

Direct work with children; the relevance of  
Clare Winnicott's teaching to contemporary  
social work practice

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As I write this, I am looking at the photograph of Clare Winnicott on the front of her biography (Kanter 2004). My memory of her is crystal clear; fair hair, green eyes, lovely (and expensive!) clothes; direct, sometimes uncomfortably so; feisty; a very good listener – so actively attentive; teaching from the bottom of her mind, seeking always to communicate effectively; entering into the moment fully and creatively, whether in party spirit or in serious mode.

And what of context? We are talking about the post-war years; I was her student in 1953 at the LSE. They were not only post-war years, with their raft of ‘welfare state’ legislation; they were also the post-evacuation years, when thousands of children had been sent out of London and big cities, for their physical safety but with little understanding of the emotional consequences. For years, there has been little professional or academic interest in the story of the evacuated children within the UK. This is in contrast to coverage of the Jewish children who came here on the ‘Kindertransport’ or that concerning children sent from here to Australia and Canada in the post war years.

Clare, a psychiatric social worker and her future husband Donald, a paediatrician and psycho-analyst, had been deeply involved in the care of those evacuated children, including, and especially, those who had proved ‘unfosterable’ and ended up in ‘hostels’. They worked in Oxfordshire, offering advice, support and consultation. Clare’s teaching therefore, was rooted in concern for children who had had disrupted lives and, often, problematic relations with their parents. This was in direct contrast to some of the work of the (then) C.G. Clinics, whose clientele tended to be drawn from intact families in which children were displaying behavioural difficulties. Clare pioneered a ‘Child Care Course’, (there were only 3 to begin with), for graduate students, which had at its heart, the children whose needs and problems fell under the new Children Act 1948. This was expressly designed to provide unified departments, within local government, for children who were, or might be, deprived of an ordinary home life because of parental difficulties.

Evacuation had brought to the attention of the country, not only the extent of the poverty in which so many children had lived, but also the dire effects of separation and trauma. Nor were the alternatives to the family problem-free. Pre-war arrangements for residential and

foster care were seen to be inadequate and a particular scandal, a child, Dennis O'Neill, killed by foster parents in 1947, was widely discussed in the serious papers.

During the immediate post-war period, running in parallel with the trends I have been describing, the work of John Bowlby, on attachment, linked in the first instance to delinquent children (Bowlby 1944), was taking shape. The early films of James and Joyce Robertson built on these foundations and offered compelling evidence of the effects on young children of separation from parents. (Robertson 1.) 1953 2.) 1969)

Last year, I saw the 1953 film again after many years at a conference of paediatricians. I was reminded of the huge significance of that film and those who backed it, in changing hospital practice so that mothers could be admitted with their young children. I also noted that I remembered it so well, wincing in advance of distressing shots of Laura in her cot.

I am sketching in here, the focus of those early years in childrens services, which were on children in transit, or in limbo when they should have been at least in transit.

Clare Winnicott believed that social work, an emerging profession, was critical to the provision of a child care service which would help the child within his/her environment. By that, she meant that social workers had a job to do both with the child directly and for the child. Most of this paper is about the former – the direct work; but she never forgot that the social work role is not simply helping a child to adjust. It is also about influencing the environment in which the developing child grows up. That environment usually, but not exclusively, is about the people directly involved with the child. (Of course sometimes the people may only be in the child's head at a given time; a kind of virtual reality rather than reality).

I am emphasising this because it is a distortion of Clare's 'messages' to suggest it was all about what is in the head/heart of the child, important as that is. Clare's social work was also rooted in practical activity which was, however, always connected to another kind of reality – childrens' feelings. She confronted fearlessly chief

education officers, or any administrator whom she believed was preventing the execution of the right care plan for a child. She was secure in her professionalism.

Those of you who have read her biography will understand why I stress these points. Starting as a social worker she became a psychoanalyst and this came to be used, quite unjustifiably, a kind of stick to beat her with, and, by association, child care social work as it struggled to come of age. This is a complex story, too long to be told here. Some of which is about the influence of USA social work, never of particular interest to Clare. It has, however, long term consequences relevant to our theme today. Afraid of becoming mini-psychoanalysts, some social workers proceeded to throw the baby out with the bath-water, (yes, I know, an unfortunate image); they retreated from seeking to understand childrens' feelings about their situation.

