you make.

September 29, 2014

Today the life support machine was switched-off on the grounds of "no meaningful future." Perhaps the opposite was the case. Perhaps my friend Mark has made his final move from the complex into the unthinkable simple. I loved him and, in his own way, I believe he loved me. Thanks Marko.

October 4, 2014

Mark died at 10:30 this morning. *sit vis nobiscum*

Gerry Fewster

The Professional Career of Mark Krueger

Dr. Mark Krueger, Professor of Youth Work at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a venerable and internationally respected and beloved practitioner, scholar, and leader in child and youth work has died. His career spanned more than 40 years and bene-

fited not only children and youth worldwide, but also the careers of child and youth workers who were empowered by his teaching, his leadership, his numerous writings, his advocacy, and his personal caring, compassion, creativity and modesty. These qualities were infused in his numerous activities that embodied his focus on the interactive, dynamic and relational aspects of child and youth work establishing it as a crucial and unique human service.

Dr. Krueger held a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Master's and Doctoral degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His entrance into the field of child and youth work began in the late 1960s when he served over a period of eight years as a line child and youth care worker and supervisor at the

Lutheran Children's Friend Society in Milwaukee. This was followed by service as a child and youth care program coordi-



nator and supervisor at Lakeside Children's Center also in Milwaukee.

In 1979 Dr. Krueger founded the Child and Youth Work Learning Center (now the Youth Work Learning Center) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The model of this Center, based on integrating theory and practice, became internationally recognized as an effective means of training and educating child and youth workers and advancing professionalization of the field. Dr. Krueger for years served as Director of the Center and was still involved with it at the time of his death. For some years he served as Interim Dean of the Division of Continuing Education which was the home of the Learning Center.

A talented and prolific writer, Dr. Krueger made a major contribution to the professional literature of the field. He was the Founding Editor of the *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work*, a publication designed to give the field a distinct voice by encouraging direct line workers to contribute along with scholars. He authored numerous widely disseminated books on various aspects of child and youth work, ranging from earlier works such as *Inter-*

vention Techniques for Child/Youth Care Workers, and *From Careless to Caring for Troubled Youth* to more recent titles including *Images of Thought: Presence, Place, Motion, Rhizomes*, *Lunch and Noise in Child and Youth Care* and *Sketching Youth, Self and Youth Work*. Because of their significance and implications for improving the care of vulnerable children and youth, a number of

these books were published by the Child Welfare League of America.

Later in his career Dr. Krueger wrote novels and short stories with a child and youth work flavor, including *Floating*, *In Motion*, and *Buckets*.

In addition he contributed dozens of shorter articles to the professional literature, developed educational materials and served on the Editorial Boards of a number of journals related to the field.

Dr. Krueger was active in many other professional organizations in child and youth work. In recent years he organized and hosted in Taos, New Mexico, a think tank meeting of leaders in the field. Prior to that he organized many other professional gatherings, including an international conference in Milwaukee co-sponsored by the International Federation of Educative



Communities (FICE). He was Chair of the International Leadership Coalition for Child and Youth Care and served a term as President of the National Association of Child Care Workers (NOCCWA).

Because of his extensive knowledge, special viewpoints and ability to engage an audience, Dr. Krueger was invited to be the keynote speaker at numerous child and youth work conferences. He consulted to child and youth work service agencies and educational institutions throughout North America.

His accomplishments were honored by numerous awards, including Distinguished Service awards from the Association for Child and Youth Care Practice (ACYCP)

The National Association of Homes and Services for Children, and the Albert E. Trieschman Center. The University of Wisconsin system recognized him with

The UW Extension / Colleges Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contributions to work preparing professionals to work with at-risk youth.

Despite his numerous academic and professional achievements, Dr. Krueger never lost the common touch and his identification with the challenges facing line child care workers. Like many in the field, Dr. Krueger, fleet and graceful as a deer, was athletic and loved to play. Many of his colleagues remember forgoing the formal lunch at a conference and going for a run with him instead, or engaging in a spirited game of pick-up basketball.

Karen VanderVen

Memories of Mark

No one can improve on the thoughts shared by Karen V. All of us who knew Mark knew him to be completely genuine and authentic in his words and actions on behalf of wounded children and teens. He was humble, fun, and uniquely insightful, which made his writings a delight.

All of us who love those he loved will miss him.

Lorraine Fox

Mark was an early inspiration to me with all his professional works from Milwaukee.

About 10 years ago he came to Rhode Island to speak at our professional child care association.

I even made it out to Milwaukee to attend the Cream City event he helped facilitate – from that I wrote an article, “Cream City Dreams: Reflections on Professionalization of Child and Youth Care Workers in the U.S.” in the Child and Youth Care Forum.

He will be missed greatly.

Gene Cavaliere



Although Mark himself never visited our shores, his name is well known by South African child and youth care workers. His work is included in the NACCW CYCW training courses currently reaching over 5000 CYCWs – and is likely to be affecting the lives of over half a million children in our country. His practical, simple, step-by-step guidance on constructing useful logs has taught CYCWs to communicate positively about children in their care. His work on prevention, support and correction of behaviour has, I am sure, helped many South African children (and their child and youth care workers) through difficult moments. We give thanks for Mark's contribution to the lives of so many so far from his native land.

Hamba kahle Mark – go well.

Merle Allsopp

Mark was a leader, a visionary, a storyteller, and had an amazing way of painting pictures with words. He encouraged and taught others in the profession to write from the heart and from the front-line he co-authored many papers with those that he encouraged.

Carol Stuart



I had the pleasure of meeting Mark on a few of my trips to the USA & Canada. I have learnt a lot about him and from him. He will forever be an asset to the field of Child & Youth Care Work in my view.

God rest his Soul forever.

Francisco Cornelius

I was saddened to hear about the passing of Mark Krueger. Even if I did not have an opportunity to meet him in person, it feels like I had already met him. During my PhD studies, I read so much of his insightful work.

I was hoping to meet him in one of the World conferences but

unfortunately it was not meant to be.

Lesiba Molepo

The first time I met Mark Krueger was at a conference; a CYC conference; likely about 25 years ago. This was the majority of our relationship; meeting at conferences and giving each other hugs and talking about how we were doing. This started when I went up to him in a workshop he was doing and told him how much I appreciated his articles. I was

struck by how calm and how humble he seemed to be and that was the beginning of giving hugs at conferences and checking in.

Probably my favourite memory of him was once going out for supper with Mark and Henry Maier over 20+ years ago at a cyc conference in Montreal. To me they were rather like the father and son of much of what cyc is about, for me. We talked about the field and they both made me feel like I was, what I had to say was, as important as everything they had to say. For me how I valued this was because it so illustrated the lack of hierarchy that I believe is a key to this field.

My other memory is watching Mark run. He seemed to run in a way that was perfect for who he was; he was strong, silent and appeared to be barely moving and yet covered ground quickly. He looked happy and relaxed and I enjoyed just watching him until he was gone from my sight. That was years ago at UVic where we were both attending a conference.

Thank you Mark for everything you gave.

Janet White



Mark taught me the essence of being in the moment with children, youth and families. His life was a paradoxical integration of being artist and doing science. I would not be where I am in my understanding of self in relation to others if it was not for Mark's compassionate patience. Presencing was an essence not an appendage to his work with children,

youth and families. Whether it was walking along the river in Milwaukee or in the auditorium at a conference, Mark was actively engaging us to think and to rethink and to reflect on our work, our calling, our response to others. He taught me to suspend my judgment because it precludes learning. He modeled that child and youth care work was the greatest act of grace and redemption; reclamation. I

have learned that since no one is perfect, we have no right expect or demand perfection from others. Thank you Mark. I no longer live by the maxim 'performance precedes acceptance'. My confusing cultural nuances embedded notions that achievement is the currency that buys approval. I have modeled the way in the brilliant light of his gospel of unconditional love.

Mark your legacy is alive, indelibly etched on my psyche. By simply being; I am.

Michael Gaffley



I have not met Mark in person but he influenced my CYC professional growth in many ways. His writings, which I used as references in my CYC degree course, will forever be imprinted on my professional journey. It's like I met him in person.

May his soul rest in perfect peace.

Vincent Hlabangana

Mark was the external examiner for my Master's thesis. Even though he did not know me at the time, and I was probably one of many students he encountered, he really engaged with my work in a way that made me feel like it mattered. He turned the defense process – which could have been terrifying – into a truly relational learning experience. From that point forward he became both a valued friend and mentor.

After that, Mark and I began sharing writing and emailing each other regularly. Over the years, we proofread each other's work, and when I attended CYC conferences I eagerly anticipated the opportunity to connect with him. The last time I saw Mark was over lunch in Newfoundland in 2013.

Here is a link to something Mark wrote shortly after I met him in 2007:

<http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cycol-0709-krueger.html> I was grateful then for the way he pushed my thinking about loss and relational practice. It holds new meaning as I read it now.

I'm so grateful that he was part of my learning/life journey.

Janet Newbury

Mark was my friend. He was also one of my mentors.

From him I learned to appreciate the simplicity on the other side of complexity.

