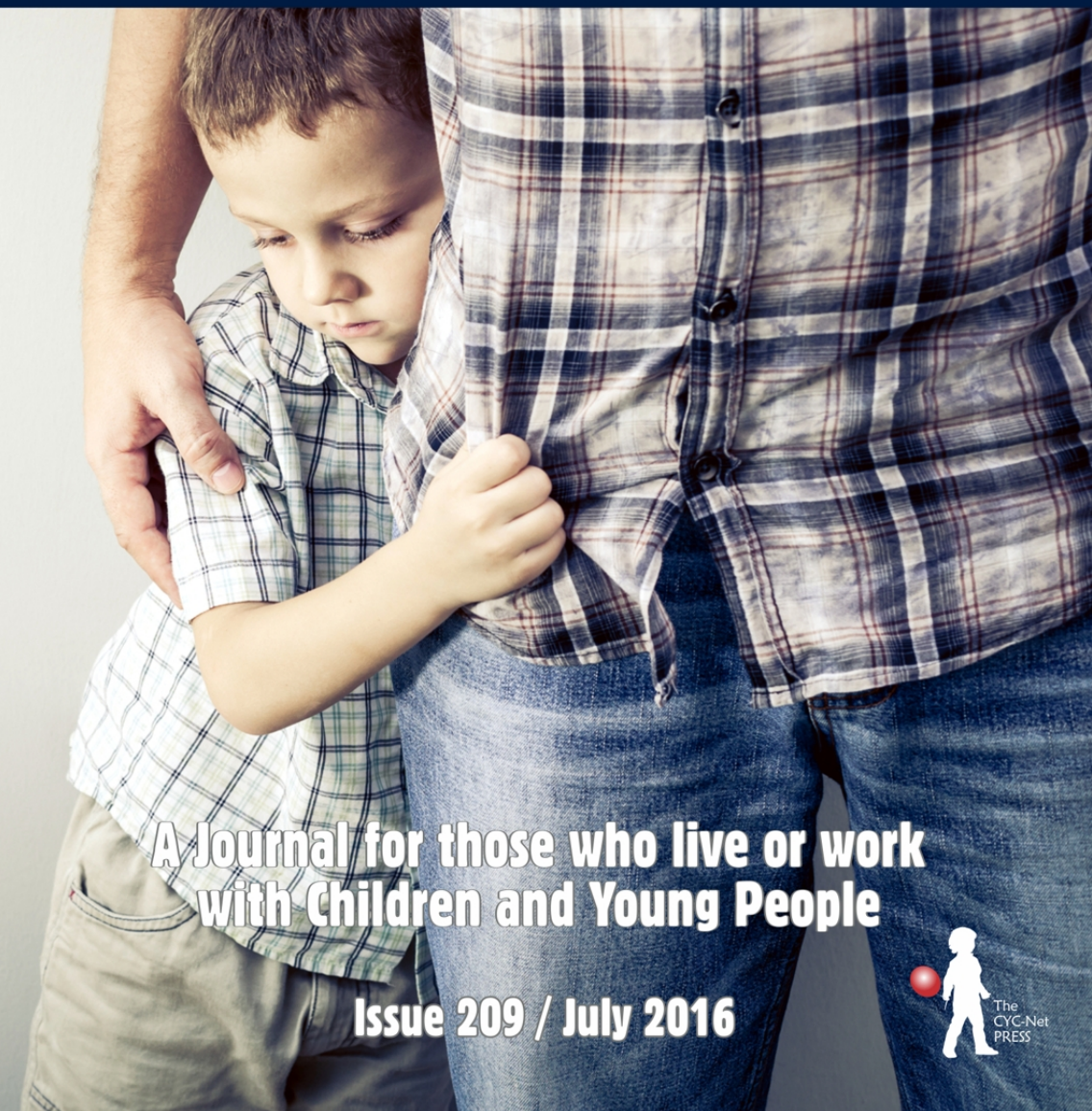
CYC-Online

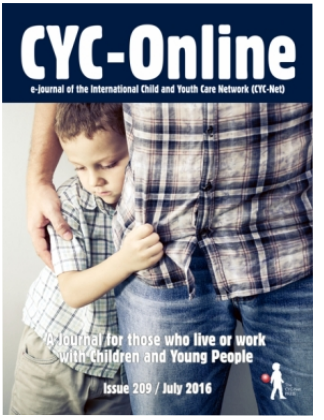
e-journal of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)



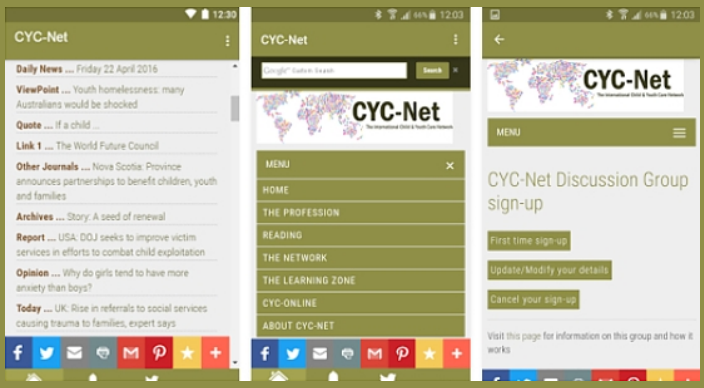
A Journal for those who live or work with Children and Young People

Issue 209 / July 2016

The CYC-Net PRESS



Contents



The new CYC-Net app is now available!

ANDROID APP ON Google play

Available on the App Store

amazon apps Available at amazon

Global Crisis and Opportunity

This past month we have witnessed significant changes in the world. The events leading up to the presidential election in the United States and the vote in the United Kingdom to exit the European Union are just two that dominate our news these past few weeks (see Leon Fulcher's Postcard on the "Brexit Vote" in this issue). Alongside the political chaos of these movements was the horrid and record-setting violence at the night club in Orlando and the suicide bombers at the airport in Istanbul. Both events have wide circles of pain among family and friends of those affected.

As always in our world of pain, many things remain good and strong. Each day, for example, when child and youth care workers show up to connect with and care for a young person or family. The decisions that child and youth care workers like you make every day to hang in with others when things get tough.

That is one of the reasons we have to be so proud of our work. Across borders and time zones we share a common goal of coming alongside others and helping their lives become less painful and more satisfying than they can imagine on their own. We do this by creating relationships, arranging experiences, and constructing new opportunities. Child and youth care workers are the most inspirational and creative individuals I have ever known.

It is not surprising that most of our work remains hidden from the everyday lives of the general population. Many in our communities remain unaware or don't want to admit that children and families like those we work with exist in our neighborhoods and on our streets.

Too often legislators spend their time making laws that fall short of meeting long-term interests and needs of young people. My home state is attempting to end all forms of group care by moving children into foster homes. This is a noble idea except that is being carried out without a robust network of foster families willing to embrace and support the unique needs young people who have had very difficult starts in life. When I was in Scotland just a few months ago I spoke with both parents and child and

youth care workers who were deeply concerned about the consequences of the guardianship scheme being implemented by the government. You can read Robin Jackson's special introduction to his report in this issue of *CYC-Online*. The report highlights the problems that arise when government reaches for powers beyond what it is entitled.

Many of you have heard of the intern and support worker who were assaulted by young people in their care in a behavioral care centre in Manitoba on May 29 (see http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/nightmares-plague-youth-centre-beating-victim-383054371.html) or the youth and child youth care workers who were injured in a secure care setting in Ontario on June 4 (see http://oakvillenews.org/disturbance-at-syl-apps-in-oakville-sends-5-youths-to-hospital)

Thoughtful responses to serious incidents like these have been offered by a number of child and youth care workers including public letters from Thom Garfat and Jessica Hadley, president of the Child and Youth Care Workers' Association of Manitoba, and Christine Gaitens, president of the Ontario Association of Child and Youth Care. Both letters were distributed in many circles including our own discussion group here at CYC-Net, in part, as an attempt to bring more awareness to those we work alongside. This month Hans Skott-Myhre offers continuing thoughts on their ideas in his column "A System in Crisis: Violence and Child and Youth Care". Check out the original letters which are publicly available on their respective association Facebook pages.

Along with these two seminal readings you'll find articles from our regular contributors we are used to reading – ones that many of us find helpful every month as we engage in and develop our practice. There are also a number of articles from new or guest contributors offering perspectives ranging from the experience of new workers to reflections on recent concepts that impact our field.

As always we are committed to keep access to CYC-Net open to everyone at no cost. Our editors and writers provide their work at no cost and many of them contribute their own financial resources to the work. If you benefit from the monthly issue of *CYC-Online*, please remember our continued presence depends on the financial support of individuals like you.

– James

CYC-Net Clan Gathering 2016 – Vienna

Bridging the Gaps

The CYC-Net Board of Governors invites you to join the 3rd CYC-Net Clan Gathering Pre-Conference Day Event in Vienna on

Sunday, 21st August from 9am to 5pm

with an optional Dinner (but we hope you'll stay for that too!)

The first CYC-Net Clan Gathering was held in Paisley, Scotland in 2012 and the second in St. John's, Newfoundland in 2013.

It is said that in some circles, discussions have focused on different kinds of gaps which exist in our field – like between academia and practice; between different service sectors; between training and service delivery; between North America and elsewhere, and between differing philosophies, etc.

As we gather in Vienna (Wien), the historic centre where our child and youth care field really started, join us and spend some quality CYC-Net Clan time together.

Sign-up for the additional pre-conference programme here and join us in this important Gathering of the CYC-Net Clan!

Leon, Thom, Martin, James, Heather and Jennifer on behalf of the CYC-Net Board

A Tribute to Jack

Kiaras Gharabaghi

School of Child & Youth Care, Ryerson University
k.gharabaghi@ryerson.ca

The thing that I love the most about our field of child and youth care practice is the people who make the field what it is. And there are many people who I think are simply amazing; some of these people know how I feel and think about them, perhaps because I see them often enough, or I have had those moments of 'perhaps we better call a cab' with them often enough, to have had those man to man, man to woman, or man to trans* conversations. I suspect there are quite a few people in our field who may have no idea just how much I admire them, appreciate them, and learn from them, but I am hopeful that in due time I may be able to convey this sentiment. But there is one person who stands apart from virtually everyone else I know – Jack.

I am certain that almost everyone who might read my column would know Jack, or at least know who he is. He has written perhaps one hundred, maybe two hundred columns himself, a selection of which are now available in book form through CYC-Net Press here. He has published articles, spoken at conferences throughout Canada and the US, and probably elsewhere. And he is quite possibly the best-travelled non-South African in South Africa, where he has contributed to the learning of thousands of child and youth care practitioners. Jack is a teacher, a researcher, a speaker, an advocate, a supporter, a mentor and a friend to more people in this field than anyone else I know; he has touched the lives of untold masses.

