CYC-Online

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

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PRESS

Contents

What Are We Really Doing?

James Freeman

A few recent conversations and experiences have me thinking more about what's really important at the foundation of our work. If we're going to keep improving care for kids around the world and in our own neighborhoods, we're going to need to keep our eyes on the central elements of Child and Youth Care. There's too much in the world that distracts us from the heart of what we should be doing. Things pop up every day seeking to pull our attention to the latest fad or hottest news. Most of us want to be in this work for the long haul which requires a firm commitment and anchor to what is lasting and what is at the center.

Our best efforts should place us next to others so that we can respond to and initiate bids to connect in ways that benefit and support others in their own growth. We can't do much if we're not present and available. It also requires that we are alert and aware in those moments. We are not primarily here to advance our profession, validate a methodology, or measure an outcome – although those are not bad things. Our foremost calling is to be present and available to support others in their own growth.

Good Child and Youth Care is also an interpersonal exchange which is transformational in both the child and adult. None of us can stay in this work without being changed ourselves. Every interaction has the potential to promote change in the child and every interaction has the potential to

promote change in us. I wonder if, at times, our resistance to change creates unnecessary barriers for those we are working alongside.

Good caring, by its very nature, values every individual regardless of their background or circumstance. Every human has an inherent worth and potential. Our caring doesn't change or add to that worth. It can create conditions where that worth and potential can be restored, and the person empowered to take the next step in their journey.

So, there is a great simplicity to our work. Some spend a lot of time and effort trying to make it more complex than it needs to be. As a way of a summary, perhaps we can think about our work in this way:

> *Relational care involves responding to and initiating bids to connect in ways that benefit and support others in their own growth. It's an interpersonal exchange which is transformational in both the child and adult. It values people, believes in human potential, and aims to restore and empower others wherever possible.*

Thanks for reading this 249th issue of *CYC-Online*. It is a humbling honor to be a part of such a diverse and committed field of practice with you.

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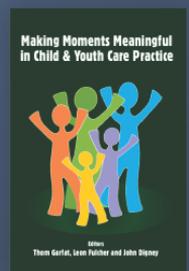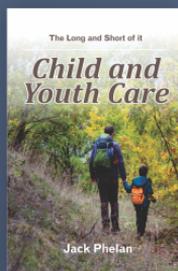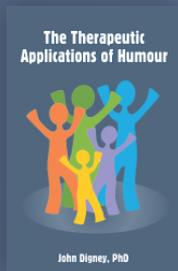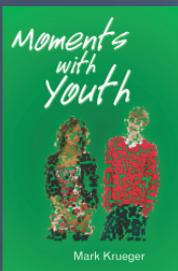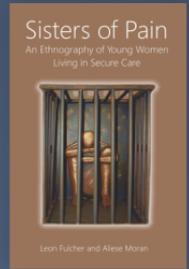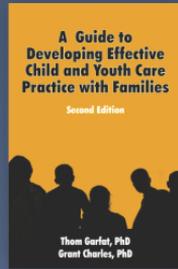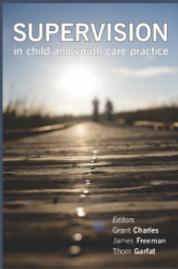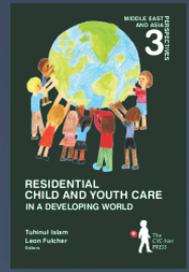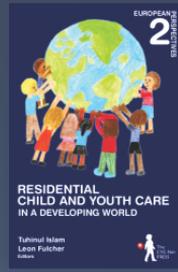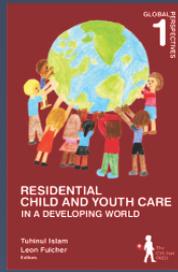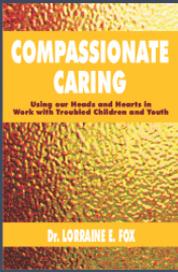
Honoring Our Own James Freeman: A Career of Caring

A "Gentle, Extraordinary Man"

At the annual conference of the National Staff Development and Training Association/American Public Human Services Association (https://www.aphsa.org/NSDTA) (https://www.aphsa.org), James Freeman received the Associations' 2019 Career Achievement Award. This prestigious award is provided to an individual who has demonstrated throughout his/her career a commitment to the profession of human services training, organizational development, and/or staff development; and/or significant contributions to the profession in terms of leadership, new ideas, and education. These contributions are measured by improved organizational outcomes, impact on the field of human services training, or improvement in best practices at a state or national level.

Throughout his career, James has exemplified these qualities and has achieved lasting impact on the local, state, national and international levels. Below are a few paragraphs from the award nomination letter.

> In addition to his significant organizational development and training contributions, he has served on a variety of national and international boards including the Association of

*Children's Residential Centers, the Child and Youth Care Certification Board (www.cyccb.org), and the International Child and Youth Care Network where he is the co-editor of CYC-Net (www.cyc-net.org) which also includes a monthly online journal (*CYC-Online*).*

In the training and organizational development area, James has established a national and international reputation as an author, program developer and administrator, master trainer, and policy advocate. As a board member and former President of the international Child and Youth Care Certification Board, he has provided a leadership role in providing a foundation for increasing standards for workforce competence in the U.S. and Canada; potentially impacting millions of youth workers (the largest human service workforce). With his work with the International CYC-Net and his international training and conference presentations, he has been a highly visible ambassador for enhancing the youth worker workforce in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Eastern Europe, Scotland, and Australia.

James oversees a federal title IV-E training grant in collaboration with higher education and human service agencies. With his colleague (Meredith Hoffman), James has conducted research to document the impact of training and certification pertaining to transfer of learning and impact on the organization including measures such as the APPLI 33 and work attendance/use of sick time (Hoffman & Freeman, 2015 a&b).

James has authored numerous articles (approximately 50) pertaining to working with youth and training and organizational development. In 2017 he co-edited a special issue on training http://www.rcycp.com/docs/RCYCP_Vol30-1_sample.pdf. *I have assigned several of James' articles as required reading for my students in the Professional Child and Youth Work Practice course at Kent State University. Several students in the course have chosen his articles to reflect upon and submit for an additional course assignment (more than any other articles).*

Upon learning of James' award presentation, one of his colleagues at his youth-serving organization referred to James as a "gentle, extraordinary man." I whole-heartily agree! James' low-key, yet powerful style of presentation and leadership tends to impact individuals effectively at both the cognitive and affective levels. With this award, his child and youth caring approach is recognized by the broader human service profession.

It should be noted that others within our child and youth care community have also been recognized in previous years by the National Staff Development and Training Association/American Public Human Services Association. These colleagues receiving the Career Achievement Award include Sister Madeleine Rybicki, Frank Eckles, and Martha Holden. We should all be proud of their accomplishments and award recognitions.

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A Personal Reflection on the 30ᵗʰ Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Tara Collins

This column is a modified version of a reflection developed for the 30ᵗʰ anniversary of the CRC and the formation of the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children that will appear at http://rightsofchildren.ca/childrens-rights-in-canada/30th-anniversary-for-childrens-rights-in-canada/.

> *Adults have power over children. Children aren't as respected.* – Maxine, John and Stones (all self-chosen pseudonyms), all 12 years old, cited in Collins (2013), p. 591

Little did I know about the impact the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989) would have upon my life's trajectory when I first learned about it. November 20, 2019 marks thirty years since the CRC adopted but I have only known about it for 23 years. So, I never learned about it as a child. It was only after the completion of my master's degree in late June 1996 when I prepared for the interview and then job with the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children that I first learned about the CRC. The match was lit!

After over two decades of working with the CRC, dedicated colleagues and young people, I suggest that the thirtieth anniversary is not at time of celebration. Instead it should be marked by reflection and action, not complacency and stasis. Consider such examples as: the extremely limited attention to children and youth in the recent Canadian federal election; or the federal government's judicial appeal of the order to compensate First Nations children and their families for unequal child welfare funding after the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has issued its eighth (!!) non-compliance order (Stefanovich, 2019; see further https://fncaringsociety.com/welcome). Moreover, society continues to be concerned less about respecting children and more about controlling children whether it is with physical restraints in institutions, corporal punishment in the home, or psychotropic drugs in the school classrooms. As Child and Youth Care professionals know well, young people around the world are not well respected. Quite simply, there are too many things that need to be done and our attention to children and youth and our responses need to be guided by child rights. Some thoughts about the CRC and next steps are offered in this short reflection.

What are rights?

It is important to have a clear starting point about what rights are. As defined in most dictionaries, they are just or due claims that human beings have by virtue of being human. Particularly powerful are the words of 12 year-olds Maxine, John and Stones (all self-chosen pseudonyms) at the beginning of this short piece who describe their outstanding rationale of children's rights, which were used in my first CYC-Online column in November 2017.