For the past few years Mark has been drawing away. In some ways, in doing this, Mark helped me to prepare for the loss of him. So like Mark to help me, or others, in their own voyage.

I have missed him as I miss him now.

Thanks Mark.

Thom Garfat

A small selection of Mark's “Moments with Youth” column in CYC-Online ...

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He wrote about kids farting in the group home van. Who does that?? He wrote about having lunch with kids, and argued that the entire essence of child and youth care is embedded within this simple and everyday activity. He wrote about 'sketching in the seventh moment', and in the process created a theory of child and youth care practice deeply connected to tracing the Self, reflecting on one's own youth, and finding the meaning of experiences in the moment and again in retrospect. He had moments himself, some quite angry, and during these he raged against the machine, condemned war in Iraq, chastised multi-national publishing corporations for taking over the unique and authentic expression of being with young people, and he even advocated for smashing some things in the interest of rendering 'being with' an authentic experience.

Teamwork in child and youth care practice was a central theme in his writing and his speaking. Like some of his contemporaries in his early career, he advocated for caring for the caregivers, checks and balances on the individual, and empowering collective moments of expression and action. He was always a leading member of the child and youth care team in North America; he was present at conferences, contributed to written collections, com-

mented on the writings of others, and led group discussions in local, national and international conversations. He brought together groups of people in strange contexts and engaged us in explorations that simply don't happen otherwise. In doing so, he created relationships not only for himself, but for many others, often unlikely ones, but always ones that seemed to have been waiting to happen for a long time.

In his later years, he became interested

in the arts, in metaphoric, and sometimes esoteric, representations of being with, thinking about, and doing in child and youth care. He explored the hidden opportunities of moving out of child and youth care in order to understand it better. He con-

ected with anyone interested in the field, and although he never sought to do so, he impacted the thinking of far more people in our field he could have ever imagined.

On a personal note, my life is better because I knew him. And now I miss knowing that when I am unsure, when something troubles me about my field, when I get stuck, I could always just ask Mark.

I wish you peace, my friend.

Kiaras.

Mark

Kiaras Gharabaghi

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With Mark Krueger's passing, we who work and think in the field of Child and Youth Care lose a vibrant, unique, powerful and seminal voice. More than that, we have lost a warm and truly compassionate colleague. One who had the capacity to keep both the foundations of the field and the future of our work in his view. Anyone who has had the opportunity to read Mark's work knows how deep, broad, and rich the scope of his writing is. Those of us, who experienced his teaching or engaged him in conversation, have felt both the depth of his humanity and his commitment to the work.

The work, for Mark, always seemed to me, to bringing the vitality of human lived experience front and center in Child and Youth Care. When he spoke about trends in the field that he liked, he highlighted those that embodied the tradition of what might be called radical humanism. That is, as he said, the "desire among workers to humanize the work, counter the dehumanizing effects of outcome and evidence approaches . . . [In this] I see a revolution in the relational and developmental nature of our work."

Mark was a revolutionary of the old

school. His ethos was rooted in an almost forgotten but essential tradition within our field; that lineage of thought and practice that is fundamentally concerned with retaining our humanity in the face of a profoundly de-humanizing social field. His concerns were phenomenological and existential. He reminded us, in all of his

writings, of the importance of the mundane encounter as the ground out of which the work arises. In this, he was pointing to the necessity of being able to experience the world as fully as possible. Like a Zen master, he kept refocusing our attention on the simplest elements of our work, a walk, playing basketball, or famously

eating a grilled cheese sandwich. However, like Zen, such activities for Mark were not simple, but full of the complexities of the lived encounter between living human beings.

In the opening section of *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari state that in writing the book they used, "everything that came within range, what was closest and that which was farthest away." Mark also drew on everything that came within range. His openness and curiosity about everything human was boundless. He

We Will Miss You Mark

Hans Skott-Myhre

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sought anything and everything that opened the field of experience and sensation. His writings encompassed art, philosophy, dance, literature and poetry. He encouraged us to open ourselves to life and to the full capacities of human expression. In his work there was the clear implication that the encounter between young people and those who work with them was rich with essential elements of being and becoming.

Mark embodied the creative spirit that I find central to the project of Child and Youth Care/Youth Work. It is perhaps this spirit that drew me to his work and to him as a friend and colleague in the first place. Mark's interest and commitment to bringing art, music, poetry and philosophy into his writing and his work was not an aesthetic desire, nor was it at all an attraction to any sense of creativity as abstracted from lived experience. I would argue that Mark used the world of the humanities, specifically, to bring the realm of human experience into our work. The introduction of the artistic, literary and philosophical, in Mark's work, is a way of exploring what might be called presencing.

Presencing, in this sense, might be defined as the capacity to enter an encounter with the other as fully as possible. As Mark said in a piece he wrote with Kiaras Garabaghi and myself, 'Continuing the El Salto Discussions',

Early in my career, I realized that I was at my best, when I, as a worker I know once said, "showed-up." I was present, energetically engaged in the

moment or activity and aware of what is going on within and around me.

This focus, on the ability to arrive to the event in question, was Mark's trademark opening. To engage the encounter as fully as possible, however, requires a refined and disciplined sensibility. To open oneself to the other with a comprehension of the complexities, nuances and subtleties that this entails, requires a rich comprehension of the body's capacity to apprehend its environment and the mind's capacity to think about what the body is experiencing. It is to this end, that Mark reminded us over and over again of the power of those arts that deal specifically in the realm of apprehension and thought. To read a poem, reflect on a work of art, be



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engaged by the dance, experience the emotional evocation of a photograph is to enrich the field of experience necessary to the composition of what we term, in our field, relationship.

To eat lunch, in the Kruegerian sense, without this deep training in apprehension and thought is an impoverished shadow of what Mark seems to be implying in his reflections on the work. Indeed, Mark appears to me to be pointing to the ways in which our work offers radical access to the possibilities of social reconfigurations rooted in the activities of human experience. This deep existential reading of the encounter between young people and workers stands as he says as a “revolution in the relational and developmental nature of our work.” But not just our work, in and of itself, but the ways in which we engage the de-humanizing elements of our field, as they reiterates the most reductive and technocratic explications of the broader social field. In this, Mark’s attention to the beingness of our humanity has important implications for how young people’s lived experience have the capacity to open new political and social possibilities.

It is in Mark’s writing, teaching, and practice that we find the capacity for a certain kind of pause, a waiting to see, that allows for a vision the future as possible through the encounter in the immediate present. In a 2007 lecture on the existential therapeutic practice of *daseinanalyse*, Ado Huygens states “I would like to stress today the importance of “to think” in the field of psychotherapy in general and espe-

cially in *Daseinanalyse*.” He goes on to point out that thought requires the capacity to wait and that waiting as a mode of thought implies the ability to be receptive and in the sense of Zen, to hold an empty mind. He says that an empty mind is premised on the ability to listen without intentionality, to just be there with an openness to the “formless vibration till something happened.” This openness can lead us towards the “unfolding of the mystery of Being.” He goes to state that,

For sure! Such a manner to deepen the thought is completely obsolete nowadays. Our era favors about others a compulsive behaviour tense by pursuit of profit, celebrity, power... No place, any time for meditation, emptiness. No place, no time anymore to think, more than ever, when you become aware that “to think” means to experience the groundless of life. Indeed, what I ponder as a thought has to remain formless even though it needs a kind of formness : an edge which does not becomes a border. The thought edges one’s way through the human’s downfall or doom without letting a visible way, just a path like that one sketched by the water in the sand. The premise of thinking is to abide the abyss of human life till some ephemeral ground is growing up. That’s the first lineaments of thought.

I would argue that Mark’s work on the art of eating lunch echoes these proposals and concerns. That his inclusion of the humanities and arts, into our increasing scientifically and technologically obsessed field, was an effort to produce the counter-narrative of pausing to experience life

as lived, rather than life as compulsion. Indeed, we might read Mark's work as an explication of daseinanalyse or the exploration of the questions of "being there," "presence," or "existence" as key elements of our work with young people.

In this reading of Mark's oeuvre, we could see him as asking us to take seriously what Gion Condrau proposes when he says that daseinanalyse is psychotherapy that engages a "phenomenological view of the human beings existence as the area of opening of Dasein [being there, presence, existence] that engages everything it encounters." This Condrau tells us opens the possibility of psychotherapy as exploring our perceptions as they disclose themselves beyond the realm of meaning and content. As such, this kind of work "differs from the dualistic world view of natural

sciences, which ultimately are based on the philosophy of René Descartes according to which an unbridgeable chasm exists between the human mind and measurable matter." Gion says that this way of working allows for the development of a new anthropology or study of human life that does not privilege either science or metaphysics but the experience of the lived subject and its reflective capacities. Gion goes in to state,

Modern scientists, psychiatrists, psychologists, and doctors have mostly lost sight of the real importance of the obvious. They often overlook the richness of what can be immediately experienced, and concentrate on coming as soon as possible to an indirect, background-based, theoretical explanation of all they meet, thereby making their object of investigation calculable and thus also reproducible.

