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(formerly *The Journal of Child & Youth Care*, established 1982) is committed to promoting and supporting the profession of Child and Youth Care through disseminating the knowledge and experience of individuals involved in the day-to-day lives of young people.

This commitment is founded upon the belief that all human issues, including personal growth and development, are essentially "relational".

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Complexities

Rika Swanzen

Andy Stanley says that “growth creates complexity which requires simplicity”, and Alan Perlis states: “Fools ignore complexity. Pragmatists suffer it. Some can avoid it. Geniuses remove it.”

While this issue is lighter than the previous special issue on education in terms of its volume, it is not lighter in terms of its content. It holds reflections on serious topics, from matters of child protection to pedophilia, from the need for professionalisation to the impact of immigration. For me the golden thread throughout was the determination of the authors to bring some understanding to some very complex issues.

These discussions occur against the backdrop of other complex world events – on the one end of the world the aftermath of the elections in the United States, and on the other end, the release of the State Capture report in South Africa. Much about people’s true thoughts and actions have been revealed. We live in a world where the pendulum seems to swing to extreme opposites, even while politicians and philosophers had us thinking at times that we are a tolerant society, or at least one that ensured protection for diversity.

The authors in this issue offer some insights on the approach to vulnerable children and youth, as well as posing questions about the responsibility of the practitioner and policy decision-makers.

To further advocacy efforts for a holistic Child and Youth Care (CYC) practice, Paget highlights the need for a broader conceptualization of protection, one that is not merely

concerned with guarding the health and safety of youth as physical bodies, but as whole persons. A distinction is made between survival and existence; utmost basic needs versus the quality of one's life – with quality being characterized by the relationships and connections between self, others, and the world. The belief is presented that when CYC practitioners regularly and ethically review their assumptions and beliefs about young people's needs and how they come to define their prevalence, they can be responsive and meet them where they are at. A deeper look at needs are proposed, with a creative link to CYC theory.

Successful intervention plans in the education and child welfare system are discussed by Holmes, with an emphasis on effective promotive factors for resiliency. The intervention strategies take a microsystem approach, motivating for effective changes through social cues and reactions to behaviours where individuals learn what is acceptable in society. Aspects of belonging, an internal locus of control and self-regulation are considered. Stay further adds to the understanding of approaches by presenting logotherapy as a meaning-therapy. The higher spiritual dimension is linked to an undeniable longing for meaning in life. An interesting link is suggested, with behaviour challenges and the existential vacuum presenting itself mainly in the form of boredom. This arises when too few demands are made upon man, an aspect that may very well become a typical concern for this generation. The basic techniques of logotherapy and their application to CYC practice are offered in this discussion.

A topic that may not receive enough attention receives candid discussion by Nobrega. It is claimed that the most beneficial treatment for individuals with pedophilia and for child sexual exploitation prevention, is through advocacy techniques that create awareness among society and social services researchers. She builds on a view that an accurate definition of pedophilia is lacking when pedophiles are grouped into the same category as child sex offenders. Specifically, because the related stigma may prevent them from receiving the required support that would reduce the probability of child sexual abuse offences. A range of treatment considerations are then suggested as a focus for interventions, thereby ensuring the prevention of harm to vulnerable young people.

Among other findings on a youth profile studied, Brooker found that easy access to the internet provided by mobile phones and other devices has impacted the sexual lives of young people. The drop in the age of exposure to pornography in mainstream culture raises concern as to what this is teaching young people about sexual interactions, women and relationships. On other matters of concern, youth aged 15-19 years are four times

more likely to be processed by the police than any other age group, but early implementation of various diversionary tactics does indeed reduce the likelihood of repeat contact with police. Risk factors that have been identified as indicators include peer rejection, academic failure and learning delays combined with teacher intolerance, reduced family connections – due to poor supervision, divorce or family break-up, substance abuse, long-term parental unemployment or low income, neighbourhood violence, lack of support services and child behaviour problems. She believes young people faced with challenges that are both universal and unique to their generation, are dealing with high levels of stress – centred around the economy and financial matters, politics and societal values, and equity and discrimination.

Grosse and Roman expand the focus on the treatment of vulnerable children and youth through the presentation of a best-practice model for parent support in communities. For strong parent-child relationships, parents need support through the introduction of basic skills and knowledge, and the establishment of networks within communities. Parents living in a community struggling with high levels of unemployment, crime and substance abuse experience high levels of stress, but resources such as community counsellors, financial support and informal support, could also address internal challenges that relate to the stressors. Less coercive discipline techniques are some of the positive outcomes of the programme.

Please also take special note of this issue's book review by Wolfgang Vachon. Rather unique of its kind, it brings you best practices from the non-Western world. The book is truly a must-read.