Polish author and pediatrician Janusz Korczak has much to teach all of us about the essential right of children to respect, which demands full

appreciation and support of all three Ps of CRC rights: participation, protection and provision (Eichsteller, 2009). All adults must recognize the essential challenge that this poses to our thinking about, efforts with, and for young people given the pervasive cultural norms that disrespect children. For example, the child's right to participate demands much more since the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2009) outlines that participation involves:

> ... *ongoing processes, which include information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and in which children can learn how their views and those of adults are taken into account and shape the outcome of such processes"* (p. 5).

Yet in many schools, other institutions, and in the private sphere, many children are silenced rather than encouraged to share their views, knowledge, and feedback about matters that concern them. Even fewer see how their inputs impact processes to which they have been asked to contribute. Consequently, much work remains not only with individual and groups of children and youth but also within and across systems and countries.

Contributions

Over the past thirty years, the CRC has developed understanding and affirmation of children's rights, advanced respect of children, and supported the development of a rights-based approach to efforts concerning and with young people. It has developed a global network of young people and advocates all committed to children, youth and advancing their rights. In Canada for example, there is 15 year-old Autumn

Peltier from Wiikwemkoong First Nation on Manitoulin Island in northern Ontario and many others including the 15 young people who are challenging the Canadian government on lack of climate change progress (See https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-indigenous-teen-autumn-peltier-urges-un-to-respect-clean-water/ and https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/canadian-teens-lawsuit-federal-government-over-climate-change-1.5335349). Shannen Koostachin's memory lives on in the hearts and minds of many across the country (https://fncaringsociety.com/honouring-shannen-koostachin) I am grateful for these wonderful human beings and others for their efforts and dedication. We should be inspired by them to work with others and act for children's rights.

Constraints

Lack of child rights understanding is a significant problem that is inadequately appreciated by advocates, human service professionals, and the general public. Young people need to know their rights and adults need to learn more about them so that they are not fearful or dismiss them out of hand. Child rights education needs to advance much more than it has. (See further pertinent discussion in Collins, 2019).

While there are many research and advocacy efforts that are dedicated to children, they do not consistently consider children's rights and actors cannot simply focus on government's formal role. There is a great gap of efforts and activities, which must think meaningfully to children's rights including for example the missed opportunity on global climate advocacy, which hasn't yet been connected to children's rights. Efforts may consider young people but not necessarily children's rights so they are more likely to reflect the understanding that children are victims or that they need our

charity, thereby disempowering them or reducing them to stereotypes. We should consider the words of a Peruvian young person who outlined:

> *Do not take advantage of us, we ask you to be responsible, do not support us because you feel pity for us, instead, support us because we deserve it... We do not want gifts, we want you to be responsible.* (Cited in UNICEF, Save and Global Compact, 2012, p. 12)

We must also resist the temptation of focusing on one or a limited number of rights in isolation from others. We must remember and reflect the essential characteristics of rights in our work and how they are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

One significant challenge is the discrimination that young people face in this country and elsewhere. Importantly, we cannot blame young people of colour for any difficulties that they may have, which reflect the system of denial as Ryan (1971, 1976) first outlined. We must recognize systemic issues that adversely affect young people of colour even as soon as they enter primary school as Clarke (2018) describes. As such, the longstanding historical mistreatment of First Nations young people or young people with disabilities continues (see further Rae, 2006; Sobsey, 2007; Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015).

A former student once shared how his high school teacher told him he wouldn't go to university and that he shouldn't attempt academic credits in high school. Thankfully this young person didn't listen and he is an important community and Child and Youth Care professional who is now enjoying his PhD program. As young people of colour have described to me in conversations, there are so many ways that others make them feel different, out-of-place, and to be feared. They describe a wide range of

discriminatory actions including how others: stare at them; cross the road or move to the back of the bus to get away; or utilize violence or such micro aggressions as asking "where are you from?" and when the answer isn't deemed satisfactory for the questioner, the follow up is "where are you really from?" (See for example https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis).

As Zoya Patel (2018) explains, fear and unconscious humiliation can inspire racist words and actions. When such discriminatory incidents occur, how do we respond? While working in Brazil earlier this year, I engaged some graduate social work students in practical discussion about how to address a racist incident involving 5-year-old children in a schoolyard. It is critical to respond. Whether children or adults, people themselves need to be supported as Patel (2018) describes rather than have any specific incident ignored or their perception dismissed as an "over-reaction". Moreover, it isn't just a question of education but also challenging problematic classifications of individual and groups of children in both personal and professional discourses and recognizing challenges that families face. To be clear, it is not the job of individual young people to educate teachers, principals, police officers, the media, or the general public. Child rights demand attention to all children and youth and more efforts to counter the pervasive discrimination in society.

During this period of economic and social change, we see more and more people are calling for progress, including young people leading with necessary responses with climate change. Even greater calls for action are needed as we need to do better to support the human rights of young people.

Conclusion: What difference do children's rights make?

In summary, the CRC has made important contributions around the world and children's rights inspire questions, processes, and responses. The irony of dedicating my life to the CRC and children's rights generally that I only learned about as an adult is lost upon me. This framework drives me in my teaching, research, and advocacy efforts. We must remember that: "Rights are important because they recognize the respect their bearers are entitled to. To accord rights is to respect dignity: to deny rights is to cast doubt on humanity and on integrity " (Freeman, 2007, p. 7).

But more is needed because we should expect more of each other in the child rights community and beyond and work better together including with young people to respond to the call for progress with child rights education and implementation in society. Children's rights demand continual action, not complacency or mere celebration. While the CRC relies on many partners, more needs to be done to advance children's rights in our relationships with young people as well as within local, provincial, regional and national spheres as well as internationally.

We need creative responses to 21st century challenges. Social innovation and child rights offer direction and guidance. As such, the challenges that our child welfare system is experiencing for example in the province of Ontario should not focus on the system, but the young people within it as the Residential Services Review Panel (2016) recommends. We can advance social innovation through learning from each other and collaborating with others especially young people.

In conclusion, the CRC is a powerful tool to support progress not only for or with children and youth. As John Eekelaar (1992) explained in the early days of the CRC:

It would be a grievous mistake to see the Convention applying to childhood alone. Childhood is not an end in itself, but part of the process of forming the adults of the next generation. The Convention is for all people. It could influence their entire lives.

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More on Boundary Dynamics

Jack Phelan

"You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him a duck" – Bruce Willis, in "Moonlighting"

I want to look at boundary dynamics as a struggle for power and control in this month's contribution.

Supporting a person to change habits developed over many years of experience, or even to be willing to learn different ways of thinking, is a challenge even when there is an expressed desire to change. Creating influence with the purpose of doing these things is a complex skill that we include under the role of relational practice. Relational CYC practice, the building of an "inter-personal in-between" which includes the practitioner and the young person or family, demands a sophisticated level of boundary dynamics and flexible levels of safety monitoring which is only possible after significant CYC training and life-space experience.

The primary level of CYC practitioner interactions with new relationships is to focus on safety and fairly thick, impersonal boundaries. Developmental changes cannot occur until safety is established, and straightforward, behaviorally-focused interactions usually are sufficient to build this important basis for relational work. However, as experienced CYC staff know, as is alluded to in my title quote, that externally controlled changes

in behavior are temporary at best and often create barriers to relational connection. So, there is a point that is reached early in our relational efforts, where behavioral, impersonal messages must be significantly reduced and gradually replaced with personal, caring, connection building messages.

These messages are typically less verbal and more experiential. The other person needs to feel our caring and closeness, not be told in conversations. Mark Krueger said it quite elegantly, "CYC practice is creating moments of connection, discovery and empowerment". These are not the aha experiences of insightful therapy, but the sensory experiences of feeling important and cared about because the CYC practitioner used the life space and his own presence to create a physically experienced sensation.

External control techniques, especially with traumatized people, builds distance and resistance. We must create and maintain a safe space in order to be relational, so there are inevitable moments of needing to take charge of a situation, but these become fewer as relational energy builds. When control is based on a genuine need for safety, there is minimal disruption to the connecting process, but when control is based on the practitioner's needs rather than any real lack of safety, the connection is damaged. Skilled practitioners evaluate every interaction based on whether it increased or damaged connection with the other as a regular self-reflection agenda, gradually getting more aware of how many of their attempts to build external control are not really helpful.

As I stated last month, sharing influence and control in the relational process is actually a gradual reducing of boundary thickness and becoming more willing to be open and build closeness together. Boundaries are social structures that create personal space and safety and are a necessary ingredient in every relationship. The professional, supportive relationships we are trying to create in relational CYC practice

are not friendships or sympathetic interactions, but intentional efforts to support the self-sufficiency and other awareness of people who will be able to move forward with living in a more satisfying way. So, the connections we strive to create are not for our benefit, although most mature practitioners will agree that there is great personal benefit experienced, but aimed at the needs of the other. Mutuality is not the focus, even though both sides often experience benefits.