There are curious contradictions about this. The rise of the idea of the 'life story book' for children in foster and adoptive care points to a contrary trend. This level of work with a child suggests a recognition of the child's needs to make sense of the jigsaw puzzle of

his/her life. Surely this must mean helping children to understand their feelings about it all? When done well in that context, it obviously requires the social worker to empathise and help the child to verbalise his/her feelings. But it is one of the many confusing and worrying aspects of contemporary practice, that these skills have not, by and large, been carried across to other spheres of child care practice, noticeably in relation to children in their own homes who are neglected or maltreated. Hence, many Serious Case Reviews point to the failure of social workers to establish effective communication with children. Some underlying reasons for this have been discussed by Ferguson (2009), who cited the Jasmine Beckford Serious Case Review of 1987 as an example.

We are still paying the price today of that retreat from our responsibility to reach out and respond to childrens feelings. The word ‘therapeutic’, which Clare pointed out nearly 50 years ago, (1963 (i) p.70), only means ‘tending to the cure of’ and is still too readily conflated with ‘*psychotherapeutic*’ when we discuss helping children through play.

There were other factors in addition to confusion over psychoanalytic theory that drew social workers away from the development of their skills in working directly with children. And, before turning to the relevance of Clare's teaching to practice today, I need to acknowledge the part that I, and others of my generation, played in allowing her wisdom to be pushed into the background. It was Clare's misfortune that too soon after she weighed into the battle for improved childrens' services and pinned her hopes to the emerging cadre of social workers, other forces came into play, professional and political. The crucial professional one was, of course, the emergence of the concept of generic social work, from the USA, much affected by the influential and rather intimidating figure of Dame Eileen Youngusband, who played a major part in the generic model which we (to an extent) imported from the USA and in the huge expansion of social work in the 1960s. There are 'tides in the affairs of men' and this tide proved irresistible. I was caught up in the excitement of the idea that social work could be conceived as a coherent whole, with underlying values, theories and skills which could be transferred to all user (client) groups. Lacking literature of our own, our ideas were fed by powerful and able figures, mostly women, on the American scene. In England and

Wales there was a rare confluence of interests; academic, (new, 'generic' courses), administrative, ("Seebohm depts."), and quasi-professional (the creation of BASW) from separate organisations, such as the Association of Child Care Officers and the Institute of Medical Social Workers. Then, in 1980, the generic seal was set by the creation of CCETSW, which unified social work training nationally and began to develop national requirements. All this at the time seemed progressive and worthwhile; in retrospect it is easy to see how unprepared society, government and social work academia were for this very large undertaking.

This is a subject of another lecture. What I must say, however, is that it has taken me many years to bring to the surface the nagging sense of my disloyalty to Clare and my guilt that I went along too readily with the current trends. I recall that in 1970, when I was editor of the new BJSW I accepted an article by Joan Vann in which she raised her fears for the child care service in the new 'generic' context. I recognised the article as well written and important and published it, but I simply did not want to heed its warning. It was simply too painful. I am not so omnipotent as to think that I could have significantly affected policy and practice in those years. But I

did not let myself see the dangers ahead. Not did I manage well the tension in myself between my loyalty and admiration for Clare and what she stood for, and the forces for change which were attractive but which, to be blunt, resulted in a weakening of the child care service in its early and vulnerable days.

Overcrowded curricula and other preoccupations squeezed out many of the early ‘child-centred’ initiatives on courses. There was very little development of direct work with children in the 1970s and 1980s within social service departments except in aspects of fostering and adoption. Ironically, this was the time when the abuse of children in their families began to hit the headlines and when practice skills in handling such situations were desperately needed. Kanter, in his biography (2004), cites the late Lucy Faithfull “recalling Clare’s despair about British social work in the last weeks before her death” in 1984 (p.151). These words affect me deeply.

Clare did not write specifically about child abuse or child protection, these words are not indexed in her published papers and I do not recall her ever teaching about it, although she gave expert witness at the Maria Colwell inquiry in 1973. What is clear,

however, is that she was quite unafraid of the ideas which lie behind the word 'abuse', which replaced the naïve term 'battering' of the early 70s. She and Donald were able to face the darkest parts of themselves and hence of other people. There was absolutely no sentimentality. Therefore her key ideas of good practice are all embedded in a background of understanding of the love, hate, joy, pain, sorrow, depression and passion which children experience.

