"Discovering who I am- Exploring the Optimal Conditions for Positive Identity Formation in Residential Child Care


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Discovering Who I am- Exploring the Optimal Conditions for Identity Formation in Residential Child Care

Gerry Marshall- Queen’s University Belfast
EUSARF Conference- Porto
3 October 2018
An initial thought

You drained me of my identity and injected self doubt into my veins
Left me questioning my own sanity
Walking around aimlessly
At war with my own body every day
Trying to scrub your heavy words off my skin
My mental state has been shaken to its core
I don't know who I am anymore

e.s.
Identity formation

- My PhD research - children’s homes and quality care with reference to identity formation


- Identity formation is an inter-subjective process - relationships with other people are critical to how I see myself and how I value myself

- Primary psychological task of adolescence


- One notable exception (Levy, 1993).
Honneth - Recognition Theory

Identity Formation

- Experience of love/care
  - Self Confidence

- Experience of human rights
  - Self - Respect

- Experience of participation and belonging
  - Self - Esteem

- 1 core theme: systemic congruence in the service of the best interests of children
- 3 psycho-social processes:
  - Pain based – behaviour
  - Extra familial living environment
  - Sense of normality

- 11 interactional dynamics as a means by which to evaluate the quality of care
ANGLIN/ HONNETH MAPPING EXERCISE (1)

Anglin

Struggle for congruence

Honneth

Struggle for recognition

Incongruence (in care provision)

Misrecognition (of self-worth)

Inhibited identity formation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactional Dynamics</th>
<th>Anglin</th>
<th>Honneth</th>
<th>Houston</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition through love, care and stability</td>
<td>Recognition through rights and justice and legal/social/moral entitlements</td>
<td>Recognition through participation and belonging in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td>Self-respect</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening and responding with respect</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating a framework for understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building rapport and relationship</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing structure, routine and expectations</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring commitment</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ANGLIN/HONNETH MAPPING EXERCISE (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff attributes (values, principles, ethics/attitudes/beliefs, knowledge, skills, training)</th>
<th>Therapeutic Milieu (life-space &amp; culture of care in home)</th>
<th>Physical environment</th>
<th>Rights, Justice, legal entitlements &amp; citizenship</th>
<th>Care/love/stability (quality of relationships with staff/family/friends)</th>
<th>Systemic congruence</th>
<th>Doing and learning</th>
<th>Participating and belonging</th>
<th>Self-efficacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extra familial living environment</strong></td>
<td>Listening and responding with respect</td>
<td>Providing resources</td>
<td>Sense of normality</td>
<td>Establishing structure, routine and expectations</td>
<td>Providing resources</td>
<td>Inspiring commitment</td>
<td>Inspiring commitment</td>
<td>Framework of understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening and responding with respect</strong></td>
<td>Emotional &amp; developmental Support</td>
<td>Extra familial living environment</td>
<td>Challenging thinking and action</td>
<td>Framework of understanding</td>
<td>Establishing structure, routine and expectations</td>
<td>Sense of normality</td>
<td>Inspiring commitment</td>
<td>Inspiring commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sharing power and decision making</strong></td>
<td>Respecting personal space and time</td>
<td>Sense of normality</td>
<td>Sharing power and decision making</td>
<td>Emotional &amp; developmental Support</td>
<td>Extra familial living environment</td>
<td>Discovering and uncovering potential</td>
<td><strong>Sense of normality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sense of normality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core philosophy of the person</strong></td>
<td>Pain based behaviour</td>
<td>Extra familial living environment</td>
<td>Anti-oppressive practice</td>
<td>Respect personal space and time</td>
<td>Holistic provision of care</td>
<td><strong>Sense of normality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sense of normality</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship building and sustaining skills</strong></td>
<td>Building rapport &amp; relationship</td>
<td>Extra familial living environment</td>
<td>Power in institutionalized care</td>
<td>Pain based behaviour</td>
<td>Extra familial living environment</td>
<td><strong>Sense of normality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sense of normality</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Level of personal commitment</strong></td>
<td>Challenging thinking and action</td>
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<td><strong>Authenticity</strong></td>
<td>Extra familial living environment</td>
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REFERENCES


Ferguson, L. (2016): *Could an Increased Focus on Identity Development in the Provision of Children's Services Help Shape Positive Outcomes for Care Leavers? Child Care in Practice*