I can't think of a clearer explication of Mark's contribution to the field and what we stand to lose if we don't sustain and extend the work he left behind. To produce our work as a rich, complex entangled, messy, mundane tapestry of the encounters between living bodies is, I fear, an increasingly marginalized and fading discourse in child and youth care/youth work. It would be both a travesty and a tragedy to lose this vital foundational aspect of our work. While we will miss Mark's active and productive voice and practice with his passing, we can continue his work through extending his vision of human capacity as a living and dynamic refutation of all that would compromise our common humanity.



The staff & families of Casa Pacifica join the CYC world in remembering the life & legacy of Mark Krueger

Casa Pacifica works with young people & families in Southern California USA, providing residential care, education & community supports to the most vulnerable in the region.

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Care, Rhythm & Presence: Remembering Mark Krueger

James Freeman

Mark Krueger was an influential leader in the field of child and youth care. This brief article highlights a few of his thoughts and reminds us of his continued influence in our daily work and lives.

I didn't know Mark Krueger in the earlier stages of his career but I could tell at our first meeting he possessed a wealth of experience and knowledge in working with young people. Although Mark passed away last month, his career and life will remain influential and meaningful for those of us in child and youth care.

Mark was a career child and youth care practitioner. His early experience in residential care and role as a professor and director of the Youth Work Learning Center (and later as dean of the School of Continuing Education) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee put him in a unique position to influence our field. The week before his passing I had an unplanned weekend in Milwaukee, visiting the learning center and the older parts of the university campus where his first office was located. It was a time to reflect on his contribution to us and the exchange of

responsibility that was given to all of us in his passing.

Mark was an advocate for young people and their families as well as for each of us as CYC practitioners. In a personal conversation where we were discussing our hopes for the future of the child and youth care, Mark was explicit in describing his hope was for a "continual improvement in the quality of care provided for children and youth...[and a] greater recognition of the powerful roles of child and youth care workers in the lives of children, youth, families and communities" (Freeman, 2013). Let's consider together a few of the things he thought were important for us to reflect on in our work.

Care and action

Mark had a keen insight for recognizing and articulating the state of our field. He wrote numerous articles where he de-

scribed the central themes in child and youth care - or at least what good child and youth care should look and feel like. In 2000 he explained:

Child and youth care is about caring and acting – about being there, thinking on your feet, interacting, and growing with children. It is rich, intense, difficult work that requires passion and commitment. When it goes well, troubled children can make tremendous strides. When it goes poorly, their obstacles may seem almost impossible to overcome.
(Krueger, 2000)

Notice the blending of care and action he describes. A sense of being with and growing together. We can't separate the development of the young person from our own growth and change. Good care, he says, is difficult and requires passion. This is not a field we can be in without our whole heart.

Developing ourselves

Mark acknowledged that our own development was critical to providing quality care. He normalized ongoing training within child and family serving organizations. In 2010 he described:

Training and supervision are as much a part of the normal routine as other major procedures within the organization. Supervisors meet regularly with workers, using the time to teach, support, and career-counsel. Introductory and

continuing inservice training...is built into everyone's working schedule. Child and youth care work is recognized as being "high tech," and like other sophisticated disciplines it requires constant review and upgrading of individual skills. One simply can't get by on experience or outdated methods of treatment. (Krueger, 2010)

Mark didn't accept that child and youth care was relegated to a para-professional role. Notice the words he uses: sophisticated, high tech, requiring upgrading of skills. One of the more intimate settings I experienced with Mark was in a meeting with past leaders in the field where we discussed our past work and future plans. Mark proceeded to challenge each of our ideas with the most critical approach possible. Our passions were aligned yet he cared enough to want to challenge and explore every possible critique or problem within our thinking and action planning. He knew that the young people and families we all cared about were worth it.

Rhythm and presence

Mark had a special insight into the rhythm and presence that exists between people in their relationships. He describes this concept in detail:

... human connections are formed in large part through a series of moments when workers and youth are at one – a quiet moment sitting on the couch together, a tucking in, a walk, a conversation – and... in these instances



there is almost always a sense of both rhythm and presence. Worker and youth are there and in synch... [and such] moments gain existence from their occurrence and our memory of them. In child and youth care...relationships are formed through a series of moments such as this that worker and youth recall with fondness. (Krueger, n.d.)

You can likely think of a time you felt in synch with another person. You had a sense of each other's presence and everything just seemed to fall in rhythm together in what you were doing - whatever that was in the moment. It is in the purity and simplicity of these moments our work takes shape. They become both an experience and a memory that will last in the minds of both people forever.

This rhythm and presence are neither optional nor marginal in our work. They are essential as Mark reminds us "the techniques we use to manage behavior and promote growth only work when workers are present (real) and in synch with children's rhythms for trusting and growing...without these elements, workers tend to do things to youth rather than with them" (Krueger, n.d.).

If you knew Mark Krueger personally or through his writing you may be remembering themes or pieces of his writing and influence on our lives. If you didn't know him let these excerpts serve as an introduction to search and read more of his work. Either way, let's all honor him and what he brought into our world by continuing to listen and learn. In that way,

perhaps, his rhythm and presence will continue with us.

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Mark Krueger

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I was first introduced to the work of Mark Krueger sometime around 1997 when working at a residential treatment center in Colorado. Andy Schneider-Munoz, then a PhD student and CYC instructor, was spending a lot of time in our treatment centre doing work on his thesis; he shared with me an alligator-bound set of articles and hand-outs used as part of a CYC course. The first two pieces were by Mark¹ and so it was that my first ever CYC reading was of his work. To be fair, I had read some predecessors to what is now CYC — *Positive Peer Culture* by Horrath and Brendtro and *Reality Therapy* by Glasser. While both books addressed the work I was doing in a previous treatment center where we were using an adaptation of both PPC and RT for our treatment model, neither had re-

ally inspired me, and neither had that CYC feel.

Mark's writing was qualitatively different, and this might help me to explain what I mean by that 'CYC feel'. His introductory paragraph to the first article grabbed me:

Child and youth care is about caring and acting – about being there, thinking on your feet, interacting, and growing with children. It is rich, intense, difficult work that requires passion and commitment. When it goes well, troubled children can make tremendous strides. When it goes poorly, their obstacles may seem almost impossible to overcome .

This spoke directly to experience. I don't think I had read words like 'rich' and

¹ As will become clear at the end of this piece, I only met Mark once and never had any sort of relationship with him beyond that of reading his writing. Normally, I would not refer to someone by their first name under such circumstances, yet there is something even more uncomfortable in the conventional use of 'Krueger' for this piece. So, I have opted for 'Mark'.



'passion' applied to the work before. That first paragraph also had something of a personal quality and I immediately felt connected to the author. This was also a first, at least in relation to work-related literature. It opened many more doors to similar, enriching experiences.

The article quickly shifted gears into a slightly more distant position of reviewing a chronology of professional CYC literature, but it then cycled back to a more personal account of nine further CYC themes, based on Mark's twenty years of practice and teaching. Again, this was the stuff that plugged me in. He argued that 'the primary motive for being a caregiver has to be that something in your centre or gut or heart or all of these is telling you this is what you want to do' (p.80). I had this feeling and I usually referred to it as a fire in my belly. It was deeply affirming to see this validated in professional literature.

That such professional literature existed was news to me. Indeed, I hadn't even been aware of the existence of Child and Youth Care, nor its efforts to build a relevant knowledge base and infrastructure to support professionalisation. Yet I knew that what we were doing required far more knowledge and skills than any of us had. Mark's second piece charted the process towards professionalization of the Child and Youth Care sector. All of a sudden, so much more became possible – not just the possibility of relevant training and education for me, but more importantly, for the whole sector.

Finally, those first two articles introduced me to several other writers who

have since formatively influenced my thinking and practice. I had the sense that Mark's direct quotes from these writers were chosen not just for the sake of me, the reader, but that they fortified or inspired him as well. Now I may be projecting here, because I have consistently used excerpts of others' writings to stoke my own fires, but many of the direct quotes in these articles had that same effect and it's easy to imagine that they did the same for him. I'll offer one example:

We need to relate and work with children as developing beings ... It is important to remind ourselves that the developmental approach does not permit preoccupation with deviant, pathological, or defective behaviour.

This was written in 1987, but it still does something for me now.

There was a third article in that set that also had an impact on me as I became acquainted with Child and Youth Care. In it, Mark offered up snapshots of practice and used the themes of rhythm, presence, meaning and atmosphere to frame practice in a more vivid, active and grounded manner – again, one that resonated very strongly with my own experiences. It also focused on the seemingly ordinary, reframing it as meaningful and casting light on its extraordinary nature. There was no reference to techniques, models or outcomes; the work, the *actual* work, was made visible and validated. The writing in this article was even more strongly personal and connecting:

Meaning is conveyed by the worker to the child and often vice-versa through words. Through contentment or joy or enthusiasm ... Through a sense of purpose and conviction ... Through the message that, "We are doing this together, with meaning, you and I. The process and the outcome of our actions will be fruitful. I understand that it might have a different meaning for you, but I hope and believe it will be fulfilling."