Those of you who have read Kanter's biography will know that the personal and professional partnership of Donald and Clare Winnicott was exceptionally fruitful. Each was an independent spirit who brought to the partnership experience and creativity which was quite distinct. But the lasting value of their contribution to social work theory and practice was in part due to the ways they exchanged their thoughts and ideas, sometimes reframing them as they went along. Donald, I think, initiated more but Clare only used ideas in talking to social workers, which she had fully internalised for which she could see the application in practice. Because of this, it is pointless to separate their contributions. Next month, I am giving a paper in London on Donald Winnicott's views on 'the anti-social tendency' in young people. Recently, I went to see a very old

friend, now in her late 80s, who did the Psychiatric Social Work course at the LSE in the late 1970s, long after my time there. She is now blind and very deaf and tires easily. But she was reenergised when I referred to Donald, remembering his weekly teaching and how exactly it was, particularly in the sense of freedom and flexibility in practice which he conveyed. I went home. The next day she rang me and said ‘I forgot to tell you something. He used to sit on the floor sometimes and show us how he communicated with children through ‘squiggles’ in drawing. (Squiggles were games played when Donald and the child exchanged rough drawings and told each other about them.) And he said “this is what social workers do with children”. By this, he meant, I think, a direct attempt, through the medium of a simple game, to understand who the child is feeling *at this time*.

Before I return to Clare’s writing, let me pause to mention two aspects of Donald’s work on anti-social children that seem to me of particular significance to my theme today. He suggested that many anti-social acts (he mentions stealing and destructiveness) are in fact indications of hope, a kind of shorthand, a cry for love and attention. In a moving passage, he wrote, ‘over and over again, one sees the

moment of hope wasted or withered because of mismanagement or intolerance'. (Winnicott 1956). He links this argument to a distinction between the concepts of *privation* and *deprivation*. The 'prived child' is hopeless; he or she has never had good enough experiences to mourn their loss. The *deprived* child wants to recapture those times of good enough experiences.

Now there is a huge amount to discuss about this. How does one distinguish between 'the prived' and 'the deprived'? What part does early experience play in the anti-social behaviour of the child and adolescent? When is a child really hopeless? (How do we know?) The point I want to emphasise is that in direct work with children, there may be precious opportunities to grasp the moment of hope, even when it is presented in singularly awkward and unattractive ways.

I thought about this as I read, in the Guardian of 4<sup>th</sup> September 2009, the account of two young Doncaster boys, sent to secure units for grave assaults on two of their peers. A neighbour on the estate in which they lived was reported as saying, of the boys wild and destructive behaviour – 'All they wanted was a bit of sympathy – a

bit of love from their parents... For them to get into trouble' (meant) 'that they were getting attention from their parents'. Of the younger boy (only 10 then), she said he was 'crying out for attention from his mother and stepfather'...

The other idea from Donald which is useful here relates to his paper entitled 'Adolescence: Going Through the Doldrums' (1965) He writes of the need of the adolescent to find his or her own reality and that this may necessitate confrontation with the adults around him/her. The vital point, however, lies in the value of personal rather than institutional confrontation, i.e. in the context of relationships.

Clare contributed significantly to the understanding of communicating with children. Boggled down as we are in debates about 'assessment' (a word she did not use) her observations are relevant and salutary for us today.

She argued that we were not aiming at collecting information or taking a case history, although this may be important to our understanding and to help children ground their memories. Rather, she says: "our real aim is to keep children alive and to help them

establish a sense of their own identity and worth in relation to other people. By keeping children alive, I am of course referring to maintaining their capacity to feel. If there are no feelings, there is no life, there is merely existence”... (1964(i) p.187)

Behind this lies the profoundly important observation that any professional encounter with a child involves a relationship, however new or uncertain, and thus has therapeutic significance, for better or worse. The so called ‘objective observations’ that one is required to make do not take place in an emotional vacuum. Even if I am only looking at a child, something is happening emotionally between us. If I actually feel nothing is happening, then that indeed is cause for worry about the child for, as Clare says then, ‘there is no life, merely existence’. Unless, of course, it means we ourselves are not engaged!

I fear that administrative and bureaucratic demands sometimes blunt our sensibilities.

Once the essentially therapeutic nature of the encounter is accepted, then there are lots of questions about how this is to be achieved.

