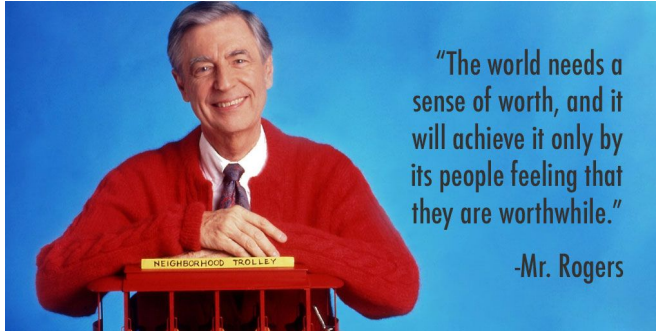




Welcome!

Everyday Interactions Matter

Reciprocity / Inclusion



Welcome everyone! Remind teachers that today's Community of Practice meeting will review reciprocity (our previous dimension over the past few months) and then introduce our next element which is Inclusion and Belonging.

This or That?

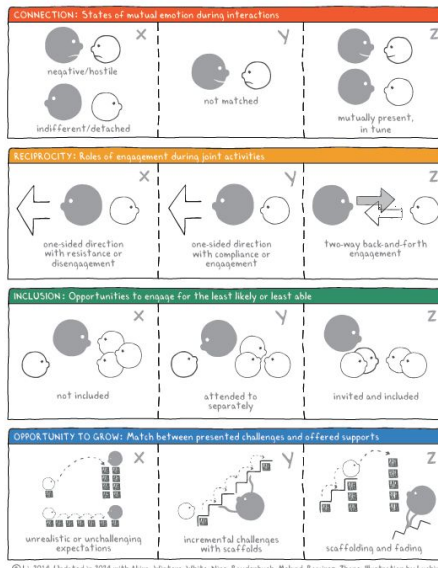
- Salt or Pepper?
- Zoo or Aquarium?
- Singing or Dancing?
- Fiction or Nonfiction?
- Dragons or Unicorns?



- Peanut Butter or Jelly?
- Road Trip or Plane Ride?
- Scary Movie or Comedy?
- Eric Carle or Sandra Boynton?
- Headphones or Earbuds?

SIMPLE INTERACTIONS TOOL

Noticing and Appreciating Human Interactions Across Developmental Contexts



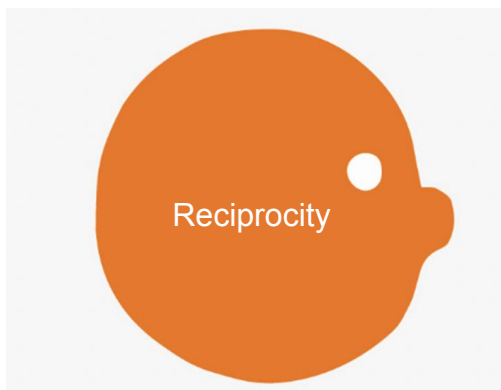
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SIMPLE INTERACTIONS
www.simpleinteractions.org

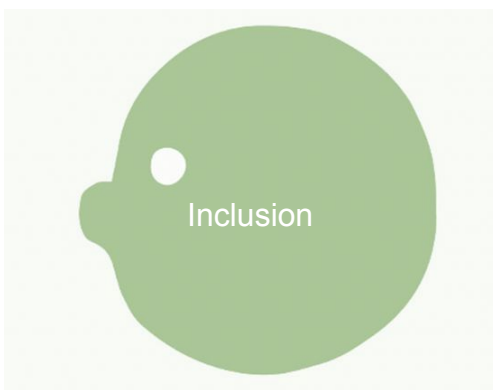
peals

- By now, the teachers should be familiar with this tool. Briefly explain and remind the group that this is a reflection tool—a way for us as early childhood educators to continuously reflect upon our interactions with the children we work with and even our coworkers.
- Review the columns of Connection (X, Y, Z).
- Explain that X, Y, and Z were chosen because the creators wanted to avoid using things like **A, B, or C**, which can sound like an evaluative grade. They also avoided **1, 2, or 3**, which can feel like a points system.
- By using **X, Y, and Z**, it helps the focus stay on reflection rather than a score, as we have fewer associations with those letters.