The funny thing is that I really don't know all that much about Jack. I know that he was born American, that he worked in NYC with very edgy youth, and that at one point he fell deeply in love with a wonderful woman (who I also love) who happened to be Canadian. This led Jack to move to Canada many, many years ago, where he has

without a doubt been *the guy* in our field. I am not sure I have ever attended a Canadian child youth care conference where Jack didn't win some sort of award – the greatest advocate, the greatest writer, the greatest supporter, the most brilliant mind, and (although I am not sure there is an award for this) the greatest party dude as well.

But ultimately it is not just his contributions to child and youth care that make Jack the guy I love. It is his deep love for edgy youth, and his deep love for child and youth care practitioners who engage those edgy youth every day that I admire. It is his humanism, his attention to the very soul of our profession, his capacity for inclusion, embrace, and connection that is unparalleled. What Jack says always makes sense, but it makes sense not just to the mind, but also to the heart. His stories from his time as a child and youth care practitioner in group homes and community programs are as real, as meaningful, as alive today as they were when they actually happened. And then there is the blunt humour, which I am not sure is meant to be humour. Jack's stories always have a hint of criminal, potentially lethal, and yet they are stories of love and commitment. Whether he is describing interactions with young people or gatherings of practitioners, he brings real people, real relationships to life. Jack's stories are selfless stories, in which he never seeks out the centre. His stories are reflections on his experiences, and statements of positive, meaningful and sometimes life altering scenarios. In all of them, Jack tells us one consistent message – respect the other, understand that you will never be the other, and therefore that your truth is never more important than that of the other.

I have never met anyone in our field who holds the line on child and youth care practice more so than Jack. Whether he is speaking about attachment, trauma, care, treatment, the brain, culture, identity or any other theme that may find its origins in other fields, other disciplines, and other practices, Jack always translates them in accordance with who we are, what we do, and why we do what we do.

As I write this tribute to Jack, I am sitting by a lake, looking out onto the horizon, and I see a life well lived, and one that continues to amaze, dazzle and when necessary, startle. And I think to myself that this is the life I want to live, and although I probably won't ever be Jack, if I can be a little like Jack, I will be grateful.

So here is to you Jack. Whatever you do next, I hope that all your dreams come true.

University of Strathclyde
Humanities & Social Sciences

MSc CHILD and YOUTH CARE STUDIES by DISTANCE LEARNING

Developed within the School of Social Work and Social Policy and the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS), this programme has a fresh, engaging curriculum that covers globalised childhoods, international policy contexts, the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), bringing up children and research methods.

The programme is aimed at students with an interest in developing positive strategies for affirming and developing the professional identity of child and youth care practice.

Launched in 2014, we are now recruiting for our September 2016 intake.

Fees for the programme are:
All students: £4000

The tuition fee is for the entire two-year programme.

To find out more or to apply to join the course:
www.strath.ac.uk/courses/postgraduatetaught/childandyouthcarestudies/

Or contact
Graham McPheat
graham.mcpheat@strath.ac.uk

CELCIS Centre for excellence for looked after children in Scotland

Self-Authoring Thinking, a Professional Requirement

Jack Phelan

I have been focusing on adult thinking complexity for the past few months. Professionals need to have more than a certain amount of knowledge, they also must have the capacity to apply that knowledge in a strategic, useful manner. I describe that issue as the critical difference between a technician and a professional. Child and Youth Care practitioners are imbedded in the life space, the lived experience of both the young people and families as well as their own. Technicians are really operating at an arms -length perspective and legitimately refer to their charges as "clients". CYC practice at this level is "doing to", but the goal is to progress to "doing with" and eventually "doing together".

A metaphor I have used to describe our work is that it is similar to wilderness rescue patrols who must find people in very dangerous places, using tools and resources to extricate them from where they are stuck. It is not useful to give advice from afar, you must join them where they actually are struggling. Family work requires CYC practitioners to join people who are standing at the edge of a dark pit, where one could fall in at any moment, rather than a worker who sits safely in an office dispensing parenting advice. Young people in pain and lacking hope need a worker with the courage to share that reality, not a rule enforcing, comfortable adult.

The key ingredient of Self-Authoring thinking is having an inner locus of control. People who think this way have the ability to think about the relationship dynamics between them and others and own their thoughts, beliefs and feelings without relying on how other people respond to them. They can hold contradictory feelings simultaneously, that is, they can both feel pain or fear and also maintain a calm and

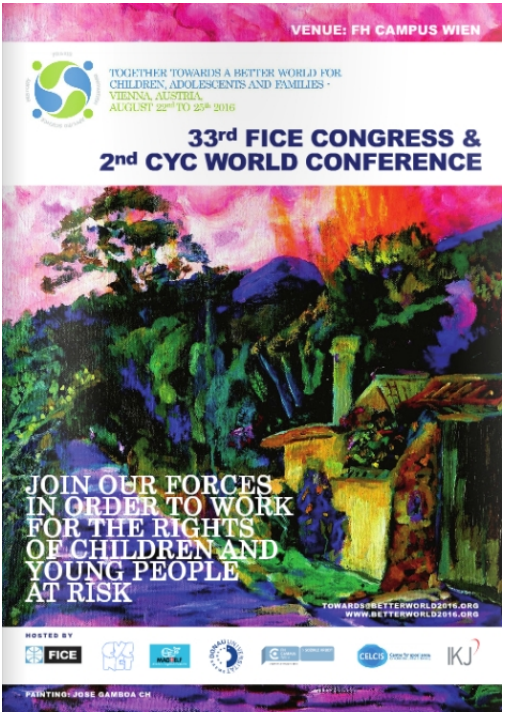
hopeful belief. This ability to experience debilitating pain and to not be controlled by it is a major requirement for doing relational work with the abused and neglected people we serve.

Professionals in the life space must be able to separate their own needs from the needs of the youth/families in our care. It is fairly easy to do this when you have the arms-length relationship typical of a technician, but effective relational CYC work demands much more. Another fairly easy connection is to feel sympathy rather than real empathy, which is a joining that is not helpful, since you are not offering help to get unstuck. If I am influenced by your pain or plight, but cannot maintain my own sense of self, then we are both in distress, or I must reject your reality. Until I possess a clear inner locus of control, I will not be able to really help you.

Boundaries are a major dynamic in life space work. Technicians have fairly thick boundaries, which keep them safe from the pain and confusion expressed by "the clients". New CYC staff also need to have this

type of boundary until they establish personal safety. Mature CYC practitioners have more intimate boundaries because relational work demands it. To create the inter-personal in-between space for useful relational work, the CYC professional must be able to be present to the other person's reality as well as have a clear personal belief system simultaneously.

Supervising adults who are on the developmental journey shifting from Socialized to Self-Authoring thinking is a complex task. Typical new hires, whether graduating CYC students or other young adults are Socialized thinkers who are fully capable of continuing to develop their meaning-making complexity, but require a developmental approach from a more knowledgeable other who can create challenges that scaffold their learning in manageable bites. Some supervisory suggestions next month.



A System in Crisis: Violence and CYC

Hans Skott-Myhre

hskottmy@kennesaw.edu

Having spent a good deal of my working life in CYC/youth work in emergency shelters, the threat of violence was never very far away. There was always an ongoing rhetoric about the importance of safety, but when you are working in the social, cultural and psychic emergency room of the streets, safety for both workers and young people was usually a bit tentative. Remarkably, most of the time things worked pretty smoothly with very little violence, but when violence did occur it pushed everyone against their limits pretty hard.

I have worked in shelters in which drive by shootings by rival gangs was not unknown, where young people assaulted each other in and out of the shelter with fists, knives and guns, where bricks were thrown through office windows and sexual assault, while not common, was not unheard of either. I have worked with well-respected colleagues who turned out to be sexual predators, drug addicts and alcoholics. I have had young people in my care who died violently by their own hand or another's, who overdosed or fell under a moving train.

Let me clear, these were not regular occurrences. The majority of the time, the workers and young people interacted in ways that exemplify the best in CYC/youth work relational practice. Overall, the programs I am thinking about did rather amazing work providing an immense array of services to young people, their families and communities under extremely trying circumstances.

But bad things did happen. And they happened in programs with very generous funding, good governmental oversight, exemplary training programs for workers.

Indeed, in these programs, workers were required to have at least a B.A. in a field related to CYC/youth work and I would, argue the vast majority could pass any of the current certification exams with flying colors. Many of them were truly gifted at working relationally with young people and yet, in spite of all of this, bad things sometimes happened, violence erupted and people got hurt or even died.

I am reminded of all of this by two open letters Jessica Hadley and Thom Garfat recently posted on the CYC-net list serve. The letters were in response to a brutal attack on two CYC workers by two young people in their care. There is a great deal that I like very much about what Jessica and Thom have to say in the letters. I am profoundly sympathetic to Jessica's statement that the attack will undoubtedly leave physical and emotional scars on those attacked and that there is no way to make it okay or right. I applaud her assertion that this situation was not an exception and can't be fixed "by improved standards of safety at an Agency and in how practicums are utilized." I agree with her that "It would be wonderful if that were the reality of all of this." Instead, Jessica and Thom suggest that there are broader systemic issues involved in this incident.

The broader systemic issues are, of course, complicated. Jessica and Thom point to the fact that reports across Canada indicate a system of care that is not functioning very well. Jessica notes that, the "high risk environment" involved in the assaults in question is hardly the exception to the rule. She asserts that there are hundreds of CYC workers who experience assaults and verbal abuse on a daily basis. Inadequate staffing and funding, high staff turnover lack of training and an increasing demand for service has placed the system in crisis. To her credit, she notes that there are no easy answers and no quick fixes. Jessica and Thom state that,

> *We cannot continue to react to young people as if their struggles were only of their own making, expecting them to conform to a system of demands which treats them as objects, not subjects, and expects them to comply without responding to their needs as developing human beings.*

This one sentence is as eloquent a summary of why we are in crisis as I have read anywhere. It is also horribly and impossibly complex. It encapsulates the contradictions and antagonisms of our field with such stark clarity. In what I am going to say next, I

want to be very clear that I fully respect and even agree with much of what Jessica and Thom propose as a solution to the problem as stated above. I just worry that their very sensible proposals are out of touch with the political actualities of the current crisis.

For example, I certainly would not argue with the fact that we need more funding for programs. Regrettably however, I think it unlikely that increased funding will happen in the amounts necessary to make a significant impact on the situation. I would argue that the logic of the current regime of neo-liberal capitalism largely precludes that possibility. The current system is about profit not people. That is an immense barrier to overcome for those us attempting to care for young people. One I am not sure we have thought through either tactically or practically.

And even if we receive increased funding, will the current agency models of care use that funding in ways that will actualize the model of care Thom and Jessica propose. They suggest a radical revision of practice where agencies are able to clearly delineate qualifications for workers to engage with young people, implement hiring standards, increase staff ratios, reduce the focus on conformity and control, engage young people in their own treatment, provide supportive supervision and recognize CYC as a unique and valuable skill set. The problem is that agencies could well do all of these things but translate them very differently. The vexing issue with neo-liberalism and postmodern capitalism is its ability to turn definitions and terms to the market of the logic.