Clare wrote about that. One of the better known of her comments arose directly from my invitation to her to speak at a conference in 1963 on the topic 'Face to Face with Children'. I still remember my feeling of embarrassment when she spoke at the conference of her discomfort with the title, which I had devised, (though she acknowledge it was well meant!). She suggested that it conjured up a very definite picture of social worker and child confronting each other in an alarmingly direct way! 'The alarm', she added 'would I am sure be shared at least equally by both parties'. (1963iii p.166/7). So if not eyeball to eyeball, how are these communications established?

Clearly, a natural path to communication is through play, an activity essential to human and much animal development. As early as 1945, Clare published a paper on 'children who cannot play'. Some of the illustrations were from the wartime experiences of traumatised children whose capacity to explore feelings in play had been stifled. She describes a 6 year old boy who was "the most completely cut off child imaginable". (1945 i p.118). His parents had been killed in the air raid shelter from which he had been rescued. He would not play when another child was around but gradually, after about 18

months, began to do so whilst ‘the foster mother sat knitting or reading’. Eventually he said suddenly, ‘does it hurt to get killed’? Clare speculates on the possibility that he could eventually ask the question because there was a foundation of ‘good enough experiences with his parents’ and he now felt safe with his foster carer, i.e. it was safe to go back. The profoundly important point which she makes is that play enables past experiences to be used and expressed in activities which the child takes on his/her own initiative. (1945 I p.113). The child then can have a measure of control over the content of the play and what he draws from it.

I referred earlier to the fears of social workers that they were venturing into waters too deep when they engaged in ‘therapeutic play’. It is time to leave these fears behind and recognise ‘that play is a natural means of communication for all children and an essential tool in helping them clarify their feelings and thoughts’. (1945 ii p.113). In various places Clare deals, pretty trenchantly, with exaggerated fears of inappropriate ‘psycho-therapy’ and says: “A very simple and clear distinction can be made between psycho-therapy and social work’... ‘because of the nature of their work and the functions of their respective agencies’...’The psychotherapist

starts from the inside and is concerned with inner conflicts which hamper social development... 'The social worker, on the other hand, starts off as a real person concerned with external events and people in the child's life' ... 'In the course of her work with him, she will attempt to bridge the gap between the external world and his feelings about it and in so doing she will enter his inner world too'. (1963 iii p.171).

For us today, there are some worrying implications in that description of the social work role with children. In some localities there are dreadful difficulties in providing reasonable continuities of experience, when staff come and go. Nor is it always clear that the need in the child's life for 'a bridging person' is taken as a priority, when jobs are divided for administrative reasons or files go unread. Passing children around like parcels between workers to suit organisational models or difficulties would have sent Clare into a controlled rage.

I am sad when I hear that children are, more often than not, taken for parental 'contact' meetings by those who can drive but are neither 'bridges' for the children in the sense of 'knowing' about

their world or qualified to ‘hear them’ therapeutically. Taking children to places in cars was so pivotal in my own relationship with them that I cannot imagine the work without it. And it was wonderful we didn’t have to look at each other! The recent article by Harry Ferguson (2009) to which I have already referred takes up the story.

Clare raises some specific issues about communication which merit special mention. One is the notion of symbols. “A symbol is simply something that is allowed to stand for something else”. (1964 ii pp. 184.5). More technically, a symbol is a secondary phenomenon which can be accepted and allowed to stand for a primary one”, [temporarily or later permanently]. She refers to the blanket or the woolly toy as examples of symbols which can give comfort and satisfaction to an infant or toddler. This familiar event was noted by Donald who developed explanatory theory around it; first described as “transitional object” – i.e. a kind of bridge between mother and infant it was later called ‘the first not-me possession’. (Winnicott 1951). It caught my imagination as a child care student and became a dissertation topic! More important, it had a profound influence on my practice and I am sure on my fellow students. In those days, we

received more children in care for short periods. The process included a careful inquiry about the 'bits of stuff' or battered soft toys to which the child was attached, so that they were not left behind on the journey to and fro. This small but very important action arose from a real understanding of the power of a symbol in this case to provide 'the bridge' and to comfort. To me, it made sense of something I had observed before I did my LSE course. As an undergraduate I was working in a residential school for desperately disturbed children. Bedtimes were a huge source of tension; with scant regard for dental hygiene, some staff gave particular children a boiled sweet of a particular colour once they were in bed. So Ben, lets say, always had a purple one, even if the member of staff on duty differed. A symbol of some kind of continuity in fragmented lives, of people knowing and remembering what colour of sweet you liked.

