Inclusion and Diversity: The Global Challenge

Marsha Forest & Jack Pearsont
For us, Inclusion is big, broad, global. It is not just about getting some child here or there into school, although that is part of it. It is not about doing a MAP, PATH, or any other Centered Planning tool to help an adult into the community (although that is part of it). It is not just about finding Rippon homes, or jobs, or leisure time (although that is part of it). It is about changing the world so no one will have to worry about these issues. There will be basic rights for every person because they are human. Some will scoff that this is impossible, and just foolish thinking. Some believe nothing ever changes. But if you look globally, you know that nothing in this world remains the same. Travel around the world and see. People are moving to the city, wars are fought over resources, human rights are being compromised. Now is the time to act! We can achieve this.

We believe this can be done. We have a dream. It will not be done quickly, not glorified, not just one outcomes of the expense of any other. The human freedom will not be built by special interest, or by simply legislating the morality of all. We will have to learn to give a little, and not to give a lot. We will have to learn to actually listen to one another, to adopt them, to think through their thoughts and feelings and decisions. The human future will be built by long-haul leaders and ordinary citizens who are willing to stand up — together — for basic human decency everywhere. It’s not a matter of left or right, democrat or conservative, but a matter of human decency and integrity in all societies. There is a whole world out there. Most of it is not white, not based on western ideas of democracy and private property. It is colorful, confusing and messy. But it is full of billions of diverse people. We need to broaden our horizons, to see how the world is turning locally AND globally. For example: China has 1.3 billion people, yet we know almost nothing about China. And what we do know is often tainted and trivial. We need to know almost nothing of Asia or Africa. We actually know very little about our own backyards. Our own ignorance paraded in front of us at the opening of the Asian games in Bangkok.

We watched delegations from around the world, all saying their countries had never heard of, or even the amazing tapistry of colour, sound and texture. The theme of the Asian Games was Friendship Beyond Frontiers. The games were a celebration of friendship and harmony.

As we sat in the sweltering heat of Bangkok, surrounded by Thais, Indians, etc., we realized how little we know, how much there is to learn, how diverse the world is. In Asia, there is hope and excitement about the future. We are not romanticizing Asia. It is complex, demanding — and driving toward a future. In this pulsing society, in this hot, crowded country, we felt the heart of diversity and inclusion. Can we figure it out — how to live together? Can we live with political, cultural, economic diversity? Our shared challenge is to take up the mantle of inclusion every morning, and work to figure out how we can live together — in our households, on our streets, in our schools and communities — and in the world. It is a massive undertaking — but we have the energy because we must. Our lives are the prize.

Figuring out how to live together will not be easy. Putting together the Asian Games wasn’t easy. Getting past the problems, the fights, the compromises, the words, the struggles as part of any kind of learning process.

All Means All: No Buts!

Dave Hingstburger is not easy. But we were never promised easy. No microsolutions here. This is big stuff. Long haul stuff. But the good news is we can begin again with tiny steps every single day. That is the joy and the frustration. It is that simple — and that overwhelming.

The journey will be long and we will need your help and resilience in our commitment. There are many sources of strength for the journey. One is learning, ignorance is the enemy of our work. Learn Blossoms with opportunity. Narrow vision is constricting; seeing the big picture of Inclusion and our daily steps as part of a path to this enormous undertaking gives hope. Personalizing each issue is draining and consuming; seeing the daily struggles as part of any kind of learning process is empowering.

All Means All: No Buts!

Visit our WEB Page: http://www.inclusion.com

Inclusion News reflects the core of our work — our lives. Each issue shows us and our readers where we are, and how we think the movement for social justice, peace and inclusion is doing.

This year, we are producing Inclusion News under challenging circumstances. While we arrived home from our incredible nine-week Asian Learning Sabbatical at the end of 1998, we found out that Marsha had a recurrence of her breast cancer and would once again need to undergo chemotherapy.

This put a dent in our armour and in our January to May schedule. We thought determined that this would be the best Inclusion News yet: the one with the broadest perspective, the one with the most comprehensive Inclusion Press Resource Catalogue. Here it is.

In this issue we share some of the ways our understanding of inclusion has grown wider and deeper through our travels in Asia, through our continuing journey with cancer, through our reflections on the legacy of friends who have died, through news from people who are living the challenges and rewards of inclusion, and through a sampling of reports on what people are doing with the ideas and tools they have picked up in their work with us.

As a look at the enhanced Inclusion catalogue will show, we have published a growing library of books and videos that communicate the ideas that matter to us in depth. And we have created a series of intensive learning experiences that offer growing numbers of people the tools and supports they need to promote inclusion. Throughout, we have provided pointers to books, tapes, and workshops that will allow you to gain a deeper understanding of what you read about.

Thinking is an important component of our work to make a more peaceful, more just world. We hope this issue of Inclusion News makes you think about it. It makes you think about the bigger picture and the wider implications of what inclusion and diversity really mean in our world and in our lives.

Like all of our work, Inclusion News is a dance with LIFE! Join us!

Marsha Forest, Jack Pearsont & John O'Brien
The Rose Quartz Warrior
Marshe Forest

Sharing a tweet with a shepherd near Lijiang, Yunnan, China in Nov. 1998

It is 1999. I have been living with cancer since June 1988 when I had my first pneumopathy for intraductal breast cancer. For years, misunderstanding my doctor, I thought I had "involutionary" breast cancer. In 1995, I was treated for ovarian cancer with a radical hysterectomy and chemotherapy. In January 1997, my oncologist found a tiny breast lump during a routine check-up. This time it was diagnosed as invasive breast cancer and the test for 14 lymph nodes were removed. This was followed by radiation. In late 1996 we returned home from our incredible nine week sabbatical in Asia. I was diagnosed with pneumonia on New Year's Eve, Soon, a recurrence of cancer was diagnosed. I started chemotherapy again.

In April, I asked myself, What if I were to sit down for a short time and write without any outcome expectation. Just write what is in my heart and soul as part of the healing path I am currently in.

What if I simply told the truth about my life and my experience? What if I wrote without judging my fear, without fear, and let the words and feelings flow out of me for a period of time... without judgment.

Here is what came in answer to these questions.

Who Wrote This Script?
For the longest time I felt I was living someone else's life, or at least I was living two lives. I was on one hand a healthy, hearty, creative, lively, enthusiastic liver and lover of life. Then there was this cancer stuff. That sort of belonged to another person. I would put the cancer in a separate place. Even our book, Dream Catchers and Dolphins, an amazing collection of all the e-mail we and our circle of friends wrote during the ovarian cancer crisis, somehow stayed apart from the rest of our books. There was the one Marshe as a life of work, joy, joy, meaning, and then this other Marshe with a "cancer" story - which somehow stood apart.

I was like I was not permitted to have cancer, to be sick. Sickness happened to others, not to me. I was split and I really don't think I knew how deeply until I started writing this.

The suffering part, the pain, the fear was in a way to be denied. Get it over with and carry on. But the suffering, the pain, the inability to feel cannot be denied or forgotten. They are as much a part of me as the trip to China. They are as much a part of me as the sunshine and sunset at Aniwell. To deny one is to deny myself and my experiences - not just the good ones but all of them.

These two parts must form a whole. For me to be whole, I need to feel this sick part and the healthy part, but just this person called "Marsha" which includes all of my experiences, and which has no path to take except the one she creates with Jack and their life together.

Silent Scream
"This isn't me or my script. I would silently scream with each visit to the hospital, 'I hate hospitals. I hate sickness.' This was the script I wrote myself, but I wasn't in control of everything (how novel and idea). How arrogant of me to think anyone else really liked cancer, sickness and hospitals. If this wasn't me, well then who the hell was it? It was as if hell was my body being out of control. I was taken out and now two rounds of chemo, it was my hair that I lost and my terror that I felt waking up each morning. It was me all right, and it was time to notice that.

Yes, this was me. This was Jack living with me through this cancer experience again. It could no longer be the human race as a whole, the sick cancer me. It simply had to be me - the whole me - going through life, I had lost humbly dumbly together again - the good, the bad, the ugly. You can stand it. I can understand this will be a big help in my journey of healing.

When I fully believe these words I wrote, I will probably feel more ready and more comforted. That's what I long for. Feeling comfortable with me, the whole me. Not fighting me and all the sides of me. Just learning to accept ME, at fifty six, a me that has been truly broken and bruised, yet somehow has been hurt.

I work so hard to forget the pain the fear and not to dwell on it, that I project myself crazy. I need to admit 1/4 bit each day and accept it on life which I certainly do. The other side is that I have been blessed with an exciting life, a great partner, meaningful work. This is part of what my life is all about, and I do mean ALL.

I need to not deny the word and feelings of real "suffering" in my life. When Paul recently said he thought I had "endured a lot of suffering in the last several years." I became weepy. Indeed I had. Having someone I respect validate the suffering part really helped.

Not a Gift - It Is What It Is
I am not of the "cancer is a gift" school of thought. I didn't need cancer to bring meaning to my life. I didn't need to remind me to slow down and enjoy life. I didn't need cancer to show me how precious each day and how precious my relationship with Jack is.

I didn't need it, but I got it. So what do I do with it? My only answer, Live with it, and one day die, as all the rest of us will do. When - no body knows. I am not a fortune teller. Living with this mortality thread hanging over me is something else I don't like. But once again, I can dislike it as much as I like, but I still have to deal with it. Denying that it has been a big part of my life, I basically deny myself, my experience and my life to basically deny myself, my experience and my life, the things that I have touched (including and included to put down the little skinnies of little fear and anxiety that you can dissipate your energies for the main battle). Jack and your friends are in the area - I was in the area - you are the ones to reflect. Take care of Jack and his energy. You have my blessing to do what it takes to get well so you can carry on with your work and your life.

Looking Closely at A Piece of Rose Quartz
All over Canada, and the world Rose Quartz. We have friends who used to own a Rose Quartz Quarry in Guadalupe, Ontario, and about five small pieces of Rose Quartz over the years that have been polished and they believe that Rose Quartz is a healing stone is there and I mean a healing stone and I simply love the color and feel of the stone.

The piece on my desk is a metaphor of how I feel at the moment. It is a beautiful rose quartz - full of cracks and crevices. It is not smooth or even, it has a lovely pink and white quality to it. There are lines and ribbons, and it has a bit of a shape that change the way it looks. From one angle I see the face of an animal, from another a beautiful mountain, yet another is a small hill. Each time I switch the angle, another face of the Rose Quartz comes into view. One side has a spot that is shiny and pink. It is changeable - but at all times beautiful.

I could feel that way about myself those days. That I am changeable but always beautiful. I am not self-accepting, whatever I am at whatever. I am not. It is still hard for me to say "I am living with cancer." My friends think I am living with cancer.

And that is it. I think that I would be the perfect victim, the ideal suffering person. I am deeply accepting of other people being human, and at times being beautiful. It is time I really believed myself. I will be humble with this knowledge of myself. I will use it well. I will transform myself at long last for just being human, and in doing so, I will liberate my health, my spirit, and my soul.

There are others, particularly those who work with people labeled disabled, that until now work feels beautiful, can't make the person, seen by society's eyes as imperfect and disabled, feel beautiful. One of my gifts is that I make others feel good and strong about themselves. I make them feel beautiful and accepted. I just need to feel that way about myself and thought that my vision is the first step. Acting on it is beginning to happen.

In a sense I am experiencing what it is like to be a person with a disability. Humbling to say the least.

Tis People, Tis People, Tis People
To Rerepis Higgins, New Zealand

Haka te to te o te haka te Puke o te centre shoot
Kia hea te koko ma e ko? where would the behind sing?
Rere ki uau? Should it stand?
Rere ki taro? Should it tone?
Ki ma koe ki kia atu? Ask me.
He aha te ma o te ono?What is most important
in the world?
Maku u ki ki a?
I would say.
He tangata, he tangata, "Tis people, Tis people, Tis people"

This proverb I share from my culture, from my land, from my ancestors, the Maori (aborigines) of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The message is simple yet powerful. It saved a village from annihilation.

Inclusion News and I have the same powerful message for ALL who are White. It is a universal message, one that transcends the oceans. I wonder if there is in some small corner of this world just one community has escaped the contamination of individualization.

Today Maori people are struggling to maintain their traditional society and natural community - the wharenui (extended family). Once powerful and sixty years of colonization and assimilation policies have driven our culture to the brink of destruction. It hangs by a thread. The more communities have become isolated from each other, the more the power of resistance and resistance is becoming the renaissance of Maori culture.

It is an unanswerable spirit of the human species that needs to be strengthened. We must always honestly expose the dangers of power, of isolation, of self-helplessness. We must challenge and give hope for communities and people to take back control from the "professionals" to the people.

It is simply and truly about PEOPLE FIRST. This is surely not simple to do or even say, but it is just, it is right, and it is time to start doing it now.

What is most important in this world.
"Tis people, Tis people, Tis people"
Sarah Jennings Question

David and Faye Weterborn

When young John Jennings, who happens to have Down Syndrome, is celebrating his birthday, his parents began talking with friends and family members about the fact that he would need to be welcomed into the world of work when he left school at age nineteen. His mother, Sarah, began asking, "Who will need to know him, and what kind of experience will they need to have with each other so that someone in our circle will offer him employment when he leaves school?" What do we need to be doing together over the next ten years for this to happen?"

Our friend and JDS staff member, Judi Snow, defines a "great question" as a question that refuses to be answered, so it keeps leading to deeper thinking and deeper connections with each other. Sarah was asking a great question, and she was asking it of the right people.

Sarah said, "Think about the old nursery rhyme, 'Here is the church, here is the steeple, open the door and see all the people.' Well, all of the people in our church—in fact every one of the people in John's life—are connected to something during the day. They all go somewhere during the day. I figure if the people in our church start talking about John's future, and keep asking the question for the next ten years, we can probably figure out how people can welcome him into the places where they work, or volunteer, or do their art, or their music, or add to the community in other ways."

Somewhere John's parents knew that it was important to do a good job with their personal community—not with the community at large, but with the people who knew John, who loved him, and who knew that he would be part of their future. They knew that if they did the right kind of work, he might have a chance at being independent of the system. A small amount of formal support—money, technology, or job adaptation—could support a much larger commitment from their friends, but John's future wouldn't be dependent on the operation of the system.

That same summer, fifty-four families marched on our Provincial Legislature, stubbornly complaining that the "voluntary rehabilitation system" had not made preparations for their children's graduation from high school. Some of their sons and daughters had been sitting at home for over a year. Their question to government sort of boiled down to "Where are the dollars??" Government's answer was simple: "Other people want more critical needs and services standing in line for the dollars."

Their message: Get more skilled at the game of competitive misery. Sarah's question helped us understand that the march on the Legislature had three meanings:

First, it was true that the "system" had not done a very good job of planning for those young men and women as they approached high school graduation—somewhere they had not been planned for or "budgeted for" on their way into the adult system.