This stuff is simultaneously personal and professional; it's also full of hope, optimism and confidence in our profession:

Presence is conveyed by eyes, smile, and nods that are alert and attentive ... By using an awareness of self to be more aware of and sensitive to children's feelings. By the underlying message that we can move forward together, you and I. I am confident based on my experience and knowledge of your feelings and needs that we can make it. You are safe because I am here and will go with you.

That hope, optimism and confidence was transmitted to me through Mark's fantastic ability to connect with his reader. He was someone I always wished I could have a sort of mentor/mentee relationship with, both for Child and Youth Care practice and, more latterly, the practice of writing. In the end, I only met Mark briefly on one occasion, and we never corresponded or anything. Yet, I do feel a debt of gratitude for his contribution to my development and to the development of our sector. He will be missed.

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Connecting With Strangers

Jack Phelan

I never met a man I didn't like – Will Rogers

I never liked a man I didn't meet – Anon

I have been writing about relational and developmental aspects of CYC work for a long time now, and I always find new ways to think about these simply complex ideas. When we find ourselves actually liking someone else, it is often because we experience something personally appealing about him/her. Typically it is because we see ourselves in the other. So too we get challenged at times by being expected to like someone because we share a mutual friend, but the appeal is not there. Just the expectation that we should like them gets in the way. Liking someone else is a very personal dynamic.

In our work we have the relational task of liking the people who are assigned to us. Often there is little screening or choice and neither side expects their relational designate to be especially appealing. The focus in CYC literature emphasizes the CYC practitioner's obligation to try to create an appeal by being aware of the in-



terests of the youth or family and building connections deliberately. We assume that the professional can manage his personal disliking or ennui in order to appear to be desiring a connection. This is a big area requiring more intense scrutiny for

professional preparation. Relational work is not just a job requirement, but a personal challenge.

Here is my thought for the day, because we are trying to find the appeal in the other person to create genuine connections, we look for ways that the other is like us in some way. The

more we can identify with the other, the easier it will be to connect. So we try to get the youth or family member to mirror some aspect of ourselves. The search is on for some common ground.

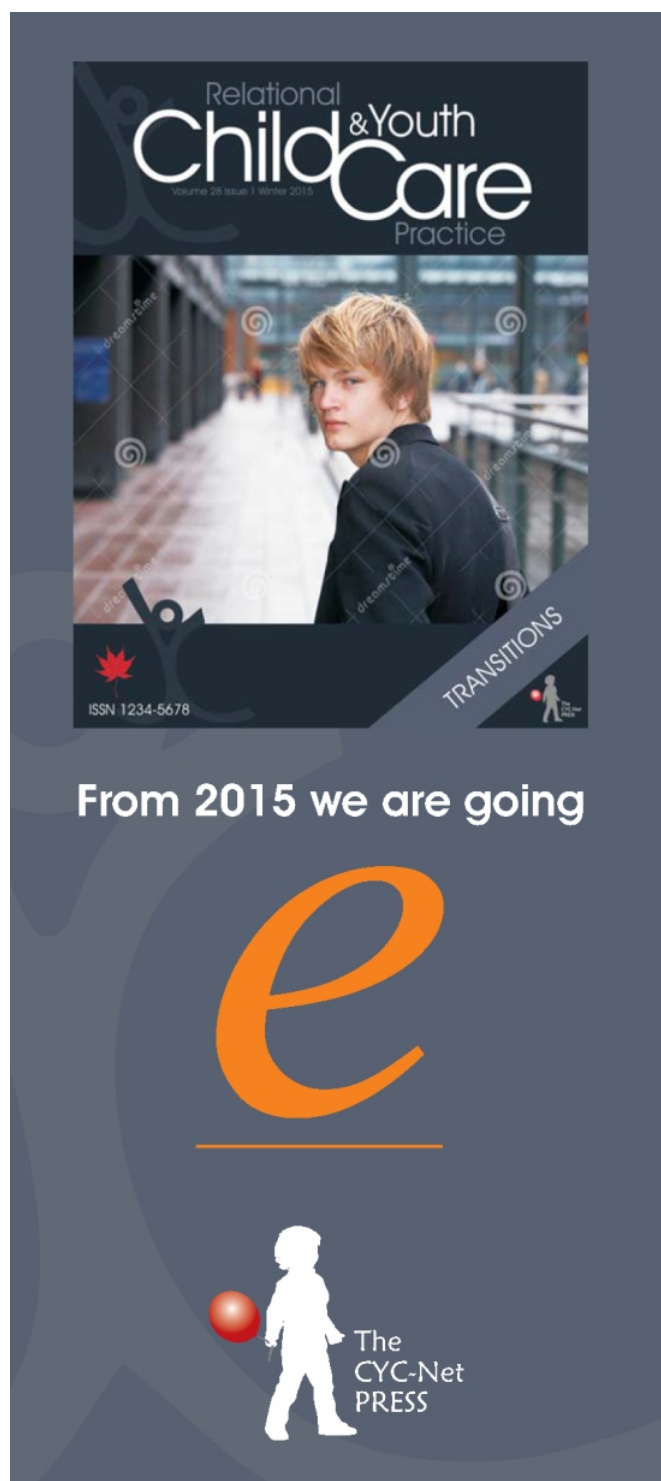
Empathy is the ability to see the world from someone else's eyes, to stand in their shoes. Effective attempts at empathy require you to let go of your own personal ideas and to uncritically listen to the other.

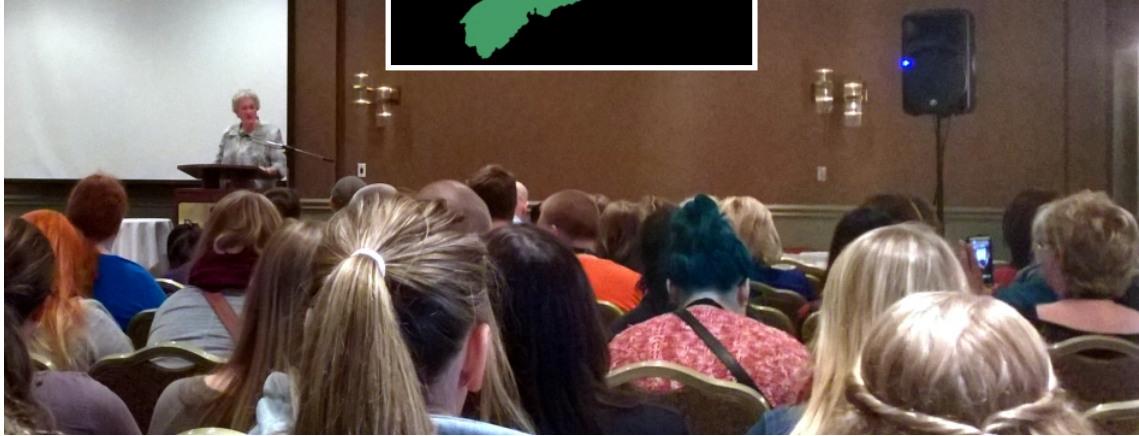
Yet the typical method used for creating connections is very personal and ego-centric. Unexamined relational dynamics can be dangerously negative, with the CYC practitioner benignly pushing the youth to be compliantly accepting values or beliefs that the youth sees as unacceptable, even foolish.

So in the attempt to be likeable and connected, CYC practitioners can be seen as not really interested in hearing the voice of the youth, instead trying to get them to be more like the adult. Empathy, which should be the keystone of all connecting, actually gets ignored. Unfortunately this lack of empathy is very loud and clear to the youth but invisible to the CYC practitioner, who has a different focus.

This can be a very important area for supervision, but it is personal and somewhat awkward to discuss.

On a separate, but connected note, a major voice in our profession has recently died, Mark Krueger. I had the privilege of knowing Mark for 40 years and would like to share an anecdote which describes his relational side. I was travelling on sabbatical in 1999 with my son Andrew, who was 13 years old. We were at a conference, in the workshop leaders' lounge and Mark said to Andrew, "what do teenagers really want, Andrew?" He was the only person under 40 in the room. "Do you really want to know" asked my son. Andrew and Mark sat down at a table and talked intensely for about an hour. Mark said little, just listened carefully. I hope that all of us would be as interested in the answer.





Opening Keynote Address given at the 18th Canadian National Child and Youth Care Conference –
Tides of Change: Navigating Beyond Believing – Moncton, New Brunswick on 8 October 2014

Believing Does Not Make It So! Moving from Faith to Facts in the Message of our Work

Lorraine E. Fox, PhD

In these days of “Outcome Based Funding” and “Evidence-Based Practice”, those of us working with wounded, discouraged, demoralized, and vulnerable young people are challenged to find a way

to talk concretely about our work and the results of our work.

We know what our task is, and that is to engage with children, young people and families in ways that lead to healing and

better lives for those who have been abused and neglected, as well as for those who have hurt them. And one of the evidence-based facts of abuse is that many, if not most adults who hurt children were children who were hurt. This would make the basic principles of intervention the same for both the children and their families.

