



Relational Inclusion blog #63: Dragon Eggs

My eldest (10) pouts at that funny place of peri-adolescence. My youngest (5) stands at that Pinocchio crossroads of being nearly a real boy. And although there is a symmetry in their ages (she'll never be twice his age again) there is a real asymmetry in their behaviour.

He's still delighted with himself because he's just worked out that he can 'stare for a long time'. He wants to be first at everything - including getting in and out of the car. He wants the biggest piece of everything and he hates kisses. He loves nothing more than bouncing on the trampoline with a grown up and watching YouTube clips where Godzilla is pitted against random other wild animals on a strange conveyor belt and although he detests school, he loves playing school (or pets?!) with daughter number two.

Daughter number one has suddenly grown out of playing school. She can no longer walk past a mirror without checking herself out and wiggling her shoulders and hips. She wants her hair bleaching and her nails 'doing' and their points of play and contact have drifted.

She also hasn't yet got to the point where she can quite allow herself to always let him go first. She understands equality in a 'that's not fair' kind of way but can't really grasp equity (although she perfectly understands the image that does the rounds of children standing on boxes looking over a fence).

This means that often World War 3 erupts when she decides to act more toddler than tween. Interestingly it is my son's skills of negotiation and repair that come into play more than my daughter's when things need resolving.

Daughter number one has started to walk to school with her friend who calls at ours maybe ten minutes before it's time to set off. Unusually this morning all my children are missing and quiet (which is very early for them to be up to no good). I shout for my son and daughter number two tells me he is with daughter number one in her bedroom. This is even odder.

The two of them and her walk-to-school friend appear and huddle round something.

'What's that?' I ask but I'm not paying proper attention. My child radar hasn't woken up yet this morning.

'It's nothing. It's nothing,' says daughter number one with a giggle I don't pick up on.

They disappear downstairs. I shout that it's time for the two walkers to go and then my son announces 'oopsy' and I hear something clatter but not smash, which is a bonus.

I get to the living room, and he is standing surrounded by thousands of polystyrene balls which cover the floor like a new carpet. Half of a small plastic egg is in his hands. The other half is submerged on the floor.

He is at that age where he drops EVERYTHING.

I do that dreadful parent frustrated half sigh, half shout thing and call my daughter's name.

Daughter number one appears and I give her that incredulous look and ask if she really had to give him those two minutes before we leave for school.

I can't help but see that my little boy flinches a little and then says quickly, 'I'll tidy them.'

I catch myself enough to ask more gently:

'What were you doing?'

'Mixing my dragon eggs,' he replies.

Of course he was.

We sweep them up together which is actually quite good fun and then we head off to school.

It's only when I'm alone with myself that I really see the moment.

Daughter number one has tried to make magic for her little brother out of ordinary things in her bedroom and it's worked. The thing we have tried to explain - the difference between being five and ten; the way to be around kids (even when you're still a kid but they're younger) she has naturally done without prompting, without anything to gain (usually this is so she can 'have' or 'earn' something). This morning she has done something for the sheer delight and for her brother.

And I nearly crushed it.

My one a day quotes for this week are:

1. *Kids won't learn to manage emotions by being told. They learn by watching you.*
(The Therapist Parent)
2. *A child educated only at school is an uneducated child.* (unknown)
3. *One day you will tell your story of how you overcame what you went through and it will be someone else's survival guide.* (Brene Brown)
4. *"It takes the same amount of time and attention to meet children's emotional needs as it does to deal with behaviours caused by their unmet emotional needs."*
(Pam Leo)
5. *Today, you are living the results of the decisions you made three months ago. The same thing will be said in three months' time.* (Quotopia)
6. *"For a small child there is no division between playing and learning; between the things he or she does just for fun and things that are educational. The child learns while living and any part of living that is enjoyable is also play"* (Penelope Leach)
7. *Dysregulation is not a "bad" thing; it's a human thing. Our nervous system becomes dysregulated for a variety of reasons, throughout the day.* (J. MILBURN)



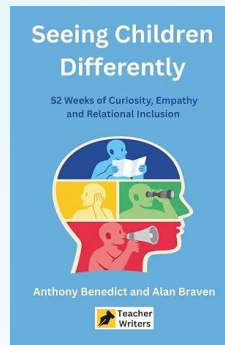
My two print and stick to the wall images this week are:



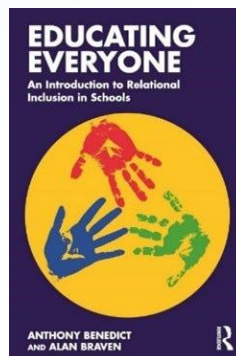
My recommended read this week is about [Introspection is an illusion created by the brain | Nick Chater » IAI TV](#)

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

Our brand-new book, [Seeing Children Differently](#) is out now and available from Amazon.



Our first book, *Educating Everyone: An Introduction to relational Inclusion in Schools* is also still available and you must buy it and tell everyone else to buy it too. It is available pretty much everywhere that sells books or you can get it here: [Educating Everyone](#)



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

Fortunately, my politics are rooted in a deep love for humanity and the exhausting belief that a better world is possible (@Itteal)

Thanks for reading
Anthony Benedict

CEO Ambition Community Trust