Second, it meant that for eight, ten, or even twenty years, fifty-four families had been systematically convinced that their children's futures would somehow emerge from the service system. They were told that the most important work that they could do as families was to pay attention to the interface with that system—educating, challenging, advocating, and hoping against hope that the system would do its job when their sons and daughters emerged from school.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, it meant that fifty-four sets of friends, extended family members, members of church congregations, colleagues at work, schoolmates and neighbors—literally hundreds of people—had never been asked to think about what they might do to welcome these young men and women who they already knew, into the world of work. A great opportunity had been missed.

Sarah Jennings's simple question is one that can reveal and engage an enormous amount of community capacity, hospitality, and creativity. Now, how do we get Sarah's question, and other great questions, on the agenda?

Warning Signs of Bad Practice in Education

Martha Forrest, Jack Pearpoint, Fran Maureri, Judith Snow, Rose and Don Gallant, Louise Bailey

We advise you to read this list and laugh and cry at the same time. All the statements are absolutely true and real situations from families all across Canada and the United States. If you are experiencing three or more of these warning signs we advise you to sit down, stop, breathe, think and then ACT!

- When you feel you don't belong.
- When the staff refuses to lift your daughter out of her wheelchair.
- When the wheelchair convey goes down the hallway to the cafeteria together.
- When the staff wear rubber gloves to touch or feed your child.
- When everyone else goes on a field trip except your child.
- When your child is the only one not to be included.
- When your child is the only one who does go to recess alone with her teacher.
- When the school yard is sectioned off just for your child.
- When no support people are being paid.
- When all support people are being paid.
- When there is "John's assistant," not the "class" assistant.
- When the school is included in kindergarten even though she's ten years old.
- When everyone thinks they are "doing" inclusion.
- When you are invited to a meeting (without your support circle) and 29 professionals in suits greet you around a big board table.
- When those 29 people all tell you they know how you must feel but...
- You are still "denying" your child's condition.
- You are not feeling realistic.
- You are listening to those "trainees".

Inclusion means With not just In!

Inclusion's Here to Stay

It's very clear, Inclusion's Here to Stay. Not for a year. Not ever and a day.

In the time the rooks may tumble, Gibraltor may crumble, They're only made of clay. But, Inclusion's Here to Stay.

Adapted from Gastown's gooseage and in "Low is Here to Stay" with apologies from Inclusion's English bard,... Gary Layden

Inclusion is NOT a Part time program. It is a right of life.

We were ALL Born in!

Helen Keller

You Know It's Not Inclusion...

- When there's an inclusion class.
- When there's an inclusion school.
- When there's an inclusion teacher.
- When there are the "inclusion kids."
- When you dread the phone is going to ring and the school is going to tell you for the millionth time to come pick up Renata because she is showing "behavior."
- When you have chronic diarrhea, butterflies in your stomach and a urinary tract infection from the stress.
- When you have a chronic feeling that something is not right.
- When you tell your son that he doesn't ever have to go back to "that place" again and your son replies, "Thank God, Thank God and Thank God!"
- When they say, "But, she has inclusion for a half hour a day."
- When she has "inclusion" in the morning and goes to another building to do her afternoon.
- When you feel unwelcome.
My Commitment To Create Inclusive Community

Kathy Fortune

My commitment to the future is that I will help create an inclusive community. A way to a world that welcomes all, includes all, and respects all. A world where no one is left behind, no one is judged, no one is excluded. A world where we all live together, in peace, harmony, and love.

Inclusion involves the whole community. We must recognize that we are all one. Yes, we are all unique, but everyone has gifts to offer the entire community. We must appreciate the need for our interdependence.

The opposite of inclusion is exclusion. Anyone who is different is shut out of the world. Racism discrimination, caste systems, gender discrimination, labelling of "handicaps"—these are all types of exclusion. In our society, we can contribute to a person living alone in the world.

You may think that exclusion is something that only happens to someone else. Unfortunately, it is a very real problem that is thriving in our society. It could even happen to YOU!

My goal of my passion to build inclusive communities is my younger sister. She has had many labels placed upon her, most of which fall under the category of "disabled." She has had a long history of exclusion. I see exclusion as it happens to me. I see exclusion as it happens to my sister. I see exclusion as it happens to the people around me. I see exclusion as it happens to me.

When she was in grade 1, the school wanted to place her in special education, but instead she went into a regular grade classroom. This was the worst decision I have ever made in my life. It was the worst decision I have ever made in my life. I am sorry for that decision. I am sorry for that decision.

At the meeting when the "gun" came on, I will have left the room. I will have walked out. I will have left the room. I will have walked out. I will have left the room.

I have also had a lot more about what my own dreams are. I have been doing something that I really didn't want to do and which wasn't important so I could spend a whole day shopping with my friends who I haven't seen in a while. I am more confident that Shaun will be able to have a better life now that I am not so much of a worry. I am more confident that Shaun will be able to have a better life now that I am not so much of a worry.

If you have ever been flown before, you know that the drinks are usually a little bit too much. I would tell you that you have participated in exclusion. A plane has two major sections. There is First Class where people pay extra to sit, and经济舱, where Coach passengers sit. First Class and Coach are separated by an ugly curtain. First Class gets comfortable chairs, wonderful service, and good food, while Coach gets peanuts. But what if there is trouble and the plane crashes? Do you think just because some people paid more they have better chances of surviving? Of course not!

Neither this whole scenario of what happens if the plane crashes with everyone in it. There is no need for that ugly curtain, because it does not really matter. The same is true with community. There is no need for segregation or discrimination, because either we all sink or we all swim.

So what am I going to do about this? I am going to start with my peers by organizing a youth initiative. I will meet with youth to discuss ways to promote inclusion in our community. We will look at various places to attract people of all different backgrounds. We will offer fun things to do. We will also have rap sessions where people can share their stories. This is how people bond. It is also how people learn about other cultures, backgrounds and lifestyles. In the future, the group will come up with shared ideas. This idea will spread to other areas. Then others and others... creating a snowball effect.

The snowball will continue to grow. We will have one community sharing stories together from all over the world. Therefore, inclusion is something that demands everyone's participation. Each of us can make a change in our own actions. We can get each person by asking ourselves, "What gift can I bring to our community?"

We can make a change. We can make a change. We can make a change.

I never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. They start by changing the thing that they care about. I invite you to join me in creating an inclusive community.

One can never be content when one feels an impulse to soar.

Helen Keller

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Enjoying Life

Amber Stingley

Hello Marsha and Jack!

This is one of my first e-mail messages. I am smiling, smiling. And I am stretching my arms in a huge hug. Thank you for being part of my life.

I have been home schooling with Marilyn and Anna-Marie Krahm, who are great friends and gentle teachers. We are studying biology, Macbeth, organic gardening, Canadian social studies and cooking.

Yesterday, I made pumpkin bread with a brand new mixer. Marilyn let me stop so I could stir the mix with my arms. Dave set up the same switch so I could grind coffee for all of us.

I am happy. My life is good. I love my family and my dog, Lady. We are all working hard, and enjoying life together.

Big, Big Love from,
Amber

Drooling: A Story of Change

Colleen F. Tomko

I recently got a letter from my son's classroom aide that previously would have made me mad and upset. This time I looked at it and said aloud to my husband, "Is this really an issue?" I am in the big picture of what we are trying to do. Is this really an issue at all? We simply decided to throw out the letter and not give it another thought.

The next day I got a call from the school principal about my son's "drooling." Usually this kind of call really gets to me, but this time instead of getting defensive I told her what I saw happening and suggested they get the other kids to help Shaun. I said that the other children would meet people who drop (including their grandparents) and people who they thought would help see people who were drooling at times.

There was a long silence.

I did agree to bring in changes of shirts for Shaun when he needed them. After that she started talking about the upcoming year. Instead of getting defensive and feeling they were about to kick him out, I took control and started telling her what she could do. I told her the next school year. I said I saw Shaun sitting in the middle of a group of children who were his friends. He would get help from other students and teachers. The assistant for the class and he had his own computer on his desk so he could use it whenever he needed it. I actually felt good about this conversation.

At the next meeting I took bright colorful plates, cups, napkins and a tray of cookies every week. My husband attended as well as my friends, Lynn, Kim and Tommy. I even took jugs of iced tea. Staff walked in and said, "Gosh, good food, while Coach gets peanuts. But what if there is trouble and the plane crashes? Do you think just because some people paid more they have better chances of surviving? Of course not!

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Helen Keller

Solution Circle: We're In

The Driver's Seat

After a Solution Circle in Connecticut

Kathy Wetherhead

We did an excellent solution circle around the problem we were having around a little girl named Allee who had been turned away from her local school. I was clearly stuck so I chose to do a solution circle. I called together a random group of people and we followed the format of the Solution Circle Tool.

What followed from this half hour "whoosh" on the side of the head was an intense and emotional journey. This was basically a synopsis without the gory details. After the solution circle our circle of support for Allee was re-energized and renewed with new folks as well as old members. We discovered as we looked closely and listened harder that Allee has a deep friendship with the kids at the local school. This, in spite of the fact that the administration has only allowed her to visit.

We were away to talk to the kids, and the para-professional who is so devoted to Allee. The special education administrator had done everything in her power to stop us from hearing the kids, stuff, and had blocked communication between the para-professional, Allee's mother and the kids by speaking up in all communication by always insisting that all communication go through her. Apartment, whatever we realized how connected Allee was with the kids at school. Many decided to push for her to at least five full-time. She got tough armed with advocates and a good knowledge of the law. At the planning meeting, all professional spoke up very powerfully on Allee's behalf. The regular education teacher expressed frustration at special education interference in inclusion. Allee. Everyone spoke right from the heart.

And the good news is that in Sept., Allee, for the first time in her life will enroll in a real school. Unbelievably, the administrator has stopped pouring all her energy into standing the way of Allee. The people who really care about Allee are now in the driver's seat.

We truly were stuck. We were buried in all the negativity and confusion. The time was right and not burned and the group really turned things around. We love solution circles.

The Solution Circle is a creative process that can help unstick a problem solver who is willing to ask five to eight people the question of what is the one thing they are responsible for taking action spending six unplanned minutes presenting the without solution, listen indefinitely for six minutes, the group members brainstorming, preceding six minutes in discussion identifying possible solutions, having six minutes in discussion acting on the problem, sounding six minutes decrying on concrete steps to take toward stabilizing the solution plan going on, and then sharing reactions to the process.
**January 1999**

A year has gone by... Andraé is still in college, still in pre-theatre. Some of the courses have stopped being interesting, one of the new ones is Computers. This one has been a particular joy to me as the teacher and students. I’m not sure how the new courses have changed her, but it hasn’t stopped her from being as creative and productive as she was before.

How have things changed from last year for me? I do not pack my school bag any longer. Last year I didn’t notice how much he had all his stuff like money, TTC card, books, social assignments, etc. I don’t think I was looking at all of them. Now Andrea uses his day timer. I tell Andrea, “I don’t do homework.” I do still give her the subsidy to follow the rules.

The tutors this year are different. He has had the same ones since September. (They are students from the college.) They do get paid, but what they appreciate most is what they learn from Andrea.

Some people are interested in the Computers course, and Andrea has done such an excellent job of it. His conversations and social skills are some of the best I have seen. He has really done what he wanted me to do for the last year - I have signed Andrea up with an agent in the beginning that made him a model. I am a model. He is a great model.

What is left to say? Maybe that this is really good! Everyone in the community has been able to come and see his social skills, might be interested in following Andrea for college. But... HE IS IT AND THEY ARE!!

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**Andrea at Work**

*Linda Till*

As graduation from High School loomed ever closer, I was filled with a significant amount of dread. I was not ready not to take on another huge battle! And you know trying to access the post-secondary system would be quite a challenge. Finally realized Bean didn’t have to go to college or university right away. She didn’t need to do meaningful things during the day. Many of us who finish High School do not go right on to college and choose to find employment instead. We decided to explore the possibilities. We were committed to finding an inclusive work environment in a real work environment.

Everything was planned and exactly as she had wanted. That work Bean would be doing work she actually did herself and work that she desired. Given that she experiences significant difficulties in moving her arms and hands, holding her head up, and speaking, this was a major challenge.

The first thing I realized was that we needed to recognize the need for diversity in her work tasks throughout the day, in order to minimize the possibility of boredom. We called this developing a "multifaceted work day." Bean has several jobs, all unpaid (although we hope to change that); a fitness program at a local fitness club, weekly visits to the local library where she does preparatory work for one of her jobs, as well as obtaining the books she needs to read. Her favorite job, the one most suited for her needs and abilities is working as a reading tutor in a grade one class at a local elementary school. She assists the teacher with reading and writing tasks. She also teaches the other grade one students how to read.

There are a few things that I have come to do consistently. One is that when she has a new job, I always make sure to have a plan for her to continue to do the things she enjoys.

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**The January**

*Allie Allie*

I buried the time and now think I love this time. We love the snow and think about the doing proce... (We are person with different situation with other opinions, derevings and days towards days, and we love snow.)
Life or Death

by Judith Snow

Jam packed into one week in October, yet once again Canadians are going to be treated to a media spectacle - the Ehuanasia and Assisted Suicide Folies. The opening act will consist of a dramatic presentation on CBC starring the ghost of Sue Rodriguez. The main act will bring Robert Latimer back for an encore performance of "Killing Ms. Smithly" performed with genuine Canadian empathy and compassion.

Meanwhile the majority of Canadians with disabilities will once again either see the event with rage or tremble even more with the anxiety that comes from knowing all too well that the bell does indeed toll for each and everyone of us - we who are made more vulnerable everyday to this death sentence. As I approach my fifty first year I chalk up a long list of intimacies that I live with in an uneasy harmony or have actually overcome through ingenuity and considerable help. On my list are quadraplegia, 25% breathing capacity, inoperable fibroids, chronic kidney stones, hepatitis C, post-traumatic shock, osteoporosis, diabetes and a variety of food and drug allergies. At various times, sometimes for years at a stretch, I have lived with relentless pain, itch and/or depression. I have stared my own death in the eyes not less than ten times in 49 years.

I know many other people, personally, who like me are not in a position to appreciate for life or their own perceptions of the beauty and complexity of our world. Not speaking, but certainly not silent either; these people, these fellow travelers of life have known the heights and depths of joy and suffering too.

Sue Rodriguez had reviewed her life and her relationships in the light of tainting physical abilities and privately decided to end it all - privately I say - I would have not agreed but never complained. Many people believe that they know what disability is all about already. They never look closely at me, my life, my work, at my home and so they never can understand either how I actually live and do stuff, or appreciate why my life is so important to me and those who love and work with me. Not knowing - many, like Sue Rodriguez, like Robert Latimer, think that life with disability is not worth living. Thinking she knew how it would go Sue Rodriguez chose to die. Too bad for her!