For example, the proliferation of the term "treatment" in CYC might well be directly related to neo-liberal definitions of care that work directly against what Thom and Jessica argue is one of the key things we must not do: treat young people as objects not subjects. I am absolutely certain that this is not what Jessica and Thom meant when they use the term. Indeed, when they propose that young people be involved in their own treatment, I believe that they are advocating for a more democratic involvement in which young people have more of a say in their own process of change.

But, as Foucault points out, entangling agency and funding agendas with the process by which people manage their lives often leads to subtle and not so subtle ways in which people are trained to shape and discipline themselves according the values and habits of the dominant system. My point here isn't that we shouldn't seek more

funding, better staff ratios and so on. It is instead, that any systems change that occurs within the parameters of the dominant system is very tricky and messy. That doesn't mean we shouldn't fight for improvements, but we can't wait on them either.

We should also be cautious about thinking that any systems level change at the agency or governmental level will remediate the level of rage and alienation experienced by young people that leads to violence. The lives of young people and the severe crisis of a failing social will continue to bring chaos and madness to our doorstep. As Jessica and Thom assert, "we cannot continue to react to young people as if their struggles were of their own making." But what does that mean? Do we have any idea or cogent analysis of the depth of phenomenological, physical and spiritual disenfranchisement the upcoming generations are being subjected to? Felix Guattari argues in his writing, that we are facing an ecological crisis at the level of society and mind that is interrelated with and to some degree exceeds the global environmental crisis. Our mental and social eco-systems are in crisis and entire species of thought and social behavior are facing possible extinction. In that regard, I sometimes feel as though we in CYC/youthwork are like those folks that deny climate change. It is not that such folks argue that there is no increase in global warming, just that it has nothing to do with anything we are doing. We just need to make a few adjustments and we will be able to continue to live in the ways we have become accustomed to since the industrial revolution. And if not, the effects of climate change will be visited on other people not us. We are somehow exempt.

In CYC/youth work we also often act as though we could make a few adjustments to funding, training, certification and we will be able to get the system back under control and do the good work we have always done. Whatever madness and violence occurs for young people in the world will be kept outside the boundaries of our professional life or managed effectively if it is allowed inside. This kind of denial is a madness of its own that is absolutely shown false if we take seriously what Jessica and Thom state about what we can no longer do. They tell us that we cannot deny the reality of young people's struggles and the fact that their struggles are related to factors outside themselves. We cannot expect them to conform to an alienating and system that radically excludes their concerns, And, we must insist on a system of care that genuinely responds to their needs as developing human beings.

Here is the horror of the situation. What Jessica and Thom propose at all levels is sensible and even necessary. Unfortunately, I don't believe that it will be achieved through appeals to the government or corporate sector. Reforms, even if achieved are quite likely to be perverted by the logic of the market. As a result, I think that for the generation of workers coming into the field now, the work is likely to be dangerous, chaotic and mad. As I noted at the beginning of this piece, for some sectors it always has been. But now the madness of the street with its logic of violence and chaos is proliferating across the sectors of CYC. We need to come to terms with the fact that we are increasingly working in a war zone and develop models that are appropriate to care under those circumstances. In that respect we need to decide how we position ourselves vis a vis the warring parties. It will matter and it already has. We already have an increasing number of casualties both among workers and the young people we encounter. The question is what do we do about that? How do we manage our wounded and what do we do with our dead and dying?

I am assuming some of you reading will think I am being overly dramatic. I surely do hope that you are right and that appeals for the same reforms and policies we have been begging for over the past twenty-five years will suddenly come to pass and all will be well. Like climate change however, the longer we delay significant social and behavioral change the worse it is likely to get. Gregory Bateson talked about the difference between self-correcting or runaway systems. A runaway system is a system that loses its ability for self-corrections and continues to amplify elements of change that proliferate until the system loses coherence and self-destructs. I would argue that young people today are living in a runaway system in which the driving engine for global capitalism is change and difference without regard for the effects this might have. The effects of living in a system hell bent on self-destruction invariably will have a profound effect on the people living in and dependent upon it. We in CYC are seeing the refugees from that system. I hope we can find a way to manage what is coming. In fact I think it is crucial that we do.

State Guardian or Head Gardener?

Robin Jackson

Once upon a time in a distant northern land a decree was proclaimed that all children and young people up to the age of 18 would become guardians of the state. When the people learned of this decree, they became deeply troubled and voiced their great anger. But the state stood firm and said it knew better than the people. The decree – the state asserted – was set hard in stone. And so it will come to pass on the 1st August 2016 all children and young people up to the age of 18 in Scotland will become guardians of the state! In other words, it will be for the state and not parents to determine what is in the best interests of the child and young person.

The powers accorded to these guardians, according to some commentators, are comparable to those held by former Stasi agents in East Germany. Whilst this interpretation may border on hyperbole, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that it is not too wide of the mark. Perhaps the most dispiriting aspect of this development has been the almost total absence of criticism and resistance from members of the child and youth care professions in Scotland. Some of the most powerful opposition has come from different groups within the legal profession.

We are currently awaiting the ruling of the UK Supreme Court as to the legality of the Act as it relates to the introduction of the guardianship scheme. That decision is imminent. Meanwhile there is growing pressure on the Scottish Government to repeal that part of the Act relating to the guardianship scheme. A repeal would be a massive political embarrassment for the Scottish National Party – the ruling party – an embarrassment it will seek to strenuously avoid at all costs.

My report – State Guardian or Head Gardener? – sets out the proclaimed purpose of the guardianship scheme and also the concerns which have been expressed concerning its legality and implementability. It is to be hoped that other jurisdictions - national, provincial or state – will take note of the particular problems that can occur when a government seeks to assume powers to which it has no legal, moral or ethical entitlement.

Relational Child & Youth Care Practice

Volume 29 Issue 2 / 2016

ISSN 2410-2954

The CYC-Net PRESS

Subscribe now at http://www.rcycp.com

I Went On A Mission at Eighteen

Sara Ireland

I went on a mission at eighteen. I set out to break an idea of myself that, up until that point, defined me. I was a ball of energy and feelings. It was a story that was only partly mine held not so neatly together by the pages of my favourite books and words of the songs that had touched my soul. But all in all, I was a mess of misplaced emotion, mistaken blame, and missed potential. But at eighteen years old, I stared down the barrel of a gun loaded with all the possibilities of a life that equalled more than the sum of my story up until that very moment of decision. Or, in my case, indecision. I signed up for what I thought would be the best plan for a person who cared - a program to become a teacher. Sitting in a chair in my high school, I sent out my college application to what I thought would be the definition of the rest of my life.

I remember packing up the truck, moving all of the tangible stuff that made up the exterior aspects of my life, and setting off to college. I walked through the doors of residence, thinking this was "it". This is where I will have the freedom I craved to create the person I envisioned.

That is certainly not the way those two years played out. Just two weeks later I had a panic attack. This was not a new experience for me, but soon afterwards, I noticed I couldn't quite close my right eye. I was caught up in a whirlwind of anxiety, depression, frustration, and freedom I had never known. As time went on, I lost movement to the entire right half of my face. Later, after a visit to a doctor, I was diagnosed with bells palsy.

I stopped caring about my goals and started making a long list of wrong choices. With virtually zero self-esteem, I set out on an unintentional mission of utter self-destruction. I lied to my parents. I stopped going to class. If I wasn't out drinking, I was in bed, letting the crippling weight of my self-hatred rip my soul to shreds. I totally and completely lost myself.

For two years, I shut out my favourite part of who I am: the ability to feel. Feeling

meant I had to own up to the choices I was making and the endless self-doubt that was crushing my thoughts. Bells palsy, although superficial, was a turning point in those years. It pulled out a part of me I didn't know existed and allowed it to flourish and devour everything I was up until that point. Near the end of my second year I had a conversation with a person in the general arts program that transferred into teachers college and found my classes didn't match up with theirs. I realized I was not only throwing away a chance at a future, I was doing it in the wrong program. I was angry. At myself. At bells palsy. At my past. At everything. But the thing about anger is that it can sometimes be a catalyst for change.

At one point it was like someone lit a candle in the darkness of my mind, and a little light broke through. I was standing in the kitchen, after coming home from a politics exam that I had not prepared for and I knew I had failed. I felt an overwhelming sense of shame, confusion, and most importantly, anger. I remember saying out loud to myself, standing in the kitchen, "enough is enough". For most of my life, I managed a balance of living and surviving. Yet in that moment I was simply surviving. I realized it was time to live again.

I browsed through the online program brochure for Lambton College, not being entirely sure what it was I was looking for. I scanned across Early Childhood Education and thought it sounded like something I might like. I scrolled through the Social Service program and thought it might be something I would be good at. Then, I remember finding the Child and Youth Worker program (as it was called then) and something inside me clicked. Honestly, I remember a lot, but I don't remember thinking too much about the decision to apply. I just remember feeling for the first time in a long time that something made sense. I remember, for the first time in a long time, feeling like myself again.

In the years up until that point, I had failed at school. I let circumstances beat my soul to a point where I lost all faith in myself and collapsed. I didn't care about the money I was pouring into an education I wasn't even remotely committed to. I didn't care that I was letting my family, the ones who believed in me down. I didn't care in the slightest that I wasn't living up to my own potential. I don't think I realized, at the time, how lost I really was.

I remember when I got the phone call, that I wasn't approved for the student assistance program because my grades where so low the years before. I called my mom

and hearing the disappointment in her voice as she told me that I could not go to school without tuition assistance. I remember contacting the school, begging for another chance. I begged my mom and sister and grandma to give me another shot at this, and telling them what I knew in my soul, that this time would it be different. Anger boiled up again.

I wrote a letter to the school, explaining to them why I did so poorly, and why I deserved another chance. I remember collapsing into myself again, and feeling the weight of my choices and my lies and my missteps sitting heavy on my heart, as the new found hope for a future so close, slipped out of my grip. And I remember when, almost simultaneously, the people in my life came through and supported me as I took another wack at a future I knew somewhere in my soul I deserved. Regardless of how far I fell before.

And I remember walking into my very first CYW class. My teacher, Richard, at the front of the room, ice breaker in hand, and soaking in the feeling of belonging. I sat alone, not knowing anyone. But I didn't feel alone, for the first time in a long time, I didn't feel scared. I felt supported. I felt safe. I fell instantly in love with a field that at that point I knew very little about. It was like this vicarious happiness and passion around a room of people devoted to caring for others that somehow broke through the ice I had been growing around my heart and started to put my pieces back together. Started to pull out my ability to feel, to care, to be me again. I was hooked. In those three years I learned more about myself and did more healing than I can even wrap my head around. I put a definition to that feeling that drove me through so many of my choices all my life. And I found a way to make a career out of it. I found empathy. I found judgement free understanding and acceptance. A second chance, and most importantly I found something that I could commit to. Something that I could throw my heart into and it felt right.

I remember walking through the arena the day I graduated and seeing my family beaming with pride mirrored in myself. I was never the most likely to succeed type. To be honest, I was more the most likely to try type. I thought back to the moment when I told my Mom I wasn't approved for OSAP. The moment I had to come clean for my mistakes. The moment she lost hope in me and the moment she regained it. I remember her talking me through the hard times with an unrelenting belief that I would make it to graduation. Disregarding my past, and knowing how much I felt at home in this career path. My family believed in me when I didn't. I wouldn't have made it if not for them giving me that second chance that I hadn't earned.