In bringing our focus to the practitioner, Boyle identifies self-awareness, reflection and praxis as concepts that are valuable to a CYC practitioner's professional and personal identity. These are held against the fight/flight response, where our ability to think clearly and use self-awareness and reflection is compromised. While it is in these moments that the ability to reflect in and on action is the most important, the impact this situation or individual has on our self-awareness must also be uncovered. It is proposed that social construction as an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society, does not become the framework for how we determine what is deviant or acceptable. If bias is checked, our intuitive feelings can act as safety mechanisms, while still providing support to people who need us. Practical suggestions for reflection through scenarios are provided to unpack social constructivism for the CYC practitioner.

While Jamieson reminds us how we came to CYC, and Goodwin points to the forming of silos and relationships, Ward argues for the benefits of professionalisation. She states that the inquests into the deaths of children in care remains too high. While relational CYC practice should also be considered a best practice in out-of-home care services for children and youth, a risk remains as a result of not claiming our professional identity. With created roles, various terms exist that may lead to a lack of clarity in professional identity. Such uncertainty could result in increased risk to children and youth. Much work has been done on the development and implementation of certification standards of CYC practice, but the author is of the belief that we have not yet legitimized our work through certification, accreditation or regulatory processes. A number of recommendations are made to consider for professionalisation.

A clear correlation exists between the professional and knowledgeable conduct of the practitioner and effective service delivery to vulnerable children and youth. This last issue for 2016 complements the many other contributions of authors who pays tribute to the profession with the sharing of their expertise. Each piece of the puzzle builds a picture for practitioners in various settings and, as Trowbridge claims it is with the *New Vulcan Academy*; what a different timeline to evolve an academy of irrational sentimentalists, a human stereotype instead of a logical human argument.

Finally, complexity is often thrust upon us in both our professional and personal lives. How we respond to it says much about what we have already learned about what we can handle. For those who had big highlights in 2016, may you have even more in 2017. And for those who had many challenges, may next year be marked by your victories. Be blessed.



Rika Swanzen

has worked in different child and youth care settings over the past 18 years, obtaining her PhD in 2006. In 2009 she joined Monash South Africa (MSA) to develop a degree for Child and Youth Care, successfully completed by 2013 with the introduction of Honours. In 2011 Rika won the Pro-Vice Chancellors Distinguished Teaching Award at MSA and has been featured through various forms of Media on a variety of topics in Child, Youth and Family Well-being. By invitation Rika also served as an International Advisory Board member for the Child and Youth Care Conference in St John's, Canada in 2013.

Balancing Survival and Existence: Protecting *Whole Persons*

Paul Paget

“A life full of passion is a life fully lived. A life bereft of passion is one that is merely survived.” – Anonymous

Keywords

whole persons, care settings, survival and existence, developmental needs, quality of life, holistic care practices

Introduction

Some care settings place what is arguably an imbalanced emphasis on young people’s survival needs (i.e. housing, food, medical/medicinal treatment, safety from bodily harm, and stability) to the extent of undermining other core developmental needs (Gharabaghi, 2012; Gharabaghi & Phelan, 2011). A main reason for this stems from fears of legal liabilities related to health and safety, oftentimes trickling down from management and into the views and practices of frontline practitioners (Jackson, 2003). However, child and youth care (CYC) is a profession concerned with fostering the overall needs and capacities of children and youth (Anglin, 2001; Magnuson, 2014). To enable truly effective, ethical, care practices that reflect the holistic nature of CYC, agencies must be committed to delivering programs and services reflecting a holistic vision of care. To further advocacy efforts for a holistic CYC practice, this article will highlight the need for a broader conceptualization of “protection” – one that is not merely concerned with guarding the health and safety of youth as physical bodies, but as *whole persons*.

Survival and Existence

For those involved in CYC, it is crucial to remain consciously aware of the distinction and connection between survival and existence. To survive is to maintain the utmost basic needs of the human body (i.e. food, water, shelter, safety from illness and danger); it is about staying physically alive and safe. Existence, however, could be described as the *way in which one lives* and the *quality of one's life*. It extends beyond the sustenance of the flesh and is characterized by the relationships and connections between self, others, and the world (Freire, 2009). Furthermore, existence is reflected in the activities and endeavours through which one cultivates and evolves one's interests, potential, and identity. It is existence that defines the *richness* and *meaning* of life. Therefore, it is inadequate and unethical for CYC practitioners to merely focus on protecting young people's survival; we must care for them in ways that protect their existence.

Critical Use of Theory and Knowledge Relating to Needs

Though CYC practitioners draw upon various theories of human development (Phelan, 2014) to inform their approaches to fostering young people's overall needs (survival and existence), theories can also hinder practice if not critically examined and applied.

