Relational Practice Model

*Isolation or connection?*
*Sustainable human relations?*

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Wider context…

Any ‘New Thing’ must demonstrate sustainability in three areas:

• ECONOMIC
• ENVIRONMENTAL
• SOCIAL

The 'Triple Bottom Line'
Today:

• Why a model?
• What is relational practice?
• How to apply it
• Where to apply it – short and long-term
• Making it happen – a ‘relational practice movement’
• What next?
Why do we need a model?

Currently, narrow industrialised models of therapeutic interventions ignore many factors in the wider system, including the need to take a broader approach to the complexity of relational working.

The powerful effect of managerialism and market competitiveness all combine to produce a milieu in which human values and relationships are not explicitly prioritised.

It is our hypothesis that the experience of public services is increasingly impoverished and alienating for those providing or receiving them. We all face the risk of losing our capacity to maintain a relational basis to our work, without a clearly articulated underlying model.

We need agreement about this so that new practice strategies and systems are developed to counteract it.

...if you disagree with this, you may be in the wrong room!
The Relational Field

ADVERSITY (= ‘ACES’)
- Deprivation
- Neglect
- Abuse
- Trauma
- Loss
- Illness

LIFE EXPERIENCE
- Parenting
- Education
- Employment
- Social stability
- Economic sufficiency
- Relational intimacy
- Physical intimacy
- Experience of home
- Social network

PHYSICAL
- Metabolism
- Nutrition
- Microbiome
- Physical environment
- Medication
- Physical treatments
- Neuroplasticity
- Disability

MODIFIERS
- Relational experiences
- Narrative
- Therapies

SOCIOCULTURAL
- Relational environment
- Racial / national / religious / gender / sexual / political / occupational identities
- Enrichment:
  - Arts and creative expression
  - Humanities
  - Sport
  - Play

LIFE OUTCOME
- Adaptability
- Stability
- Flexibility
- Functionality
- Belonging and trust
- Self-worth
- Sense of purpose
- Meaning
- Moral framework

OVERALL
- Health - viability
- Education - capability
- Employment - sustainability
- Justice – prosociality

PRE-BIRTH
- Parental health and mental health
- Ante-natal care
- Genetic inheritance
- Intra-uterine
- Obstetric

BIRTH

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- Attachment and bonding
- Emotional containment
- Communication and play
- Inclusion and involvement
- Agency and empowerment

POST-LIFE
- Spirituality
- Remembrance
- Legacy

LIFE EXPERIENCE

DEATH

Unconscious

Conscious
Hopes for this model

• Extends the baseline understanding and conceptual rationale for service interventions in public services, based on explicit theories of causation and need, using established evidence, research and innovative investigation: **it should help to inform public policy and strategy**

• Gives a ‘whole-person / whole-life’ perspective on disease / distress / disability that a simple disease model cannot address: **it will help clinicians and researchers to understand how they might relate to, and collaborate with, other relevant areas**

• Makes complex ideas of ‘human development’ accessible across disciplinary borders, and to the general public: **it can identify, and perhaps prevent, problems of over-specialisation and fragmentation of services**
Relational practice – what is it?

Relational Practice is a way of working where establishing and maintaining a helpful interpersonal relationship is the priority.

It requires:

• flexibility, adaptability and willingness
• an understanding of the inner and outer lives of individuals in the social field
• an enabling and facilitating attitude in developing our relational behaviour

...only a first attempt at a definition!
Relational practice – what it is for

• To facilitate the normal development of psychosocial life
• To join the personal and the social at all levels in all domains
• To enable professional work to be based on better knowledge and understanding of essential relational skills
• To counter the dehumanising effect of mechanistic practice
Current applications

• Health and Social Care – Enabling Town Slough
• Criminal Justice – OPDP, PIPEs, Enrichment programmes
• Housing and Homelessness - PIEs
• Education – teaching and schools, exploring how...
• Environment – Greencare
Big Picture Applications – 10 year vision

- Health and Social Care - policy commitment for all professionals to be trained in model and relational practice
- Criminal Justice – extension and expansion of the principles of OPDP; establishment of joint health and criminal justice operations; psychosocial prisons and prison reform
- Housing & Homelessness – the role of community and belongingness in housing and community development
- Education – learning environments all need to be developed on the basis of the connection between relational health and effective learning
- Environment – policy commitment linking personal choice and expectation to climate recovery
- Wider community applications – transition projects
Relational Practice Movement

- The movement
- The membership
- The charter
- The evidence
- The know-yourself programme
The principles for a relational charter

• Belonging and connection
• Safety and confidence
• Involvement and inclusion
• Boundaries and limits
• Communication and authenticity
• Honesty and transparency
• Spontaneity and flexibility
• Ownership and responsibility
• Personal agency and freedom
• Leadership and purpose
Making the Relational Movement Happen

- Policy and politics
- Practice and Innovation
- Campaign and communication
- Research and evidence
Next up...

• BIGSPD – circle groups
• Delphi exercise – agreed definition
• Medical anthropology – detailed description
• LTP includes ‘therapeutic environments’ phrase
• Further evolution of Enabling and Facilitating Environments
• Social media?
• Other sectors
• Establishing the value of hope - coupled with professional disobedience
THE END

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