



Supported Lodgings | Mentoring | Semi-Independent Accommodation



Dear Friend

As we move towards Easter and the temperature increases and evenings become lighter it's difficult not to have a little more 'spring' in your step (excuse the pun). For me this is even more the case given we recently moved another young person into a supported lodgings place - this time in Peterborough.

In this newsletter we share a paper on **relational practice**, which builds on our theme of love from last month and is at the very heart of all our work at Concrete Rose. In the words of Bruce Perry *"Relationships are the agents of change and the most powerful therapy is human love"*.

You'll also see our growing waiting list for supported lodgings, including the **14 young people** referred to us this month, as well as our **practical wish list** plus a recipe for **chicken in 40 cloves of garlic**. We've also been doing some work on supporting young people toward **employment**, and have identified a few ways you might be able to help!

Finally, whether Easter is a time of rest and relaxation, reflecting on and celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus, or eating lots of chocolate (or like me, all three) I wish you a joyful time.

With love,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M.J. Farrington".

Mike Farrington
Founder



The Heart of Practice: Building Cultures of Relational Care



Following decades of professional practice with children where "love" has been considered unprofessional, ideas of love are now being reintroduced - something to celebrate!

Mike Farrington has collaborated with **Ali Wigzell**, Assistant Professor in Criminology, University of Nottingham, on a new paper drawing on their combined experience to design organisations and practices where a relational approach can flourish. Here's a brief extract - and you can read the full article [here](#).

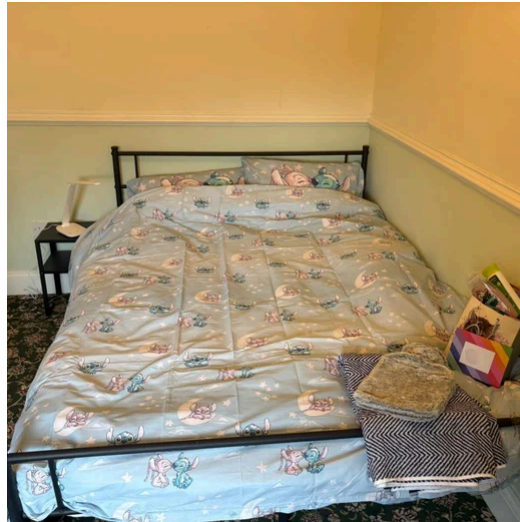
Ten features of relational practice with children

Loving care is not only an emotional response but a choice, a value and a practice (Held, 2006; Tronto, 1993). These are ten features of relational practice that young people have highlighted as making them feel cared for:

1. **"Gives a sh*t"**: The adage often given to teachers that students want to 'know that you care before they care what you know' is applicable here.
2. **"They do what they say"**: A key way of building trust is whether or not the adult does what they say they are going to do.
3. **"Not always on downer"**: Children need encouragement and hope. This can be difficult in a role that encompasses harm and risk but change is more likely with a strengths based approach than an emphasis on error and consequence.
4. **"Never gives up"**: Children need commitment; two major components of this are perseverance and forgiveness.

5. **“Goes the extra mile”**: actions above and beyond the ‘norm’.
6. **“Has time for me”**: time and attention help children to feel they matter. .
7. **“Looks like they enjoy themselves”**: Children will quickly pick up on whether you want to be with them and spend time with them or would rather not.
8. **“They’re there if I need them”**: With careful management, availability even outside of scheduled meetings is another way children experience care and concern.
9. **“They don’t patronise me”**: Recognising children as capable experts in their own lives (if sometimes in need of guidance) is a key footing to communicate care.
10. **“Not afraid to give a bit of themselves”**: Sharing small details of your life, such as a favourite football team or hobbies makes you more human, genuine - and trustworthy.

You can find the full article **The Heart of Practice: Building Cultures of Relational Care** [here](#).



Move-in day

This month we moved our first young person in with supported lodgings hosts in Peterborough! This is a new, and exciting, step as we look to provide more options for young people across the county. Together with hosts, and gifts from Castle Street Methodist Church, we were able to make move-in particularly special by providing a welcome pack and, for a huge Lilo and Stitch fan, bespoke bedding!! As you will see below, we've had lots of referrals this month of young people needing a safe place to call home, and our wait list continues to grow. Being a supported lodgings host is compatible with full-time work (and holidays etc) so if you have a spare room and may be able to help, please get in touch for an exploratory conversation: mike@concreterose.co.uk / 07881926728



Employers - can you help?