When practitioners start to think more deeply about the intention of relational work, letting go of a focus on behavioral safety, the need for control reduces significantly. When one has less need for control, the fear of losing control goes away. Power becomes an issue that turns inside out, now you see power as needing to be given away, not held tightly.

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

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Fear and Joy

Hans Skott-Myhre

I come from a generation who were trained and taught that to be afraid was unacceptable. My mother grew up on a ranch in the early part of the 20th century and lived through depravations and hardships I cannot imagine. She was a force of nature and someone you never wanted to cross. Her anger was legendary, particularly if you treated her children in a way she found unacceptable. She was anything but conflict avoidant. She never shrank from a fight, but underneath her armor, her private pain and sorrow was deep and profound. In her way, she was in the end a study in tragedy. But I never saw her afraid. I do remember her intolerance for any sign of fear in me. I was told in uncertain terms that to be honorable was to be brave under all circumstances.

My father was an immigrant who came to the United States after world war two. He had run away from home at roughly 15 tears old and been taken in by resistance fighters living in the Norwegian mountains and fighting the Nazi occupation. He never talked about it in any detail, but I was given to understand that he had seen and been involved in some very nasty violence, both against the Nazis and among the partisans themselves.

I remember an event that happened when I was roughly the same age he was when he left home. We were living in the suburbs of Philadelphia and my father had a year long contract across town that required he drive through an area of the city where there was ongoing gang violence. It was in the late sixties and there was considerable animosity between black youth and affluent whites. Things were so tense that it was considered

unwise to travel into black neighborhoods if you were white. I had been reading about a white woman who had driven through the neighborhood my father went through every day on his way to work. The news had reported that she had stopped for a red light and was dragged from her car and beaten to death. I was young enough that it didn't occur to me to question the account and it made me very nervous for my father's safety. I attempted to warn him to take another route to work, He was drinking coffee in the kitchen as he was about to leave. Without missing a beat in his routine, he said, "I have fought armed Nazis to the death with my bare hands, I am not worried about some young kids with guns." I was stunned. I had never seen this side of my father. He was simply not afraid and as the years went by I saw many instances of this absolute lack of fear. Unlike my mother, he never talked to me about being brave, he was far more interested in me being sensible (something as a young man I was very clearly not). I think he understood that we had come through different worlds and that my world required a different kind of courage. Nonetheless, it was clear to me that being afraid was simply not an option if one was to be considered a grown man. Fear was for children.

As a result of my upbringing I am a bit suspicious of my biases when it comes to fear. I wonder how much of my aversion to fear based discourses is rooted in my own inbred cis-white machismo? That said, I am also aware of the fact that dominant systems of power rely heavily on discourses of fear and anxiety to maintain order and discipline in the societies that they control. In the 21st century that society is the world of global capitalism as a comprehensive arbiter of the information economy and a major contributor to fear in our lives today.

I was thinking about fear in all these ways. In particular, in relation to the discourses about burnout and self care. The question of burnout and the way it is framed I find deeply problematic. While I don't question the fact

that CYC workers burnout, I am deeply skeptical about the reasons. When I talk with my students and other workers in the field, I consistently hear that they are worried about their ability to bear both the problems of the young people they encounter and their own problems at home. They express strong concern, that the level of trauma they will encounter in the work will be more than they can handle. The warnings they receive from their instructors, peers, and supervisors about inevitable vicarious trauma have a deep impact on them and their sense of emotional and relational competence. Again, I don't doubt that trauma is part of the work and that encountering stories of pain and suffering have an impact.

What concerns me is the way in which the discourse of burnout and vicarious trauma creates a rift between CYC workers and the young people they engage in their work. It seems to me, that the ways in which burnout is framed is often in a way that blames the service recipient for being emotionally and psychologically toxic to the worker. It is as if the pain and suffering of the young people and their families was too painful to witness. Of course, this assumes a worker unfamiliar with how to manage high levels of pain and suffering in their own experience. It implies a worker unable to process either their own pain or exposure to the pain of others. Or perhaps, there is an assumption that the worker's life experience has not prepared them for encountering the actual material struggles of young people.

In any of these scenarios, the young person, their community, and family is seen as radically alien to the CYC worker. Something to be approached cautiously and with a considerable degree of trepidation. There might well be a perception that the emotional and psychological world of young people is not our world and it is a dangerous place that could have a devastating effect on the worker. It can drain you, depress you, and debilitate you.

At the end of the day, it seems to me that this way of talking can set us up for a loss of faith and profound feelings of hopelessness; that is to say burnout. If we take on the set of beliefs that the encounter with young people is personally threatening, then it would be reasonable to be afraid. Indeed, I worry that these ways of talking about the work can lead to being afraid of the very young people we have set out to serve. I don't necessarily mean physically afraid, that might be easier to handle. I mean afraid that their emotional and psychological experience of the world can be toxic to our own emotional and psychological well being.

I would argue that there are two additional and complimentary discourses in our field that support us in fearing young people. The first is the way in which boundaries of often presented. I will leave aside the extremely problematic discourse that we must have very firm boundaries to protect the young people from us, for another day. What I am interested in here is the idea that we must have firm boundaries to protect us from taking our work home. Implicit in this way of talking about our work is an assumption that what we will take home is damaging. I have often heard it described almost like a virus that will infect your family and all of your other relations. Taking your work home will damage your relations with your partner, your children, and your friends. I would argue that this viral description of our work as a kind of disease, is rooted in a description of what we do as being all about trauma all the time. When we talk about bringing our work home, we almost never mean our ever increasing capacity for relationship, compassion, and care. We are seldom referring to the life affirming events in which we see young people overcoming enormous hurdles and struggling with integrity against sometimes overwhelming odds. I wonder, how much of the deep set of support and care we find in our networks of colleagues and supervisors we should leave at work?

What is absent then, in the prohibition against bringing work home, is the life affirming learning and sets of relationships inherent in our work. The fear based discourse that seems to increasingly permeate our professional identities can obscure the ways in which the world of work powerfully and positively can enhance our life at home.

Related to this obfuscation of the inherently healing and transformative aspects of our work is the demand for self care. Gharabaghi has written on this cogently not long ago here on CYC on-line and I would refer you to his work. In regards to what I might add, I am concerned with the drive towards self care in the ways that it is driven by fear. I have no objections to caring for oneself, although I think its relation to being a good CYC worker is vastly overstated. The old bromide that you can't give to others what you don't have yourself, I have found to be at least mildly facile. I have never been entirely sure what it is one is supposed to have and how mindfulness, yoga, exercise, and proper eating would fill that void. There have been many excellent workers I have known over the years who ate terribly, smoked, drank excessively (not on the job), had terrible relationships, and in a nutshell didn't care for themselves very well at all. On the hand, I have known workers whose engagement with young people to be dubious at best who cared for themselves impeccably. To be fair, I have also known workers who cared for themselves well and did great work. All of which is to say I am not convinced that caring for yourself under the neo-liberal regimes of commodified self care makes any difference in the kind of worker you become.

More important is the capacity for ambiguity, compassion, empathy, a high tolerance for chaos, and the ability to love others. While it can be argued that these qualities are more easily accessed and put into practice by well rested and emotionally centered workers, in actual practice that hasn't necessarily been the case. I think we need to be very careful about

ideas and theories that propose healthy norms that have the capacity to shame us if we don't meet them. There are multiple ways to shape ourselves and our lives, only some of which adhere to normative notions of health. The key is to find ways to engage the work that are not rooted in fear, but in the ways we can bring ourselves most fully to the encounter. That is radically different for every worker I have ever known.

Of course, I would be remiss if I didn't note the possibility that my aversion to fear based discourses might well be rooted in my generational affinity for a certain kind of masculinist bravery in the face of adversity as I mentioned above. However, then I am reminded of the extraordinarily courageous work of my colleagues who are neither of my generation or my gender. I am reminded in particular of the work of Eve Tuck, who suggest that we abandon discourses of trauma for Indigenous people and open instead discourses of resiliency and survivorship. Or my friends from Sisters Rising whose work on colonial trauma easily meets my standards for bravery. Or the political work in the U.S. of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib. The list could go on with environmental activists such as Greta Thunberg who informed the world her autism was a super power, LGBTQ activists such as Grace Dolan-Sandrino, and many others. I suspect that their bravery is founded in a different social register than my old school cis-white male version, but I stand in admiration nonetheless.

Of course, I am still a bit suspect of my own normative standards for exceptional bravery. What of those of us who feel they are not very brave, but are still compassionate and caring. Those less rooted in the exceptionality of heroism? Do we all need to be heroes and tough to do the work. To be honest, I find that aspect of my thinking highly suspect and bit disreputable. I have a vague nostalgia for hard drinking, hard working, "better to burn out than to fade away," modes of life. But I have admit that

my own penchant for this kind of nostalgia is just another defense against fear, and as such it is a fear based discourse as well. I want heroes to fight against the dark so we don't have to be afraid or let fear rule our lives. That said, with all due respect to my colleagues who face down fear, such as those I have noted above, I want to suggest an alternative basis for caring for ourselves. I suspect that quite a number of thiose named in my examples already know this but . . .