Clare tackled head on some reasons why we maybe hesitant to engage directly with children. (She does not refer to simple 'awkwardness' and uncertainty, even shyness, yet this can be a factor. I well remember a nice essay by a male student in Nottingham about child observation which began: 'this was the first

time I had ever met a person under three' ...) But Clare knew how powerful are the feelings in ourselves aroused by children, above all, those damaged or in distress, and how overwhelming these feelings may be to the worker. "We are horrified at some of the experiences they have been through", she said, and continued: "To work effectively with children, the first and most fundamental thing we have to know about is the strength of our own feelings about the suffering of children." (1963 iv p.169).

These comments have assumed a particular poignancy in the context of child abuse tragedies over some 40 years. Our Serious Case Reviews do not reveal what we could not bear to see? I have wondered in recent years why it has taken so long to place the issue of neglected children at the centre of child maltreatment concerns.. A sense of impotence, of hopelessness in such cases (for complex reasons which I can't go into here) may have caused some workers to lift their emotional drawbridges. "I can't face this; this child is in too much misery, cold, wet, dirty, hungry, alone".

We ignore these hugely powerful feelings at our peril, and, of course, at the childrens' peril. But it should be an absolute duty of

the organisations which employ social workers to ensure that there are safe places for these feelings to be explored and managed.

Clare did not, I think, ever envisage the extent to which social workers would be sucked into constraining rather than liberating bureaucracies. She wrote positively, not negatively about being ‘professional’, not about elitism, gaining power and control, or feathering ones own nest – all criticisms of emerging child care social work in the 1960s and 1970s, often made by leather-jacketed sociologists. Rather, she wrote: ‘Our professional relationship is in itself the basic technique, ... by means of which we relate ourselves to the individual and to the problem’... Our professional self ‘is the most highly organised and integrated part of ourselves. It is the best part of ourselves... we get reassurance about our value and goodness because people can take and use what we give. Our professional relationships are more balanced and reliable than our personal lives’. (1955 i p.149/50.)

I have found these words deeply helpful at various times, when other things fell apart. They also clearly acknowledge that some personal fulfilment is an acceptable component of a professional

relationship, if it is properly directed. What Clare does not take up, though, is that there has to be a working context which facilitates such professional relationships. Hence, for example, my earlier criticism of arrangements for contact when the relevant social worker does not have the opportunity to be with the child. Or when pressure to complete assessments on time stifles the essentials in a therapeutic encounter. Her words remain with me as a vital reminder of the essential dignity of a truly professional relationship.

So then, and in conclusion, what would I like you to take from this paper?

No doubt partly because I am in old age, I would like social workers to give a bit more time to history. I am thinking of two kinds of history here. First, although in direct work with children, the focus is on the ‘here and now’, it must be informed by a sense of the importance of the child’s history in relation to the behaviour of the present. This seems dreadfully obvious but, as early as the ‘90s, commentators such as David Howe, were noting that we seemed to be neglecting the vital significance of the past in relation to the present. This is of course, not simply about facts but the feelings it

has generated in the children. I am haunted by the episode recounted to me about a social worker who turned up at a Review Case Conference for an immigrant young person without ‘reading the file’ and did not know that the child’s parents had been murdered. She asked him whether he wanted to go and live with his parents. Then, there is our history, our occupational and professional identity as social workers. How did we get here? What has been gained or lost in the process? It sometimes seems to me that we are caught up in a dreadful whirl of happenings, crises and instant communication; this includes, but goes far beyond, our own share of child care alarms and excursions. There is loss of collective wisdom, of a sense of continuity which gives us a framework to understand current behaviour.

Although there is a huge amount to be done to challenge the negative reporting of much in the media and the negative statements of politicians who so often have competing agendas, there is also a need to reformulate the purposes of the work and the means of achieving it. It is irresponsible not to look back and ask – how did we get here, what has been learnt and what has been lost?

I have a sense that we may be on the cusp of significant change, though paradoxically at a time of particular economic difficulty and, in all probability, political change. I have seen a succession of enquiries from Maria Colwell in 1973 onwards resulting in overoptimistic political statements about “never again”. We have been forced to face failure in the care system, such as the poor educational attainment of children in care. There has also been far too little celebration of genuine achievements, notably in the development of fostering and adoption practice. (Schofield & Simmonds, 2009). But despite this, I do hear a different voice in the discourse, in the better media, in the journals, even from the politicians on a good day, which seems to be saying that we must find better ways of using social workers to help children and their families and of supporting them to do so.

