

Relational Inclusion blog #20: Self-care

This morning I don't know if my bucket is too full and everything is spilling over or my bucket is empty and there's just nothing left, but I've had enough. I've asked daughter number 2 to brush her teeth five times and she's just looking at me and refusing so I've snapped at her.

I've brushed daughter number 1s hair and she's screamed so loudly you'd think I was trying to pull her hairs out individually with pliers. I try to explain that her four-year-old brother broke two bones in his arm four days ago and made less fuss. But I get sass back. I try to explain how if she screams when it's something so little I'll never know when she's actually hurt. She gives me another mouthful. I make idle threats and snap back, and she runs off to her mum. I shout to my wife that I only need to upset my little boy, and I've managed a pre-school hat-trick.

For those of you who read this weekly, I know in the back of my mind that daughter number 2 has another writing test, and *we know* how that affects her. Daughter number 1 was at an overnight school trip the day before so is shattered. I do know these things.

Not long after, my wife jokingly says, "I hear you've had a little tantrum as well. Did you throw her hair bobble on the floor?" And it takes everything I've got not to snap at her as well.

Today I want to go back to my old ways. I want to shout. I want to stamp my feet. I want my children to follow my instructions first time without arguing and if they don't I want to shout them down until they do. I want to swear at my wife, and I want to scream at the sky.

I've had enough of Relational Inclusion and trauma and attachment and neuroscience. I want to *behave my feelings*.

It's hard. We are emotional animals. Clearly my *window of tolerance* is very narrow. I think back to one of my supervision sessions when the therapist asked me, "How are you sleeping? What are you doing for your own well-being? Because when you're running at full throttle and you're spinning lots of plates, that also affects your nervous system. That is also hyper vigilance. So, what are you doing to check in with yourself and keep yourself healthy?"

And these questions stopped me in my tracks. I'd never thought about it that way. I had only ever thought *literally* in terms of trauma and attachment.

I think my point this week, is that we need to remember to take care of ourselves. We need to check in with ourselves. We need to remember it's ok to not be ok. Relational Inclusion applies to us as well. In fact, it absolutely starts with us because if we're not okay we can't hope to help anyone else, emotions are contagious. And, at the end of the day, we are only human.

As sometimes happens, my feed seems to be reinforcing what I'm learning. This week's quotes are this morning's feed:

1) The art of detachment

*Nothing belongs to me.
It's all an experience.*

True peace begins when we stop trying to own moments, people, or things. Life becomes lighter when we understand that everything we encounter is simply passing through us and not meant to be possessed. The people we love, the pain we endure, the joy we feel, all of it is part of a fleeting experience meant to shape us, not define us. When we learn to observe without clinging, we stop suffering over what leaves and start appreciating what is. Nothing is truly ours and that is what makes every moment sacred. To live without attachment is not to live without love, but to love with freedom and awareness. (@_awaken_one_ / @mindsets)

2) *There is something good found in slowing down, in simplifying. In saying no. In the dying art of doing nothing at all. There is something we need in the stillness. Something we can't get anywhere else. (Brooke Hampton)*

3) *Every moment of one's existence one is growing into more or retreating less. One is always living a little more or dying a little bit. (Norman Mailer)*

Which reminds me of the famous Shawshank quote:

4) *Either get busy living or get busy dying.*

5) *Too often we forget that discipline really means to **teach** not to punish. A disciple is a student, not a recipient of behavioural consequence. (Dr. Dan Siegel, The Whole-Brain Child)*

6) *By acknowledging the emotion, dropping whatever story we are telling ourselves about it, and feeling the energy of the moment, we cultivate compassion for ourselves. (Pema Chodron)*

7) *Half the troubles of life can be traced back to saying 'yes' too quickly and 'no' too slowly. (Josh Billings)*

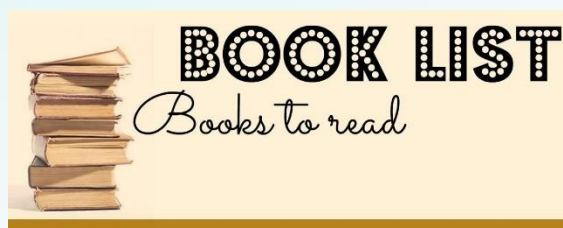
My two print and stick to the wall images this week are:

People react differently to the same stress factors



My *recommended read* is another watch. Jamie Oliver's C4 documentary "Dyslexia Revolution." Powerful, data driven, campaigning for education reform and lots of lived experiences. Good to see Sec of State receive facts relating to undiagnosed neurodivergence and the prison population link

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/jamies-dyslexia-revolution>



This week's pick from my bookshelf is a must read. It's called 'What Happened to You' and is a discussion between Bruce Perry (renowned brain development and trauma expert) and Oprah Winfrey. They shift from asking 'What's wrong with you?' to 'What happened to you?' Need I say more?

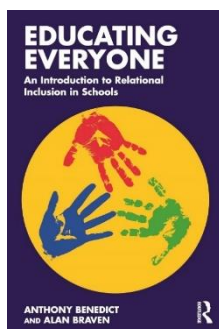
I opened my copy randomly and found this quote:

If you look at the fundamental organisation and functioning of the human body, including the brain, you will see that so much of it is intended to help us create, maintain and manage social interactions. we are relational creatures.

If you have read any interesting books which support / develop / further understanding of all things Relational Inclusion, please add a comment through Substack.

If you find the Relational Inclusion blog useful, feel free to share with your networks.

Our book, Educating Everyone: An Introduction to relational Inclusion in Schools is out now and you must buy it and tell everyone else to buy it. It is available pretty much everywhere that sells books or you can get it here:



You can subscribe to my weekly blog here:

https://open.substack.com/pub/anthonybenedict/p/relational-inclusion-blog-15?r=5ki35n&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web&showWelcomeOnShare=true

Finally, I'd like to share a quote which has really stuck in my mind:

8) *Wish people well. Do this silently from your **heart** while you are driving, standing in lines, or with people on the street. **Notice** how you feel when you do this. (Conscious Discipline)*

Thanks for reading

Anthony Benedict

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