I want to suggest that instead of avoiding fear, we seek joy. That, as Rosi Braidotti would have it, rather than oppose, we affirm. Instead of boundaries, we form alliances with young people and their families that build on our commonalities of pain and struggle. We have a great deal to offer each other, if we can see each other as comrades in struggle, rather than dangerous and alien. Bringing the exceptional living force that is our birthright together in common purpose is the most effective kind of care I know, if only because it evades the narcissistic investment of the "self." If we are to have an answer to the system of multiple oppressions that affect us all, perhaps it is to be found in finding new ways of living that are proactive and not reactive. If we are to have a revolt that affirms us as living beings with a world in common, let it be a joyful revolt. As Emma Goldman said, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution." Perhaps we can find ways to dance together as the way in which we avoid burnout and promote care? Sounds kind of fun and although I admit to being a bit of an old curmudgeon, I do like the occasional bit of fun.

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Relational Child & Youth Care Practice

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The Trauma Trap

Kiaras Gharabaghi

Not a day goes by in child and youth care, and in the helping professions more generally, without someone making reference to trauma, trauma-informed care or trauma-informed practice. And there are few conferences in our field that pass without some slides showing the brain, nicely carved up into the various sections impacted by trauma. Trauma is certainly 'a thing'; it is real, impacts many people, including children and youth, and often has devastating consequences. And the research on trauma is real too; Bruce Perry is certainly not wrong, and neither are the armies of researchers identifying the causes of trauma, the impacts of trauma, and the best ways to address or respond to trauma. Most commonly, we speak of trauma in the context of individual circumstances. A young person may have experienced trauma as a result of sexual or physical abuse; perhaps due to witnessing violence in the home or due to war. Sometimes we speak of trauma in a community or a group context. In Canada, intergenerational trauma is often cited as a way of describing the consequences of centuries of racism and human rights violations committed against Indigenous people. Trauma can manifest as a community-based phenomenon as a result of war, wild fires and ecological devastation, hurricanes, or other forms of loss or violence within the community.

All of this is important, and we ought to continue to be preoccupied with trauma in some form or shape. But while we dive ever more deeply into this term, this phenomenon, and this condition, let us not forget some

of the possibly problematic aspects of over-focusing on trauma. Here are some that come to mind:

1. Almost the entire history of psychology, treatment, therapeutic intervention and indeed, child and youth care, has been based on a model in which social problems and forms of oppression are translated or reconstructed as individualized problems in need of individualized solutions. A great deal of the current trauma movement appears not very different than longstanding and past movements that have served to problematize an individual as a way of avoiding a response to much bigger, much more social, and usually very white misdeeds. Yes, there is such a thing as intergenerational trauma impacting Indigenous communities in Canada, but if identifying this results in more investment, more emphasis, more opportunity to devise trauma treatment carried out by (usually white) experts and professionals on the bodies and souls of (often not white) 'victims', then we are not actually moving forward; instead, we are perpetuating power structures and systems of control and containment that have served dominant classes and groups well for centuries.

2. Trauma is about wounds, hurt, pain and weakness. The wholesale characterization of entire communities in this way does nothing to elevate their sense of agency and control over their own destiny. Community-based trauma in the face of wild fires in California, hurricanes in the Bahamas, or earthquakes in Haiti result in responses based on charity models. Those poor people, wounded and incapacitated; let's send some blankets, food and money. As the Native American scholar Eve Tuck pointed out over 10 years ago now, this kind of damage-centered approach to characterizing

communities is actually counter productive and potentially further traumatizing to the communities (Tuck, 2009). I sometimes wonder why our charity-minded interventions don't include sending condoms to disaster areas. Is it because communities impacted by devastating natural disasters or war are supposed to be wounded, weak and in pain, rather than having sex?

3. Since we are increasingly investing in the medical version of trauma, driven by our new knowledge about brain impacts and their consequences, we are quickly forgetting that many communities and groups of people are 'traumatized' not by individual experiences, but by group experiences of violence and oppression perpetrated by the very people who are now offering treatment. One consequence is that we are investing very little, if anything at all, in community interventions or community healing, driven not by our knowledge about the brain, but by the community's knowledge of its own regenerative and healing powers. Yes, communities impacted by terrible events are still powerful. The label 'trauma' may not acknowledge that, but in fact a path to healing is always found in community rather than in external impositions of mostly foreign knowledge.

4. In settings where child and youth care practitioners are active, the role of trauma has increasingly served to reinforce a familiar problematic. This is the binary construction of victim and perpetrator that we see every day in our schools, in group homes and in community settings. The bully is an aggressor, while the victim of bullying is traumatized and in need of care. And so we criminalize the bully and we treat (and in the process further incapacitate) the victim. And yet we know that the bully is themselves a victim of a kind of trauma; perhaps the social trauma

of racism, or cis-genderism, or ableism, and very often of classism. Why do we allow this hierarchy of trauma to exist? Why do we treat and care for the victim of individualized trauma and criminalize the victim of social trauma?

There are surely many other problems associated with the current focus on trauma. More generally, I increasingly worry about how quickly we diagnose what are really very complex, often historically evolved, and almost always inequitable constructions of trauma in which some groups tend to be diverted to health care settings and others are diverted to corrective and coercive settings. Furthermore, I worry that perfectly healthy young people are constructed as wounded and in pain when they are really just resisting containment, surveillance and coercion (which is actually a sign of health). I also worry that we abandon our confidence that child and youth care methods, and in particular relational practices that take account of broader, political and systemic issues and contexts, are meaningful ways of being engaged with young people presenting difficulties in their own functioning, and challenges to their communities' functioning. Some young people are edgy and tough; that's why we have child and youth care practice. When we frame such young people as victims of trauma, we enter their lives in the sweepstakes of binaries that stream them into jail or the office of the trauma specialist.

For child and youth care practice, the focus on trauma also presents opportunities. We don't need to focus on the euro-centric, medical version of trauma; we could instead focus on the social context of trauma, and develop our practice from its current inter-personal interactive focus to one of politicized praxis (not my term; many others have used this term or terms reflecting its meaning – for example, White, 2011; Bellefeuille & Jamieson, 2008; Little, 2011; Kouri, 2015; and in personal communication,

Jean Pierre, 2019). This doesn't require abandoning the good work we have always done, and that has led some to speak of relational safety, for example (Garfat, 2016). It just means that instead of finding yet another term to explain everything, we could instead focus on being with young people, their families and their communities in ways that center them, that seek solutions through their systems of social interaction, cultural expression and racial bravery, and that push us to perform less the expert role and assume more the healing helper role.

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From Trauma to Resilience

Tonya Hotchkin

Trauma affects our lives in a multitude of ways. Resilience is cultivated through intentionally engaging youth in experiences that enhance their wellbeing. It is important for adults who work with youth to increase their own understanding of trauma, toxic stress and the impacts on the brain. When youth care workers have this foundational knowledge as well as increase their own self-awareness and how to engage in interactions and relationships in a centered, regulatory manner, youth have increased opportunities to improve their social, emotional intelligence. The Tanager Way offers an approach that incorporates research on trauma and resilience in order to create a guidepost that emphasizes the components of safety, connection and belonging, meaning and purpose and efficiency in order to best serve youth impacted by adverse experiences.

Keywords
Trauma, Resilience, The Tanager Way

Trauma & Resilience

Trauma is described as a deeply distressing experience. Resilience is described as the ability to recover from difficulties. The long-lasting question we ask ourselves as professionals is: How can we help someone get from trauma to resilience? How do we grow, cultivate and foster resilience, healing and hope in those who have experienced deeply distressing experiences? We know we can't take away or erase adverse experiences, but we can mitigate the effects those experiences have on the lives of those we work with. We can intentionally and purposefully engage

those who have been exposed to adversity with other experiences that create adaptive neuropathways. We can provide opportunities to help heal the parts of self that are suffering and provide new narratives that help alter the story called life.

All children deserve safe, secure, empowering relationships with adults in their lives. It is through adaptive relationships that children, and essentially all humans, increase their opportunities to positively view themselves, others, and the world. It is through relationships that resilience is planted, nurtured, and grown. We hope to instill in every adult the understanding that you do not need advanced education, training, and expertise to provide this connection to those children around you. You do not need a special degree to cultivate resilience. We want to encourage all adults who work with, live with, and raise children to provide interactions in which the goal is to connect and engage with children in empowering and compassionate ways.