If I am right, then there is a fascinating, difficult and immensely worthwhile task awaiting us; to articulate for the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the role of social workers in working with children who cannot live with their families or who are at risk within them. In one way, we have the advantage over the early social workers. We now have a substantial body of good research which has told us a great deal about

the factors which affect the lives of children in care and the social work response to them. Our problem, is not so much lack of knowledge; it is our failure to translate it into effective action.

Clare did not have the benefit of that research but she had the ability to use certain insights from psychoanalytic theory which were and are of fundamental importance to this work and which deserve our respect. As I said before, she never exaggerated the part which social workers had to play. She knew well that those who cared for children hour by hour were critical, and that it was the management of the total environment which in the end was going to make the difference between good and bad outcomes. So this is not an omnipotent claim by social workers of the centre ground. But we can use today her summing up of the three areas of work in which social workers have a particular significance.

‘First we try to reach the children, to establish communication and to construct a working relationship which is personal and yet structured.’

‘Then, we try to look at his world with him and to help him sort out his feelings about it: to face the painful things and to discover the good things’

Then, we try to consolidate the positive things with the child himself and his world and help him make the most of his life’

Clare added, ‘even if we are unable to help children as much as we would like to do, we can at least attempt to prevent muddle,... or try to sort it out for them so that things add up and make some sort of sense. In this way we can prevent or relieve a great deal of distress’. (1963 v p.183).

‘If there is no vision, the people perish’ (Proverbs: 18). In Clare’s case, the vision was founded on a powerful moral view of social responsibility to the deprived or disadvantaged and of the child as a whole person, with fundamental and interacting needs material, physical and emotional. Her vision was that social workers could play an important part in helping to meet these needs. What better for social workers today than to take that vision forward and to work out its implications for contemporary society?

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### Clare Winnicott

Children who cannot play. 1945

i) p.118      ii) p.113

Casework techniques in the child care services. 1955

i) pp.149/50

Face to Face with Children. 1963

i) p.170      ii) pp166/7      iii) p.171      iv) p.169      v) p.183

Communicating with children. 1964

i) p.118      ii) pp.184/5

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'For those who would be in communication  
with others, simply everything counts and  
all our faculties are needed if we are to  
receive and interpret with approximate  
accuracy what others are expressing.  
"Communicating with children" p.187.

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**What we are aiming to achieve in**  
**communicating with children?**

"We are not aiming to collect information or  
to take a case history; (although we do so  
on the way)... Our real aim is to keep  
children alive and to help them to establish  
a sense of their own identity and worth in  
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[Communicating with children. p.187]

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"A very simple and clear distinction can be made between psycho-therapy and social work'... 'Because of the nature of their work and the functions of their respective agencies'... The psychotherapist starts from the inside and is concerned with inner conflicts which hamper social development... The social worker, on the other hand, starts off as a real person concerned with external events and people in the child's life... In the course of her work with him, she will attempt to bridge the gap between the external world and his feelings about it and in so doing she will enter his inner world too."

[Face to Face with Children. p.171]

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### On Symbols

'A symbol is simply something that is allowed to stand for something else... The capacity for symbol formation in the individual is an important part of normal development and is a crucial matter in the capacity to communicate and to become socialised.'

[Communicating with children p.185]

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### On our feelings in working with children

'To work effectively with children, the first and most fundamental thing we have to know about is the strength of our own feelings about the suffering of children.'

[Face to face with children. p. 169]

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### On the professional relationship

'Our professional relationship is in itself the basic technique, ... by means of which we relate ourselves to the individual and to the problem'...

Our professional self 'is the most highly organised and integrated part of ourselves. It is best part of ourselves... we get reassurance about our value and goodness because people can take and use what we give. Our professional relationships are more balanced and reliable than our personal lives'.

[Casework techniques in the child care service. Pp. 149/50]

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### The 3 areas for social work with children

'First we try to reach the children, to establish communication and to construct a working relationship which is personal and yet structured.'

Then, we try to look at his world with him and to help him sort out his feelings about it: to face the painful things and to discover the good things'

Then, we try to consolidate the positive things with the child himself and his world and help him make the most of his life'

Face to Face with children.p183.

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