I found something amazing in this field. I grew into a version of myself I can be proud of. Still very much a working progress, but with a lot less really big downfalls. I'm a person in the making. I can confidently and proudly define myself by one thing, I am a Child and Youth Care Worker. And I fought like hell to say that.

SARA IRELAND is a recent graduate from Lambton College in the Child and Youth Work program and lives in southwestern Ontario, Canada. She recently attended the provincial conference with the Ontario Association for Child and Youth Care in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Signs and Symptoms in Child & Youth Care Evaluation and Judgement

Doug Magnuson

In *Medicine for Mountaineering and Other Wilderness Activities,* Wilkerson (2010) describes the difference between signs and symptoms. "Symptoms, being subjective, must be described by the patient." Symptoms are indicators of health issues that are caused by non-traumatic causes, like illnesses and heart and respiratory problems. Dizziness, pressure in the chest, radiating pain, and weakness cannot often be observed, and the patient's description may be the only route to understanding what is happening. Wilkerson says the patient's own words are best.

> *The time and circumstances in which symptoms appear and their chronological sequence are significant. The precise location of pain, the time it began, whether the onset was gradual or sudden, the severity of the pain, and the quality of the pain—cramping, stabbing, burning—should be ascertained. Symptoms must be evaluated to determine if they are continuous or intermittent; how they are aggravated or relieved; how they are related to each other; and how they are affected by position, eating, defecation, exertion, sleep, or other activities. Non-painful symptoms such as tiredness, weakness, dizziness, nausea—or their absence—may be highly significant…*

Note the multi-dimensional range of things we might want to know about the experience, for example, of pain. Note that the patient's descriptions of pain are not a description of the cause of pain. Note that we are also interested in what does not get described—"Failure to describe a symptom must not be considered a reliable indication that the symptom is not present." This is what Michael Baizerman calls the "donut hole" theory, looking for what is NOT there.

"Signs" are objective—visible or identified by touch—and in wilderness first aid we

find them through physical examination. We identify a rapid heartbeat, pale skin, constricted pupils, deformities in a limb, and blood by looking and feeling for them. We might ask the patient where it hurts and be directed to an ankle; if we do not also do a methodical search we will miss other problems, potentially more serious. Note that because a sign is visible does not mean that the cause is always obvious or that we cannot be misled. Ankle swelling can be a break, a sprain or, edema.

Signs and symptoms are both subject to interpretation, and one can be mistaken. Signs and symptoms can be deceptive, and sometimes they contradict each other. When they do, they are carefully parsed. There is some difference in perspective between the two. It is best with symptoms to give priority to their subjectivity, to the interpretation and described, lived experience of those symptoms in the words of the patient. By comparison, it is often best with signs to give priority to the objective assessment, to the evidence provided by about how it looks and feels. Either way,

assessment and care depend on both signs and symptoms—it is nonsensical to ignore one or the other. What gets priority at the scene is dictated by the demands of the scene—by what the patient needs. The interpretation of these signs and symptoms takes practice and guidance, in a community of experts, where expertise is acquired through practice in field conditions. Instructors have to be able to demonstrate what they teach. Even researchers need field experience.

Many CYC settings have analogous "symptoms," indicators that are best learned through the lived experience of children, youth and families—rigorous effort is required to understand them well. These same settings also have "signs," indicators that are best learned through more objective judgment. This is true in practices aimed more directly at alleviating pain and suffering and also in practices more widely focused on well-being. My point—and I do have one—is that in CYC it may similarly be nonsensical to pit the expertise of interpreting symptoms in opposition to the expertise of interpreting signs. It is similarly nonsensical to teach the practices of these complex interpretations in unidimensional terms—in slogans and pithy phrases. The world is too big, and the experience of children, youth, and families is too varied. Finally, we may also learn from the first responder world the principle of earning authority based on expertise in field conditions. It has become a truism that most agencies/programs are organized so that those without practice expertise are given the most authority. Those of us providing professional qualifications face the same challenge of keeping these qualifications in contact with experiential expertise.

Reference

Wilkerson, J. A. (2010). Diagnosis. In J. A. Wilkerson, E. E. Moore, & K. Zafren (Eds), *Medicine for Mountaineering & Other Wilderness Activities.* Seattle, WA: The Mountaineers Books.

Child and Youth Care Conferences: Learning, connecting and making memories

Jenny McGrath and Christine Pope

Recently, a student planning to attend her first Canadian child and youth care conference asked us why we go to conferences. This simple question led to a passionate conversation about significant learning, memories shared and connections made. The student seemed motivated by our response so, we we'd like to share some of our experiences, personal examples and insights in the hope of inspiring other students and new practitioners who have not been to a conference, to give it a go!

Connection to the profession

Although we both have significant memories from every conference, our first experience still resonates because it was where we appreciated the bigger picture of child and youth care. We felt an energy and excitement about the profession that we had not yet experienced. Those who spoke enthusiastically about their decades long career in child and youth care inspired us. We saw beyond our job, our agency and our community and realized that we were part of a vast community of people who 'got' us and shared our passion for working with children, youth and families. Yet, we also noticed variety in practice and intervention. Some things resonated with our understanding that validated our practice identity and some things were different. This helped us to process who we were as practitioners and reconsider our intervention strategies. We returned to our work with new ideas and a desire to implement them!

Supportive mentors

During our first several conferences we purposefully attended workshops offered by people we studied in school because we were somewhat "starstuck" and wanted a chance to hear them in person. We were not disappointed and learned much in these sessions but what impressed us most was the fact that they spent time with us and

wanted to know our ideas about child and youth care. A good illustration of this comes from Christine:

> *Many years ago as a recent child and youth care graduate, I was asked to speak at a conference educator's day. This was a great honour as it provided opportunity to attend what felt like an elite and exclusive gathering. However along with the excitement came an extreme case of nerves. An author who was greatly admired, offered kind and supportive words just prior to my taking the podium. It was a surreal experience to be face to face with him yet it provided a boost of courage for me to talk in front of some of the same people I learned about in my child and youth care program. This presentation was later published which in turn led to many other career opportunities.*

These mentors also invited us to join special conference events including meals, major league sporting events, the Rock and Roll hall of fame and museum tours. Through these sessions, special excursions and conversations, we met people in various phases of their career, but came to realize that we were all connected as child and youth care practitioners. These "icons" became people who supported us and mentored us to take chances, change jobs, travel, complete graduate degrees, publish, and share our knowledge. They are now our friends and colleagues who continue to challenge and inspire us. We keep going to conferences to maintain these longstanding relationships and create new ones; because this helps us stay connected to our purpose and reminds us of why we became child and youth care workers.

Giving back

We realized early on that it was important to give back. To this end, we readily shared workshop information with our peers during professional development days and we tried new techniques and activities within our programs. After attending a few conferences, we were encouraged by our mentors to present with them so we could comfortably share our knowledge and experiences. We remember the nervousness and anxiety but also the support and praise we received for our efforts. We later gained confidence to present independently and believe it is important to share our ideas, as workshops and research presented can help the field continue to grow and

reflect current issues, developments, and knowledge.

Another way we contribute is by sitting on conference committees. We have both helped plan provincial, national and international conferences and have learned much from this process and allow us to keep expanding our professional network. Conference planning is time intensive and requires contributions and expertise of many. Students and new practitioners can volunteer on various committees and this can become a way to garner support to attend conferences. We applaud all practitioners who have helped organize and promote our conferences because we believe they are integral to the ongoing development of our field.

Coming full circle

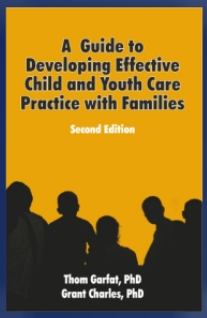
We have both been fortunate in our careers to have supportive supervisors that contributed greatly to our professional and personal development. In recent years, we have noticed that we have begun to take on this roll. As educators, we are now mentors to our students. We encourage them and support them to share their knowledge and experiences through publishing and presentations. At conferences, we are mentors to new practitioners and have supported people through their first presentations. It is equally rewarding to see others having experiences that we recall so fondly as their excitement is contagious. We find ourselves noticing first time conference attendees in awe of the energy, camaraderie and support they are receiving. We hope they too feel connected and are inspired to share their experiences!

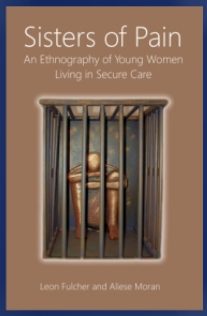
All are welcome

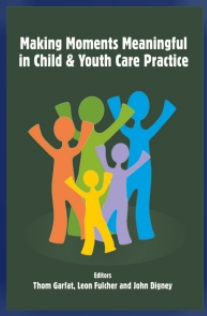
There are many ways to maintain a commitment to ongoing professional development such as reading, training, and membership with the child and youth care association, however there is nothing like attending a child and youth care conference. These events add another layer of learning that goes beyond collaborating with even the most dynamic team of coworkers. It is four days of relationship building, exchanging and challenging perspectives, learning new ideas and tools, and celebration. Meeting professionals from across the globe in various stages of their career is both exciting and humbling as these interactions provide opportunities to broaden and challenge perspectives at a different level. Come join us!

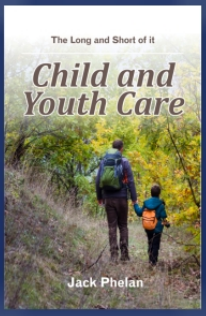
Click

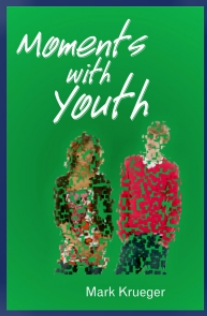
TO VISIT OUR CYC BOOK STORE

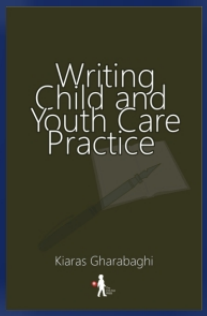












info@cycnetpress.cyc-net.org

It's Not About a Calling, It's About Being… Just Be… And An Experience of Learning to Be

Jessica Koury

From the moment that I stepped into the Child and Youth Care field I knew that this was not my calling. Let's just say I thought that I was not a "natural." I felt like I had to work harder than everyone else to become a Youth Worker. So, why did I think that this field was not my calling? To me a calling meant that you were and had to be a natural. You could do the work and already have some of the skills that a Youth Worker is supposed to have. It took me some time to alter my belief that I was not good enough because I didn't consider myself a "natural." After a few years of self-exploration and self-reflection, I came to terms with the fact that it was okay to be unsure and it was most certainly okay to be messy at times.

Thinking back a few years I had known that I wanted to help people; more specifically I wanted to work within one of the many helping professions. I wanted to give back because I came from a place of limitations, disadvantages and challenges that no one my age, nor anyone for that matter, should have to experience. It was a few positive mentors when I was growing up who influenced my decision to become a helper. What I did not know was that Child and Youth Care would be the place for me and at the young age of 24 here I am with a post-secondary diploma, working towards my degree.