In order to understand the importance of relational based growth and healing, we want to give context to how our interactions, experiences and relationships shape how we grow and develop. This is important as we look at young people and the day to day behaviors they can exhibit. Philosophically, we want to be looking at human lives as, 'we all have a story'. When we understand that all behavior communicates a need and that there is 'no such thing as a bad kid' we honor the belief that we all do well when we can (Greene & Ablon, 2006).

We must give credence to studies that have looked at the influence of toxic stress and adverse experiences on the developing brains of children. To empower the potential of resilience we must understand the depths of trauma and how it affects our brains and our bodies. A key message is that trauma is a sensory experience and there is no 'score card' when it comes to trauma. Often trauma isn't logical, that is, we don't have choice in how

our body and brain integrate the experience. Trauma can be real or perceived and we need to understand these core concepts to empower the potential of healing the experience of adversity.

Let's use an example to depict the influence of toxic stress on the human body and brain. Imagine that a young man was sexually molested as a two-year-old. As an adult, he is walking down the sidewalk and he encounters a smell and then is hiding in nearby bushes. His friend asks, "why are you in the bushes"? His logical brain or 'upstairs' brain says, "I don't know". However, the limbic region of his brain or 'downstairs' brain knows that he smelled a scent that was present during the sexual abuse. A key function of the human brain is part of the brain called the amygdala. The amygdala also resides in our 'downstairs' brain. This is the part of the brain that is responsible for our flight, fight and freeze response - our safety response. We are a brain, body connecting machine. When our amygdala screams 'danger' we respond. However, for those who have experienced adversity, their brains are often saying 'danger', even though there could be no real danger present (Siegel & Bryson, 2012).

Additionally, we all have an individualized ability to withstand stress and feelings related to lack of safety. This is called our 'window of tolerance'. When we are out of our window of tolerance we either go into hyperarousal or hypoarousal. This means we either externalize or internalize and respond accordingly. Our ability to regulate or sooth our sensations, emotions, feelings, thoughts and behaviors is incredibly important in our day to day functioning. However, those who have been exposed to adversity or toxic stress can experience very small windows of tolerance. Their baseline is much higher than most because they are expecting unsafe situations to occur frequently. Our ability to regulate is greatly influenced by our life experiences and the interactions and relationships we have been exposed to in our growing years.

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Regulation is an important concept to understand. Often adults become frustrated that youth who have difficult behaviors become easily frustrated, agitated or angered. However, once we understand how the brain is responding to perceived stress and feeling unsafe, we know the importance related to youth having the skills and ability to regulate and manage their affect in an adaptive manner. Literature connected to attachment theories attests that our ability to regulate manifests through co-regulation. When the caregivers or adults in a young person's life attune to, nurture and meet the needs of the child, the brain is learning how to soothe and regulate through mirror neurons. This is where we move to one of the most significant learning pieces involved in 'From Trauma to Resilience.' We call this the 'You Intervention'.

The 'You' Intervention

We say intervention because typically those working with other humans like that word, however, we know that resilience and wellness is much less about interventions and much more about the way of being with others. It is the relationship and belief in humans and their capabilities. In the 'You Intervention' we explore and assess ourselves in order for us to offer the most authentic, centered connection to those we work with. Self-exploration occurs through a variety of personality assessments such as, Meyer Briggs, Communication Styles, Colors personality test, and Values. Often our biggest struggles, triggers, and emotions come from relationships and interactions with others. It can be incredibly hard to be grounded, centered and fully present with self and with others during times of stress, tension and conflict. It is our responsibility to be self-aware, reflective and conscious of how our beliefs, assumptions, perceptions and personalities can influence others and how to work most effectively with those around us. When we are self-aware and connected to our own sensations, feelings, thoughts and behavior then

we can first regulate self in order to offer a regulatory interaction with another who is struggling.

A phenomenal resource of the 'You Intervention' is *Parenting from the Inside Out* (Siegel & Hartzell, 2014). This book requires the adult to take a close look at our own childhood experiences, our own private logic and authentically be connected to self. It is hard to regulate another human being if we are not first regulated. As adults we see a crisis or problem and go into 'fix it' mode when often children just need us to be present and ask the right questions to help them find the answers. When we can be grounded, centered and regulated in response to a youth's difficult behaviors we give the youth experiences rooted in safety, connection and allow the youth to learn social, emotional skills necessary for resilience and success in life.

Once we have a foundational understanding of adverse experience and trauma, then move through the 'You Intervention.' The final piece of the puzzle is looking at key components of resilience and creating systems, environments, and day to day interactions centered on these concepts. There is a lot of research regarding frameworks of resilience. Creators have produced models such as THRIVE (National Resilience Institute, 2018), 7 C's (Ginsburg, 2014), and the ARC model (Blaustein & Kinniburgh, 2019). These are all helpful frameworks to conceptualize resilience and what key components need to be fostered in healing environments. When we consider resilience, we look closely at social, emotional intelligence and how that can be fostered in everyday interactions. Resilience is largely centered on mind-body skills. If trauma lives in the body and brain we need to give opportunities and experiences that help heal different parts of self.

The Tanager Way: Conditions of Well-Being

At Tanager Place we created a framework and training for staff called 'The Tanager Way: Conditions of Well-Being'. We took what we know about

trauma and resilience and created a guidepost that informs our service delivery and the way of being with those we work with. We know that wellness and resilience is fundamentally connected to humans need for safety, belonging, meaning and efficacy in the world. We believe it is our responsibility to provide services that foster the below conditions.

Safety

We believe in the condition of safety as the foundation for all other conditions to actualize. Safety is one of our basic, evolutionary needs. Most of our decisions and actions are based on sustaining or improving our circumstances. Safety is encompassing of physical, emotional, mental, social, physiological, financial, and nutritional needs for survival. It is only when we have a sense of safety that we can continue to grow, develop and be motivated forward. We believe a large component of safety is the need for regulation. We must have regulatory relationships and environments. Regulation occurs through ongoing sensation awareness, emotional-awareness, social skills and relationship skills. Safety must live in everything from policies, procedures within our organizations to how we do services delivery and invite client voice and choice. When organizations are actively engaging in trauma informed work, safety must be at the forefront of consideration.

Connection and Belonging

We believe in the condition of belonging as it is an overarching ideal that connects us. We acknowledge that belonging is more of a state-of-mind than a tangible outcome. It is something that is individual to us all. Through our experience in the field and in working with children and families, we have found several components to be essential in creating a core value of belonging. We believe we must have interactions,

relationships and connections with others. We must feel like we are cared about. Connection occurs through creating a sense of community, restorative practices, feeling accepted and valued. When we work to foster connection and belonging we aim to help youth who are engaged. We know when youth are engaged they experience shared interests, strengths, and capabilities. Engagement occurs through involvement, being resourceful, and contributing to the larger community. When youth feel connected and that they belong they will be motivated by relationships and wanting to be a part of the community. The community also sees the youth's strengths and believes in the youth's potential. We encourage care providers to look at all the elements that influence the sense of connection and belonging and how we are getting the youth and families we work with connected to those who can provide experiences rooted in wellness resilience.

Meaning and Purpose

Meaning is an intangible ideal but one that encompasses the very essence of life and our existence on earth. How we find meaning in our lives is different for everyone, but the consistent idea is that it is the 'Why' that drives you forward. Your heart is your best tool to access your true purpose and passion. When you lead from your heart, you are naturally more joyful and motivated to explore. When we demonstrate purpose, we give off an infectious passion, a love for life and an unyielding connection to daily living. Meaning gives humans direction, personal fulfillment and desire for curiosity. Meaning and purpose often help youth feel they are a part of something bigger then themselves. When we help youth feel the interconnection between themselves, others and the world around them we give them the energy to create a life that is a part of the larger society.

Efficacy

Efficacy refers to the ability to take action, be effective, influence lives, and assume responsibility for behavior. It refers to the feeling of control and a sense of agency. One of the important components of efficacy is that of self-actualization -- he fulfillment of our talents and potential. This provides our sense of mastery and satisfaction. Efficacy is the belief that we are courageous, capable, independent and autonomous. Efficacy helps us achieve and stay focused and responsible to our norms, values and morals. Efficacy enhances and enriches our lives. It keeps us centered on the responsibility we have toward wellness, so we can be successful in the world. Youth feel empowered, feel they have a voice and feel direction and vision for their future when they are engaged in the element of efficacy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, 'The Tanager Way: Conditions of Well-Being' and 'From Trauma to Resilience' is a framework and training guide to increase awareness and competencies in those adults who work with youth. We all want to foster resilience, wellness and help enhance the lives of the youth and families we work with. There are hundreds of examples and interventions that we integrate into the framework and training to ensure the fidelity of our programs and service delivery. Trauma informed care is a way of being within an agency. It lives within each system and interaction that touches the lives of those who receive care. We believe that fostering the conditions of 'The Tanager Way' creates interactions, relationships and environments anchored in cultivating, fostering and enhancing the resilience inside each of us. There are many things that adults do within their every-day, ordinary interactions with children that help increase resilience and encourage the process of transformation. Doing this work is life changing, for those giving and those receiving care. From trauma to

resilience is about planting seeds of hope, offering interactions that heal and providing experiences rooted in cultivating resilience.