My problem is that these death mongers won't keep their private ignorance and irrationality to themselves. Rather they push, proclaim, parade their death sentences around, drawing the comfort of assumed solidarity from convincing others that I should be dead too.

Now I have to deal with a public that wonders why I want to live or if I should be allowed to.

With Robert Latimer, the media goes out of its way to paint large, every negative shade of Tracy's life while turning its own blindness and dealness into deadly silence about all that was worthwhile in her life and her presence among us. Absent are the words and pictures about what could have been if true compassion and appreciation had ever been turned into an intentional search for ways to support, develop and contribute to her gifts.

Just think, Tracy would have been celebrating her sixteenth birthday this month! What about some funky clothes - say some leggings, a mini-kit, some makeup, a stylin' purple streak in her hair to bring out her laughing eyes. How about a henna tattoo, and an accessible taxi to the school dance accompanied by some school chums to make sure that all goes well. Afterwards, some pizzazz and loud music in the recroom to round out a perfect birthday. It happens for girls like Tracy everywhere. It will never happen for Tracy.

Instead of parties and planning for a future that will be full of participation, the media concentrates on the pain and the daily struggles. Even worse, the pain and struggles are magnified with no questions asked: "Were there really no alternatives? No one else willing to step in?" In the last years of this millennium, with access to every medical system ever known to human beings, with millions of dollars going into human services in Canada, with the latest sort of innovation getting a test run in North America - no alternatives than death - really? Really? Give me a F... in Breakfast!

The very worst thing about being a Canadian with disabilities is in death sentence in our culture's eyes, the death sentence that stops every person without the courage from looking past the surface or thinking past the hype. People who are considered who will have no enemies, will be, should be, already am, dead. Robert Latimer and his wife were handed an excuse by a society that has already decided - helped in large measure by a media that feeds on the sensational and sentimental.

The same media and society write the lines for Sven Robinson and Sue Rodriguez to faithfully parrot on the way to her grave - and beyond onto prime time TV.

Save me from one thing and one thing alone. Save me from all those who would have me dead for my own good!

No one is free while others are oppressed.

Standing By

Dick Sobey

Back in the year of 17,
Someone said, "It just plain mean That we probing a wretched life!
There is no need to bear the knife Or bear the blame. We'll just stand by And watch defective children die." 
So, in that region of the gray
A hundred children passed away.
Then in the year of 22,
They rose another point of view,
"Death from neglect is pain slow,
A most unpleasant way to go
Its kinder far to end the strife
And take the infant's useless life.
And with their hearts so mercy filled
A thousand children more were killed.
Back in the year of 31,
They realized that they'd just begun.
"The most defective children die,
Yet many others are passed by.
To live such lives that we can see
Have no potential quality.
And so they used a stricter test
That said 10,000 more to rest.
In early spring of 39,
Hitler and his grand design
Gas and flood Brandt the power
To take the life from Baby Knauer.
Then others whose young lives would be
"Not worth living," certainly,
From our world were quickly passed,
Starved or drugged or simply gassed.
So by the year of 45,
The "healthy child" stayed alive
While "damaged goods" were quickly slain
By those who wished to spare them pain.
The bioethicist defines
That most inclusive borderline
Between the ones that we should save
And those sent to a crate grave.

Don't Defend Inclusion: Make Others Defend Segregation

First they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out - because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for the communists and I did not speak out - because I was not a communist.
Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out - because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for me -
and there was no one left to speak out for me.

Pastor Niemoeller
(Victim of the Nazis)
Marsha Forest’s note: Although this letter was written to me, I think it speaks to all of our readers in a more general way. I don’t need traditional recognition. Awards and certificates don’t mean much to me. But a letter or a phone call from a teacher, parent, person who has been helped by our workshops, books or videos is all I need to keep going in those times I wonder if anything is really changing. The answer is “YES!” Things are changing but change is slow and often you only hear the bleak news not the little glimmers in the letter that make everything worthwhile. I urge all our readers to write letters or phone those who have done something meaningful or just plain nice. It means a great deal to us and the work we do. Give each other one is the thing that costs no money and means more than money can buy. Here’s Janice’s letter with her permission.

Dear Marsha,
I have a few quiet moments away from the demands of family and work. I decided I wanted to spend this quiet time with a cup of hot chamomile tea (with a hint of vanilla) and YOU. So I am visualizing you sitting somewherecomfortably.
The conversation went like this:
Marsha, I just have to tell you that Marsha invited to his first party given by one of his classmates, Andrea. We are all thrilled, happy, de light(ed) and quite pleased. (don’t apologize for the feeling but it’s all very sweet!) I am convinced that this invitation was likely never to have happen if it wasn’t for you and everything you and your gang have done around inclusion.

Because of Marsha, you have made a difference that has been meeting for five years. Different kids have floated in and out of this circle has been meeting for five years. Different kids have floated in and out of this circle since his third grade experience.

Over the years Marsha’s classmates have had the chance to experience his many gifts. (“You can always count on Marsha to give you a sense. Marsha doesn’t get frustrated when he can’t play soccer perfectly. He does what he can and is satisfied. I wish I could be like that.”) They have witnessed his many changes and they celebrate them with him.

These young people who have been in Marsha’s circle of friends have been able to interact on a day-to-day basis in common routines with someone who was a disaster for them. That is the work or so kids will view the world a bit differently because of knowing Marsha.

You taught me a lot about asking questions and listening. Wow! That’s hard! But your words echoed over and over when I was concerned that Marsha was being left out. So as a result of your encouragement I’ve been able (once in a while) to ask for help from another mom whose son or daughter is in the same situation. As you would expect, the asking helped to create positive results.

I thank you so much for your work. You have an experience of community and responsibility for others in our world.

I shudder to think where our family would be today without the work being done on inclusion. The good news is that I only have to shudder for a brief moment. Then I can move on to do the real work.

Although none of the children in the circle of friends have disabled siblings, and no one has to think about their lives forever just as you have mine, Marsha’s, my husband Rich and our daughter Emma. I just thought you and all our readers and others who do this work should know how grateful I am and every other mother and father and sister and brother. You have a beautiful remaining or asking for the gift of love that you so generously made.

“At the deepest level, there is no greater gift than the gift of understanding the universe rearranging itself.” (Jid Kabbat-Zinn, 1978)

Marsha, here’s your tea bag (real tea bag enclosed) so you can enjoy a hot cup of tea while you savor this love note. Thanks for being in the world.

Love,
Janice Flakia (Michigan)

Big Bellies, Short Legs and a Fine Six Year Old Scotch
Dave Hingban-

Hey, for the scene is depressingly similar. I am walking down the sidewalk in Toronto and some passer-by tells it necessary to those in different sizes. Each one of them, no matter if they call me “Skin” or “Fats” think that they are outrageously clever. They walk away chuckling to themselves pleased at their clever riposte.

I now know better. Whenever I present my self to the world—I prepare from the curios glances of children to the outright hostile glances of their parents, I wait. It’s dangerous to just forget, even for a moment that I am different. Once, when finishing teaching a group of people with disabilities on how to defend themselves from abuse and violence, I felt teeming wonderful. The session had been powerful, fun and outright exciting. I saw people grow under my careful planning and teaching—it felt good to be making a difference in the lives of others.

Along in Vancouver, I decided to treat myself to dinner at a small restaurant across the street from my hotel. Odd. I had taught them how to be careful of dangerous situations and I forgot. Forget that those in those sizes. I didn’t have that in my head. Forget that I had been told that I should keep my head on straight. Forget that God made me a little size. Forget that God made me a little size.

Well, today, Robert, a cute little six year old came over beside me. He started to crawl over me and I thought I wanted out of the pew. I asked if he was Peter and he said, “No, I went to sit on your lap.”

Cute, huh.

I don’t have a lap since ... well, I haven’t had a lap. I joked and told him that I didn’t have a lap, I only had knees and that I couldn’t be comfortable sitting on them. He said, “You don’t have a lap because your legs are short, right?” I smiled. I am almost 6’3”. If I had short legs, I’d have to have an extraassessor. I don’t now mind being fat, or talking about it so I said, “No, it’s not because I have short legs, it’s because I have a big belly.” Complete relief, he was so happy, how there’s no need to feel guilty or be ashamed of your curves. And you and your gang have done around inclusion.

And this about three miles beyond the town of cute. What tremendous social skills from someone who likes to dig for gold, he said, slide down hills and fall out of trees. I have but two questions, “How did he learn such kindness?” and “How old will he be before he understands the idea of his sensitivity meant to a bald, fat guy?”

Well, I’m writing this so that his old grandma (and boy she sure is old) can keep him when he hits his teens. He’ll need to be reminded that kindness is remembered and appreciated by guys with tiny legs.

Martin Luther King Jr. 1929-1968
These quotes inspired us everyday during our work. They are so true.

“I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed.”

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal. I have a dream that my four little children will be able to join hands on a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but the content of their character. I have a dream today.

The function of education therefore, is to teach me not to be colored and to think thusly, every student who steps with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous of them all is an OK man gifted with reason but with no morals. We must remember that intelligence is not enough, Intelligence plus character can Improve and true education.

The complete education gives one not only the power of concentration but also the orderliness of which to concentrate.

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. It
Dreaming and Planning
Judith Snow
A Quiet Revolution

As I remember it there was no Person Centered Planning in 1978. I believe that the widespread adoption of planning that is focused on an individual with a disability label is a marker of a quiet revolution. Some perceptions have changed in some of our culture as this practice is taking hold.

First of all, we have begun to believe that individuals who are called disabled are first of all people. Not many years ago this thought would be dismissed politely but quickly - still is in some places. Formerly the universal perception that disability disabled all other characteristics of an individual gave rise to blanket, usually mass, treatment of labeled people. Instead “they” were viewed as dangerous, burdensome, non-human creatures. To have a disability was to be without the capacity for relationship, participation, responsibility or intimacy. Now some of us are willing to see and support these human capacities in everyone.

Secondly, we have begun to believe in and experience the value of planning with individuals. To plan is to believe that the future is not already given - that it can be guided into better directions. Even more importantly we are willing to try planning alternative futures that may be better not just for the individuals themselves but also for the various communities that they may come to participate in. We dare to carry out our planning in ways that encourage communities to encounter the capacities, contributions and differences of the people in ways that benefit as many people as possible.

Thirdly, ‘we are not centering our efforts on the’ caregivers and providers, as important as they are. We are focusing on the individual made vulnerable by being physically or functionally ‘different’. We have created vehicles for discovering and giving strength to the voices desired to be central individual. By doing so we have stood behind our ethic that normal is not always the best and usual is not always the way things have to be. In this we have added our voices to other voices of the latter part of this century. We are speaking against our cultural and political myopia. We are asserting that diversity in all of life is of great value and we plan to keep diversity as a regular part of our community.

Dreaming and Planning with Scott

When Scott was born his father immediately announced to friends and family that he was “special”. He was born without eyes. Later he had an allergic reaction to childhood vaccinations. He developed epilepsy, a hearing impairment and generalized muscular weakness. At 16 he doesn’t speak, uses a wheelchair, eats with the greatest of difficulty and is supported in a variety of personal care.

But only the least aware would think that these are the characteristics that make Scott special.

Picture a rambling two story house with a two-car garage, built on a wooded ravine in small town Ontario. Over 30 people are crowded into a usually - sparsely family room. Large sheets of newspapers are taped to the extensive bank of windows. The assemblage ranges from a two-month-old baby to Grandmother in her eighties. Family members are well represented but ten of the gathering are teenagers. The young man taking graphic notes on the newsprint is one of them and Scott is another. The other eight teens have been Scott’s classmates since Grade 4 or earlier.

The group has gathered to do more than celebrate Scott - 16th birthday. The theme is “Planning and playing with” Scott. Over a space of three hours they tell stories of Scott, of his parents and of his many friends. They recount battles lost and won with school boards to maintain Scott’s inclusion in regular classrooms. Most of all they talk about the love and inspiration they have received after being drawn into Scott’s influence.

The young men and women tell discreet versions of their adventures. Stories range from afternoons experimenting with lard hair dye shared among the group to wild nights at Canada’s Wonderland where Scott has served as their “Amex”. (Don’t leave home without it)” I was a housemate. Scott can go to the front of every line and go on without more than once, too. All his buddies are sure to get on with him! Scott’s parents tell of the careful negotiations that have been required over the years to ensure that all the children will get to stay together, not just in class but on school trips and during important, “just hanging out” times. It becomes clear that the “children” are aware of their promise to Scott, and although they, to them, is always threatened. The teens tell of a recent incident in the school cafeteria where Scott was almost hit by an empty pop can being thrown across the room in food fight. The official response was a suggestion of Scott’s presence in the lunch room. Scott’s gang tell us that they made sure that restriction never got registered and that the work went out to be-would be launched to be more carousel.

Other, somewhat older members of the gathering tell of meeting Scott. Time spent with him has moved them to shape their work and their balance plans around him. It turns out that Scott is a good judge of a life partner because folks who know him won’t marry anyone who doesn’t want to spend time with him. People are making life decisions that they can keep Scott in their daily activities and move in with him if and when that should become necessary.

And what of the future for the teens and other volunteers who when and if a new adventure is raised? Supposing Scott got himself a campervan and traveled around North America, and beyond, looking for new experiences and, of course, fun. No one says: You must be kidding! Be realistic, Scott, himself, is laughing and stopping his knee in excitement over that one.

Scott has brought many problems for many people to cope with. His challenge is to discipline opportunities to discover how to support another person and how to accept support from others as well. They experience personal engagements in service. They are part of a team, a family, an enterprise that is needed and fostered. They see human values at work and are learning to solve both practical and social problems as they assist Scott and his family in overcoming barriers in the world of routine activities.

The intimacy that Scott brings to his world goes beyond personal emotion. By sharing his desire for a deeper and broader sense of life to be a partner in the challenges and opportunities of life, many young people have found other people to be involved in. They discuss a deeper love and a genuine community. This is the specialness of Scott.

"Visiting a family in their home teaches more than a thousand books"
Jack Pearpoint

Finding Mr. Yang in Yunnan, China

Marsha with Mr. Yang in Lijiang
Lijiang has apparently been here for 600 years and is the centre of Naxi culture. The old city has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site, and is carefully preserved and maintained. It is charming, and we walked the marble cobbled to the old market which was a little - actually a lot - touristy, but still filled with delightful wares and wonderful traditional costumes. We shot our photo fill, and then began to explore the back streets. We went the other way. It was a blessing because we got to meet Mr. Yang and his sisters.