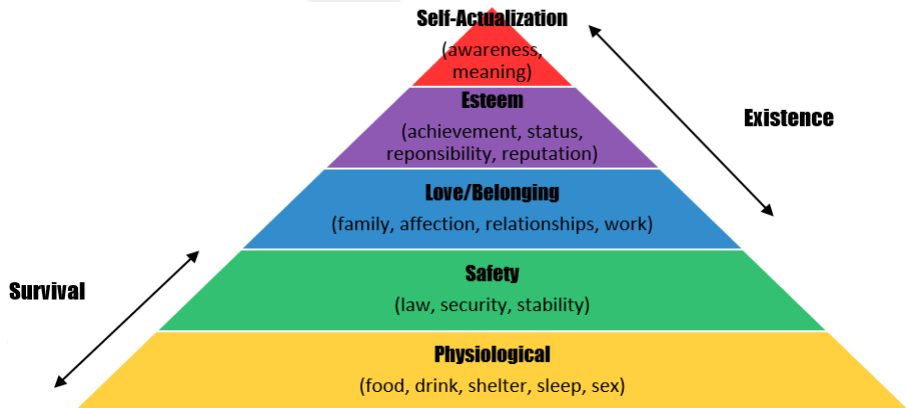
Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory informs us about core human needs and how the degree to which these needs are fulfilled can affect overall behaviour and functioning. These are physiological needs (i.e. food, water, shelter, health), safety needs (i.e. security, stability, freedom from harm, danger, and fear), needs for belonging and love (i.e. relationships with family and friends, cultural membership), self-esteem needs (i.e. recognition, status, a sense of achievement, worth, autonomy, and freedom), and needs to self-actualize (i.e. fulfillment of creativity and talents, extending one's potential and abilities) (Maslow, 1943). Furthermore, Maslow posited that these needs are categorically and hierarchically ordered (see Figure 1), and that the fulfillment of each successive category of needs is dependent upon the complete fulfillment of the categories preceding it (Maslow, 1943). Over the course of time, other scholars have added to Maslow's hierarchical model by integrating additional levels of need. Following the category of esteem needs and before the category of self-actualization, a visual rendering of the hierarchical model by Alan Chapman (2001-2004) includes the categories "cognitive needs" (i.e. knowledge and enlightenment) and "aesthetic needs" (i.e. the pursuit of balance, beauty, and form).

Chapman's visual also includes an additional category above self-actualization called "self-transcendence". However, unbeknownst to many (Koltko-Rivera, 2006), self-transcendence was a category of need that Maslow had begun contemplating sometime after developing his initial and most recognizable, five-stage, hierarchical model (see Figure 1). One could say that the additional categories of cognitive and aesthetic needs added could be conflated with Maslow's conceptualizations of self-transcendence.

Drawing on thoughts and musings from some of Maslow's later publications and personal journal entries, Koltko-Rivera (2006) relates that Maslow's ideas of self-transcendence included "... service to others, devotion to an ideal (e.g. truth, art) or a cause (e.g. social justice, environmentalism, the pursuit of science, a religious faith), and/or a desire to be united with what is perceived as transcendent or divine" (p.303). It could also "... involve mystical experiences and certain experiences with nature, aesthetic experiences, sexual experiences, and/or other transpersonal experiences, in which the person experiences a sense of identity that transcends or extends beyond the personal self" (p.303).

Figure 1

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Adapted from Zalenski & Raspa, 2006, p.1121.



A theory like this one can be useful to understanding the different types of needs youth may have and struggle to fulfill in relation to other needs. However, CYC practitioners must utilize theory critically and in relation to their actual practice experiences. Empirically speaking, there are numerous practice situations that debunk the viewpoint that needs are rigidly categorical and follow a particular sequence. For example, the number of suicides amongst youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ) clearly demonstrates how the need to belong, to feel accepted and loved, can affect the desire and will to simply survive. In a study that assessed the socio-environmental impacts of suicide among LGBTQ youth, Hatzenbuehler (2011) discovered that youth who identified as LGBTQ were 20% more inclined to attempt suicide than heterosexual youth when living in environments where people of non-hetero-normative orientations were subject to harassment, threatening/ violent behaviour, and a lack of LGBTQ advocacy and supportive spaces that offer a sense of belonging and worth. Similarly, many adolescent girls who struggle with body image concerns due to unhealthy societal pressures to be skinny are also seeking love and acceptance to the point of starving themselves, sometimes to the brink of death (Hoek, 2006). As for many street youth lacking a sense of familial support and protection, belonging, community, and achievement, such youth are more inclined to become part of a gang (Howell & Egley, 2005) and put their physical safety in various violent situations to feel connected to others, obtain a sense of identity and, paradoxically, feel safe through the protection of their gang (Peterson, Taylor & Esbensen, 2004). Then there is the case of the CYC practitioner who is so passionately driven by their aversion to social injustice. This type of practitioner will stand and fight for their self-actualization and that of the youth in their care despite authoritarian backlash and the possible loss of employment and income (Skott-Myhre & Skott-Myhre, 2015). In cases like this, one could argue that such commitment stems from needs of self-transcendence, which are implicated in CYC practice principles such as being in relationship with young people, examining context, empowerment, doing *with*, meaning-making, and love (Garfat & Fulcher, 2011). Even Maslow himself became conflicted with his original beliefs of needs being orderly and sequential as he further explored the notion of self-transcendence. Originally, he thought of self-transcendence as a subsequent stage to self-actualization. However, in his paper, titled *Theory Z*, he writes:

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