As soon as I stepped foot into my first lecture at Algonquin College and all of these definitions of our work kept coming at me, I realized that this occupation was what I wanted. It was about being me and finding out who I really was. I spent years trying to fit into the mold that I thought was our work but it just recently dawned on me that there is none. I was trying so hard to become a Youth Worker that I lost sight of what being a CYC actually is.

Someone once told me to "just be" and I thought, "That's it!" All this time I have been looking for the answers but I already knew how being with someone during a struggle and helping them through it could change the course of their life, because it happened to me. Once I realized this, it was like the world was lifted off of my shoulders. I began to see our work through a whole new lens. All I had to do was just be… A person, an ear, a voice, a playground (literally a human jungle gym) or even just a small touch. I just had to be; with intention, empathy and my mind set on goal's, to work with and motivate children youth and families for positive change to be possible. I learned this through reflection and really tapping into my reactions in moments of working with children and their families. What really helped me do this was asking myself simple questions like: How am I doing right now? What am I feeling? What are my biases? Are my own experiences contributing to tunnel vision? And how would I feel in this child/family's position?

I think that I finally understood the importance of checking in with myself when I was asked to work with a child's mother. I had great rapport with this child, but I'm not going to lie, working with parents scared the daylights out of me. This family was going through a horrible divorce, the father left and was never to be heard from or seen again, the children were very young and the mother had fallen into a deep depression. Mom came into the school where I was completing my placement during the day. She

had an appointment with a Social Worker. Here came the thoughts again "great, I never had amazing experiences with a Social Worker. I know what Social Worker's and divorce mean."

I knew I needed to be more aware of my own experiences in this situation but the reality is my past always influences how I react. As I walked into the staff room, mom was sitting at the computer almost in tears. I introduced myself and asked her how I could be of help. She explained that she couldn't find the information that she needed for her meeting and she doesn't use a computer very often. I immediately pulled up another chair, sat with her, and asked if I could make her something to drink. She smiled, I smiled, and it was at that moment that I realized success wasn't about reaching a goal, completing a task, or being in the right place at the right time it was about being with someone when they needed it the most and sharing that moment. As we continued to work at finding forms I saw hope beginning to lighten the mothers face. Her posture changed and she started to speak with more confidence. By the end of my time with the mother we did not find all of her forms, although we did manage to dig up some. I left her with the papers and the Social Worker hoping that everything would turn out okay.

During my break that day my supervisor approached me with joy on her face. She told me that I had made a difference in that family's day because the mother couldn't stop smiling during her appointment and the Social Worker experienced a breakthrough with mom. While reflecting on this experience I realized that I connected with and supported the mother in a moment she needed someone the most. I did enough to change someone's day for the better. I do not know the end result of this family's case but I knew that I had had a positive impact on them just for that day.

Taking the time to pay attention to myself as well as the child/family who I was with in the moment helped me relax and not be so worried about doing things the right way… let's face it there is no right way. Like I said earlier get messy and give yourself permission to get messy sometimes because that is how we will learn and grow together as a field.

Authentic Attachments

Sacha Fellers

I have been in the Early Childhood Education field for 10 years. During this time, I've had many different experiences and opportunities with children, families, coworkers and community organizations. All of these experiences have contributed to my ever evolving philosophy of childcare. Each unique experience has provided me with countless opportunities for growth. I would like to share my journey with you.

In the beginning, I would play with children as they played, following their direction and working through difficult moments as they happened. I wasn't thinking about much other than playing, keeping the children safe and engaged and hoping I could diffuse any problems that occurred. I played with them and modelled appropriate play skills and then I stepped back to observe their play. I would remain just outside their play to support it and give positive praise as needed. When needed, I would step back in, and then step back out, continuing this cycle throughout free play, going around the classroom to each play group. I felt it was important to be engaged in play. At this point, I was doing my job, enjoying my work and for the most part having fun.

But I wasn't having fun when I had to deal with not being listened to, disrespected, hit, kicked, spat on, ran away from and called names. For the moment, let's just call these *challenging behaviors*. I can remember my heart pounding, feeling inadequate, frustrated, disappointed, sad and often times crying. I took the challenging behaviors personally. Often times that left me at a loss and I didn't know what to do. Over time, I found myself detaching from these experiences: in essence, detaching from the relationship and the child because I wanted to get through the moment and carry on to have fun.

I know now that I was in a state of disconnect when the children needed me the most.

At that point in my career I wasn't invested emotionally with the children I was working with. Around this time, a colleague gave me feedback that I was not nurturing the children enough. I can remember being livid when hearing that information- asking myself, "how can I not be nurturing? I work with children all day….of course I nurture...why did she say that about me?" I did not receive it well. Needless to say, that feedback resonated with me for long time before I allowed myself to be open to the idea that I needed to be more nurturing and even then I had no idea what that was meant to look like. Looking back on that moment, it was a game changer for me.

Over the next few years, I hung onto those words, "you are not nurturing the children enough…" I would play and replay interactions over in my head with a different sense of awareness. I would observe other educators in their practice to see if they had what I was missing. Slowly, over time I allowed myself to be more open, real and genuine with the children I was now *caring for* - rather than *working with*. When it came to challenging behaviors I wasn't *dealing* with the kids as much as I was learning to support them.

Now I had the idea of playing with children to support their development and paired it with nurturing the children with some openness and love. This provided opportunities for the children and I to create trusting relationships. As I began to build more trusting relationships with the children, supporting them when they showed those 'challenging behaviors' became less of chore and more an opportunity to further a connection with the child. I now believed connections took place when I engaged with the children in their worlds, in their imaginative states. Not only was I there and present for the teachable moments but more importantly I was building relationships with the children. The children learned to trust, respect, and have fun with me. In these interactions, I was nurturing the children's abilities and creating bonds that would strengthen our connection. With relationships built on trust, mutual respect and love, the children were often having more success.

As more time passed, I began to believe more strongly that in relationship, when feeling safety, trust and love, the children would receive what they needed to grow, learn and adapt through their ages and stages of development. Gradually, I gave myself permission to become emotionally invested with the children which lead to my 'ah-ha' moment - I have to bring my authentic self to each relationship to create strong attachments with the children I care for: without the attachment there is no true

connection. And only with a true connection can the children thrive. But however connected I was, I still didn't understand why the challenging behaviors were still happening. I can remember wanting to *fix* the problem.

When I want to fix a problem, I work harder and that is exactly what I did. Since I now had more success with challenging behaviors, I found myself consistently supporting them and I wanted to work with them to solve their problems. At that time, it seemed like a win-win for me.

Consistently, I was with kicking, screaming, crying, and angry children who were repeatedly in momentary states of emotional chaos - arms and legs flailing, tears flowing, voices screaming, toys being thrown and furniture and equipment flipped. It was in those moments I was trying to calm the children and make the problem better. Time after time, in these heightened moments I would try to support problem solving with different techniques and practices. The children would respond to me because we had a strong nurturing relationship. By respond I mean calm down and carry on and yet the same behaviors would continue over and over again. At one point, I realized my approach wasn't working and I was exhausted. The children were not learning the skills I was attempting to teach to support their development.

I now think that often children are not responsive to support for a couple of reasons. They are not feeling connected, safe or nurtured - there is no emotional connection with the adult or they are in state of chaos and learning will not take place when they are in heightened emotional states. I believe the children need an emotional connection and learning opportunities happen when they are in a relaxed state, feeling safe and having fun. For me...another light bulb moment.

My philosophy continued to evolve. I now thought that in the children's state of play is where the profound learning takes place. There they learn the emotional, social, physical and intellectual skills to successfully navigate relationships with other children and adults. I found that when I entered their play or facilitated play with the children that I could positively promote teachable moments by modeling different scenarios throughout the play that they could remember when problems occur later on.

As my practice continues, I believe everything comes full circle. I bring my authentic self to each relationship...engage with children…model, engage, follow their lead…relationships are created by entering their world…respect and trust is earned…respect and trust is given…nurture with love and consistency…set clear

expectations…children will feel safe and secure…children and I will have successful relationships. Together we will build a strong foundation for our relationship. Together we will navigate our way through their development with more success.

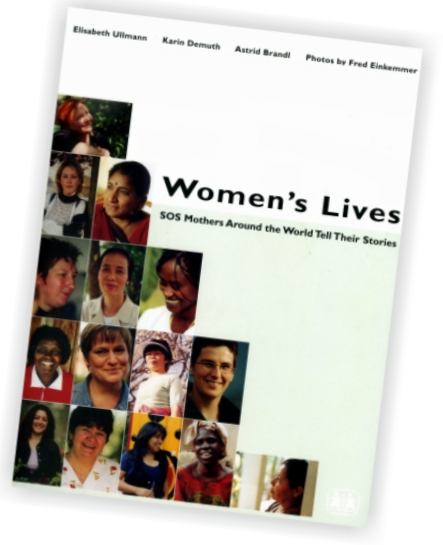
I believe *it's essential that I take ownership of what's happening in the day to day* struggles and have an awareness of my contributions to those struggles. I hope that by consistently reflecting on my philosophy of childcare, on holistically meeting the needs of the children, on nurturing each child's uniqueness in a way that encourages positive growth that I will stay connected and emotionally invested to best support the children.

I am able to build the foundations for attachment. I believe the relationship will flourish and be nurtured through engagement and authenticity. This will be impactful in having success with the children who display more challenging behaviors.

Women's Lives

SOS Mothers tell their stories

Part 8



Nancy Gicheru

Born 21.10.1960, Kenya

"You think you know a lot when you start, but that isn't the case. You learn new things with time and gain more experience."

Her real name is Nancy, but everybody calls her "Mama Faith". Faith was her first child in her SOS family, and in Kenya it's usual for all SOS mothers to take the name of this child. Mama Faith also has two children of her own, two daughters, who live with her in her SOS family. She is proud that she treats all her children as equals and that her daughters have integrated into the family so well.

Mama Faith takes care of twelve children. It is no surprise that she is busy all the time and that her household is well-organised. The children also do their smaller or greater tasks in the household with the utmost of care. We are told that this attitude is a basic value in African society: children are measured by what they contribute to the family once they have reached a

certain age. They have to learn that life is not a game. An intelligent child is one who grasps this quickly. Otherwise, the African saying goes, "He can't tell millet from weeds."

The Story of Her Life

"Everything I'd possessed was gone. I was exhausted and at the end of my tether."

My name is Nancy Gicheru. I was born on the 21st of October 1960 in the district of Uasin Gichu. That is a long way from Nairobi. It's about a four-hour drive. My father died in 1995. He was very old: almost one hundred years old. My mother is still alive. She was ill a lot and had a number of miscarriages. My parents owned a lot of sheep and were, therefore, considered rich people. But none of that is any good, if you don't

have children. So, my mother said to my father, "We have so much, but we don't have any children, and all the children I've borne you are dead. Maybe I'll die too and then you'll be all alone!" My father wasn't prepared to take a second wife, but my mother insisted on it. It was she who brought the new woman into our family. My mother was very happy when the second wife had her first baby. After that my mother also had some healthy children. I have three sisters and three brothers and I'm the fifth. My other mother has eight children and we all call each other brother and sister. The two mothers still live together today. They love each other and we children love each other too. You don't realise that she's my stepmother when I go to visit her. When I came to the SOS Children's Village, it was bit like back home.