We were wandering up a side street, and poked heads in tiny darkened doorways to see two ancient ladies weaving and sewing. We asked and were encouraged to take pictures. We didn’t argue. After a few shots, Duane and I began to move on. Marsha and Donna fortunately dodged. They were leaving when a reporter from the Beijing News Times came to interview Mr. Yang and his sisters. He wanted some "foreigners" to colourise their pictures, and they were the right answer. They were included, and were privileged to discover that this family of 80 year olds were quite remarkable. Mr. Yang is a famous poet, and perhaps the leading expert on the oldest living pictorial language. Dong-Ba (the Naxi language) was invented 2,000 years ago and has been in constant use ever since.

The reporter left, but Mr. Yang was in fine form and we spent the next two hours drinking green tea and having poetry and language lessons from Mr. Yang. He "punished" in Naxi (Dong-Ba). Chinese and English (Naxi is pronounced "Nashe.") When he revealed that he was 80 on the solar calendar - and 80 on the lunar calendar, we were humbled by his age and his wit. He insisted that he was just a "foolish old man" - foolish like a snake. He read, translated and acquitted three poems, two on the environment, and a third that summarizes in one line: "Visiting a family in their home teaches more than a thousand books." As he shuffled through mounds of books and cards from admirers and students, he often quoted Bruce Chatwin’s book, Songlines (a book we love) sitting there. We opened it, and the inscription was a personal note from Bruce Chatwin - who visited Mr. Yang in 1985. As we chatted, tidied and smoked, he had been a teacher until 1951, when he was sent for compulsory re-education and worked as a mason for 33 years, four months and three days. Now he is a teacher again, presenting himself as "a foolish old man."

Duane made the fatal error of asking him the symbol for "foolish old man". He looked at Duane and laughed. It is a photograph of a man who possesses only one eye - and Duane wears an eye patch. Mr. Yang hugged Marsha and Donna, posed for photographs, and agreed to copy one or two of his poems for us.

A note from John OBrien:
This is not just a good travel story, it is a parable about the life of every day journey. Staying on a linear plan and schedule sticks to the routes in the guidebook, as too many travellers do, sometimes yields less than wandering. Being restless to see more and make things happen - as Jack and Duane were - sometimes yields less than moving slower and letting things develop by seeking hospitality and sharing ideas. The coincidence of Jack's interest in language recording with Mr. Yang's expertise might be more accidental than incidental in arranging their meeting.
Dream Catchers and Dolphins
Peter Mascher

Who needs to read about illness and fear? Nobody. Who needs to read about illness and fear...and love and compassion and inspiration and creativity and -- and just simply -- life? Probably all of us.

Because if cancer isn’t (yet) part of your daily life or of someone you love, you can read Dream Catchers and Dolphins, by Marsha Forest and Jack Pearlman, as an affirmation of what it means to be human: not just accommodating our need for others but making that terrifying and wonderful insight central to our lives.

If you are dealing with cancer or another serious disease, you’ll recognize yourself in these pages. You’ll be there on Marsha and Jack’s shoulders, standing and staring at their bad days. They’ve had to bear so much in the 11 years since Marsha’s first diagnosis of early breast cancer. And you’ll feel part of their exceptional network of friends.

More than 150 people around the world, brought together over the years by Marsha’s illness, have been touched by stories penned by their friend, writing to the universe, sharing their pain and their joy.

More than 150 people around the world, brought together over the years by Marsha’s illness, have been touched by stories penned by their friend, writing to the universe, sharing their pain and their joy.

For example, Marsha’s raw and honest expression of the change “is still alive, is still loved, now, is living, is the power of love” is repeatedly cited as a testimony to the power of love that sustains us.

Living to the Full
Bob Perseke

Although it wasn’t expected, Dream Catchers and Dolphins turned out to be an adventure book. Not on the e-mail circuit, I never got the scoop on what was going on. But this book became a journal of my own odyssey. It provides a satisfying understanding of Marsha and Jack’s work and how their lives were turned upside down. It’s a book that needs to be read by all of us.

Each Belongs
Phil DiFrancesco

Congratulations Hamilton!

While some school systems are still debating whether to do or “do” inclusive education, the Hamilton-Wentworth Separate School Board in Hamilton, Ontario, is celebrating the thirty (30) years of welcoming all children in its schools.

Under the leadership of Jim Hansen, Phil DiFrancesco and Betty Browne, the board has seen its clear mission statement: Each Belongs. All children have been welcomed in the system for thirty years. No ifs, ands, or buts. Jim says he will take pride in having done the simple powerful two-word message statement, but nothing else.

The 28,500 students and 1,400 staff members at the system, this is common practice. They don’t understand why it is such a big deal. Otherwise, they are providing a comprehensive program for communication and learning, the Hamilton Board.

Their new 15 minute video al-
Scuba Rules

An Exercise in Listening

"Scuba Rules" are our adaptation of the international laws of scuba diving. Building on the learning of millions of safe scuba divers, we have used this as a metaphor for creating "safe spaces" for living and learning.

NEVER DIVE ALONE: Always with a buddy. In scuba diving internationally, there is a "law". Never Dive Alone. Always with a Buddy. This law is enforced by divers internationally. Diving without a buddy will strip you of your diving certification for life. The reason is simple. It saves lives. This isn't a choice. It is an ethic. If you want to dive, you dive with a buddy. We think this ethic is as valuable above the surface as below. It could 'save lives' in organizations and families.

Merely saying don't dive alone isn't enough. We must have practices to encourage and reinforce the rule.

In teaching diving, one learns the 'habits' of an effective buddy system. Underwater, you must keep your buddy in sight. If you are separated, you have SIXTY SECONDS to conduct a short, focused search around, under and above you. (A useful hint is follow the bubbles — modeled on follow the money.) If you don't locate your buddy, you begin to surface immediately. Usually, you find another diver surfacing — and it will be your buddy.

This is not a complex ethic. It negates individualism. It acknowledges our mutual interdependence. It can be implemented immediately anywhere — and everywhere. We recommend it.

Practical Tips:

• Introduce the Never Dive Alone rule (use the overhead if you like). Explain the dangers of diving alone briefly.

• Generate a short dialogue on the kinds of dangers participants face in their lives and work situations — if they 'dive alone'.

• Arrive with an 'experience' of diving with a buddy. For example, in our workshops, we have people "buddy up" for the day. We do not require them to be 'in sight' at all times, but we do encourage several "check-in" times when we ask "buddies" to do a safety check with each other. It only takes five minutes.

• "Find a Buddy" — make a time (only a couple of minutes for everyone to "find a buddy" for the day. Make it clear that the only requirement will be occasional safety check-ins. They are NOT required to be "friends for life". (Be sure everyone has a buddy!) For odd numbers, having a trio is ok.

• Buddy Up Time: At intervals throughout the day, make ‘buddy check’ times. Take a couple of minutes to check with your buddy and see if you are OK, and if there is anything that can be done to make things better.

This does not guarantee anything — but it creates an opportunity for people to begin taking care of one another — at no cost. It personalizes whatever you are doing, since every single person gets to have some input on how things are going. This means that simmering issues are less likely to explode because they are given voice and hopefully an opportunity to make timely and reasonable accommodations where possible.

Emergency Rules (Scuba)

STOP
BREATHE
THINK
ACT!

All of us are racing frantically, trying to cope with the daily pressures of life. When we 'react' to a new threat or emergency situation from a headspace of frantic change and internal muddles, we are putting ourselves in grave danger. This is the time for emergency scuba rules. This discipline is quick, but saves lives.

Underwater, when an emergency occurs, it is too late to begin planning for an emergency. One must have learned the discipline almost instinctively — so you do not make the crisis worse — and thus increase your chances of survival. The over arching concern is that by 'reacting' quickly, we can make things worse.

Thus, the first step is:

• STOP — whatever you are doing — STOP!

• BREATHE — Breathing is fundamental to life.

When we forget to breathe, problems get more complex and dangerous almost instantaneously. As we know from many practices including yoga, breathing is not just hyperventilating, but rather a full, slow, even intake of breath — and a full, slow and measured exhaling. In crisis, many of us gasp air and then hold our breath. Underwater, that can be fatal. Above water, it doesn't help much. Thus, we ask you to join us in inhaling and exhaling three deep breaths — so they FEEL what we are talking about. Then when a 'crisis' arises, and they remember Scuba emergency rules, they will remember and repeat the feeling of deep slow breaths — in and out.

• THINK — Having stopped, and cleared your mind with a deep breath or two, (it only takes a couple of seconds), you are in a position to THINK about what to do — rather than simply 'reacting'.

• ACT — This is an emergency. There is no time for lengthy deliberations. Stop, Breathe, Think — and then ACT. Do what you must do to be as safe and secure as you can.

Again, this does not guarantee success. Life isn't like that. However, it gives a better chance of responding constructively to the issues we encounter. Reacting often increases harm: scuba rules diminish the risk of increasing harm — and increase the probability of a positive outcome. Above and below the water, these have become indispensable 'habits' we use to deal with the daily surprises of life.

Challenge Questions: Are you working alone? Why? Budget is not an acceptable excuse. If there are other humans in your vicinity, you can have a buddy. What would it take to get you to ASK someone to be your buddy? When? If not, why not? What is so frightening about asking? Could you survive if they said no?

Are you 'REACTING' without thinking? Why? Time is not an acceptable excuse. A three second pause to stop, breathe and think — BEFORE you act — can save you time and aggravation. If you aren't stopping, ask yourself why. Is your reason a reason or just a bad habit?

When are you going to start developing your new HABIT? Tomorrow is the wrong answer. NOW is the right time. Practice, practice, practice makes a habit. Stop, Breathe, THINK and now go on...
Understanding MAPS and PATH
Jack Pearpoint, Marilla Forest & John O'Brien
You make the path by walking

Maps and PATH first and foremost are tools to help restore dreams and ignite hope by drawing people together to envision and plan and enact constructive futures. For us, maps and PATH are not just another way of doing business, they are a different way of thinking. They are definitely not more of the same thing.

Maps and PATH are designed as healing tools for people and for organizations. They are in fact more spiritual than technical, which is one of the reasons they are difficult to bureaucratize. They must be used with skill and heart, a practice rooted in an ethos of ‘do no harm’. This is not simply a matter of technique, it is more an art. There are technical competencies to master, but this is not the difficult part. As an art, PATH centered planning requires facilitators to be able to truly listen to people’s dreams and nightmares. Next, their hopes and visions must be shaped into sustainable images. Finally, there is a transition into practical daily routines that move them safely in the direction of the dream. Facilitation requires giving over control by taking and practicing the power to move from a position of power over others to power with them.

We have invested time and energy in developing maps and PATH because we think they make a difference in the lives of real human beings. We believe that these tools are for all of us. We are all human beings. We believe everyone wants and deserves, simply by virtue of being born human, a chance to live fulfilling lives where gifts and capacities are recognized and utilized.

All of us, at various times of our lives, are in situations where we cannot manage alone. Our abilities are trapped, and our ‘deficiencies’ are noticed. At such times, our need to reach out to renew, to reconnect our ‘mission’, to find the power in our dream, so we can be full, healthy, contributing citizens. That’s where maps and PATH fit in for us. People who want to exert power over others will use any tool to enhance their control. The control we choose to exert are clear ethical guidelines. Thus, if people with power choose to plan for people without having them present, the label on the tool makes no difference, but simply becomes another deceptive shell game to take or sustain power and control.

Introductory MAPS learning checklist
I have...
- Watched the Shaﬁk’s MAP video.
- Read... All my life’s a circle, pp.1-28
- Action for inclusion
- What’s really worth doing
- From behind the piano
- Answered the sequence of MAPS questions reflectively, for myself, with facilitation, and provided the facilitator/recorder with feedback.
- Facilitated another person in answering the MAPS questions and received feedback on my recording.
- Developed a set of notes for myself on “What I want to review before I facilitate a MAP.”
- Made agreements with at least two other people who will support my practice with MAPS by encouraging me and debriefing with me.
- Identified a family I will approach to be my partners in taking the next step by allowing me to facilitate a MAP with them.

Introductory PATH learning checklist
I have...
- Watched the Introductory PATH training video.
- Watched the PATH on ACTION video.
- Read... All my life’s a circle, pp.29-43
- PATH Workbook
- Been a PATHfinder on an issue that matters to me, and provided the facilitator and recorder with feedback i.e. have had my own PATH done.
- Facilitated another person’s PATH and received feedback on my facilitation.
- Acted as a graphic recorder for another person’s PATH and received feedback on my recording.
- Discussed a set of notes on “The label on the tool makes no difference” with one or more PATH users.

The Quest for Community Membership
John O’Brien and Connie Lyre O’Brien
...we must inescapably understand our lives in narrative form, as a ‘quest’.
― Charles Taylor (1989)

How can person-centered planning contribute to building communities committed to enabling individuals to pursue vision, values, and personal goals in positive social interactions? The practice of community building requires that we as a society be willing to abandon our institutionalized plans. We need to learn to live with the uncertainty inherent in the quest for community.

The image of a quest — a difficult search through unknown territory for something that seems good to the hero — provides a way to think about the relationship between person-centered planning and community building. Whether it concerns Rama’s search for his kidnapped wife Sita, Odeus’s voyage home, Persepolis’s pursuit of the Holy Grail, or Judith Snow’s quest for the kind of personal assistance that frees her from imprisonment in a nursing home (Pearpoint, 1990), the story of the quest answers at least four questions:

1) What does the hero seek?
2) Who are the hero’s companions?
3) What are the challenges and aids offered by the territory through which the hero journeys and what prices must the hero pay to continue the journey?
4) How does the quest change the hero?

Each of these questions opens a window on the effectiveness of person-centered planning.

Any quest that overcomes this dismal history of segregation and control deserves honor, regardless of the personal space people journey through. However, work to change shared space offers the greatest opportunity for learning about how person-centered planning can encourage people to overcome the invisible bubble. So we hope that each practitioner of person-centered planning supports at least one of two focus people whose quests draw them into shared space.

Excerpted from A Little Book About Person Centered Planning.

Nunavut: A Beacon of Hope for Aboriginal People and All of Us
On April 1, 1999, Canada’s youngest population took control of our large territory. With the creation of Nunavut almost all the world’s 150,000 Inuit people now enjoy a degree of self-determination: some 50,000 In Alaska, 55,000 In Greenland, 50,000 In Nunavut and 3000 In Inuvik, as Northern Quebec’s Inuit call their homeland. Nunavut is the latest beacon of hope for other Aboriginal people’s, not only in Canada, whose land claims or other negotiations are proceeding at a glacial pace.

Nunavut illustrates that small populations and daunting physical distances are not insurmountable barriers to maintaining a distinct cultural community within Canada. “We are very much a distinct society,” leader John Amagoalik says. “And the Nunavut government will have the responsibility of protecting and preserving that distinct society. But we are not trying to break up Canada. We’re trying to join it.”