We're desperately in need of opportunities with sympathetic employers and organisations who are prepared to give our young people the chance to thrive in workplace settings. In particular we need:

1. Volunteer roles
2. Work experience opportunities
3. Part-time employment
4. Summer internships

Our young people vary widely in skills, experience and confidence and so we are keen to work with employers to create a myriad of options. We're also looking to create a **Trauma-Informed Employers Network** (watch this space!). If you'd like to support our work in this area, do contact: mike@concreterose.co.uk.



Sector ambassadors

Most young people are fortunate enough to be able to call on a network of trusted adults to find out about roles, companies and sectors they'd like to explore for work. Young

people who have grown up in care or difficult family backgrounds often suffer 'relational poverty', so we want to create a network of adults who are prepared to chat about what roles involve, the dynamics of a particular sector and how to get into it. If you have experience in a particular field and would be prepared to be called upon occasionally to chat to a young person about your work/sector, please contact Juliet for more details:

juliet.allan@concreterose.co.uk.



Mentor training

This month we hosted a mentor training evening at C3 church exploring the topics of finance and housing. Unsurprisingly, for many of the students we support these are areas of particular concern especially during holidays, periods of intermission (health breaks) and post-graduation (with many students having to sort housing and work whilst completing finals). For a real life example of how these issues can affect care-experienced students we recommend this article in the Cambridge University newspaper, Varsity: [Care-leaver left at risk of homelessness](#)

For more information on our mentoring programme contact: alison@concreterose.co.uk

Practical support wishlist

These are a few things we could really do with if you or someone you know could help:

- **A large rug or some carpeting** to make our meeting room more welcoming for young people gathering for social support while job-hunting
- **Tupperwares/lidded food boxes** so we can send young people home with a meal from our Care Leavers' Hub
- **4 bedroom rental property in Cambridge** to pilot our Co-Living Project at reduced rental rates

Thank you for supporting our work!

*'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world;
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.'*

Margaret Mead



**One room
One life
One future**

Become a supported lodgings host and help a young person build a firm foundation for the future.

ROOM TO SPARE? MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

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The wait list! Last month we were referred...

- 4 Cambridge University students/graduates requiring short-term accommodation (May-October)
- 2 sixth-form students currently mid A-levels and about to leave care aged 18
- 3 17-year-old young women about to leave care
- 1 17-year-old asylum seeking young man (originally from Sudan) based in Cambridge
- 1 17-year-old asylum seeking young man (also from Sudan) attending Peterborough College
- 1 16-year-old young woman currently in care, working and based in the Newmarket area
- 2 18-year-old young men currently homeless

Could you host a young person with our support?

- 🌹 Rental remittance
- 🌹 Short- (uni holiday) or longer-term options
- 🌹 Careful matching
- 🌹 24/7 on-call support
- 🌹 Comprehensive training
- 🌹 A community of supportive hosts

[Find out more](#) or contact Mike for an exploratory conversation:

E: mike@concreterose.co.uk T: 07881 926728 🌹

"I've had an absolutely wonderful experience"

Please share this newsletter with friends who share your heart for young people

[More hosts needed! Explore hosting...](#)

Home cooking: Chicken in 40 Cloves of Garlic



This is an easy one-pot dish when you have friends over - you can use as many chickens as you like! We cooked it at the Care Leavers' Hub last month - you cook the garlic cloves in their skins and then squeeze out the caramelised paste onto some crusty bread - mmm!

Ingredients:

- 1 whole chicken
- 1 lemon
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/2 tsp mixed herbs
- 1 bottle (cheap!) white wine
- 40 cloves of garlic in their skins
- Salt & pepper to season
- A dash of creme fraiche/cream to add at the end if preferred

Method:

Place a lemon inside a seasoned chicken, and fry the whole chicken in a deep-ish pot til brown all over. Set aside.

Fry a chopped onion with the herbs. When soft, return teh chicken to the pot and add the 40 cloves of garlic and wine. Bring to the boil, then simmer with a lid on in the oven at about 150 degrees for 1-1.5h.

Add a dash of creme fraiche or cream if you like, then serve with crusty bread and salad - squeeze the garlic out of its skins onto crusty bread and enjoy with a fresh salad! 😊

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PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES!

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