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How to Prepare the Ideal Agency Exit Strategy

Noor Almaoui and Frank Delano

Even though Kathy made a point of assuring John that he had nothing to do with her leaving, John couldn't help but feel that it was his fault. As far as he was concerned, this was just another case of an adult abandoning him because he was too difficult to get along with. He was more convinced than ever that he was no good and that it really wasn't worthwhile to try to get close to and trust adults. (Krueger, 1986)

In the preceding quote Mark Krueger illustrates just one of the many dynamics that may take place when leaving a job working with children and families. Separation is a part of life, but for children in care it is a much more common phenomenon than for others. If the child is in residential or foster care, they have already experienced the trauma of being removed from their primary family – and likely have had that experience multiple times. There are predictably many more separations from people they have come to care about and who will care for them. Ironically, the very nature of the work we do is to enable separation as quickly as possible as we work to move the child to the least restrictive level of care. A large number of separations from caring for people may be inevitable in some situations, but the way in which those separations are managed can go a long way in causing more damage to children. They may provide a painful learning experience or perhaps a valuable corrective learning experience for that child.

Departure from a job can also be an important and potentially painful experience. It is often said that you never get a second chance to make a good first impression. Similarly, we never get a second chance to make a good closing impression. How we leave a job has a major impact on our professional reputation. It will follow us in our career in terms of our image, relationships, references, etc. More importantly, how we leave may have a profound impact on the children and families we work with. We may be leaving a job we love and have to face the reality of separating from peers and children that we care very much about. We may be leaving a job that we are not happy in and we may have feelings of anger and disappointment about our experience there. Whichever the case, leaving can be a very stressful experience for us. Very often too little thought is given to a sound, professional, and sensitive exit strategy as we depart. The more stress we feel, the more tempting it is to take short cuts in the process. This makes for an even greater necessity to have the proper supports for ourselves available. The following key factors can be part of a sound professional separation process and provide a working template for making a plan to leave a job in the best way possible.

1. Making the decision

Making the decision to leave a job is one of the most important decisions a person may have to make in their career. There are many different reasons you may choose to leave. Some may be situational, such as re-locating where you live or entering school. Other reasons may be taking a new opportunity to grow, being unhappy with the type of work, not liking your supervisor, etc. Many times, the non-situational decisions will involve strong emotions that may sometimes cloud our thinking about the decision. If you are leaving in a way that is raising strong emotions for you, it is important to have trusted people to help you clarify your thoughts

in order to help make the decision in the most considerate way possible. It is optimal to make a list of practical pros and cons before making a final choice about your future. If changes in working conditions would help to stay, you may want to have a discussion with your supervisor or Human Resources to see if those adaptations may be possible. If you are actively seeking another position it would be important to decide whether to disclose attending interviews for new positions, or risk your employer finding out through a rumour or someone else.

2. Telling your supervisor

Once you have firmly made your decision to leave, the first person you should notify is your direct supervisor. It is the most appropriate professional protocol and, no matter the nature of your relationship, your supervisor deserves the respect to know first. If you choose to initially disclose it to someone above your supervisor, that will likely reflect negatively on you with more senior people in the agency as well as hurt your relationship with your supervisor. If your reason for leaving is directly connected with discomfort with your supervisor, you may want to first talk to a trusted friend or mentor outside of the agency to help you frame your departure and what to say. The basic guideline for how to frame the reason with your supervisor is to be truthful and if it is related to a negative feeling about your supervisor or the agency be sure to frame it gently.

3. Your resignation letter

You should have your resignation letter finished when you tell your supervisor but it should not be turned in until talking with your supervisor face to face. It is very important to focus carefully on the content and tone of the letter. There are templates on the internet that you could use and customize to your particular situation. It would be wise to have someone

more experienced and savvy about organizational politics review it with you before you submit it. This would be crucial particularly if you have negative feelings toward the agency or your supervisor. The letter should be brief, positive in tone and give a brief reason for leaving. It should be dated the date you turn it in and should give the date of your last day of work based on the notice you are giving. Try to frame your experience in the job as truthfully positive as possible with an emphasis on ways you have grown during the time there. It would also be wise to close wishing the agency and those remaining there well in the future.

4. How much notice to give

Most agencies have a clear policy about how much notice is required when leaving the job. You should definitely be sure to give the minimum notice but ideally, especially if you are working directly with children and families, you should give as much notice as possible. Generally, thirty days is an ideal time for professional notice. The children and families you are working with have likely had many different people come and go while being in care. It is crucial you leave enough time for them to digest that you are leaving and to have time to process that with you. You also may have made many relationships with children and families that have become important to you, so you will want to have time and a strategy to process the separation for yourself. Keep in mind that if you try to "short-cut" the amount of notice you give you will leave a bad impression with the agency and likely make a negative first impression with your new agency. Experienced interviewers pay close attention to the question about how much notice you plan to give the position you are leaving. They will assume how you leave the job you are currently in will mirror how you will leave them.

5. Telling peers and others in the agency

It is advisable to tell peers and others in the agency in a thoughtful manner. Keep in mind when you tell your supervisor and submit your resignation letter, it will likely leak out to some staff in short order. You should also be aware that once you tell other staff it will likely leak out to the kids and possibly families shortly after. Therefore careful coordination of letting people know should be a priority. Ideally it should all be done very close together to minimize the chance of kids learning through others which would exacerbate whatever significant feelings of loss some may have. In a smaller setting, you may choose to tell peers individually or in a team meeting. In a larger agency with many people, you may choose to do so through an e-mail blast. In an e-mail blast, try to parallel your process to the one with the resignation letter. Your reason for leaving should be framed as positively as possible and it is important to wish people and the program well when you are gone. You should be extra careful not to give people any reason to read between the lines and interpret "sour grapes" or negative feelings about the agency or particular people. To avoid any misunderstanding, you should not send that e-mail directly, but ask Human Resources and your Supervisor to approve it and ask that the e-mail be sent from one of their e-mail accounts. This will assure people you are not trying to cast negative aspersions. Never burn bridges professionally - even subtly.

6. Make a list of all your responsibilities for the person replacing you - if possible, help your replacement with the transition

It is important to make a list of all your responsibilities that you can leave for the person who will be replacing you. This might include tips you have learned to complete assignments most effectively. It could also include things like important contacts you have had with "gatekeepers",

peers around your agency, and with collaborating agencies that might be important contacts for them as they settle in. If your relationship was good with these contacts be sure to let them know you are leaving and to give your successor their names. Remember no matter what your feelings are about the agency as you are leaving your main responsibility is to the children and families you have been providing services to. The smoother the new person transitions into your role, the better the future service to children and families.

7. Cleaning out your office and computer

As you are leaving, you want to be sure you take any personal items with you and turn in all of the agency property given to you (e.g., keys, books). Although agency maintenance staff will likely be responsible to clean after you are gone, you want to be sure you leave the office in sparkling clean shape on your last day. Perhaps, a handwritten welcome note for your replacement would be a nice touch. Go through your computer files thoroughly to be sure that any personal information or communications have been deleted. You should also be sure there are no informal communications there with colleagues that would reflect badly on others in the agency. We recently heard a horror story of a new worker turning on her computer on her first day only to find an e-mail her predecessor wrote to a colleague saying awful and defaming things about the new person's supervisor. This put the new person in an agonizing position of what to do with the e-mail given the defamation issues as well as leaving them with a negative pre-conception of their new supervisor. If you have access to the agency e-mail system when you are off-site, be sure you alert the IT Department to close out your account on the last day. Put an "away message" on the agency e-mail account alerting people of your departure date with directions for who to contact in your absence. Do the

same with your phone voicemail and have directions if someone is calling with an emergency.

8. No "bad-mouthing", even informally to peers

Departure from a job raises many different feelings within us. Sometimes, if we were unhappy or frustrated with the job or people we worked with, there is temptation to vent as we are making the transition or after we have left. It is crucial to put just as much effort to avoid negativity in our informal communications with people as we did in our formal communications. This may be even more tempting if peers are also unhappy, or in social conversations in a restaurant or bar as you get together with people. The world is a very small place and the helping professions world seems even smaller. You want to be sure you don't burn any bridges and keep yourself on the professional high road as you leave. It will benefit you greatly going forward and you will be prouder of yourself down the road.