From Inclusion Press, we wish this new young land the best of luck in creating a new future for their people.

Vision Statement of Nunavut
In Preparation for Nunavut, the Nunavut Implementation Commission created a vision for their future government. It was adopted. Today, Nunavut has a government that:

- Places people first;
- Represents and is accountable and fair to all its residents;
- Is a servant of the people of Nunavut;
- Seeks direction from the people;
- Offers programs and services in an integrated and holistic manner;
- Promotes harmony amongst people;
- Places ownership of well being into the hands of individuals, families, and communities;
- Conducts itself with integrity and openness;
- Encourages excellence and welcomes creativity and;
- Incorporates the best of Inuit and contemporary government systems.

Office of the Interim Commissioner of Nunavut
P.O. Box 780, Inuvik, NT X0A 0H0 (fax) 867-879-5833

We are privileged to be working in Inuvik with the new school division who are using PATH in classrooms throughout Nunavut.
MAPs and PATHs - A Family Perspective

Bryn and Clark Fortune

Kali, Lindsay and Bryn Fortune

As often happens, unexpected blessings evolve when we step outside of our usual routine. As a result of a professionally motivated educational experience, our family was fortunate to have a fresh look at ourselves in an affirming, revealing process called MAP.

Bryn is the director of the Michigan-based Parent Leadership Program-Early On. In an attempt to understand the MAPS and PATHS processes, she attended a facilitator workshop put on by Jack Pearpoint and Marsha Forest. A MAP is a process that a creative facilitator can use to bring out the dreams and fears of individuals (or groups), creating an affirming focus on the strengths, gifts and uniqueness of that individual to reach out for their dreams and take steps to live their dreams. In our experience, two points seem critical to the accomplishment of a meaningful MAP. First, a MAP can only change your life if the individual makes a personal commitment to the action steps created in the MAPS process. Second, the facilitators must be incredibly respectful of the process of this time. Without this deep regard the possibility of MAPs will not be realized. The only way to avoid this potential for the facilitators to experience the risk and failure of the process.

We believe this is the only way one can create the understanding needed to allow the experience to run its course, the fear to be replaced by courage, and the nightmares to be replaced by dreams.

After attending the facilitator's workshop, Bryn was so impressed with the process that she signed up our entire family to attend another MAP opportuni the next weekend. During that time, we completed a family and individual MAP.

The experience was powerful, risky, and at times very uncomfortable. In the generation of our family's MAP, our two daughters each gave their heartfelt dreams and nightmares. Each of our children have significant challenges to their physical health and the youngest daughter has "differing abilities." Relatable to other children their age, they both have unique perceptions of the world, life, and spirituality. As parents, it was very sobering to hear the girls discuss their health fears, and exciting to hear their dreams of college, boys, and future choses.

Lindsay's (our youngest, at the time) nightmare was about losing her life to communicate. Her dream was of a huge white mansion with servants, a chef to cook her special diet, and a housekeeper, an indoor pool, a lake and ski boat in the rear, and a multiplicity of automobiles in the garage. Kalli (our older daughter at fifteen) dreamed of her own space, a lot in a high location. Later, as our daughter's own MAPS were generated, we found that Lindsay's principle desire was for a white mansion with servants, the homeless, and Kalli's desire for a lot was to have a safe haven where she could rest, be supported and worry-free.

Bryn's principle nightmare was the hell of surviving the loss of her children to physical illness. Her dream was to be connected to a vast circle of friends. Using MAPS, this nightmare was once dreamed. Without the support and love of her family. Her dream was to develop our family's shared sense of faith and spirituality.

All of these feelings were powerful, very uncomfortable, and risky to announce to a group of people, even if those attending the MAPS session are family and friends. The courage to articulate those things that you fear, the personal work to work through these things and make them known, the acceptance of support from those in your MAP circle, are all liberating and stretching activities. As a personal development tool, the MAP process had shown its strengths. As a family it allowed us to think about and communicate some important feelings and information we often neglect in everyday living. Each of us felt blessed to have had this opportunity and experience.

As a family, we often pull our MAPS out on the living room floor and speak to one another about the work we have accomplished and which ones we are still working towards. We have moved closer to our dreams! The clarity and helpfulness that the MAPS process brings forth is an incredible gift. We would encourage any family given the opportunity to participate in a MAP to seize the experience. It can truly change your life.

Marjorie McBride, a professional social service worker from Minnesota, met Joel at one of the Toronto courses. Joel volunteered to be the process facilitator for Marjorie's PATH. He had already done the graphics work and wanted to try a new role. Marjorie remembers, "At first I was a bit concerned as I knew that any person centered plan should be taken lightly". He volunteered to do the PATH facilitation. He felt that an art that can transcend dge as long as the person demonstrates mature judgment, is grounded in the values of inclusion, honors the uniqueness of the person's talent, is a good listener, facilitates the person's dreams and ideas rather than his or her own, is flexible and creative and creates a welcoming environment. Joel did all that as he had basically taken the same course as I did, in fact, I did it far better than some of the so-called "trained educators" present at the PATH presentation.

Joel remembers Marjorie's PATH: "I was really not sure what I was doing. I wanted it to be perfect. It was very stressful. I learned that was great, as I got done Marjorie's images and thoughts and more, I had to make Marjorie's friends and get out everything she wanted to say.

Marjorie: "Joel was great. His youthfulness entered my soul. He is way beyond his years. His creative thinking and action pushed me beyond my limits. He asked the right questions to unlock my PATH. My PATH was called "My Journey to a Legacy" and Joel was realistic about the steps I needed to take to reach my North Star. He and the graphic recorder, Tammy, created images for my words.

As a result of having my own PATH done I am convincing even I am now a much better listener to others' dreams and I'm better at helping people figure out how to reach their own North Star.".

Joel now wants to facilitate a MAP but he knows before he does this he has to have a MAP done for himself. "I know the first rule of thumb is that you can't do these things to other people till you've been through it yourself, because you can't understand what the person is going through. Since this was written Joel has had a MAP done and is now learning to be a MAPS facilitator.

The next time you wonder where you are going to find a potential co-facilitator - just open your eyes and ask around. I was asked, "I didn't think you were extraordinary." We answered: "Just waiting for the opportunity to be asked to be involved in real and creative work. Not all teenagers would be interested, but many are simply waiting for us to ask.

The DREAM (North Star) segment of a PATH. Never kill anyone's dreams.

The Education Assistant's Prayer

I wish for a teacher who will see me as a

A colleague with contributions to make.

I wish for a teacher who will see me as an assistant

to children,

though with particular focus on a few.

I wish for a teacher who will ask for my ideas.

I wish for a teacher who will see me as a person.

But feel free to guide me as a tool

to benefit children.

I wish for a teacher who will challenge me
to do my best.

I wish for a teacher who loves children.

I wish for a teacher who can see me in a model.

Gary Bunch Inclusion: How To p. 85

Inclusion: How To

Gary Bunch

The inclusive teacher is a student oriented professional who

knows the student is more important than the curriculum.

knows that difference amount of students are to be valued.

knows every student learns better together than apart.

knows the teacher can control the curriculum to the benefit of the student.

knows that effort reduces the price of child learning.

Inclusion: How To p. 26

True peace is not merely the absence of tension. It is the presence of justice.

Marlin Luther King, Jr.
Hope Restored with PATH

Glenn Cockburn
Gang Prevention Coordinator
Winnipeg, Manitoba

I decided I wanted to do something that truly might be in the area of prevention, not wait until kids were in trouble but get to them early. I phoned the principal of a downtown Winnipeg core area school (Dufferin School) where I knew the principal, an aboriginal woman named Donna Green. I asked her if I could work with the Grade 6 students on doing some creative planning. She said, “Sure.”

I was also tired of seeing too many expensive consultants with over-complicated materials that didn’t really involve the community. Hardly anyone ever involved the youth that were getting into trouble. These consultants, as too many teachers and social workers, often meant well but were so busy “telling” everyone what to do that they didn’t have any time to involve the youth in solving their own problems.

When I say involved I really mean involved. Involved in a meaningful way. I wanted these Grade six students to be able to see a future with hope.

A few years ago I met my now friends and colleagues Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint while they were doing a workshop for aboriginal health care workers in Winnipeg. I liked the tool they had developed called PATH. They basically said to me – Glenn you’ve seen PATH in action - go do it. That’s exactly what I did.

To me PATH was exactly what I was looking for. It started with a blank sheet of paper, used teamwork to facilitate, and used a colorful visual graphic as a key. It was built on a model of community capacity and believed that all people have gifts and talents and can solve their own problems with a little help from their friends.

To me PATH is a simple and amazing little tool. What it basically does is:

- Gets people who are stuck in a rut or problem unstuck.
- Gives people a way to actually see a future.
- Gives people hope.
- Gives people a beginning, a starting point for action.

The first thing that amazed me when I worked with the grade six students was that their hopes and dreams for themselves were the same as the adult professionals that work with them.

The students above all wanted:
- their families back together
- their families to participate at school
- their parents, parents, or guardians to get really involved in their lives, especially at school

In drawing their vision of North Star (step one in the PATH process) practically all the students wanted me to draw a mansion - this mansion for them was a place where they and their families could be safe.

For them the mansion was their school and the school would provide meals, and teachers who genuinely cared for the students and their families. The most important people for the students to enroll were their families and then their teachers. They all wanted to get through school and life and move on to find a better way of life than they were experiencing now.

The NOW part of the PATH was quite powerful. The students described their now as dirty, lots of fighting, gangs, getting beat up, drugs, needles, inability to get along in the morning because they’ve been up all night, lack of things to do in the evening, violence, unhappy, scared, hungry, homeless...

They wanted the school to open day and evening and they wanted team and other sports.

I kept thinking. This is exactly what most of the teachers and social service people also wanted for the kids. This is exactly how we all envisioned the now. We all agree so let’s make it happen. What’s stopping us. Let’s do it.

One thing was sure. Few thought or believed that these “inner city core kids” would sit still long enough to do anything meaningful. How wrong they were! I started working not long after with the Grade six kids but with Grade 5, 4, 3 and even Grade 2. And they all sat for two and a half hours with only a short break for recess. Because it was their PATH they were truly involved. They even got involved in doing their own graphic recording. After all it was their PATH.

They were proud of their plan. They knew I was there for one reason – for them. There are now five fabulous PATHS at Dufferin School. The seeds are planted. We don’t need sophisticated complicated expensive plans. We can do it simply and inexpensively with PATH.

PATH is a catalyst for change and therefore the follow up is built right into the process. The plan is right there for everyone to see. If it has involved the people it is meant to serve it will be followed. If it hasn’t really involved the students it will not be followed. Simple.

You won’t need follow up or coercion as it is right there in living color before everyone’s eyes. It is right in your face.

My goal and dream is to do this for all the aboriginal youth groups in Winnipeg and then to do individual PATHS for all the kids who want one so they can take their PATH home and put it up for their families to see or better yet do it in their homes with their families present.

Glenn doing PATHS with Grades 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The Bigger Picture
My job is basically to figure out how to stop crime and violence before it even starts. We do this in many ways in Winnipeg such as family group conferencing, sentencing circles, using PATH, sharing circles, mentor programs. Our model is based on using the strength of the community and theirs in it.

Instead of marching criminals in one door of a prison and out the same door when their time is done, we need to see what we can do to help women and men in trouble turn their lives around. To do this we must have an integrated community action approach.

My vision for crime prevention and a good life for the youngsters I work with is a simple one, shared by many. We want to feel safe again. I cannot imagine that happening without communities having hope and without caring. The model and processes we are using in Winnipeg and elsewhere take us back to community cohesiveness... and that hope.

Come to Winnipeg and visit. Come see the hope for the future at the Dufferin School.
Circle of Friends
Not a Program

Marsha Forrest, Jack Pearpoint and John O'Brien

We get phone calls that have a disturbing consistency. "Can you send me information on the Circle of Friends Program. I want my school to set up a Circle of Friends Program for my child." This is not a thoughtless request. However, it is frightening in its implications. It is a cry for salvation from the prison of loneliness - attached to the assumption that there is a program one can buy that will solve this problem. In times of school massacres, these are calls that we ignore at our peril. They are cries for help.

The callers are usually parents of children who have somehow been excluded by the system. They are looking for the "school" to create a friendship circle for their lonely child. Our response is find out where the family lives, and hopefully to connect them to other families in the vicinity with whom they can begin to talk.

The other frightening call tended to be from "systems." They said, "We did a circle and a program was written. One of the basic ideas of both these calls is the same. The circle has been commodified - turned into a thing you can purchase, buy, make work. Circles of friendship are not for sale. Friendship cannot be purchased. By its nature, it must be freely given. A circle is not a thing. A circle is the very soul of the child. A Circle of Friends concept was not invented nor written about for any one discipline or field of thought. It is an ancient concept. It is about art, literature, theatre. It is about hope, dreams, philosophy. It is about love, hate, rejection, loneliness. It is about life.

In modern times, when everything is marketed as instant, when answers come in pills, and dating services provide partners, of course one wants a circle for a lonely child. A noble wish, but it doesn't work. It is set up for frustration and failure. Friends don't pop out of the micro-wave. Instant cookies don't quite taste like the real thing. Real cookies are messy to make, and take time to bake. But the result is delicious. And you don't need a commercial to tell you how good it is. You know.

We think people often confuse the simple but powerful tool - the Circle of Friends Exercise - with the actual building of a circle of friends. The exercise, developed and used over the years by Marsha Forrest, Jack Pearpoint, Judith Snow and John O'Brien, asks people to look deeply and closely at those in their lives, and as a visual aid, to make a chart of who is in your life - in the first, second, third and fourth level of your circles. We did this originally to demonstrate that for too many people with disabilities, there is only a fourth circle of paid personnel in their lives. The fourth circle people were not bad people. It is simply a fact that they are involved with a person's life because of their jobs.

This profound exercise, which can take an hour or a day, opens insights into people about what they want their life to look like. It gives insights into who and what is missing in your life and what you really want your life to look like. It is a tool that is a major catalyst for change. But it is a tool, which increases clarity, does not build a friendship. It is not a program, it is a tool. A circle may begin with ideas triggered by using the Circle of Friends Exercise tool - and result in simple practical steps - a visit to a neighbour, or a call to a friend. It really begins by helping you to be able to yourself and others. It never begins with your own or student, but always with you the adult. The children whose homes have the chance of friendship are families where the adults have relationships in their lives. Numbers don't count. The importance is quality and loyalty and love.

Yes, it would be wonderful for school systems to build in the notion of fostering friendships for all children. But this is much too important to wait for school systems to conclude the debate about what school is for. In fact, the "friendship stuff" is still not high on the agenda - even as we report the lengthening list of the tragic massacres by isolated, excluded, lonely students. Expecting the school to solve this gus is a recipe for failure. Don't let them off the hook, but don't wait. It is too important. "But what do I do?"