The Plan For Today...

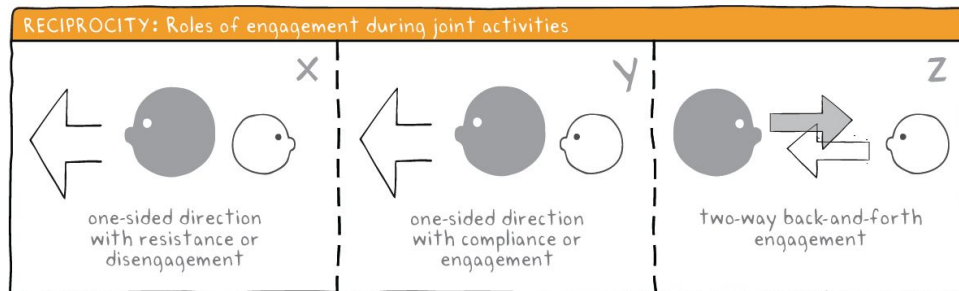


Roles of engagement during
joint activities



Opportunities to engage for the
least likely or least able

Reciprocity



Activity: Split group into three smaller groups. Assign each group a letter (x,y,z) have them discuss a time when they found themselves in that particular column. Have them report out on one of the scenarios (if they are comfortable)

When we do things together with individuals, whether it is to play, to talk, to learn, or to teach, we can have different roles. In the dimension of Reciprocity, children and adults exchange roles, form partnerships, and gradually may shift power and control in any joint activity— whether it is conversation, homework, or a game—toward balanced “serve and return” exchanges.

Reciprocity modes of interaction include exchanges characterized by one-sided control from an adult, where children may be disengaged or resistant (Reciprocity X). In addition, an interaction could be characterized by children complying (passively or actively) with an adult’s one-sided direction or control (Reciprocity Y). In other interactions, the adult and child(ren) may share a balanced, reciprocal partnership where it is difficult to tell who is directing or in control of the interaction (Reciprocity Z).

Brain Building



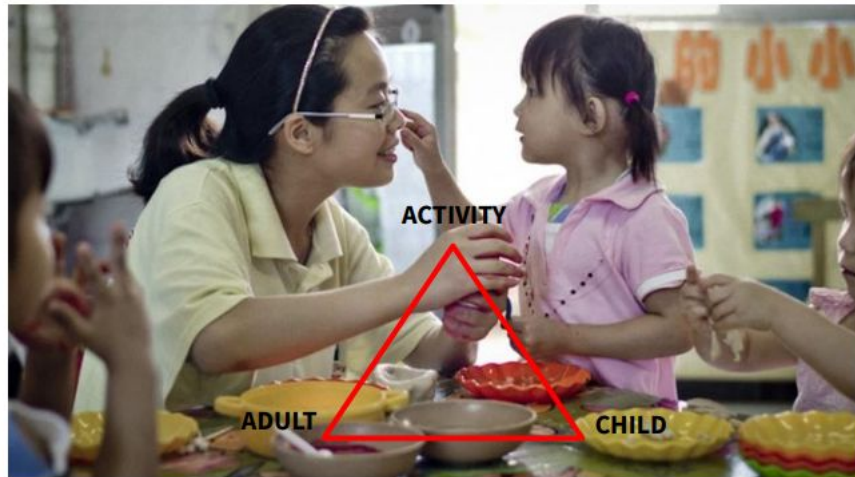
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Activity

- While watching the video, have the teachers write down one specific thing that sticks out to them on a post-it note.
- At the conclusion of the video, have everyone bring their notes to the front of the room and stick them on the large white paper.
- Once they are gathered, read the different observations aloud to the group.

The Interplay of Connection and Reciprocity

- Explain that this video is a wonderful depiction of the importance of both connection and reciprocity.
- Point out how the video brings both elements together, showing how they support each other and how one cannot be truly successful without the other.
- Highlight the moment in the video when the father did not notice the "serve." Note how the baby became frustrated, began to whine, and put his head on the ground.
- Ask the group to consider what would have happened if the father had continued to miss those cues, it likely would have resulted in full-blown crying.
- Remind participants that while we will inevitably miss a child's serve at times, it is vital to remember just how important those returns really are for the child.