9. Having a farewell party?

In many agencies, the agency or supervisor will plan a farewell party for the person leaving. If this is the case for you, try to gracefully have input on the form in which the party will take to best fit your comfort zone. Will you be asked to give a speech? Will others give speeches? Where will it be held? If people will be asked to contribute to the cost of the party, keep in mind some may have to miss it if they cannot afford the donation. If alcohol is involved, keep in mind it is still a professionally connected event. If a farewell party is set up that will be with the children, be sure to be aware many of the kids will have strong emotions about you leaving. That may play out at or after the party. Talk with your supervisor about a plan for kids or parents who may give you gifts and how to handle that. If the party

with the kids is in a group setting try to be sure you are able to stay for a while after to process strong feelings that may have popped up from kids. Additionally, check in that there will be sufficient adult presence after you leave the party to process with kids who may be extremely upset after you leave the party.

10. Use of supervision or mentors

Unfortunately, it is all too common that when someone has handed in their resignation the amount of supervision time they get is lessened. The supervisor may find other priorities and the person leaving is busy taking care of everything they need to while in the transition. In reality, exactly the opposite should occur. The amount and depth of supervision should increase during the transition period. It is important to the supervisor to be able to monitor the transition process to be sure it is going smoothly. You may feel that you cannot complete certain tasks before leaving and the supervisor would be able to provide support or extra resources for that to happen. You may have strong emotions about leaving or trouble prioritizing your work with the extra responsibilities. Supervision would be a very good place to process those feelings and get help with the priority struggles. If you are having difficulties with your supervisor, or don't feel comfortable discussing your feelings with them, you may want to spend time processing the feelings and other aspects of the leaving process with someone you trust (i.e., a mentor). You will need someone you trust to reflect on the feelings and help you be as self-aware as possible as you go through the emotional part of this journey.

11. Telling the children and families

Perhaps the most crucial part of your leaving process is the way in which you process and support the children and families you are providing

CYC-Online
Working Professionally with Children and Youth
e-Journal of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)

November 2019
ISSN 1605-7406
56

services to. For kids and families who have been in care for any length of time, it is likely many people have come and gone from their lives. It is never wise to assume "they are used to it". Many have developed a protective shell of being resigned to it, but each one can be very painful. How the process goes is crucial for them going forward. When planning to tell the kids you are leaving, keep in mind it should be very close to when you tell your supervisor and peers to minimize the chance of them hearing it from other sources. If you are working with kids in a group setting, try to announce it in a group meeting to minimize it being transmitted through the "telephone game" where the message is distorted as it passes through each person. Ideally your supervisor would be present and enough adults to be supportive to kids in case any are upset after they hear the news. Keep in mind, it is a natural tendency for kids to be angry about it and some may say things that are hurtful to you ("See, you never really cared about us" or "Who cares, I really hate you", etc.). It is important to frame the announcement and reason you are leaving in a similar fashion to what you have said to the others. It should be as honest as possible and framed positively. It is very common for kids to blame themselves when adults they care about leave. You should be prepared for that dynamic and be well prepared for questions the kids may have after your announcement. It is important to not leave directly after the meeting and be available to spend some time individually with kids for a couple of hours, or just to "hang out" with them. If you work with kids or families in individual contacts, you should consider following the basic themes above in your individual meetings if meeting with them in a group is not logistically possible. If your regular contacts are primarily in individual settings, try to be sure there is at least one more meeting together after you tell them to be able to process feelings and what they can expect going forward. Don't forget yourself. When making these kinds of announcements, it may be very stressful and

emotional for you. Try to be sure you have supports set up for you afterwards to talk about the day and settle your emotions.

If you have been working with the families you should think about how you will inform them of your departure. You may want to talk to your supervisor about the idea of writing a formal letter to parents, either from you or the supervisor. The letter should let them know you are leaving, give the date you will be gone, and that you are available to talk with them during the transition. You should also let them know, to the best of your knowledge, what the plan will be for their child and them after you leave. If you know who your replacement will be, you can make an "introduction" of sorts by copying them on the letter. If you do not know your replacement be sure to make it clear who at the agency they can contact if they have questions about their child after you are gone.

12. Giving a "warm hand-off"

In discussing attachment and loss, Branch and Brinson (2007) talk about the importance of assuring a child the remaining adults will take care of them. If you are aware who your replacement will be, it would be crucial to spend time with them to familiarize them with your work and with the children they will be working with. If at all possible, there should be a joint meeting with you, your replacement, and the children to give a "warm hand-off" of caring responsibilities as a visual way to assure children that they will be cared for when you are gone.

The challenge

"One of the major challenges of our work is to engage young people and their families and then to disengage gracefully, in a manner that promotes the consolidation of gains made during placement" (Mann-Feder, 2003). It is important that we take extra care to leave the job in as

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

Working Professionally
with Children and Youth

November 2019
ISSN 1605-7406
58

thoughtful and professional a way as possible. If we sever relationships that are important for us, the children and their families, there is great potential for high stress and future damage. However, if we are able to disengage in a positive, caring and therapeutic way, it has great potential to serve as a learning experience for what positive separations can be and to solidify the positives that were built in the time together. Ideally, it will give the message to children and families "they <u>are</u> worthy of the relationship and care you gave them" and that they were also very important people in your life.

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A Historical Moment

Barrie Lodge

On Friday 18th October 2019 at the Monash University of South Africa, the first year Bachelor of Child Care students stood before witnesses to declare the pledge of commitment to uphold the Child and Youth Care code of ethics. The code is embedded in the South African Social Services Professions Act of 1978 as amended. In our long history of professionalization this is a first.

This, in my private capacity, is the keynote address I made on this historical occasion:

Today you make history. The first to take the SACSSP oath of professional commitment to the child and youth care code of ethics. Congratulations. You are giants riding on the shoulders of giants.

Don't let anyone tell you that this is an "emerging" profession. It is well established, accepted worldwide as a full profession and a field of study with its own unique body of literature, skills, practice and code of ethics. The roots of this profession can, for example, be traced as far back as the early Christian church when a special order was established called the Diaconate to do the work of diakonia. The Diaconate people were ordained to focus on identifying and meeting the needs of orphans (and widows).

Our early pioneers and our earliest contributors to our knowledge were from psychiatry, education, psychology, religion, advocates for

children and heroes of child protection. Noticeably in and after the great wars.

In South Africa after the first world war when many servicemen returned and when many did not return, there was an obvious need to build what were called orphanages. Then, in 1923, just at that same time, came the big flu epidemic which claimed the lives of many parent as well as children. Faith-based organisations and government built large dormitory styled buildings to provide 300 beds or more for children and young people. Child and youth care workers were called all manner of names like, house mother, house father, uncle, aunt, sister, nurse, house master, care giver. Whatever the name, what they were doing was child and youth care work.

An example of this is a faith-based Children's Home in Johannesburg. It had beds for 450 boys. In the early 60s our South African guru, grandfather of child and youth care and pioneer worked there as an "assistant house master". He was doing his Master's degree in Psychology at the time. He, together with the then so-called "Headmaster", Canon Eric Richardson realised that real child and youth care work was stressful, that an exchange of support and practice was needed. Together they formed what they called The Transvaal Association for Child and Youth Care Workers. Please note the term "child and youth care workers". It produced and distributed a regular newsletter, a journal, and held conferences.

Through the work of Brian Gannon it became the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers (NACCW). It is from here that many of our giants grew.

To develop Child and Youth Care as a profession, much had to be done.

CYC-Online
Working Professionally with Children and Youth
e-journal of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)

November 2019
ISSN 1605-7406
62

It needed education and training - especially a degree in Child and Youth Care. It needed recognition as an independent, stand-alone (but integrated) social service profession, a code of ethics, international recognition, equality of services for all children.

I came into child and youth care work in 1983 when these were our aspirations. We were in the height of the struggle against apartheid. That in itself was a huge focus and a sapper of energy. We had to struggle for equality of service delivery for all children irrespective of colour. The world , quite rightly regarded South Africa as the pariah, the skunk of the world. We were banned from everything. We couldn't get books. Publishers would not import to South Africa. We couldn't get visiting academics as they put their jobs at risk. We couldn't get international recognition for what we had already achieved. We were banned from the International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE) under the auspices of UNESCO. South Africa had not signed the UN Charter of Child Rights.

These barriers had to be broken. Amazingly but slowly, they were. Barrier breaking in the 80s rested mainly on the shoulders of the NACCW which was organised and had a non-racial membership. Brian Gannon published and advocated. The next NACCW Director was Leslie du Toit who I think is often forgotten as our hero. She managed to get some literature into the country and to establish early training programmes to the then Basic Qualification in Child Care level. She got some academics to come, address conferences, conduct seminars, run courses and seminars.

The first I remember was F. Herbert Barnes who brought with him the concept of the child and youth care worker as educateur and child and youth care work as a craft. In 1992 Martin Brokenleg and Larry Brendtro came. They later introduced the Circle of Courage. Masud

Hoghughi ran courses on the Problem Profile Approach (PPA) and allowed that the NACCW publish his books for South African availability. James Anglin (University of Victoria, Canada) helped With Leslie du Toit to persuade and develop a curriculum at the University of South Africa for the introduction of a University Certificate, then a Diploma and finally a degree in Child and Youth Care.