That is a good place to start. Sit and wonder what to do. But do not sit alone! First and foremost, do not expect someone else to do it for you. It is time to gather your closest allies and ask, "What do we do?"

We are not saying there are NO places where facilitators are hired to assist young and older students to make friends. There are a few. We think it should be a top priority everywhere - but even in the best circumstances, school ends and summer comes. Holidays. Graduation. Kids come and go. Facilitators come and go. It is too risky to put the fabric of relationships on you and your children into the care of such a fragile structure. Circles and friendships exist in the very fabric of life - in the fourth circle. The family must be the owner/operator of their circles of support. If schools and other support systems can help - great. But prudent families do not give over control of their children's lives lightly.

We urge you to agourize this. Read books, watch movies, think on your own and what you want in your life. We are still overcast in the culture of massive individualism where doing things alone is the norm. Asking others for help - especially outside the family unit - is still something for most of us. We can ask and should do it alone - without bothering anyone - is the norm. But the more we move, the more we move, the more we need each other. Doing it alone is almost guaranteed failure. Consider that carefully.

We have all been taught a delicate and dangerous habit - thinking that pleases others is an "expert", a professional. So the answer is (and (are) there (have (is) been (have (is) been) some people gifted with this talent, skills, techniques to help us. We want to welcome those talents and gifts. But some issues are "not commercial" stuff - about the family helping people - helping each other. We have been doing this for centuries. We KNOW how to do this - in our hearts. If we take the time and create the courage to dig deep into our souls, we will find we have untold riches, and unexplored answers to respond to our unique situations.

Our own case in point illustrates the strategy you could tell your�Jurors, or �Rose's story, etc. It is always easier and less vulnerable to tell other people's stories, but as we report the past the eleven years we have been struggling with cancer, the last five years have been the most painful. The first chemotherapy was in 1955 followed by radiation in 1997 and another current round of chemo now (April 1999). A very difficult period indeed. Not pleasant nor easy.

The hospitals in Toronto are among the best in the world. We are brilliant technicians and experts in their field. They can do the treatment. But what they cannot do is make no matter how many, there is no one we are not giving is to the giving of the fear and trauma of cancer and the often cruel side effects of the drugs.

This is no one's fault. It is instead a system's fault but while we are attempting to stay alive, we are fighting the long term revolution of any change of a medical system gone amok.

And so we call. We call our friends. We cry. We call out and we see over time who comes. Some come and some don't. There are disappearances and that is understandable. But the more we call, the more we come. Alone we would die. Together we have a chance of survival. There is no certainty. There is chaos and fear. And yes there are times of joy and laughter.

There is no program in this. There is just life itself. There is no body, there is only the body, there is the body. There is time, there is only the time, there is the time. There is yesteryear, there is only the day, there is the day. But what if there is only the one in your life you may ask. We believe there are loneliness people everywhere. There are churches and neighborhoods groups. There are self help groups. There are friends and neighbors and school people. There are good people all around you. Find them. Go to places and people you know, Go to places and people you don't know.

What we have found is that if you are looking in the right directions, the people will come around. Ask them in for coffee or tea. Feed them and cry with them. That is not easy. That said, you are asking very few people to be there for you. The more you ask the more you ask the more you are asking for help. They just don't want that.

There are books and videos to give you ideas. But the action starts around your kitchen table or in your living room. It is not easy. It is not easy. It is not easy. But the most important thing you can do for your own life and the life of your children.

My Circle of Friends
Miriam Miller
I have circle meetings. We talk about problems I have. We talk about my work. We plan my birthday party. I live in a co-op. We are a community. Everyone helps each other. My circle helps me figure out what to do in the co-op.

Do you know what a circle of friends is? A circle helps you with your problems. People meet every few months in my apartment. We usually have little luck. Sometimes I look before the meeting and no one is there. Sometimes I look before the meeting and someone is there. Sometimes people come too. I always say lots of people come to. Some of my friends don't want to come.

But the meeting I make an agenda. I put down all the things I want to talk about. At my last meeting we talked about how we work and cleaning and getting more people to come to People First meetings.

My circle of friends listens to me. Then they give me ideas. My next circle meeting is after Easter. We are going to talk about my ex-boyfriend. He is bothering me. My circle of friends will help me.
We were driving home from a wonderful conference in London, Ontario, having a lively conversation about whether the word “inclusion” was being so mutilated and perverted that it was no longer useful. We all decided that rather than discard perfectly good and useful words like “inclusion” and “integration” we need to reclaim these words and own them proudly.

For example, just because the Conservative government of Ontario’s current Premier Mike Harris, is using the term “Common Sense Revolution”, to cut everything decent, good and kind out of the Ontario education system, than means the words “common sense” or “reform” are bad or wrong words to use.

We are sick and tired of the “bad guys” co-opting our language. It is time to take back, to reclaim our words. In 1989 we wrote Action for Inclusion, and we believe it is still relevant to say, action is our goal. The word comes from the Latin for making complete - in the sense of renewing or restoring wholeness. We aim to develop complete classrooms - classrooms that continually renew and restore wholeness among children and teachers who represent the diversity of the real communities in which we live.

Inclusion of those who have been left outside is the first step in integration. The word derives from the Latin for shutting the door after someone has come into the house. Some people think that you can’t speak of integration without inclusion. This seems like nonsense to us. Integration begins only when each child belongs.

Only after we are all in the room or at the table can we create a true integration happen. This is NOT assimilation. It is dealing positively with diversity. It is integration in the sense of the word meaning - wholeness and healing.

The words “Inclusion” and “Integration” get misused to mask the power and endurance of segregation and professional hegemony. We must take the power to turn these words into ideas and deeds that make the world a better place for ALL. The words and the power to use them do not belong to the segregationists. The words and power belong to people with the courage and creativity to work together for social justice. Let’s reclaim our language.

“Love” is another word that has been mutilated and cheapened. It has been co-opted by the advertisers of Madison Ave, and the pop psychologists of the talk shows. It remains vital. It does not belong to those who will sell jeans, or cigarettes or instant answers to life’s dilemmas. It belongs to the heart. It belongs to people with the courage and commitment to stick together through the long haul for what is right.

The exciting work of building and rebuilding a classroom, a business, a neighborhood, a family can only begin after everyone has begun the work of belonging.

Belonging begins with welcoming - thoughtfully, carefully, joyfully, lovingly. The opening movements in the dance of life must carry mutual acknowledgment, recognition, and appreciation. This is not a fast or finished work. It is a life long adventure.

**Reclaiming Our Words**
Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint and John O’Brien

**People First Define REAL Education**
Richard Raston, Tamara Moyer, Karen Paskarik, Barb Fonke, Michael Callahan, Dean McKenna, Mary Bouras, David Gilmore, Pauline Lynch, Bill Ballantine, Pat Worth with David Hasbrou

**Think about it!**
We have some thoughts about growing up, about education, about being people, about what is truly important. We offer these in you to think about and make part of our working education system.

**But who are we?**
- We are People First of Ontario.
- We are people first!
- We are people who have been labelled.
- We are people who have been through the system - we know its flaws.
- We are people who make our own decisions. We fight for the right of all people who have been labelled to make their own decisions.
- We are people who have feelings.
- We are people who have been segregated, pushed around and called names.
- We are people who have been locked up in institutions - like prisons.
- We educate the public about the harm caused by segregation through telling our stories.
- We are people who need a good education to get a REAL job in the community.

**We believe you need to know what it was like to be labelled as a child:**
- It hurt to be called “mentally retarded” and “mentally handicapped”.
- It made me real angry.
- It made me feel different from everybody else.
- I was called “stupid” and it really hurt.
- It made me upset then and it still does now.
- I didn’t understand when I found out I was really and that people thought things were wrong.
- I acted out.
- I felt mixed up. I didn’t understand why they were labelling me.

**We believe you need to know what it was like to be segregated from all of the “regular” kids:**
- I felt like an outcast.
- I felt really alone. I needed a friend.
- I felt different. I only had a couple of friends. Most of the other kids were “higher” up than I was.

**We want you to know what we think makes a good education:**
- Having all my friends, all my cousins, cooperating, helping me. Not being called "handicapped". Being with all of the other kids in the neighborhood.
- Learning to read, to write, to do arithmetic. RESPECT from your classmates and peers. Having respect for them, a two-way street.
- Being with everyone - TOGETHER.
- Having the other kids learn from you. Teaching each other, learning from each other.
- Overcoming obstacles. Making friends. Doing things with friends after school. Teaching the teacher that nothing is impossible.

We are often asked by our own navets. We don’t feel we are believing that together people can take important steps toward a more inclusive society. But we continue to have to learn how long it takes, how hard the work is, and how deep it is linked to issues of war and peace, poverty and wealth, profit and greed, justice and injustice.

Inclusion will only happen in places that want to unleash the poet in every child, in neighborhoods that seek social justice for all, and where visions in the work places where the truth is faced head on, and where the hurt stuff is not hidden in back closets. Inclusion is about facing fear, racism, hatred, prejudice and injustice, and changing these conditions so that people can build a new kind of world.

Life is suffering and pain as well as joy and love. This is no secret. Inclusion isn’t about "the inclusion room", "the inclusion children", "the inclusion curriculum". Inclusion is about integration, and integration is about creating wholeness in a fragmented and frizzled society.

We are optimistic! The trend internationally is toward more people living with more and more diversity. The trend is democracy. The trend is human rights. The trend is inclusive. Let’s take the word inclusion and use it well. Inclusion means bringing more people in to the door. That is a critical step in creating a just society with a just education system, a just system of laws, a just health care system.

The words are there. Let’s use them proudly and wisely. Let’s live them.

**A good education:**
- Takes parents and teachers believing that we are intelligent. It takes parents and teachers believing that we have a right to be included. It takes people helping us to believe in ourselves.

Where there is great love there are always miracles.
Helen Keller

**And here’s why we believe it is important to get a “good” education:**
- A good education makes us happy! We have more knowledge. We feel great going through high school
- A good education means we can learn to teach others. It means we can become a teacher. That is what education is all about.
- We can get a job after school, maybe become a CEO, run a company.
- It allows us to go on to night school - even become a teacher.
- It means we can get a job.
- Because we need to know how to read and write.
- We need to learn different things. We need to get a job.
- We need to use computers.
- We need to learn how to read and write - so we won’t feel developed. We don’t learn how to read.
- It is important to get a good education so I won’t be known as the kid who doesn’t know anything.

**But most of all learning together as people is important because:**
- Every child has a right to dream about what they want to do with their life.
- Every child has the right to share how they feel.
- Every child has the right to dream of a future - a world of possibilities.
- Every child has the right to speak — every child has the right to be heard.
- Every child has the right to learn as much as possible — in the regular class with all of the other kids.
- Every child has the right to a REAL EDUCATION!
In Phonsavan, Laos, we visited the UXO (Unexploded Ordnance) project sponsored by MAG. The Mines Advisory Group. There I chatted to the bomb by the obscene and terrifying reality of travelling in rural Laos. It is not safe. There are literally millions of unexploded bombs—everywhere—waiting to be stepped on or triggered accidentally. For nine years, the US dropped more bombs on Laos than were dropped in all of Europe during WWII—the equivalent of one B-52 load of bombs every eight minutes, 24 hours per day, 365 days a year.

Thinking About Freedom, Individualism and Democracy
As we consider the issue of freedom and democracy in Laos, I am confused by how to communicate what we have seen. There are the slides which will convey images. But every photograph is but one dimension and there is more. And the more is largely irreducible. It is more than the smell of frangipani, or the slow unstoppable whosh of the silt filled Menong. It is more than crickets at night and rotsters in the morning. One perspective could be that is view is of poverty. That does not sit well with me. It’s true that in terms of per capita income, Laos is a poor country. But the concept of poverty for those who have food, shelter and water becomes a relative term. We have travelled the full length of Laos and seen a thousand views of people in their daily lives. Since the tourism industry is not yet sophisticated enough to create plywood protected barriers to hide those who do not want us to see, we have seen Laos in the raw and we have loved it.

So what is the confusion in my head? It is not something we were able to discern from conversations. We do not speak Lao. And yet, with all the lack of “modern” facilities for so many people, we saw little sign of anguish or despair. In fact, it was very clear that people worked hard, rested in between the agricultural cycles, and within reasonable bounds, enjoyed life. Perhaps one of the strangest and most profound visible symbols were the Buddhist temples and monasteries in saffron robes. Keeping in mind the reality of a reformed revolution by a party that identifies itself as “Marxist-Leninist,” this is a serious contradiction. Religion is supposed to be banned according to dogma. But they apparently tried that dogma in 1975, and the people didn’t like it. So they changed. The official position is that no religion will be supported, but none will be opposed. Thus, the people wanted to be Buddhists—fine. And there is animism and Catholicism (a little). But Buddhism is evident throughout our three week immersion. And there are one or two objections. In fact, there is something wonderful about a culture where it is not only “normative,” but honored, to take a “Sabbatical” and think about the needs of the spirit. This can be for a weekend or a week—life or on the installment plan. And the cost is “show up.” People feed monks. Their work is spiritual, so manual workers contribute enough to allow them to do that work. One of the incidents is that the kind of “begging” we see on the streets of Toronto, and most any other Western city, is virtually non-existent. My count was four in Laos. There were very old and crippled, and one was a war amputee.

Bombs (hopefully exploded) serve as toys, pillars, displays.
Inclusion News 2000

Phnom Penh, Cambodia: The Killing Fields

Today was Killing Fields day. We walked through the sunken mounds — where tens of thousands had been slaughtered and dumped. We saw human skulls — all ages — piled — sun dried. We saw torture chambers.

The best estimates available suggest that 2,000,000 people were assassinated during this bitter civil war. With toothless skulls abounding, leg and arm bones protruding from the pits, the thrill of being human chilled. Could humans do this to one another? How? How many centuries ago was this insanity? But this is not ancient history. It is now. And as much as there were leaders like Pol Pot, one man could not do this. One tiny country, that has about 10,000,000 citizens remaining could not have done this without manipulative external finance and propaganda. I don't understand, but I know better than to predict.

Who are we to lambast the Cambodians as crazy for killing each other, when the CIA, Chinese, Thai and others were providing and making money from arms and sales. And in Kosovo, the bombs now rain down on people that until recently lived as next-door-neighbors. Today they are slaughtering each other — again. The Irish 'troubles' are not done. The Israeli's and the Palestinians appear ready to gouge each other's eyes out — in the cause of peace. Indonesia is boiling, and East Timor ready to explode. The list could go on. We don't have to go far to see intolerance that is the right of genocide. Listen to Canadians talk about Quebec. Listen or watch the not-so-latent racism toward the Chinese, the East Indians, the North American Indians. We have no room to glot at our superiority. I stare

Tribute to Teachers

There are many wonderful teachers out there. They can inspire students to want to come to school or to avoid it like the plague. Dom Gatati is one such great teacher. This note was written to him and we convinced him and the author to let us publish it as a tribute to the many unusual heroes who make kids who would otherwise not get up in the morning want to attend school.