If you are actively engaged in either reading or contributing to the discussions on *CYC-Online* you will know that child and youth care workers love to share what they think and have no shortage of ideas. Thinking something, however, doesn't make it true, and our ideas don't necessarily make for a profession.

Sometimes we try to use different words to give our ideas more credibility. Have you noticed how often people use the word "believe" when they want to make sure you pay close attention to their point?

Instead of "I think you're wrong Frank", it's, "You know, Frank, I don't believe you are correct". Or, "you know Margaret, I believe you will find...". So what's the difference between think and believe? Exactly. There is no difference. Except that we like to use the word believe to try to convince someone that we are right about what we are thinking.

Of course everyone likes to be right. We search for words to make us appear correct in our thinking. How many times have you heard someone say, "I am convinced blah, blah, blah", or "it is my conviction". Again, a conviction is just a thought or an idea.

Of course, there's nothing wrong with thinking. On the other hand, people have been known to think some strange things. How many of you have heard someone say "I happen to know".....and follow it up with something you disagree with?

Faith has been defined as the ability to believe in things for which there is no proof. So in order to gain professional recognition we must definitely move beyond just faith and commit ourselves to practice based on proven truths. Facts can be checked and proven. But something can be "true" without being factual, and that's a good thing. A line from a novel or a fairy tale or a song can be true, without being factual. Sometimes truth is easier to come by than facts.

You know how the kids are always telling us we don't know anything. Well, we do know some things. So let's talk together about what we as a profession actually do **know** – not believe – to be true about our work. I give you:

A dozen truths discovered over the decades and centuries of child and youth care work – true whether you want to believe them or not!

TRUTH #1

Systems theory principles of change turn out to be true. Faster is slower, and the easy way out usually leads back in.

Those with the money to fund our work with kids and families don't want



long, drawn out interventions. They want a quick fix so we can discharge clients as quickly as possible. Sometimes, to keep the money coming, we have colluded in a wish, hope, fantasy that we can create an approach, a program, a gimmick, a motivation strategy that would be easier on us and faster on the outcomes – incentives, points, levels, rewards, punishments – and we’ve convinced ourselves that these will work. But we must face the facts, the evidence that a lot of our ideas about what helps kids, up until now, have proven to not help kids.

We have spent decades looking for a quick fix, but programs don’t make kids sick, and programs don’t make them well. The truth is that kids get their hearts and minds broken from faulty relationships, not from faulty programs at home, and programs built around anything other than curative relationships will fail. And building relationships with betrayed, hurt, demoralized children is a long, slow, tedious, laborious task.

Let me just rattle off almost 30 years of follow-up studies on the outcomes of substitute care for abused and neglected children and youth.

Follow up studies on kids leaving substitute care are unfortunately very consistent in their findings. Studies carried

out by Casey Family Programs, Courtney, The Los Angeles Times, The Pew Charitable Trust, Youth Today, Child Law Practice and the Department of Health and Human Services reveal that following discharge from our programs our kids:



Tina Kroll and Kiaras Gharabaghi with the most valuable cookbook in the world!

- Make up the majority of juveniles arrested on prostitution charges;
- End up incarcerated at a rate of one in four to one in five;
- Become homeless at a rate of 20 to 33%;
- Fail to complete high school in far larger numbers than youth in their own homes;
- Continue to show evidence of mental health problems and post-traumatic stress disorder after discharge;
- Are frequently unemployed and if employed have low wages;
- Have significant health problems;
- Get pregnant at a significantly higher rate than peers; and
- Doctors who change the medicine they give their patients when new and better medicines are found are admired, not criticized. The medicine we have been using has not been working. This is a fact we have to face.

Trauma Informed Care, now a mandated training in many places, recognizes that we should never stop trying to find approaches that are best, or at least better, for our kids and families. It is also recognition of the degree of harm caused by child maltreatment.

We can't use a crisis intervention model for treating trauma. The truth is, children and families traumatized by poverty, community violence, domestic violence, addiction, and abuse cannot be treated in short term, *get-'em-in-get-'em-out* models. We have not failed and the clients have not failed when we are not given the time required to repair the mental and emotional injuries we are called on to treat.

TRUTH #2

When the mind is sick the symptoms are behavioural.

We are not behavior interventionists. We are behavior detectives. There are so many reasons for kids to behave in certain ways. We have workshops on strategies for dealing with oppositional behavior and we discover that there are at least seven very different reasons why a kid might be oppositional.

Learning to distinguish between the unwilling, the unable, and the unwilling because they are unable, is no walk in the park. Punishing the behavior will not give us the information. Only a relationship in which sufficient trust is built to have open and honest sharing of what is in the hearts and minds of our clients will tell us what we need to know before making a "plan" to help them.

Let's face it, some kids are just "brats"



Aurora de Monte and Melissa Lynn
ready to attack the lobster at Catch 22.



James Freeman,
on the other hand,
wasn't entirely
sure of the lobster.
Or maybe he just
didn't like his new
bib.

and are temperamentally difficult, which many parents have to struggle with. However brats, while annoying, do not generally end up in child welfare. In the child welfare population we discover a boatload of possible causes for oppositional behavior:

- Response to controlling abuse;
- Symptom of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder published in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM);
- Symptom of neglect and lack of parenting;
- Result of pre-natal exposure to drugs and alcohol;
- Evidence of a learning disability;
- Result of multiple placements where exposure to a multiplicity of different rules render them too confused to remember where they are now and what they're supposed to do; or
- Evidence of an attachment or conduct disorder.

It's not the behavior we are out to treat, but the cause of the behavior. This truth is very unpopular because it implies that a behavior intervention is likely to be more difficult than we would like. It requires that we find the cause before attempting a cure.

TRUTH #3

One size does not fit all.

We have learned that treatment of the mind and heart must be tailored to the individual, just as is true in the



Wolfgang Vachon



Bill Carty

treatment of other disorders of the body. Sometimes I think we forget that the brain is a body part.

One size does not fit all is why senior citizens such as myself have to carry around a list of every medicine they take, because if something happens they can't just give me something without knowing what else is in my system. It is why even when you younger people sprain your ankle the doctor is pulling out the family history form before they will tape up your ankle. What does my father's heart condition have to do with treating your ankle, you say? Everything, they think. I'm not treating your ankle; I'm treating you.

A medicine that will help one person will kill another. An intervention that will help one kid – room time to calm down for a kid with ADHD and contagion problems who can settle when removed from the stimulation – can cause a despondent, rejected, kid to commit suicide if put in a room alone. We can't have a program that gives the same medicine to every kid and expect healing for all.

TRUTH#4

We know that treatment is done by individuals, not by programs.

I want to take a minute to have a private conversation with all of you out there who have been referred to as “fluffballs”. You know who you are and the rest of the team does too. You have been called weak, naïve, a pushover, and who knows what all because you have taken the kids’ side. You don’t yell at a kid that they are “off program”! You have advocated for a softer approach. You have tried to steer away from punishment and toward discipline; from harshness to help. When a consequence has been called for you have decided that the appropriate consequence is a session with you at the kitchen table, going over what happened, what went wrong, and what could be different next time. And after your heartfelt discussion with the young person who would have chosen to clean the toilets rather than talk to you, one of your colleagues said *“yeah, yeah I know you talked to him/her – but what is their consequence?”* Why do we feel the need to do something harsh or hurtful to think that a young person has received a consequence? According to the dictionary, a consequence is *“that which naturally follows”*. Why can’t engaging in a teaching interaction be something that follows a poor choice?

There are still some among us who believe that a therapeutic intervention with a young person who has already lost every-



Pat Foran, Jenny McGrath and Debbie Sliwinski

thing – their innocence, their dignity, their families, neighborhood, school, pets, siblings, favorite pillow – the way to help them is to take something else away from them. That’s right, this kid will shape up when they lose something. You can believe this if you want, but giving is the cure for loss, not more loss. And so we give them ourselves.



Hedgie and handler

TRUTH #5

We know that our work is too complicated to be done by any one person. We know that proficient teamwork is as important as any other skill.

Just as in a family where parents work harmoniously together on behalf of their children, teamwork has been proven to be a key ingredient in an environment that promotes healing. And isn’t this annoying! Why do I have to

work things out with her, or him – my colleague with whom I disagree so often??? We're here for the kids, aren't we? Why can't I just work things out with them and just try to avoid my teammate who I find so frustrating? After all, I didn't even choose to have him/her on the team; s/he was just assigned to me.

We talk ourselves into believing that we either don't have the time to put into developing a competent team or we don't want to spend the money. You can believe that the kids are more important than the team, but you will be wrong. Couples whose only relationship is with the kids and who don't spend time collaborating on how to raise their children are not competent parents. A truth is that the time and money you will spend on the cost of poorly functioning teams wreaking havoc on the unit, and in the lives of clients, far outweighs the cost of putting the effort into helping us get on the same page, work out our differences, manage our conflicts, and get consistency in our approach.



Colleen Clark and Renee Stevens from Homebridge Youth Society with their trusty spreadsheet in tow, checking on the collection of items from the CYC-Net Auction.



A relaxed Jeff Reid.

TRUTH #6

There are limits to what can be accomplished with training.