There were others. Professor Norman Powell in the midst of the struggle introduced us to cultural competence. Nick Smiar introduced Professional Assault Response Training (PART).

In the meantime, domestically, the leadership and advocates for the field were able to get, on paper at least, recognition of child and youth care work as a profession in the South African Council for Social Services Professions Act 110 of 1978 as amended. This was in 1998. But the first Board met only in 2004 (why the delay?). The regulations and the code of ethics was drafted 18 times (over 10 years!). Finally submitted for approval in 2013 and 14 months later signed into law by the Minister of Social Development in October of 2014. Now it's October of 2019 and you make history by being the first child and youth care group to take the solemn oath of commitment to the code of ethics.

You are entering an exciting and challenging future in child and youth care work. All and everything will be ethically and values driven. There are some early indications of movements in the field that you will carry as giants on your shoulders. The 4th Industrial revolution is upon us with huge implications for you and the young people in programmes. Larry Brendtro is taking a strong interest in neurological aspects as a driver of child and youth development. Rick Kelly is leading child and youth care thinking into Radical and Restitutional child and youth care practice.

Today I have taken glimpses into the rear view mirror whist still driving forward. You are riding on the shoulders of giants. It's true. Now, I'm looking forward and I see you. Today marks the moment. It is you who become the giants of tomorrow.

Congratulations.

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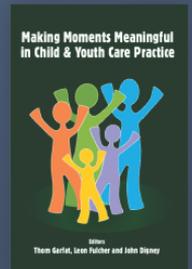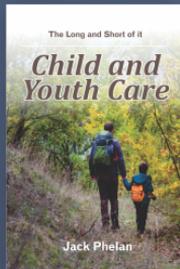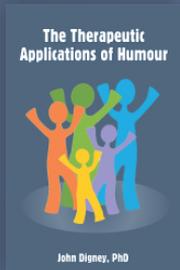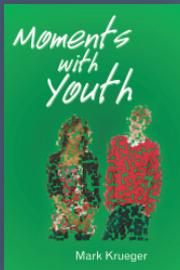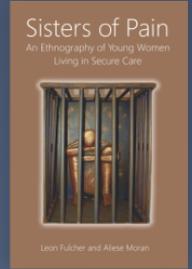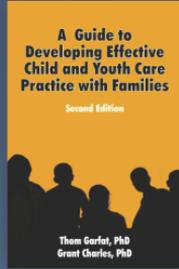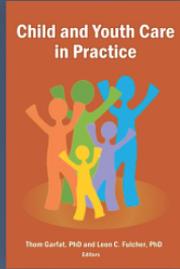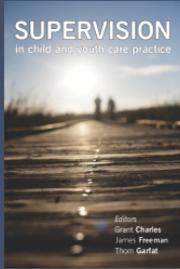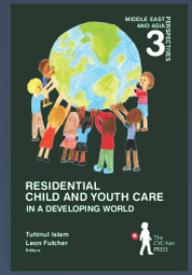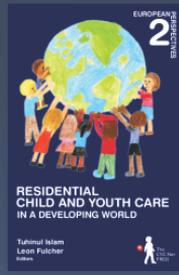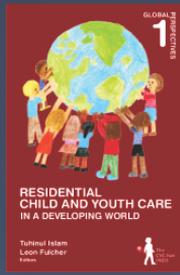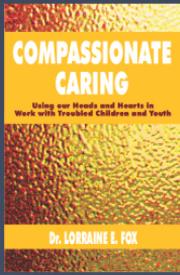
Postcard from Leon Fulcher

Christchurch, New Zealand

Kia Ora Koutou, MaComrades! Happy Springtime from where we are! And what about that Category 5 Typhoon Hagibis that hit Japan and the Rugby World Cup cancelling three Group Round matches? Compare the way that Japan has responded to this worst in 60 years typhoon (Pacific) with the way the US left Puerto Rico to recover from a similar force hurricane (Atlantic)!

Here in New Zealand we are coming to grips with the death of a student in a university residence. Many will know that I consider college and

Canterbury University at Christchurch in New Zealand's South Island

*An Engineering student from a North Island City setting out on a life adventure*
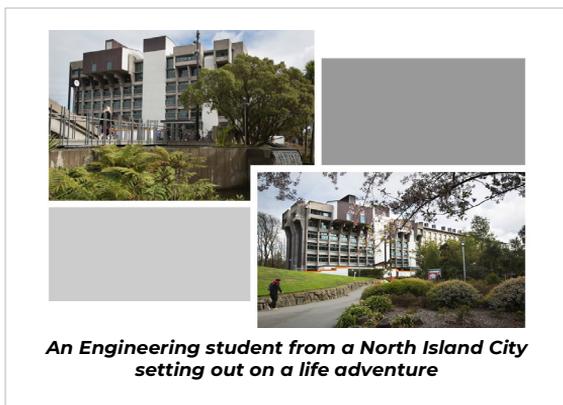
university halls of residence, residential colleges and hostels being very much part of the child and youth care field. Residential care and education go together in such settings, and that is what makes this latest New Zealand death so upsetting and worthy of personal and professional reflection.

First year Engineering student registered at Sonoda university hall with pastoral care

Mason Pendrous (I use his real name because his family has made a personal commitment to sharing what they know of Mason's life story as a first-year university student) was living in Sonoda accommodation 'contracted out' to an international student accommodation provider.

Pastoral care was one of the features that influenced the family decision for Mason to apply for a place at Sonoda Hall. Check out the life story interview with Anthony Holland, Mason's stepfather who shared parental duties with Mason's mother until she died of breast cancer 5 years ago. A 28-minute interview tells the

*First Year Mason Pendrous thought to be engaging in 1st year university student life*

story known to the public thus far about what happened to Mason Pendrous here: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/26/world/australia/new-zealand-student-death.html

The most shocking detail about Mason's story is that he lay dead for weeks in the student accommodation he shared with four other students. Examine the living unit floor plan supplied by the student accommodation provider. One sees that residents shared toileting and shower facilities, and there was also a shared sitting room area with table.

Floor plan for 5-bedroom living unit with shared shower, toilet and sitting room area

Study the floor plan and think about which room Mason Pendrous might have lain dead for 8-9 weeks? What questions might arise about connections and relationships that might exist between the residents of this living unit, beyond sharing toilet facilities? Early toxicology showed no alcohol or drugs in Mason's system.
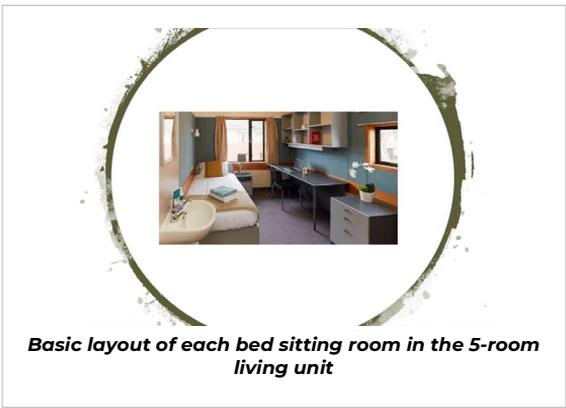

Basic layout of each bed sitting room in the 5-room living unit

Consider what might happen during a typical week in a shared residence with 5 young adults, especially young males aged 18 to 22 years of age. It is sometimes easy to overlook ways in which youths in their

Mason Pendrous with stepfather and in his travelling kit

late teens are setting off on their first real experiences of semi-independent living. Think of life stories that accompany each young person setting off on their own for their first year at University in a city far away from home. Parallels can be drawn with the experiences of refugees being moved from the familiarities of home to new challenges faced during their first year

settling into a university course, peer group and a prospective living group after first year.

What made Mason's experience horrific was the way that he lay dead in his room for so long. Mason's stepfather shared how he kept trying to make

Canterbury University Vice-Chancellor de la Rey announces student's death inquiry

contact with Mason between July and September. The formal inquiry terms of reference will focus on what was happening with Mason during his first year at university. Pastoral care receives secondary attention in this review.

Let's be clear, pastoral care involves connecting

> BENEATH EVERY BEHAVIOR THERE IS A FEELING. AND BENEATH EACH FEELING IS A NEED. AND WHEN WE MEET THAT NEED RATHER THAN FOCUS ON THE BEHAVIOR, WE BEGIN TO DEAL WITH THE CAUSE, NOT THE SYMPTOM.
>
> ASHLEIGH WARNER
>
> tinybuddha.com

Pastoral care involves making connections and building relationships!]

personally with every student and facilitating relationships that nurture developmental achievements through university studies and group living.

Information

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

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In general:

- Submissions should be no longer than 2500 words
- The style of a paper is up to the author
- We prefer APA formatting for referencing
- We are willing to work with first-time authors to help them get published
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