I know a teacher. He has a good heart, sense of humor and always would go that extra mile for anyone. But, most of all, he has a lot of respect and love. He is the best teacher I've ever had. I always enjoy his company. He pretty much always points me in the right direction. Next to my grandparents, he is the kindest, most generous person, that I know. I would do anything to be in his class again.

Mr. Gatati, you go the extra mile for all your students. You did for me and for my friends. You were the one who gave me a reason to come to school every morning. But most of all you had a heart. Most of my teachers aren't like that. There wasn't a day I remember that you weren't happy except that one day when we all read an article and we all had no questions or comments about it because the story was so sad. But you expected us to have questions.

You made learning fun for me. I have a lot of respect for you as well as love. I wish you and your family the very best.

Jennifer

at smashed and tortured skulls. I realize I cannot and must not allow the thought that this was another time - a different place. It is now!

We drove back in silence. Our next stop - the high school that became one of the major torture chambers and prisons. From the exterior, the other than the barred wire, it was a simple high school. But as we walked around the cells and torture chambers, the blood, the bodies, the anguished shrieks of babies, children, men and women could be felt in one's bones. Paintings of the torture methods left nothing to the imagination. Manacles that I deluded myself had disappeared with slavery were piled, rusting from endless soaking in human blood. A map of Cambodia made from human skulls was one effective summary of recent Khmer history. Again, I must stop myself from allowing the pretense that 'they were different,' we are different.' We are all human. And as numbing as the truth is, we too could do this. The only difference is that with all our technological sophistication, we can have the pretense of civility as we butcher people - with cruise missiles and smart bombs. We must be very careful. The blood soaked slide from mere racism to genocide is an uncontrollable task. No one thinks the atrocities are possible - in the beginning. No one means them to happen. Once the propaganda erodes respect for human life and convinces us that 'they aren't human,' "this is a necessary evil," or "it's us or them," the precipice is near.

Peace is an alternative. After a few millennia of war, we have in place a proof that war doesn't work very well. Perhaps 'waging peace' with the same finances and energy would give a different result. We have nothing to lose by trying, and only our humanity and our lives to gain.

I have seen enough of genocide. I was in Biafra. I was in Sudan. I have seen Kwashokor among Cambodian orphans. I have seen uncountable greed and unthinkable poverty. I have seen human skulls piled high. Enough. It is time to give peace a chance.

We can begin by stopping the bombing today. Feed children; do not bomb them.

Graphic Lao footers - intended to reduce death and maiming of children from UXO - unexploded bombs.
Remembering Lives Well Lived...

Since the last issue of Inclusion News, a number of close friends and colleagues of all ages have passed from this life. Each taught us a great deal. We thank them, and honour their memory, by building on our shared commitments to working to create a world where all are welcome. We honour the contribution of all those who have passed on, with hope that you will make time to remember the unique contributions made by each of our loved ones. These are but a few.

The first small article is by Joel Hollands and tells of a growing friendship with Bryce Thomas. Maria Galati was at that Summer Institute when Joel and Bryce's Texas trip was a dream. Donna was a powerful teacher in New Mexico and, like Maria has made the path smooth for so many who will follow. We selected from quotes from Herb Lovett's book, Learning to Listen, because none of us can speak for Herb and we miss him. Similarly Joel left notes about Aleta. When we were thinking, we looked at his book, When Spider Was Little, and discovered once again that his essays have much to teach today – on violence in schools.

The Adventures of Joel and Bryce in Texas

Joel Hollands and Bryce just being boys last summer

While I was doing my MAP at the Toronto Summer Institute in 1998, one of the things I told the group I wanted to do was to travel. Daryl, Janet and Bryce were part of my MAP team and Daryl asked me if I really wanted to visit them in Texas. I said "Yes," but I really didn't think I'd be on a plane to Texas that August and actually spend two weeks in Clumburn where it was not 100 degrees. My excitement never got me a ticket and we never went. At first Bryce and I just hung out. We watched our favorite TV shows, went swimming, played our favorite game 'fighting the bad guys, rented movies, and played with Bubba the dog. Later the first week, we went to Fossil Rim where you drive around and see and feed real animals. Bryce loved it when an ostrich stuck its head in the window. It freaked me out!

We also got to go to the observatory at the university where we looked at the moon through big telescopes. That was pretty neat.

But the highlight of the trip was Six Flags, a gigantic amusement park. Bryce had gone there before and done most of the rides. I was totally scared to be on the rides with Bryce as I was sure he was going to fall out. But he had a harness on and his dad would hold him from the side and his mom or I would hold on him (for dear life) from the back.

We did practically every single ride in the park and the only one that I didn't like was Dive Bomber Alley. If my memory was there she would have advised against it - very strongly. Basically there's two huge 200 foot towers and one rainbow shaped 200 foot arc. There's two bouncy cables that come down from the arch and hook up to you. Three of us went, it took a little more time to hook up Bryce, but the workers were really very nice, helpful and enthusiastic.

A cable hook to the three harnesses and it pulls you up to the top of one of the towers quite slowly. You are then lifted up above the earth and all that's holding you is your harnesses. The speaker announces "Flyers 3, 2, 1, FLY," I pulled the rod which let us go and then you feel the pull and they build up and forth a few times. We screamed all the way down and Bryce said at the end "I feel like Pegasus." (The ancient mythological winged horse.)

Later that week we went to Hurricane Harbour, a huge water park where we did all the water slides possible. The people there were really nice. They even let us stay a little above the earth and all that's holding you is your harnesses. The speaker announces "Flyers 3, 2, 1, FLY," I pulled the rod which let us go and then you feel the pull and they build up and forth a few times. We screamed all the way down and Bryce said at the end "I feel like Pegasus." (The ancient mythological winged horse.)

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Bryce and I had lots of fun and I hope we can do it again. We are going to show the video of the Dive Bomber Alley to start the Summer Institute of 1999.

I'm learning more and more that Bryce can do anything that any other kid wants to do. We just need to be creative in figuring it out. The main reason Bryce and I get along so well is because we're both "insane roller coaster junkies."

Bryce Thomas

Aug. 11, 1987 - Jan. 20, 1999

Joel Hollands wrote and read this at Bryce's funeral service.

Bryce was a great friend. Bryce was fun to be with. I enjoyed being with him fighting the bad guys and answering his many questions as best I could. Reading him stories and racing him around like I did whenever we were together. Braiving dive bomber alley at Six Flags. I loved doing things with him. Bryce was a curious intelligent person who could have been anything he wanted to be. I am so happy I had the opportunity to meet him, to know him, and to be his friend. Bryce was like a brother. I treated him as I would family. If Bryce needed something, I or anyone else in my family wouldn't even have to think twice about it. But I miss Bryce. No. I do miss Bryce. I'm going to miss the way he said, "Yes," the way he would always say "What are you talking about?" I miss fighting bad guys with him and I most definitely miss his smile. I will miss him but never forget him.

The Spirit Brother

Janet Thomas

Closer than a brother, you are my friend. My brother did not choose me, as clearly as she loves me.

Others do not want me, even through blood ties are strong.

We met and our kindred spirits burst into flame.

I felt a completeness, right here, next to my heart.

You my spirit brother are ever a safe harbor.

from the storms of my soul.

My mother did not choose me.

But God formed you and I of the same clay.

We are two pieces of one whole.

And I simply call you friend.

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. Security does not exist in nature nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than exposure.

Helen Keller

Donnie Phillips

April 24, 1982 - May 31, 1998

Leora Phillips

Many adoptive parents know the saying, "You didn't grow under my heart, but in it." And that's true, but the reality here is, I didn't give birth to Donnie, but he gave birth to me. He is the only person in my life that loves me unconditionally. He holds nothing back! He allows us to experience his joy, fear, excitement and anxiety, love, laughter and sadness to the full depth that he does. He is the bravest person I know. To live the life he does does take much great spirit takes a great deal of courage. Donnie is a teacher first and foremost. He taught me you don't have to have sight to see clearly or ears to hear. That patience takes many forms. That walking is a gift and not a walking is a gift. That smart makes many paths and has nothing to do with anything that can be measured, or tested. That love is not hearts and flowers, but blood, sweat and tears, and hard work and lots of laughter and that is worth every moment. His love reaches the deepest part of my soul and brings out the best and the worst in me. He makes me want to run faster, jump higher, fight harder, persevere longer, laugh quicker and cry more often. "And a little child shall lead them..." and he does. Kicking and screaming sometimes and with a gentle- ness unexpected at others. He never lost patience with me unless he couldn't go in the car or I didn't change the battery in the truck fast enough. Changed by a child? Absolutely, in ways I could never have imagined. Donnie brought new life to my life, broad- ened my circle of friends. I truly learned to navigate systems I had never even heard of before and lived frugally even when I failed. I am and will be etern- ally grateful he choose me.
**Inclusion News 2000**

**Herb Lovett**

1951 - March 21, 1998

Robert Carter

Oral of the speeches and tributes to Herb, Rob's is the one that touched me the most. I am sad. The world lost a good man. Herb is still part of my circle in spirit form. He went to heaven and is safe.

I will type about Herb and how his work will continue. I am writing this for everyone to hear. What was Herb to me? The answer lies in my heart and soul. Last December at TASH, I heard that Herb would take Gunner's place. What did I not realize was Herb would be a heaven helping the people who died needlessly in institutions.

I want everyone to know Herb loved everyone. He is now an angel in God's army. His job is to help in ensuring which behaviorists get into heaven or ends up in hell. Herb is going to many operas in heaven. His days are spent reading poetry and his nights are filled with music.

Herb wants Michael to build a memorial for the thousands of people who are in institutions.

I will help in freeing everyone from places that use aversive treatments. I will stand and fight against all odds. We need to rally everyone. It is time to fight like the battle of the bulge. It is time to start a revolution and I am ready.

I want to tell people life is hard, but we must never stop trying. Fortunately, I have family and friends who support me in my goals for a safer life for all.

Michael, I hope we will meet with me so I can type and tell him something. Michael can be on my panel, too. He will replace Herb in a way the world cannot understand, but I do. I hope Michael realizes one of the reasons for Herb's success was Michael.

When I typed, God said it was okay that Herb loved Michael. God wants love in his working, whether it is man or woman. I understand this from observing.

Herb's life needs to live in our hearts and minds. Here, today, we should all take a stand that no longer will suffer be allowed. No more, no more.

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**Shafik Asante**

Aug. 11, 1949 - Sept. 5, 1997

**The Roots of School Violence**

Shafik Asante

Very few people, if any, would refute the fact that we live in a violent society. In fact, our society seems to honour violence. How many times have we seen Sylvester Stallone (Rambo) or other male superheroes calmly negotiating a truce with their opponents, apologetically saying "I'm sorry, I may be wrong. Let's try to work this out," or do they end up killing them? We all know they always end up killing the people they view as their enemies, the people they are in conflict with. Aren't too many of our youth doing pretty much the same?

A recent "Children at Risk" report from Washington, D.C. stated that the number one cause of death among High School aged youth today is gunshot. This is the reality our youth face; this is the reality we all face.

What Can We Do?

Varying groups have done a number of things to both publicize and eliminate this issue of school violence. Calls for more police protection in the schools, metal detectors and better police weaponry are consistently heard throughout our communities. There have been countless rallies, demonstrations, and conferences. Why then does violence remain so present and so seemingly unstoppable?

Some say it is the "crack" epidemic that's causing the problem, others think the media is the culprit. Others insist we need more police. I take the position that if we are to change what violent offenders do, we have to change what violent offenders think. A common theme that youth offer me is they see a generation of people who have "abandoned" them and then label them "fool.

They go on to say that if they are lost, then we are the generation that lost them, making us "fool." The cutting of major school programs like music and sports that are important to the youth feed their belief that we don't care about them. The lack of decent jobs and education leave them missing the skills to compete in the economic market, so many of them have decided to get paid "by any means necessary" selling drugs and other illegal activities.

Our Challenge

Our youth feel estranged from the larger society. Our challenge is to get them re-connected to the things that can build the entire society i.e. community building. It is the youth and students of the world who have led many movements that called for major change in the conditions that isolated them from their society (such as the students of Soweto, South Africa and the American Indian Movement). In the U.S. and Canada youth played a major role in the Civil Rights and Anti-War Movement.

We must realize that youth and not only buy into the myth that the youth are a major cause of what is wrong in society but are a major cause of the solution. Youth are the future of our society.

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**Learning to Listen**

**Herb Lovett**

Herb thought deeply about what it means to see and treat one another as humans first, as these quotations from his most recent book show.

**We have established services for what people are, not rather for who they are.**

"If Maureen died tonight; I asked them, "Who would care." Someone said her mother probably would. "Anyone else?" I asked. The group thought about it and decided, "Not really." So this woman who has no home, whose one emotional relationship with someone other than her mother has been abusive, who makes about $5 a week, and who has no friends is difficult to be around. In the face of all this - by the way of comfort and assistance - she is told that she is "inappropriate" she can earn two cans of diet cola a day. And then we get confused when she is still so dirty, demanding, and "impossible." It took me a while to notice the perilous gap between what we know and what we do. Knowing her plight as a homeless, poor, and battered woman with noordinateive people in terms of getting her some emergency money, a reliable income, and a safe home. Instead, because of her labels as "mentally retarded" and "emotionally disturbed," she was seen as needing "treatment."

Fundamentally, the most helpful thing I have found is to listen to what people have to say. By now, I suppose it's obvious that by listening, I mean the act of attending carefully to what is said as well as what is meant, to regard actions as communication, and, most profoundly, to possess the spirit of taking other people seriously.

Reflections on Our Asian Odyssey: Deepening the Dialogue on Inclusion

Jack Power

Kummin, Yunnan, China - PEOPLE...

Most every day (on our nine week odyssey; Oct. - Dec., 1998), I spent time with my battery powered Apple e-mate recording events and impressions. From time to time, impressions collected into reflections on what we were learning. We have a deep commitment to building a world where all are welcome and all are appreciated. We know that we all grow through meeting differences. Our understanding was deepened, stretched and sometimes troubled and puzzled by our unprogrammed travels. These extracts from my journal provide a sense of what we learned. The first confronts the dynamisn of Asian people, the second for action on the honor of people living and dying among unexploited bombs in the edges of the star represents the resources people can claim to grow in by working “outside the box”.

Because the policies that impose scarcity serve important social and political interests—such as minimizing taxation, or distributing wealth to the wealthy, or returning profit to nursing home investors or protecting the working conditions of union members or reducing contact with socially devalued people — the box will light strongly and skillfully to protect itself. Change will come through organized political action in conflict with the powers the box serves.