Explain that a serve and return interaction can be visualized as a triangle. One person initiates or **serves** an interaction. Both individuals then mutually share their attention on a specific object or activity. The other person **returns** that serve with a facial expression, a gesture, words, or labels. This cycle of engagement can continue back and forth until one person eventually disengages and moves on to something else.

How do you listen?

THE ART OF REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION | PARTICIPANT REFLECTION GUIDE - 2023

4 HOW DO I LISTEN?

Read through the kinds of listening activities listed below. Ask someone to talk for a minute or two. Notice what kinds of listening activities your mind does and check off the boxes as you notice your mind going into these places. Alternately, listen to someone talk, watch your mind wander, and then use this tool afterward to record your observations.

- ☐ Listening to find **connections**. Your mind thinks, "Oh, I remember when that happened to me too!"
- ☐ Listening to find a **story of your own** to share. Your mind thinks, "I can tell her about that time that I..."
- ☐ Listening but **wanting to jump in** and finish the speaker's sentence.
- ☐ Listening to find a point you **agree or disagree** with.
- ☐ Listening to find something you can ask a **clarifying question** about after because you want more information.
- ☐ Listening to **understand the other person's perspective**.
- ☐ Listening to ask a **probing question** to elicit the other person's thinking or build their reflective capacity.
- ☐ Listening to **fix it**—to find a way to help or solve a problem, to give advice.
- ☐ Listening and **empathizing**—with the other person.
- ☐ Listening and **judging** the other person – finding fault with what they said or did, evaluating their thoughts.
- ☐ Listening to find something you can **critique** or offer a rebuttal.
- ☐ Listening and feeling **impatient**, wishing that the other person would stop talking.
- ☐ **Fake listening**. Being bored by what the other person is saying. Occasionally nodding or *ah—ha—ing* but spacing out.
- ☐ Listening and feeling **excited, inspired, or moved** by what the other person says.
- ☐ Listening for implicit meanings; listening **between the lines**.

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From Here to There

peDals

This page can be utilized as an interactive group activity during the session, or it can be provided to the teachers to complete as an independent reflection on their own time.

If you choose to facilitate this during the training, lead a brief conversation afterward to see if anyone discovered something about their own practice or interaction style that they hadn't realized before.

Encourage participants to share any "aha" moments regarding how they naturally navigate the different modes of connection.

What Can We Do As Caregivers?

1. Notice the 'serve' and share the child's focus of attention.
2. 'Return' the serve by supporting and encouraging the activity.
3. Give it a name.
4. Take turns... and wait.
5. Practice endings and beginnings of activities.



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Notice the Serve and Share the Focus Pay close attention to what the child is concentrating on. By sharing their focus of attention, you gain valuable insight into their current abilities, interests, and immediate needs.

Return the Serve with Support Encourage the activity by returning the serve. This doesn't always have to be verbal; a simple smile, a hug, or an affirming "Wow" or "I see that" goes a long way. These small gestures let the child know their thoughts and feelings are being heard and understood.

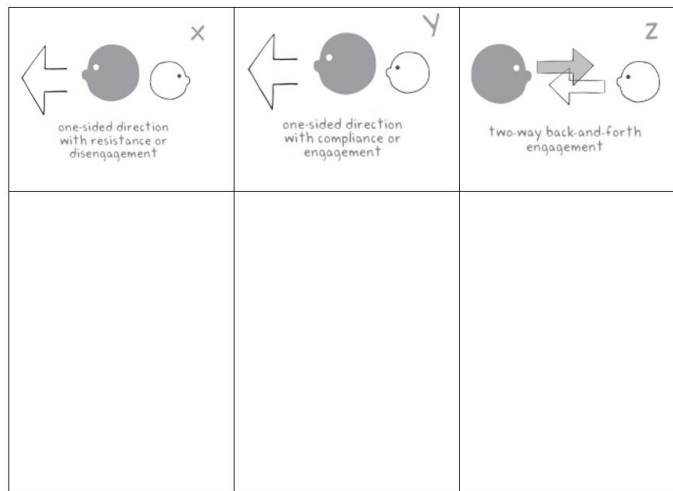
Give It a Name When you name what the child is seeing, doing, or feeling, you help them forge vital language connections in the brain. This labeling helps them categorize their world and understand what to expect next.