Is there anybody to whom you're particularly close?

I'm very close to one of my brothers. There's nothing I can't tell him. The same goes for my eldest sister. She is just as much a friend as a sister to me. I'm also close to two of my stepmother's children. I'm always happy when we can be together. I also have a friend who I've known for a long time. She has always been prepared to see my problems as her own.

I have other friends too, even some men friends. That's not something you can start when you're grown up. You have to begin much earlier. Our parents enjoyed company and had a lot of friends. We've inherited that from them. If I wanted to invite all my friends here, I don't know where they'd all sleep. I have old people as friends, and children too.

What was it like living with your parents?

Like most of the people in the area, my mother was a housewife and my father a farmer. They grew maize and beans, and tried hard to make sure that we could all go to school. We children also tried to help them and perhaps that made my parents' lives a bit easier for them.

But we didn't have enough money for all the children to go to school. My parents, therefore, decided to allow my eldest brother to train as an accountant. That meant that his income then paid for the next brother to finish university. He trained as a teacher and now teaches in a grammar school. Whilst he was at university, he would

spend his holidays with our eldest brother. They would reap the maize in the "jambas" (*Note: fields*) together. They used the money they earned to help their brothers and sisters, our parents and also our stepmother's children. In the end, we were all able to go to school. In the meantime, however, the older girls had got married. I was ten years old when I started kindergarten. I knew I should have been in school already, but it didn't matter to me. I knew why things were the way they were. I went to school until I was twenty-three.

What have been the most important moments in your life?

Everything in life is important, but I'm happy that I've found a balance for myself. Maybe I once had the wish to have a family of my own and a husband, but, when I see the children and think about my own background, I'm proud to be an SOS mother, and to look after children who are not my own. Sometimes, when I visit friends outside the

village and see what problems they have to deal with, then I appreciate my profession and my family all the more.

Do you have any hobbies, or is there anything you like to do in your spare time?

Yes, I enjoy music and I like to sing. I take pleasure in working in my little garden where I grow vegetables for my family. I go on trips and visit my family and my friends. The children enjoy it when we go somewhere together. They're proud to be out with their mother. Occasionally we visit one of my friends and stay overnight. We don't mind sleeping on the floor. The children think it's fun. When we're there, I'm always the first one to lie down on the floor to go to sleep. Then the children can see that even their mother is sleeping on the floor. I think it's a good thing for them to see where we come from: experience is the best teacher.

Is there anybody of whom you could say, "I would like to be like them"? Do you have a role-model?

Yes, certainly, those are my sister-in-law and my friend. They are both good women, who always take the time to listen and are ready to help at any time. I can remember admiring my sister-in-law when I was a child. She was always good to our family. She is a woman who takes things in her stride, whether they be big or small. She still loves us even today. Thank God that I'm now becoming somebody who doesn't take everything so seriously, who is good at listening, who can give good advice and who is ready to compromise. We weren't very well off when she came to our house. We had neither a living room nor a bedroom. Our parents slept on one side of the room and the children on the other. There were three stones around the fire in the middle. Because we only had one dress each, we had to wash them in the evening and hang them over the fire to dry.

Has there been a moment in your life that you could describe as the most wonderful?

Yes, it was when I felt this surge of courage. I was out of work and suddenly was offered a teaching post. I'd been so tired before and had asked God questions about my life. Tears came to my eyes when I was asking him. What had I done to God that I

had to fight so hard and was out of work, even though I'd gone to school? There were other people who hadn't gone to school, but they'd still married, got rich and went on outings with their families. It was a sort of prayer. A week later, a friend of mine came to visit and she told me that they were looking for a kindergarten teacher in one of the schools. I thought, "Am I dreaming?" That's when the good times started for me. I've never stopped working since. I was able to take on many posts, covering for people who were on maternity leave, and finally I became an SOS mother.

Can you also remember your most difficult moment?

Yes, that was when I was still living at home. One of our neighbours died and left a little child, a baby, behind. Every time I saw that child, it affected me badly. I imagined that I too was going to die and leave my children behind. I became ill and lost weight

until I looked as if I were HIV positive. My second child was very young at the time. She was barely five months old. I couldn't breastfeed her anymore. The doctor told me I wasn't ill, but that I just worried too much, and I should take things easy. But I was out of work and had used up my reserves for the hospital. I had been hoping to set up a little business, so that I could send my children to school. Thank God, one of my friends helped me. She said, "I'll lend you the money, so that you can set up a little business. You can pay me back the starting capital later." She also helped my children by buying clothes for them. She knew how to get me up and running again.

You have two children. Have you ever been married?

No. I was meant to get married, but the man left me. He doesn't care about his children either. I didn't find it too bad, though, because my parents didn't send me away. My parents are my friends. It's not like that in all families.

What would you say are your particular talents?

That I like being with people and that I'm brave and courageous. I can talk in front of large gatherings. I also don't let things get out of proportion. I take everything as it comes. God gave me these abilities. They are gifts that not everybody has. I've also always had leadership qualities. That started when I was at school, and now I'm the SOS mothers' representative.

Motivation for Her Choice of Profession

I said, "Oh God, that's the right profession for me."

When I was at school, I always wanted to be a nurse or a teacher. I'd always had a soft spot for children. Part of our Sunday School was that we would visit families who were badly off. There were poor people and orphans too. It always made me sad to see children with no parents.

Life changed after I'd had my two children. It was difficult. I'd hoped to have a family and a husband, but I realised that it was too late for that. Then I became a kindergarten teacher. I felt I was walking on the spot, but I thought, "This is God's work." It wasn't

easy, because I had to care for my children and I was on my own. When I saw the advertisement from SOS Children's Villages, I had no idea what that was, but I fulfilled the requirements they demanded and so I applied. I was invited for an interview.

I just spoke as I felt at the interview. When they told me what sort of children they took in, I remembered how worried I'd been about the orphans and the widows. I said, "Oh God, that's the right profession for me. There's nothing else I want anymore. I don't want a husband and no more children of my own." They didn't promise me a job as an SOS mother straight away, because my children were still very small then and I was told honestly, "Mama, your own children need you." It is difficult for an African to leave their children behind, even if it's necessary to earn your daily bread. They didn't want to do without me, though, and told me I should wait. A year later I was given the job. First of all they sent me on a course for four or five months where I learned a lot.

When I was asked to take on a family of my own, I had to go back to my own children first. My mother took me to one side and said, "Care for this family well and be full of love for these children, as I was for you. This is not an easy task. You have to look after children who are not your own. You also have to look after yourself. You will have to turn to God and ask him for strength, because it won't be easy." My older brother and my father said the same thing. My father was always happy when I brought the children on a visit. They all supported me a lot.

How did you explain to your own children that a new way of life was about to start?

When we got to the house, there was a problem: all the children wanted to sit next to their mother and my children asked, "Why are they calling you mummy? They don't belong to us." I explained to them, "These children have lost their families, and now we're here to live with them. They don't have anybody to look after them. That's why I said I would be their mother, just like I'm yours." They said, "Hey mum, you can't just say that we're brothers and sisters. Even our grandmother knows that we don't have any brothers." Whilst I had been on the course, I'd left my children with my sister-in-law and so I said to them, "Look here, if I should die, perhaps your aunt would look after you and one day you would call her mummy too. It's the same for these children. You are all my children." So they accepted it and helped the other children. Today they love and appreciate one another. When you see them all together, you can't tell who my daughters are.

Experiences as an SOS Mother

You need support and motivation, because it can sometimes be very frustrating.

The life of an SOS mother is not easy, because you have to dedicate your life to the children. So much depends on you, because you are the main pillar in the house. The SOS mothers believe: no mothers, no village! If the village director wants to see one of the children, he has to ask me, the SOS mother, first. I know the children better.

As an SOS mother you have to be organised. There are a lot of things I should be doing right now, but time is short. I have to divide my time up so that I can be with the children, go to a meeting and do all my other work. Perhaps I have to go to the school, because one of the children has had problems. You have to rush here and there and back again, because the other children are waiting for their meal.

The children need you. They can't do anything on their own. The fact that they have lost their parents has left scars. They need time to heal. Some children don't even get better in the SOS Children's Village. It takes time until a child opens up, learns to love and until you learn to love the child. An SOS mother is also a teacher: "This is a cup. You should wash the cup up. After the meal, you should take your things through to the kitchen. This is a kitchen." Before they come here, the children don't know what a

kitchen or a living room are. They are suddenly placed in an entirely new world, and you are their teacher.

The children have a lot of problems, particularly when they first come to the SOS Children's Village. First of all, the children are given a medical examination, either at the hospital or by the doctor. You can ask the village director for help and perhaps, if there's one available, you'll be given an SOS aunt. Before we had the educators, we SOS mothers had to find out ourselves where our children's strengths and weaknesses were. For example, they don't go straight to school as soon as they have been taken in. They are allowed to stay at home until they're mature enough for the kindergarten. It's your task, as an SOS mother, to take the time to get to know the children better. The SOS mother then tells the village director when the child is big enough to go to kindergarten. You say to the village director, "This child needs this or that. He or she can do that well, but has these problems." It's very important to keep the village director informed, because teamwork makes everything easier. The children realise too that there is solidarity here, and that's good for them.

Do you discuss the problems you have with your children with the other SOS mothers too?

If there's a big problem, I discuss it with one of the other SOS mothers before I go to the village director. The SOS aunts are important too. The children know that the SOS aunt is the second most important person, because, if I have to go away, she looks after them. In my house the children do what the SOS aunt says. I've told them, "Something could happen to me and then the SOS aunt will take over the house and be your SOS mother. So, show her respect and don't annoy her. If you have a disagreement, then talk to the auntie."

Last week, I came back from home two days early. I wanted to see how my children had done at the end of the school year and wanted to talk to the teachers. The SOS aunt and I put a plan together: she visited some of the schools, and I went to the ones where I was expecting problems. We're a team in this house, and it works well.

In my role as the SOS mothers' representative, I try hard to make sure that things run as smoothly as possible in the working relationship between the SOS mothers and the SOS aunts. If there are any difficulties, I try to mediate and to work out a

compromise. You always have to try to be fair to everybody. If there are too many problems, you have to talk to the village director, but that's never been the case here.

Have you ever compared your life here, in the SOS Children's Village, to that of a single woman with children living outside the village?

Life in the SOS Children's Village is much easier, as far as money is concerned. We have enough for housing, clothes, food and education. If you look at a woman or a couple living outside with two or three children, their lives are not the same. They have to fight for everything.

Another difference is that a mother living outside is continuing her own clan. I get children from all sorts of different clans and various environments. I don't know exactly what each child has inherited from his natural parents. If a child has just been

abandoned somewhere, you know nothing at all about his or her background, and that's difficult.