Bracketing the real in “real” limits with quotation marks acknowledges the ambiguity suggested by this diagram: limits are both real and subject to pushing, or efforts to push them back, such as the eight forms of action listed next to the arrows.

Most of these limit-expanding forms of action lie outside the power of policy makers to command. They lie within the power of groups of people with disabilities and their families and friends and co-workers and schoolmates and neighbors. Policies can create barriers or provide help to these kinds of actions. Imaginative people may engage one another in making the most of what is actually available by working to create strong mutual support and access to necessary knowledge, skills, materials, and funds.

Thoughts Leaving China

Being in China brings many things to mind. Perhaps the most powerful is that there are 1.3 billion Chinese -- give or take a hundred million. That is a lot of people. And if our wander through Yunnan is any indication, they are eating well, have good access to an extensive health care system, and the children are going to school. English is being taught, so a decade from now, getting around China will again be a different experience. But my hunch is that the English is not being taught to create a nation of tour guides for European tourists. Rather, English is the global language of commerce and computers. Here comes China. In my head, there is no question. The twenty-first century will be the century of China. We have all had our day. Fifty years from now, we will wonder how we squandered so much on so few with such a minimal result. China will show us.

Another impact of being in China is renewing consciousness among the literate. We have been totally illiterate - again. It is not a matter of ‘privilege’; it is a matter of survival. We were virtually unable to carry out the most fundamental daily rituals without assistance. We didn’t eat properly. We couldn’t find bathrooms. We didn’t find water. We didn’t find baths. We didn’t find anything. We didn’t know how to get to the next place, by bus, train, plane or even walking - even though all the information was often right in front of us. It is important to be humble - knowing that the world isn’t all white - and in fact - only a tiny minority of us are.

And the English is not being taught to create a nation of tour guides for European tourists. Rather, English is the global language of commerce and computers. Here comes China. In my head, there is no question. The twenty-first century will be the century of China. We have all had our day. Fifty years from now, we will wonder how we squandered so much on so few with such a minimal result. China will show us.
Action for Inclusion

The TORONTO Summer Institute on Inclusion, Community & Diversity
July 1-7, 2000

Hosts for the Learning Community:
- John McKnight
- John O'Brien
- Marsha Forest
- Jack Peapoint
- Judith Snow
- Wayne Helgason
- Nkosi Asante
- Bahiya Cabral Asante
- Dave Hingsburger

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Jack Peapoint 745-40.1124@compuserve.com

Visit Our WEB Page: http://www.inclusion.com

I Got Help at the Toronto Summer Institute
by Miriam Miller

Last summer, in the first week of July, I went to the Toronto Summer Institute for Inclusion, Community & Diversity. I had fun. We went to a party on Monday night at Rose's house and another party on Wednesday night at Sheldon and Judith's house. I liked the last party at Jack & Marsh's. It was on Friday night.

I liked doing my PATH. I talked about what I want to do in my life. There were two women who helped draw and asked me questions. Other people sat with me and helped me do my PATH. My PATH helped me think about things I can do with my friends. Almost everyone did a PATH. On Tuesday night I went to the Marche restaurant. I had pasta for dinner. It was good. One day I went out for lunch with some of the people. One afternoon I had fun with some kids.

My job was to welcome people every day. I held people: "My name is Miriam. Welcome to the Summer Institute."

I went to different sessions. John McKnight and Jack Peapoint. Cathy Hollands and Wayne Helgason talked about his work and his books about handicapped people. Some of the sessions were about MAPS, PATH and Circles.

I am going to the Summer Institute again next summer. A woman from Colorado is going to stay at my apartment and go to the Summer Institute with me on the subway every morning. Are you going to the Summer Institute too?

Cathy Hollands is the Managing Director of Inclusion Press in her spare time. Her real job is mother of five. Need we say more? Cathy comes in evenings - AFTER her main job - and is an indispensable part of our inclusion team and our family.

Cathy Hollands: Chief of Collections; Convener: Back Porch Collective

Dear Summer Institute Team,

Our group from Winnipeg had a unique learning experience this summer at your amazing Institute. Our team, including two aboriginal youth, found the experience challenging, stimulating and inspiring. We are all used to too many stilted and stale workshops which don't even employ good adult learning techniques. The Summer Institute is on the cutting edge of just plain good learning and effective teaching. And we thoroughly enjoyed it.

I particularly enjoyed participating in the PATH Planning Process with our two youth members. We are well on that PATH and are using the tool in our own meetings. I want to make sure more of our people from across Canada attend the 1999 program in Toronto. This is too good to miss. You managed to make everyone feel welcome and safe to try out new ideas and new learning. John McKnight's daily sessions were terrific. The diversity of the group was excellent and particularly enjoyable meeting and learning with colleagues from England, Scotland and the United States. The African American group from Philadelphia was particularly stimulating in their ideas and practice. We plan to keep in touch with many of the people we met at the Institute and feel it has widened our perspective into what true diversity looks like.

We all talk about empowerment, about learning styles, about a new way of doing business - this week's learning experience put the theories into practice. I look forward to brainstorming with you about how to get more native people to the Institute next summer.

Thanks for including me. See you both soon.
Sincerely and warm greetings from,

Wayne Helgason
Director, Winnipeg Social Planning Council

Cathy Hollands, Managing Director

Dear Marsha and Jack,

Just a note to tell you how valuable I found this year's Summer Institute. Pedagogically, I think you've mastered the rare capacity to engage participants in their own learning. And of course, that's the only way people really learn.

Also it seems to me that you have multiplied the learning possibilities by 120 people. While we have a great faculty, we are only seven so the Institute provides 20-fold opportunities. This is rare and wonderful to see in education.

In addition to the valuable information learning, there was also an invaluable sharing of and by the participants about survival, grief, joy and victory. I never witness such renewal and power generation as at the Institute.

It is by far the best adult learning experience in North America. I travel extensively and see far too little of the real kind of learning environment that exists at the Summer Institute.

It is a privilege to join you. I look forward to the years to come.

John McKnight

Most training programs treat participants as clients. And as we all know, people learn the least when they have no active role and are merely consumers. The Summer Institute is the opposite of the typical training programs. The Institute is intentionally designed to create a learning, sharing forum where everyone contributes and everyone learns. It is for this reason that I find its participants the liveliest learners and the most influential activists in the course of inclusion.

John L. McKnight

Dear Cathy,

I received our band's video this week. It is a wonderful piece of work. I hope we can get the video onto TV sometime soon.

I have just returned from a trip to China. It was an incredible experience. I was able to see the real China, not the media-fied version that we are used to seeing. China is very different from what we think it is. It is a very exciting place.

I will be back in Toronto soon.

Best regards,

John O'Brien

I have been asked to write a letter for this issue of Inclusion News. I would like to talk about the experience of being in China. It was an incredible experience. I was able to see the real China, not the media-fied version that we are used to seeing. China is very different from what we think it is. It is a very exciting place.

I will be back in Toronto soon. I hope to see you all there.

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Best regards,

John O'Brien
Design for Change

A Master Class Facilitating Change
Jan. 26-29, 2000

Jack Pearpoint
Marsha Forest
John O'Brien

Limited Enrollment
For information contact
INCLUSION PRESS
To Apply: Send a cheque or purchase order for $300.00 to INCLUSION PRESS

Design for Change Course

Own Cooper (Manchester, England)

For more information on this course, please contact the facilitator at 0523 391 919 or oxcooper@iol.com.

Kinhervie House Workshop

Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint, Heather Anderson

We didn't have an exciting training event on a farm, we just had to be creative. Kinhervie House near Dumfries on the Borders. Enrollment limit 25. Reflection, disciplined work and practice, people who want to be heard have it anyway.

Enrollment Limited Teams Welcome

The CREATIVE FACILITATOR
Practical Tools
Nov. 3-6, 1999

Hosted by:
Marsha Forest
Jack Pearpoint

A four day hands-on course to practice
Circles, MAPS, PATH, Solution Circles,
Graphic Recording and Process Facilitation
Tuition: $500.00

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To organize PATH Workshops or Creative Facilitator Events, call us.

Reflections on the Design for Change Course
Heather Anderson, Edinburgh, Scotland

For four days in Feb. 1999, thirty of us had the opportunity to think and reflect on the work we were doing and how we might do it differently. Choreographed and orchestrated by John O'Brien, Jack Pearpoint and Marsha Forest, the course was a thought provoking and inspiring four days.

In the real world, back here in Scotland, I spend all my time designing and delivering training courses to help people think about inclusion and ways of making it more likely in our society. As a participant who therefore knows a bit about how and how it is to help people to see what's in front of their nose, I want to thank John, Jack and Marsha - the course was brilliantly conceived and wonderfully structured. The three day course was circled around a video of Douglas Cardinal, an internationally renowned Canadian aboriginal architect, who spoke wisely and profoundly about something all have to be magical and creative beings. He reminded us all we had creativity within us. By the last day of the course, my own power of creativity was something that had been forced to accept.

With Douglas Cardinal's words ringing in our ears, we then traveled on a roller coaster of ideas and challenges.

It was all fantastic stuff and we were skillfully guided through the rapids by our coaches. By the third day if someone had asked me to present a play on the ramifications of quantum physics for change in mental health services, I would have tried. Thank you all for letting me have so much fun while learning so much.

More importantly, Design for Change really helped me to see from a different vantage point where I was and what I was struggling with. The exercises and readings helped shift things in my head that were blocking me. I felt I had the tools I needed. Several weeks after the course, I am still remembering in minute detail, the things we thought about, the stories and energy people shared, the things we made and the plays we presented together. It was a wonderful and creative learning experience.

The Creative Facilitator - A Course

We get many calls asking about our Creative Facilitator Course. We have been running this course in Toronto for the past seven years and it is always fresh and exciting. Each new course looks to get a bit more challenging. The course is based on a clear and powerful VISION of an inclusive society for all. This course is not about disability - it is about the wider issue of how we all are going to figure out how to live with one another.

We do not argue or debate this vision, but move right into understanding and using a set of tools designed to help any family or organization move in this direction.

The course is built on sound adult education principles and - again - derived by the quotation. Tell me I'll forget. Show me I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand. The heart of the Creative Facilitator course is observing and then practicing a set of tools including MAPS (Making Action Plans), PATH (Planning Alternate Futures) and other tools depending on the group. As a starting point, the course includes Circle decision making, Sizing up Circles, Making Meetings Matter, Six Thinking Hats, Buildings Circles of Friends.

Will this course certify the participants to be MAPS or PATH facilitators? Absolutely not. We don't believe in a certification process, but we do believe that with practice each participant will have the potential to be an effective facilitator.

The course is for beginners who have never heard of these tools and also people who have been using them in their daily work. It works within the pace and using a "Learning Marketplace" philosophy everyone builds their own agenda for the four days. Evenings for example are optional but many form working groups to practice the tools they learned during the day.

We ask participants to come with a creative and open spirit and a full heart. What happens is a large extent dependent on the group that arrive. We create the agenda with the group based on the theme of the course. All participants have to note that this course comes with a warning: it may just change your life. This is not about doing something to someone else. It is about looking deeply into yourself, reflecting and being thoughtful about your own practice and practice rather than simply talking about issues.

We love teaching and facilitating these four day workshops where the emphasis is on listening to one another.
The Four Seasons
Major Workshops in Toronto

All courses are for individuals, teams, organizations or families.
All welcome!

Location: Primrose Hotel, downtown Toronto

The Fall Season:
The Creative Facilitator

Presents the popular fall season Creative Facilitator Course with Martha Forest, Jack Peaport and Dave Hasbrouk as your guides. This course delivers four full days and optional evenings to learn and practice many creative tools for facilitating and leading group workshops and seminars.
We promise that you’ll show up, be present and participate in all the activities. We encourage you to come to Toronto with a tool kit full of new ways of thinking and working. We suggest you come with at least one other person from your organization.
Limited to 35 participants

The Winter Season:
Design for Change

Presents the challenging four day and evening Design for Change Course with John O’Brien, David Hasbrouk and Martha Forest as your guides. This course is for people who have participated in the Creative Facilitator course, the Summer Institute, or have attended events with John, Jack, or Martha. It is a rigorous and exciting workshop that will engage participants in design-thinking time to scan, focus and then design a change plan for their organization, family or self. There is an entirely new set of reading materials and tools used in these four days.
No one will go home the same, and the time will be filled.

The Spring Season:
The Challenge of Change: Training for Guides

New Workbook on CD-ROM “The Challenge of Change”

Motto: “Have Course! Will Travel.”

Locations: to be announced.

The guides for this course are Jack Peaport and Martha Forest. We offer tools for creating an Energetic, Can-Do Culture for Survival Changing in Your Organization - slowly and surely. A four day intensive event for leaders, teams, organizations. Based on our new CD-ROM, you can take the course home when you find time, including a collection of overheads, slides, video, audio and text.

The focus is on tools, groupings in categories, that you can implement when you take them home.

Examples:


We welcome 100 cutting edge leaders to be co-thinkers in creating a unique one week Learning Marketplace event building a new kind of team learning community. Taste what education for the year 2000 can look like and feel like. This is for current and future leaders in social services, education, health care, education, advocacy, who want to thinking about how to find practical and creative solutions to the complex problems of the day.

Warning: This is not for people wondering whether and why to do it but how to get the work done to make everyone’s lives more full and just.

The Summer Season:
The Toronto Summer Institute

Inclusion News 2000

The street, is part of the team helping in production and distribution work. John O’Brien, although he lives in Georgia, is a key friend and partner - developing materials and always available with sage advice. Judy Snow, our resident philosopher, rolls in for field wise words that keep us on the round and narrow.

And we never survive without Harry Martin our part time accountant. His wife and his assistant Christine Ho are always on call when we need them.

In association with the Press, we also run the Centre for Integrated Education and Community, which is a Canadian Charity. The major activities of the Centre are to run the Toronto Summer Institute, and the web site, www.inclusion.com, and distribution of Inclusion News. The Center also produces a program of work with families.

We are guided by indigenous elders in New Zealand (Uncle Whetu) and Toronto (Lillian Anne McGregor) plus one Mac/indigenous elder, our dear friend Te Pipowai Commons.

Our mandate and vision is to make inclusion for all a reality. We see this as a lifetime work. We travel internationally and the workshops teach organizing, teachers, educators, families, etc. A set of creative tools to help them work differently and much more effectively without the negativity we see too often. We work with whoever wants to really change.

Thanks for your support!

The place is the physical and psychological environment in which we live, work, play and become. It has a life, a history, and a future. It is a place of possibility and potential, but also of constriction and limitation. Inclusion is about creating a world where everyone can fully participate and contribute.

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