Unhappily, licensing bodies often respond to troubles in programs by mandating more training. As a professional trainer I am certainly all for training. But training fixes two problems only: deficits in knowledge; deficits in skill. No other problems will be fixed with training. Attitude problems do not get fixed with training. Unmanaged conflict between colleagues does not get fixed with training. Lack of consistency in responses, causing anxiety and confusion with kids does not get fixed with training. The truth is that most problems do not get fixed with training.

Most problems get solved with competent supervision and competent teamwork. Sometimes we have to be willing to have “courageous conversations” not just with clients but with each other for the sake of fixing what isn't working on our team.

TRUTH #7

It is a truth that although we are here for the kids, treatment can only happen when we Care for the Caregivers as well as the Cared For.

There is a mountain of evidence about the stress caused by caring for traumatized and demoralized individuals and families. There are demonstrated “costs” in terms of compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, and vicarious traumatization. A program that does not put as much effort into taking care of the staff as it does into caring for the kids is putting both the staff and the clients at risk.

Compassion is one of the oldest proven medicines for the heart around. All religions teach it. Unfortunately, the root of the word is the word passion, and passion is exhausting. The truth is, the Caregiver needs as much care as the client.



Martin Stabrey looks on as Thom Garfat (with the aid of ten raised fingers) explains to Renee and Colleen how much the next CYC-Net Auction will raise.

TRUTH #8

There is no manual!

It's not that we haven't read the book; it's that the book doesn't exist. There is no book that has the answers to each of our most challenging problems and there never will be. It isn't possible to write a book about every per-

son alive. That's what it would take to give us the key to the puzzle that is an individual client.

Your supervisor does not have the manual that will make your job easier. It's

not in a drawer, or cabinet, or library, so we have learned to stop looking everywhere for the answers. We have found it to be true that we waste time hoping someone else – some teacher, some expert, some author – will give us the key, the answer,

the correct path to healing.

Rather, the time should be spent getting to know the secrets locked securely in the mind and heart of your client. Only



Grant Charles and Ben Anderson-Nathe



by getting to know them do you stand a chance of figuring out how to motivate them; or what new approach to try. Only by investing the time to get to know them can we convince young people to take a chance on a relationship with you, and to trust you enough to be vulnerable and hold onto your hand while they find new ways to cope with the challenges that overwhelm them. It is as important to read your clients as it is to read books.

TRUTH #9

It is true that doing something longer and more often that isn't working will not make it work.

Sometimes interventions don't work because although we believe them to be effective they are silly because we don't take the time to think them through. Some of my personal favourites include:

- **Time out:** Why would you put an emotionally disturbed child with learning disabilities, FASD, ADHD, PTSD and who knows what other handicaps on a chair or in a room alone and tell them to think? Really? Do we expect that they will magically mature or overcome their cognitive difficulties while

they stare at a clock for however many minutes we assign them to time out? And what is their problem with time anyway, since all they do is sit there and watch time go by? Now, time out with two chairs, with us sitting next to them to help with problem-solving so that they can respond differently might be good idea. But in my experience, children are most often sitting alone. Not only is this not very bright; but neither is it helpful.

- **Early bed time for bedtime problems:** The literature on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder makes it clear that in two out of three categories of symptoms – Re-Experiencing and Arousal – there will be sleep disturbances. Children who experience difficulty with going to bed or sleeping are **not** demonstrating “*behavior problems*” but well documented symptoms of mental harm. They avoid bed to avoid their repetitive nightmares. They avoid bed to avoid remembering how creepy it was to go to bed and wonder if or when someone would be coming in to join them in bed and hurt them. They avoid bed because they have learned that harm to their



mother often came when the violent perpetrator thought they were asleep. So going to sleep was abandoning your mother. Or, they go to bed, but their symptoms of hyper-vigilance keep them from being able to settle down. They hear every noise, sometimes even the clock ticking. High levels of cortisol in their systems, similar to veterans returning from war, keep them awake and restless.

And what do we decide would be a “therapeutic” (healing) intervention? **More** time in bed. Don’t you sometimes have to wonder what is wrong with us?

Building in bedtime routines and practices – something relaxing to drink before bed; a night light; soft music; something cuddly to hold; promises to check on them frequently – would make a lot more sense than putting them in a situation they already have trouble handling well for a longer period of time. Or, at the very least, not yelling at a youngster as they pop up frequently to seek reassurance that everything is safe.

- **Grounding runaways:**

Young people who run away do not have problems with leaving; they have problems returning. How do we help them learn to return when we decide to keep them from leaving? Just saying.



Ernie Hilton, Kelly Shaw and Leon Fulcher.

I challenge you to examine the interventions you are using to see if, in a futile effort to gain some compliance, you are disempowering yourself by repeating something that is not working because you have built in a standard response that does not allow for truly therapeutic responses to non-compliance.

One of our truths is that creativity is your friend. If something isn’t working, try something else. Build into your program permission to step out of the program if it will allow you and a young person to figure something out that will be more helpful than what is in the handbook. Quirky people often respond to quirky interventions. And quirky workers can think of them!



TRUTH #10

Sometimes you just have to laugh.

A wonderful truth for us is that silliness is an evidence-based professional intervention strategy, both for us as workers and for the kids and families as clients.

No baby has to be taught to laugh. All people start out laughing, but some stop as their world turns grim and frightening. It is a great gift to give laughter back to someone who has lost it. Not everyone has to be funny. Some of you are funny; others are of good humor and appreciate funny. Both work.

Stress produces an increase in a body chemical referred to as the “stress hormone” or cortisol. Cortisol is a steroid-like substance that carries with it the same risks that accompany the risks from taking too many steroids, one of which is an increase in aggression.

Sometimes we do this without even realizing how scientific we’re being. Think of how often you have experienced a challenging interaction that was truly awful and unnerving, only to retell the story later on with humor and exaggeration with colleagues, making it hilarious rather than frightful. Sometimes we fall all over ourselves trying to get our story in while others share their misadventures and get everyone laughing. Believe it or not, this is a professional, evidence-based practice.



Lorraine Fox and students.

Stress is not the event, but our perception of it.

Humor gives us **perceptual flexibility or cognitive control**.

Laughter changes your body chemistry. Laughing causes the release of **Endorphins and enkephalins** – secretions with morphine like molecules, which are a

natural tranquilizer and a built in pain killer. Endorphins have been shown to combat and decrease the amount of cortisol – the stress hormone – in our systems.

So, along with the other tools in our stress management repertoire, we have learned to include humor.

And it turns out that you can remind your supervisor next time you are reprimanded for being too silly in the workplace that laughter is an evidence-based practice for coping with stress. And stress is a fact of our work.

TRUTH #11

There’s a limit to what we can do.

There’s a reason that child abuse and neglect are crimes, and the reason is that maltreatment forever changes a child, and they can never be as they were intended to be.

It is very hard to sort out the reasons for our very modest success with some kids and our complete lack of success with others. How much of the blame are we to

take and how much belongs to those who hurt our kids before we met them. If someone steals your car you can either get your car back or get another car. If someone steals your childhood you can never get it back. And we can never give it back.

The truth is that we have to recognize our limitations. We do what we can. Like many soldiers coming back from war our young people have traumatic brain injuries. The majority of their wounds are invisible. We see the symptoms and we see the pain, but the prescription to alleviate their suffering is often illusive.

Embedded in this truth is another:
There is no program that wants the kids you don't want.

Don't give up on a kid because working with them is too hard. Nobody else wants them either, and moving them will cause more pain as they deal with another rejection.

People say that kids are "not appropriate for our program". But are they appropriate for a relationship with someone who will give them what they deserve.

TRUTH # 12

A key principle of our evidence-based practice is that child and youth care work does require faith.

An accepted reality of child develop-

ment is that **cause and effect are not related closely in time.**

Issues of "displacement", "transference" and all of the other psychological and behavioral issues that come regularly into the relationships between direct service workers and wounded children and adults, resulting in extreme stress and the constant need to self-monitor and employ our strategies of "professional distance" are the result of maltreatment suffered much earlier than any particular day and time. The mind is a repository of everything that it has experienced, and harmful inputs in early years can cause harmful outputs decades later.

On the other hand, many of you have

had the experience of being surprised, maybe even with your own children, to have found that the good stuff you put in there while they were growing up, really did

"take". Parenting is often frustrating because it often appears that children are rejecting the input from their parents and parents worry that they are not being effective at raising healthy children. And then to their amazement, that child you were so worried about becomes an adult to be proud of.

In the same way, it is not possible to "measure", in an academic sense, the results of the seeds planted by child and youth care workers. Often it seems that



Doug Magnuson and Kiaras Gharabaghi talking with students.

nothing is taking hold and all of our efforts at establishing the kind of relationship that can provide a balm for trauma and pain are being rebuffed. But, the truth is, you never know.

I believe that more often than not you will not be there to hear yourself being quoted, or see the anger being properly managed. Nor are you likely to be there to watch the formerly hard and harsh young person now hugging and showing love to their child, the way you showed it to them.