And one more thing: when a child living outside becomes a teenager, there's often a crisis in the family. The parents shout at them and sometimes they are thrown out of the home. The parents often don't know about the particular problems involved in this stage of a child's development. As an SOS mother, I at least had the opportunity to learn that there is something called puberty and I'm prepared for it. There are also parents from outside who come to us for advice and want to know how we deal with the children.

I'm sure you can remember your training to be an SOS mother. How did you find it?

The training is very important. Even if you have experience of some things, there is still a lot to learn. It's also a good thing to listen to other people's experiences. Practically, I knew the things my mother had taught me, but I'd never known the theory behind them. I learned a lot. I asked so many questions! We had sociology, psychology and many other subjects. I enjoyed child psychology the most, because I found out how you can discern what's going on in a child's mind. Now I can interpret a child's behaviour better and know that he or she needs help in one way or another.

I'm very much in favour of the SOS mothers being offered refresher courses. The years pass, the times change and we need to change too. I did a course last year and it helped me a lot. We should be checked regularly, just like we keep a check on the children. We're getting older everyday and forget things. We often tell the children off, but maybe the problem lies with us, the parents.

You've been an SOS mother for nine years. Have you changed in this time?

Yes, of course. I discover something new every month, every year, because I learn from other people. You always have to change, because you're continually being presented with new challenges. You think you know a lot when you start, but that isn't the case. You learn new things with time and gain more experience.

Has the SOS Children's Village changed?

Yes, things are always changing, because life never stays the same. These days the children have a better sense of responsibility. Before, they often didn't realise how serious life was. They thought they had everything here. We had to tell the children, "When you're grown up, you will have to work hard for your future. There's everything for you here, because you still need it, but one day you'll have to stand on your own two feet." Now they've started to think about their futures and that might help the younger children.

Can you remember the best moment in your life as an SOS mother?

Yes. When the children were still small, I got a lot of support from Sister Maria, who taught our course. She was very pleased with how I worked and encouraged me very much. When Faith was still young, I was happy that I was able to bring her up so

well. Any new SOS mothers, who were undergoing training, would be sent to me. I would hear a knock at the door: "Sister Maria's sent me, so that you can tell me more about Faith and how you've brought her up." I found that lovely, because I realised that my work was being appreciated. And I thank God that it's still the same today. If I'm not sure about something, I have the courage to ask. I'm not scared of the village director or ~~of~~ the national director. I trust them fully.

There must have been difficult times too.

Yes, of course. Sometimes, when the children are ill and there's nobody to help me, because there are too few SOS aunts, I feel very alone. Even if the village director comes by, I'm the one that is responsible for my house. Don't you think it's difficult when all the children look up to you, but you've got no energy left? When the children were small, there were always complications and the children often had to go to hospital. I could never rest, because I was constantly at the hospital and the other children were waiting for me with their homework. Sometimes you just lose heart. You need support and motivation, because it can sometimes be very frustrating. You see, the village director has just come to see how I am. I feel good now, because I know I'm not alone.

Have you heard about Hermann Gmeiner?

Oh yes, of course. He was a kind man. He had great plans and thought a lot about the needs of the children. There are some people who aren't moved at all when they see people in trouble, but Hermann Gmeiner knew what a hard life meant. He lived together with his oldest sister, but a sister can never replace a mother. He was big-hearted. Perhaps God can find mothers with big hearts to follow the calling, just like Hermann Gmeiner did. He dedicated his life to children and created a small heaven on earth for the suffering children. Where else can a poor child find such a house and get a second mother? I wish I'd been able to get to know him, or at least just to be allowed to see him. He gives the SOS mothers a lot of strength.

In the years you've been working here, have there been any changes in the working relationship between the SOS mothers, the SOS aunts and the village director?

Yes, there have been changes. These days, everything is much more open. If something's not right, the management doesn't keep it a secret anymore. You are informed and asked about it. This openness is good. Everything should be spoken about, because sometimes you don't know if you've done something wrong and, if everything's out in the open, changes can be made. The same goes for our children. You can't punish a child for making one mistake. You have to talk to the child first and give him advice. Perhaps then the child can find an alternative.

Everybody knows their place. If you want to ask a question, you know whom you can ask. That's good and helps everything run smoothly.

If you could change anything in the SOS Children's Village, what would that be?

Well, there are a lot of things I'd like to change. I'd suggest that the SOS mothers got the highest priority, because of the work they do. The organisation should think about how they can better support us. We need motivation, in order to be strong. I'm able to bring up a child from nothing and make something out of him. Isn't that great?

How does the general public view your profession as an SOS mother?

They find it unique and wonder what sort of training we get, so that we look after children who are not our own. Most people think that we get paid a lot and that's why we do it. Some people find it hard to understand that we don't work here for the money. However, those people who are honest say that we are special people and special mothers. We also call ourselves "special mothers", because there is something special about us.

How do you see your future?

I'd like to see my family developing well. As long as I'm together with the children, I'll make sure that they do all right. They should become independent, and then perhaps I'll be happy and will appreciate my own achievements more. I'd like to keep

on seeing them, even when they don't live here anymore. I'd like to know they are continuing what I've taught them, for example, the spirit of togetherness.

The Children in Her Care

They need recognition, no matter how small it is.

We watched Faith, her brother and her sister from a distance when they came to the SOS Children's Village. We thought, "Oh God, so these are the sort of children that come to the SOS Children's Village!" If you've only heard the stories, you don't think too much about them, until the moment you see the children. Faith was very ill. I don't like thinking about what she looked like then. I spent the night with her in my bed. She was so small, and we had to give her medicine. I didn't sleep a wink all night, because I was convinced that she wouldn't survive the night. But I thank God and the SOS mother who encouraged me. She had a "jamba" with vegetables and spinach. She said to me, "From now on, you don't need to take your basket to the market anymore. Come to me every day and help yourself to spinach. Give the child plenty to eat, until she's strong again." Sister Maria brought in the doctors, because we thought that the child wouldn't develop normally. She thought it might be too much for me, as I was only a new SOS mother at the time. Perhaps the doctors would have suggested that the child go to a home for the disabled. Because I was afraid, I thought, "If that's what they decide, then that's fine." I was finding it hard to cope with this situation, but didn't want to say anything. However, the SOS mother who always came to me said, "Mama, don't let them send the child to a home for the disabled. This child will grow up to be the most beautiful, healthy and intelligent of children. I've cared for many children who were weak, and they've all grown up normally." So, I told my heart I needed "faith" to do it. I said to the village director, "Please call me Mama Faith from now on. My faith means that this child will grow up normally." And so it was. I tried to make her happy, to laugh with her and hold her to my breast. When she realised that she was in a different world and that there was somebody who loved her, she started making sounds, "Ta, tata," then "mama" and so on. She could speak, only she'd had nobody with whom she could laugh or speak before. She was also psychologically sound. She's

intelligent, receptive, and very good at school. She's self-confident, is open to everybody and is always laughing. We are very close. Her weakness is that she's sometimes forgetful. But Mama is always there. Mama is even called "Mama Faith", and so sometimes she thinks she's the best child in the family. I put her to rights there, though, and tell her, "You're young and I'm getting old. You have to help me." Faith would like to be a teacher and I think she could manage it. She speaks well in front of other people and can express herself well in English.

Do you know all your children's background stories?

Yes, I know them. We have free access to the records. I can also ask the relatives, because we're in touch with them. I accompany the children when I can, so that I can find out more about their families.

Tell us a little about your children. Do you have any particularly fond memories?

Oh my God, I don't know where to start. Perhaps with the youngest:

David is very sweet and he loves me. He likes to play, but is a bit slow at learning. He can't concentrate very well. For example, if you tell him to clean his shoes, he'll go off and play first. When he comes back, he's forgotten that he was supposed to clean his shoes. But I understand that it has something to do with the way he was brought up. He loves people, even if he doesn't like seeing me with other people. He's always the first to come into my room in the mornings to wake me up and ask, "Mama, did you have a good night?"

Margaret is David's sister. They are very similar. She's musical, well-behaved and always laughing. I try to show her how pretty she is. If only she could make up her mind to be better at school! I tell her, "Margaret, you can be Miss SOS or Miss Kenya even with an academic qualification. Only being pretty won't help you much in life. You won't receive any recognition, if you can't express yourself properly." Now she's trying to improve.

Hermann is Faith's brother. He's friendly and always laughing. He's good at sciences, except for maths. I encourage him by saying that I used to have the same problems, until I realised that I had to ask questions. All he wants to do is play, and he doesn't get

on well with children of his own age. He spends most of his time with younger children. The educators say that the problem probably lies in the fact that as a small child he had too little contact with children of his own age. So I encourage him and tell the other boys they should try to include him. I've noticed that it's improving slowly. You can tell him more now than before. I have to recognise that, even if he's only improved by one iota. They need recognition, no matter how small it is. If I notice that a child is getting into difficulties, I'm especially nice to them. We go on a trip, eat together outdoors and talk to one another.

Douglas' voice is just breaking. He sees this as a weakness. He does realise, though, that he's becoming a man. I tried to explain it to him: "Let's look it up in your biology book. You have to know what direction you're taking now. You're growing up." He would like to be a hotel manager. He enjoys cooking and serving. It doesn't matter how many visitors we have. He's always proud when he does that. He's become a real role-model in my family. Even the village director has noticed that we have a very responsible child in this house. It hurts Douglas, if there's something he can't achieve. Then I tell him, "Look, you have to accept yourself the way you are."

Agnes is tidy. Even her schoolwork is tidy, and you never have to remind her to do her work. You need a lot of time, before you understand her, because she isn't very open. I spoke to her sister-in-law today. They're going home together, and I told her she should try to speak to Agnes, so that perhaps she'll open up a bit. She likes praise and recognition, and I try my best. You have to be especially nice to children who are withdrawn, so that you can find out more about them.

Janet is also going through puberty, but I'm prepared for that. She doesn't like being told off in front of others. It used to be quite difficult with her, but now we've introduced IDP: Individual Development Planning. I put down things that I notice on the form. The children like to read it, to see if I've written anything good about them. That's helped me a lot. She cried a lot right from the start. I tried to find out the reason for this from her relatives. Apparently she inherited that from her mother. I'm happy now, because she's improving. I motivate her every day.

Jane is at grammar school now. She possesses a real love of mankind. She's friendly and always has time to listen. Every time she comes here, she goes to greet all the families. I'm proud to have brought up such a child. She sent me a card: "To my dear mother." To my dear mother! I never expected anything like that. She's also become a

role model in our house; the other children want to be like her. She never used to be so self-confident. A doctor and an educator told me that I was the only one who could give her hope and self-confidence. Once I realised this, I made time for it. We're very close. The last time she was here, we talked until midnight, until we fell asleep together in my bed.

Ruth is also a role model for the other children. She's at the college in Ghana *(Note: SOS Hermann Gmeiner International College),* and so the other children are setting their sights high. She's always encouraging them and writes letters: one for me personally, one for the whole family and one for the children. She wants to know how the family is, and tells me how I should take care of the children. She's like a teacher to me, and I appreciate that.

