

" Specific practices in child care
... are a good deal less important
in the long run than the spirit in which
they are carried out ". (10)

George Orwell 'defined' man as a " bag for putting food
in " ⁽¹¹⁾ and at the most basic this is true, but, and it is a very
large BUT - we surely subscribe to a deeper awareness. To be
human is to be in communication and in relationship with others.
Our growth and development is achieved mainly through the
part we play in the lives of other people and they in ours.

It is time we moved away from roles and institutions - father,
mother, son, daughter, child, adult. Time that we concentrated
much less on some sort of imperative in these roles and their
avowed relationship of blood, parenting, family, or of 'being
in care'. It involves a process that I would call social indi-
viduation, a paradoxical tension or dynamic whereby I become
more and more ME by the very fact of being increasingly in touch
with the reality of the YOU.

There will always be a subtle tension between the social self
and the uniquely individual self - the more we understand that,
the more likely we are to make appropriate ' interventions ' in
terms of communication and relationships, in other's lives - per-
haps letting them be, and be themselves rather than some so-
cially accepted stereotype. This sharpening focus on the ' indi-
vidual ' in ' relationship ' in increasingly being referred to
as an essential in medicine, nursing, psychiatry and educa-
tion. (12)

The Residential Home then, is the environment for the growth
of the uniquely social individual. It is a process rooted in
personality. Personality - that mysterious overawing realm
of the unique individual. Personality, identity seems to be a
tension, or balance, or dynamic between heredity, my physical