A truth of our work is that we just have to believe that we are doing the right thing, and trust that we planted enough seeds and gave them enough water that someday the seeds will take root and produce the beauty that was hidden by the pain.

So we love them, we take them back time after time and give them chance after chance. I believe that most of our kids are doing the best that they can, given everything, so we do the best that we can and we have faith.

Conclusion

The truth is that we have to get paid for our efforts, not for our outcomes. The outcomes of what we do are not possible to measure because the exact impact of those emotional injuries is difficult to measure, in any scientific sense, and because the results of our work may not become

immediately apparent.

The problem in explaining our work is that many of our truths seem counter-intuitive or go against generations of so-called wisdom. Responding to an aggressive child with tenderness seems like the wrong response. But we know better. That's why we come to conferences

where we can talk to other child and youth care workers who "get it".

Once we clarify the truths of our profession we are then tasked with the difficulty of explaining these truths to those who have trouble believing them. So let's keep working on learning how to articulate our own wisdom, the sources of our information, and the foundations for our own convictions.

We are not told that the truth will make us happy. But we are told that the truth will set us free. The truth is – we are engaged in work requiring love and labor! The results of harm cannot be accurately measured, nor can the results of love. I hope these truths of our profession will provide freedom from the judgment of others, who would like our work to be easier than it is, and who demand outcomes we cannot provide in the time we are given.

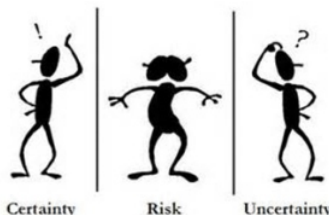
Thanks to Garth Goodwin and Martin Stabrey for the photos.



It was, after all,
a CYC conference!

Certainty and Uncertainty

Maxwell Smart and John Digney



Adventure upon all the tickets in the lottery, and you lose for certain; and the greater the number of your tickets the nearer your approach to this certainty.

Adam Smith, Scottish Economist

I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality.

James Joyce, Irish author and playwright

In knowing or not knowing

To many the term 'uncertainty' is associated with a lack of conviction or assuredness – basically is it about 'not totally knowing'.

Therefore one might assume that the term 'certainty' relates to more affirmativeness, to a 'knowing' – we would like to agree with this but we really can't be sure of this being the case. Like many other words, these two (certainty & uncertainty) can mean different things to different folk and it is just as unlikely that this article shall create a universal clarity around definitions. Actually we are uncertain about this, but who knows for sure.

All that being said, we do need to get some degree of clarity about where this article is going and we believe we can achieve that by asking the reader to consider the concepts of 'certainty' and 'uncertainty' in terms of being 'human needs'. Tony Robbins, motivational speaker and businessman, (N/D) said '*... one of the six human needs is the desire for certainty; certainty that we can avoid pain and gain pleasure and comfort*'.

Of course there exists many 'Needs Theories' and each of these have their own merits. Glasser, for instance, has described in detail his belief in the human needs of 'survival, belonging, power, freedom and fun'; Maslow, gave us his

universally known 'hierarchy of needs', describing needs such as, 'physiological needs, esteem needs, aesthetic needs and need for self-actualisation. Then more recently we have Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern (1990/2002) who developed and articulated a framework highlighting the human needs for 'belonging, mastery, independence and generosity'.

Well now, all these various and varying theories that talk of human 'needs' could certainly lead to a feeling of 'uncertainty' about what to believe in or which theory to hang your hat on. In reality, they all have huge merit and all tend to consider the same, and then some different aspects of, common concepts.

So, what of certainty as a human need? Robbins (N/D) argues that, *'Some people pursue the need for certainty by striving to control [as much as possible] aspects of their lives, while others obtain certainty by giving up control and adopting a philosophy of faith'*. This contextualisation of our initial statement allows us to see how a 'desire for certainty' can be viewed as a need, it also allows us to see how different people can seek to meet this need – some through taking up a position of 'power and control' and others by submitting their will to the unquestioning beliefs espoused by a more powerful other.



Embracing Uncertainty

Then, just to keep us on our toes Robbins (N/D) then tells us of his belief in another human

need, one which seems to be the converse of certainty, *'... if we get total certainty, we get ... bored out of our minds. So, God, in her infinite wisdom, gave us a second human need, which is uncertainty'*. Robbins explains his logic, *'We need variety; we need surprise. Variety makes us feel alive and engaged'*. So certainly can be good and can make us feel in control, but uncertainty is the need to seek out the novel and unusual. But not always!

Where is the fit?

Clearly one can say that 'not knowing' makes something 'unpredictable' and unpredictability is a feature of the lives of all young people. But for more than most, the youth who encounter 'in-care' or child and youth care services, unpredictability is an omnipresent construct. These young people can become frozen like a rabbit in the headlights because nothing seems certain in their situation; am I going home this weekend? Will my mum and dad turn up for their contact visit?

Likewise, we also encounter youth who seem petrified about trying anything new, they have an engrained fear of failure – borne out of bad experiences and negative human contact. Each type of youth has a struggle with uncertainty; one is seeking predictability, the other needing to learn to not worry so much about unpredictability.

Of course uncertainty, unpredictability and not knowing are often a shared narrative in the lives of troubled youth well before they encounter us and as we ex-

plore their lives and histories, it is hard to see how this type of 'uncertainty' could ever be perceived as a human need.



Predictability & Growth

If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties.

Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*

Given the often chaotic life histories of the young people we look after and look out for, a lot of the time we tend to seek out some element of certainty for them; particularly when they have encountered grossly unpredictable life circumstances. In order to militate against the excesses of uncertainty we often try to provide predictable or consistent care environments – a difficult task, for at the same time we are conscious of being individual and flexible in our approach and we are seeking to ensure that care settings are as 'de-institutional' as possible.

Usually certainty is thought to be preferable to uncertainty, however we should always remember that in child and youth care we do not and will not ever totally

occupy a world of certainty. After fifty years of practice between the authors we know that no two shifts in residential care are ever the same. Some might say that there is nothing more certain in residential care as uncertainty.

At the same time as seeking out certainty we recognise how 'stuck' people can become without challenge or the uncertainty of taking on the new or changed. On close scrutiny it has to be said that uncertainty is clearly ubiquitous in life - there are uncertainties in almost every life endeavour; particularly when choice comes into the equation. Should I go to college, get married, have a child? These questions all carry a large degree of uncertainty as to the outcomes and to this end therefore uncertainty must be seen as a necessary life issue, and thank goodness for that, for if we lived in an entirely predictable world with no surprises nothing could be learned and nothing would be worth knowing. As Lachmann (1976) noted, 'the future is to all of us unknowable'.



Standing on the Edge

For everyone the future is unknowable but as child and youth care professionals we are tasked to bring about some certainty into the lives of the young people in

our care; this involves assisting them with some positive changes. Being engaged in a joint process and aiming for positive change involves uncertainty, it involves taking a risk; after all both staff and young people have to take risks to enter relationship and this risk will have an uncertain outcome.

However in taking the 'relational risk', the dam of certainty is breached and together we can enter a new world of both possibility and 'welcome uncertainty'. What we do next to support the youth to navigate this uncertainty will determine how the youngster meets the challenges ahead. Relational alliances forged out of previous uncertainty can alter the course of a life. Take for instance a youngster experiencing for the first time playing for the school football team. Given that she may have previously lacked confidence, self-belief and faith in others, gaining an acceptance from the coach and teammates, a world previously full of threat may become one of belonging, self-belief and personal power.

Uncertainty & Autonomy

Learning that uncertainty does not need to be a threat can be one of the most liberating experiences for youth. Uncertainty can clearly be uncomfortable but it can also create tensions in a person that can motivate change.

Like standing on the precipice considering whether to leap or stay still, a youngster must weigh up what is best. When the risk of doing something differ-

ent is taken by young people new social learning becomes possible, they gain in independence and self-belief. If this embracing of uncertainty and 'risk-taking' is supported and modelled by helping adults (where the adult interventions are peppered with actions that communicate respect, sincerity, support, and a willingness to encourage trust), then the leap into uncertainty can open a new door of social and emotional learning and healing.

Uncertainty can therefore become the 'new certainty', an uncertainty that can be fundamental to continued growth, a new dawn that meets the need to grow and become your own person.

Digs and Maxie,

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Last week a friend dropped by and invited us to a big birthday party he was throwing for his wife. It was to be one of those special parties ... let's just say she was celebrating the end of another successful decade ... and he wanted to make it a memorable event.

Now, nothing could help make a birthday more memorable than a specially designed cake. And since my wife is pretty creative at designing and decorating novelty cakes, we offered to help out.

Well, I say "we" offered. Technically, I guess it would be more accurate to say I offered for her to make the cake. And the moment the words were out of my mouth, I realized I had once again wandered into a minefield wearing clown shoes.

Once our friend was safely out the door my wife was up one side of me and down the other like a weed-whacker gone berserk. It's not that she minds making a cake, especially not for close friends. But she just hates it when I volunteer her for stuff.

I did the smart thing and just cringed in a corner and took my lumps, but once she had stormed off to another part of the house, I got to thinking: "Hey, wait a minute ..."