Yesterday you mentioned a family meeting. Could you describe that a bit more?

Saturday evenings are reserved for our family meetings. We share our views, our joys and our worries. We sit down together as a family and try to find solutions and improvements to the way we live together. I might tell a child off and the children might tell me off, if I've done anything unfair. These meetings have helped us a lot, and if there's not much to discuss, we just take the time to chat.

To My Colleagues Around The World

First, I would like to tell you that you have to stay yourselves. You have to portray a real and genuine picture, and be a role model for your family and your village. In order to continue the late Hermann Gmeiner's words, you have to be patient and work in the spirit of love for the children. You should never be discouraged, and, if you ever have problems, you should know how to pray and forgive. Whilst you are doing that, new ideas will come to you. You should be organised and then you'll see how successful your work is. We should love one another and pray for each other. I will do that.

Nancy on the Situation of Women in Kenya

In earlier days, most Africans saw no need for women to go out to work. Mothers, in particular, were to stay at home and look after the children. The woman runs the household as a servant whilst the man goes out to work and earns money to feed the family. These days, people are better-educated and realise that there is nothing against both partners working. However, life has become hard in Africa, particularly for women. They have a lot of children but no big "jambas" to work anymore. Even so, African women are prepared to work anywhere, as long as they earn something and can support their families.

Some people believe that women are of no value. But let's look at the facts: three quarters of the population are women. The SOS Children's Village is an example: the only man is the village director. All the others are women, who have left everything behind to look after these children. Being a mother in Kenya is a very important thing, because a mother saves lives. I'm an SOS mother and have twelve children. Don't you think that I've saved a lot of lives? A mother will always be a mother, whether she's young or retired. She suffers with the child and with all other living things. You can't compare the situation of women to that of men. It is hard being a woman, because you have to take care of everything. I think it would be a good thing if there were something that could be done to improve the lot of women.

The girls in my house are better at school than the boys. I think it's for the simple reason that girls are more intelligent than boys! In earlier days, girls didn't go to school. When my parents were children, it was thought that a girl would become a prostitute, if she went to school. She would leave the house, see a lot of things, and men would desire her. It was a type of jealousy, but it's easier today.

SOS Children's Village Work in Kenya

5 SOS Children's Villages, including 6 SOS Youth Facilities, 5 SOS Kindergartens, 4 SOS Hermann Gmeiner Schools and 1 SOS Vocational Training Centre, 3 Medical Centres and 8 SOS Social Centres, supporting the community and offering counselling and psychological support, especially for people affected by HIV/AIDS.

JULY 2016
From the Brexit Newswires

Greetings colleagues. I don't know how many noticed recently that the question most asked of Dr Google involved *'what is the EU?'* That cannot have involved any British and European Googlists. All of Britain were tuned in and then seemingly shocked themselves out of Europe, judging by how many young people are now saying they want their vote back, saying they never thought it mattered!

After 43 years, Britain held a Referendum about Staying in the

Elderly people went to the ballot boxes in droves to vote Out of Europe

The demographic spread of votes had young people voting mostly Remain but, Britain's oldest citizen's voted overwhelmingly to Leave. Generally speaking, people in the cities voted to Remain, except for cities around the old industrial heartland of England where voters feel alienated from government decision-making. Old working class England are angry, and they blame immigrants, saying also that the European Union is run by bureaucrats. Yet for 40 years, elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have represented UK interests in the Council of Europe!

The UK decision to leave the European Union was overwhelmingly supported in parts of England with low income and

Child and Youth Care Humour has Followed Quickly After the Exit Vote

education levels. Average educational attainment, median income and social class in English local authorities were the strongest predictors of how residents in that area voted in the referendum. Voting results show that residents with a higher education were more likely to vote Remain. Alienated people feeling angry and disconnected from opportunities taken by others voted Leave.

British and European humorists have been quick to find ways of laughing about the state of heightened anxiety and uncertainty arising out of Great Britain voting to exit the European Union after more than 40 years. While it was allegedly a non-binding referendum, it would be political suicide and potential revolution were the outcome of this referendum were set aside for any reasons.

British youths now face closure of open borders to and throughout Europe. They will no longer have access to college and university studies anywhere in Europe and pay only local fees. British youths will also face new challenges facing any wishes to take up employment anywhere in Europe without EU access. The demographic who voted Leave now made life difficult for generations of youths.

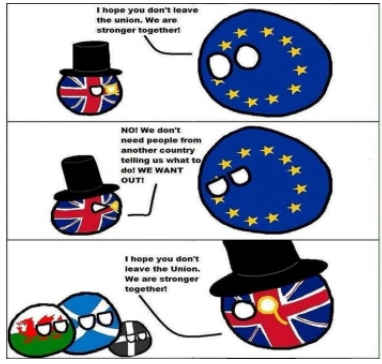
All of Scotland voted to remain in the EU and now have justification for a second independence vote to remain part of the European Union. A scramble for Irish Passports has immediately followed by Northern Ireland folk, who can hold two

Youth voted IN and now have the most to lose from Exit

European Humour has particular depth in its use of sarcasm

passports and want to retain the benefits of EU membership. Meanwhile, English Leave politicians say that Scotland and Northern Ireland should remain together as part of a strong United Kingdom (xenophobic and racist commentaries aside).

Organisational turbulence such as that now unleashed across the UK and Europe is now reflected in stock exchange turbulence around the world. And still there are interviews with Leave Voters claiming they had no idea what might be the consequences. They were just angry and fed up with politicians so voted without thinking it all through. It was John Dewey who claimed that democracy is dependent upon an educated demos! A key demographic for Leave voters was lower education and blaming immigrants.



All of Scotland voted in block to remain part of the EU, now told they cannae go!

The Soap Opera week saw Republican Party Presidential incumbent Donald Trump

"Brexit could be followed by Grexit, Departugal, Italeave, Czechout, Oustria, Finish, Slovakout, Latervia, Byegium. Only Remania will stay"

Future prospects for EU Exit campaign elsewhere in Europe

Donald Trump landed in Scotland to check his new golf course – the US election looms

fly into Prestwick Scotland and travel to Aberdeenshire for a briefing about his new golf course and hotel that shares land with a bird refuge. Trump cheered the Leavers, mindful of how he, too, is supported by a US demographic who are angry, less educated, feeling undervalued and alienated.

How do child and youth care workers help young people to become part of an educated demos?

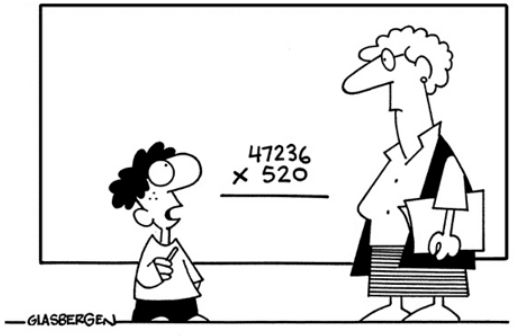
There are a whole lot of unhappy Young People across Europe

endnotes

Some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again.
C.S. Lewis

"I don't want to be a man," said Jace. "I want to be an angst-ridden teenager who can't confront his own inner demons and takes it out verbally on other people instead."
"Well," said Luke, "you're doing a fantastic job."
Cassandra Clare, *City of Ashes*

We are all alone, born alone, die alone, and – in spite of True Romance magazines – we shall all someday look back on our lives and see that, in spite of our company, we were alone the whole way. I do not say lonely – at least, not all the time – but essentially, and finally, alone. This is what makes your self-respect so important, and I don't see how you can respect yourself if you must look in the hearts and minds of others for your happiness.
Hunter S. Thompson
The Proud Highway: Saga of a Desperate Southern Gentleman, 1955-1967



"Aren't there enough problems in the world already?"

Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands.

Anne Frank

The mark of the immature man is that he wants to die nobly for a cause, while the mark of the mature man is that he wants to live humbly for one.

J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

"In my day you had to reach puberty before you could act surly."

"Dear God," she prayed, "let me be something every minute of every hour of my life. Let me be gay; let me be sad. Let me be cold; let me be warm. Let me be hungry ... have too much to eat. Let me be ragged or well dressed. Let me be sincere – be deceitful. Let me be truthful; let me be a liar. Let me be honorable and let me sin. Only let me be something every blessed minute. And when I sleep, let me dream all the time so that not one little piece of living is ever lost."

Betty Smith, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*

CYC-Online is a free-to-access e-journal published monthly by The CYC-Net Press. Readers are welcome to print out pages or chapters and use these as desired.

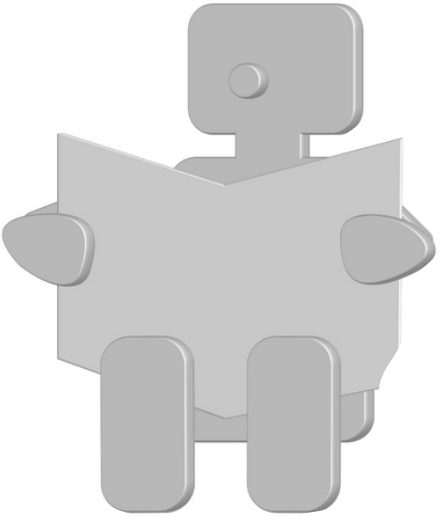
Editors

Thom Garfat (Canada)
thom@cyc-net.org

James Freeman (USA)
james@cyc-net.org

Founding Editor

Brian Gannon (South Africa)
brian@cyc-net.org



Correspondence

The Editors welcome your input, comment, requests, etc. Write to cyconline@cyc-net.org

Advertising

Only advertising related to the Child and Youth Care profession, programs, courses, books, conferences etc. will be accepted.

Rates and specifications are listed over the page, or email advertising@cyc-net.org

THE INTERNATIONAL CHILD AND YOUTH CARE NETWORK

CYC-Online Direct Advertising Rates

Size	Standard	x3 insertions	x6 insertions	x12 insertions
Full page	$250.00	$200.00	$150.00	$100.00
1/2 page	$187.50	$150.00	$112.50	$ 85.00
1/4 page	$125.00	$100.00	$ 75.00	$ 50.00
1/8 page	$100.00	$ 75.00	$ 50.00	$ 30.00

Price is per monthly issue, per insertion. Full amount payable at first insertion. Deadline - 7 days before monthend.

MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS

Please send all relevant artwork to **admin@cyc-net.org**

Files: Only TIFF, PDF, EPS or high resolution JPG will be accepted. All images should be CMYK.
Image resolution 300 dpi at 100%
Fonts: If using PDF, either embed fonts or please supply ALL fonts with the documents, or convert fonts to paths.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Size	Layout	Width	Height
Full page	Portrait (5mm bleed)	200mm	260mm
1/2 page	Portrait	95mm	260mm
	Landscape	200mm	125mm
1/4 page	Portrait	95mm	125mm
	Landscape	200mm	60mm
1/8 page	Portrait	40mm	125mm
	Landscape	95mm	60mm

ONLINE JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHILD AND YOUTH CARE NETWORK (CYC-NET)

www.cyc-net.org

Published by

ISSN 1605-7406