It occurs to me there have been more

than a few times she's answered the phone and it's one of her friends, all excited about buying a new house. I'll be sitting on the couch, reading, and I'll hear those words "So, when are you taking possession?" And I'll run in and start

waving frantically to get her attention, but she'll totally ignore me long enough to say, "Well, if you need any help with the move, give us a call ... no, really ... oh, just a minute - what is it, dear? Stop banging your head against the wall, I'm on the phone to Darlene."

Later on I'll get this: "Hey, I didn't vol-

unteer you. I volunteered us." Right. Except one of us is going to be hauling a washer and dryer up the basement stairs on his back while the other one of us is making sure each piece of china is wrapped in its own individual sheet of newspaper.

All Volunteers Take One Step Back

Nils Ling



Or I'll get a call that goes: "Mr. Ling, when your wife filled out the registration form for the Spoiled Brats T-Ball League, there was a box that said "If you want to help coach the team ... Mr. Ling ... Mr. Ling ... what's that noise? Sounds like something thumping against a wall ..."

So maybe I did volunteer her to make a birthday cake. At least she's never come home to these words: "Honey, we're having a fund-raiser and ... well, I suggested we have one of those booths, where the kids pay a quarter and get to throw a pie at someone ... honey, don't, you'll hurt yourself and you'll tear the wallpaper ..."

I guess nobody's happy to find out they've been volunteered to do something

by another person ... but when you think about it, a lot of things wouldn't get done any other way. I've never heard anybody stand up and say "Hey ... can I be in the dunk tank this time?"

In the end, the cake was a big success and added a lot to the party. So that should be it - a happy ending, right? Except at one point in the party, I came up to my wife at the tail end of a conversation - just in time to hear "...you've got our number - he'd be glad to help out." And she turned and flashed me the sweetest smile. As if to say - "Gotcha".

I think I've figured out why I get those migraines.



A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, "How many women can a man marry?" "Sixteen," the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. "How do you know that?" "Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up, like the preacher said: '4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer'."



Postcard from

Leon Fulcher

NOVEMBER 2014

Moncton, New Brunswick

Greetings from Moncton, New Brunswick – setting for the 18th Canadian National Child and Youth Care Conference held at the Ramada Plaza Crystal Palace Hotel and Conference facility. The Atlantic Canada planning committee did a sterling job in organising the event. Problem was, nobody bothered to tell them that the place was closing down at the end of October!

Whilst there were the odd challenges to be overcome, like the restaurant closing and its furniture being sold off, the Ramada staff who continued to look after conference delegates were truly stars. And the food catered in was good.

A lead-in to the 18th National Child and Youth Care Conference was the inaugural Online Auction spearheaded by Homebridge Youth Services in Nova Sco-



Website picture of Ramada Plaza Crystal Palace still showing – don't go there!



McGinnis Landing Restaurant closed on the Wednesday before we arrived!

tia under the guidance of Colleen and Renee. These two were truly stars whose enthusiasm spread all over the place. After a frenzied last hour of bidding, items purchased in the auction were collected from this dynamic duo.

It was a pleasure watching an emerging generation of provincial and national child and youth care leaders taking over the reins of responsibility for our profession across Canada. These three were but a few of the many new sources of energy and inspiration that now help make the





**Homebridge Youth Services' Colleen & Renee
–Stars of the CYC-Net Auction**

Canadian scene such a vibrant and inspirational place for relational child & youth care practice.



**Christine, Kelly & Pat - representing a new generation of
Canadian Leaders!**

Another notable feature of the Moncton Conference were the sizeable number of child and youth care students who attended and actively participated in everything that was offered. The conference organisers showed a touch of genius by making it possible for students to attend through sharing hotel rooms – some with blow-up mattresses on the floors! Real investment in the future!



**Youthful delegates hanging out at the National and investing
in the future!**

Drawing upon the inspirational work of New Zealand Film Maker Kararaina Rangihau, Thom Garfat and I offered a



Sibling groups prepared for a film shoot during an Out-of-Focus Workshop

workshop that divided a group of thirty participants into sibling groups – oldest, only, middles and youngest – and invited them to script a short (3 mins maximum) film before using their smart phones to create four short films. Lots of fun, even with post-production work!

An evening session with the students from Nova Scotia Community College at Truro, organised by their Lecturers, was



Kelly, Jacolyn & Jeff organised an evening gathering with NSCC students

another special treat! What an experience Thom and I had being asked very challenging questions about what relational child and youth care practice is all about, and of how we came to be involved in this profession the way that we are. Thanks guys for reminding us just how important it is to be questioning active learners!

I left Moncton, feeling that child and youth care is in a very important place across Canada, and I look forward to the 19th Conference in Nova Scotia!



The New Brunswick Band that played after the closing banquet were great!

Thom



EndNotes

“What defines you isn't how many times you crash but the number of times you get back up.”

— Sarah Dessen, *Along for the Ride*

“All I really want to do today is go to the book store, drink coffee and read.”

— Ann Marie Frohoff

“As a teenager you are at the last stage in your life when you will be happy to hear that the phone is for you.”

— Frances Ann Lebowitz

“It was only high school after all, definitely one of the most bizarre periods in a person's life. How anyone can come through that time well adjusted on any level is an absolute miracle.”

— E.A. Bucchianeri, *Brushstrokes of a Gadfly*

“Let your inner DORK shine through.”

— Rachel Renée Russell, *Dork Diaries: Tales from a Not-So-Fabulous Life*

“Time-tested, Irish Catholic-saturated maxims, like “the believer is happy, the doubter is wise,” were constantly proclaimed with a sobering voice and a proud finger in the air, as though it were the antenna through which he was receiving these life lessons. Not a day would pass in our house without a proverb escaping his lips, which was something for a man who made it his childhood mission to dismiss anything uttered from a nun or monsignor. If you didn't collide with one of his sayings on your own, the universe would impel a situation so it could find you.

I would be going about my business, keeping the wind at my back and the sun on my face and the rain on my fields, or whatever, when I'd do something infernally and unforgivably criminal, like allow a friend to buy me a Slurpee. I don't know whether it was the tinkling of change from a pocket that was not mine or the sound of illicit slurping that would wind its way with the wind and into the ears of my father, but I would return home to a stern lesson about how we Donovans shall neither a borrower nor a lender be. I would usually defend myself with a string of lies, which would be rebutted with stories of old men who died at peace with nothing but their honor and a crust of soda bread.

Few of his dictums made real sense to me as I grew up, but there was a comfort nonetheless in decoding them or ignoring them altogether. I figured that all kids came up with the same dogma from their parents, considering that every other kid I knew was Irish or Catholic.”

— Erin Donovan

"She had been a teenager once, and she knew that, despite the apparent contradictions, a person's teenage years lasted well into their fifties."

— Derek Landy, *Mortal Coil*

"Like its politicians and its wars, society has the teenagers it deserves."

— J.B. Priestley

"I hated high school. I don't trust anybody who looks back on the years from 14 to 18 with any enjoyment. If you liked being a teenager, there's something wrong with you."

— Stephen King

"We must be careful not to discourage our twelve-year-olds by making them waste the best years of their lives preparing for examinations."

— Freeman Dyson, *Infinite in All Directions*

"Snow and adolescence are the only problems that disappear if you ignore them long enough."

— Earl Wilson

"...the changes during adolescence are not something to just get through; they are qualities we actually need to hold on to in order to live a full and meaningful life in adulthood."

— Daniel J. Siegel, *Brainstorm: The Teenage Brain from the Inside Out*



"Don't worry if people think you're crazy. You are crazy. You have that kind of intoxicating insanity that lets other people dream outside of the lines and become who they're destined to be."

— Jennifer Elisabeth, *Born Ready*

"Indifference and neglect often do much more damage than outright dislike."

— J.K. Rowling

"When you stop expecting people to be perfect, you can like them for who they are."

— Donald Miller

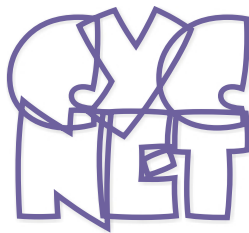
"Our wounds are often the openings into the best and most beautiful part of us."

— David Richo

"Are there any more beautiful words in the English dictionary than 'see you tomorrow?'"

— Jennifer Flackett, *Little Manhattan*





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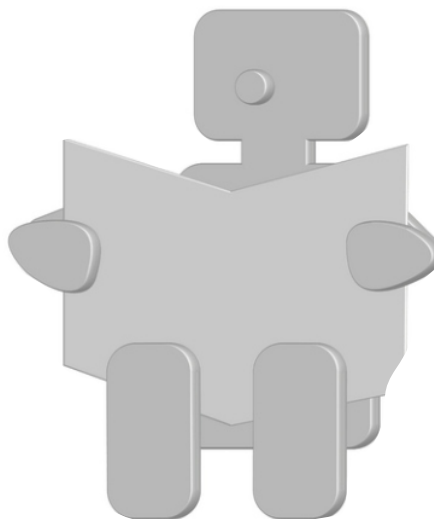
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