Take Turns and Wait Keep the interaction going back and forth like a game of tennis. It is crucial to wait after you "return" a serve, as children often need extra time to process and form their own response. This rhythmic turn-taking helps children develop self-control and learn the social flow of getting along with others.

Practice Beginnings and Endings Be mindful of the natural transitions in play. Children will signal when they are finished or ready to move on to something new. Recognizing these signals helps you support the child's autonomy as they navigate the start and end of different activities.

Use the Simple Interaction Tool

Using the SI Tool, work with a partner to try and identify the different modes of reciprocity that are being observed in the video



Pass out the **What Did You Notice?** chart to each pair of participants.

Ask partners to work together to identify and document specific moments that align with the different modes of **Reciprocity (X, Y, and Z)** from the video.

Suggest that groups watch the video more than once to ensure they catch the subtle shifts in interaction and control.

Have the pairs report their findings to the larger group to discuss the different types of reciprocity they observed.

Video

Up From Nap

Let's watch your amazing work!

What do you notice?

What do you wonder?



Pre-Viewing Reflection Before we play the video, please keep the following questions in mind and use your **Simple Interactions Tool** as a guide:

- How is the teacher communicating? Pay close attention to their gestures and facial expressions.
- How is the child communicating?
- What specific connections are you seeing develop?

Post-Viewing Discussion After watching, let's discuss what you noticed. Beyond the actions, try to take in the feelings of the moment. It is so important to let these instances of reciprocity sink in so we can recognize them in our own work.

Journaling Activity: Connecting to Your Practice Reflecting on the video and using the Simple Interactions Tool as your guide, think about a time this week when you felt the most connected in your work. In your journal, please include your thoughts on the following:

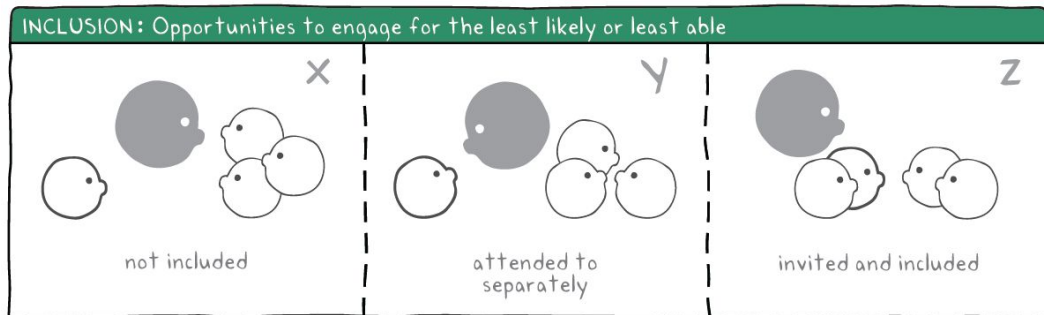
- Who was involved in the interaction?
- What did the interaction look like in practice?
- How did the moment make you feel?
- What intentional practices could you use to extend this connection into future interactions?

Closing Thought Noticing these details about yourself and your practice provides invaluable information. Just as we analyzed these videos together, try to find small moments during your day to check in with yourself. Being mindful of these interactions is the first step toward deepening them.

Break Time



Inclusion



When you enter a space with multiple children, you may notice that some appear to participate less than others. This can happen for many reasons, ranging from a child's individual ability or temperament to their current social and emotional state, or even the physical context of the room. As observers, it is important to look beyond the general interactions taking place and ask a critical question: "Who is (or is not) included?"

The Three Modes of Inclusion Observing inclusion begins with identifying the children who seem least likely or able to engage with the larger group. We categorize these observations into three common modes:

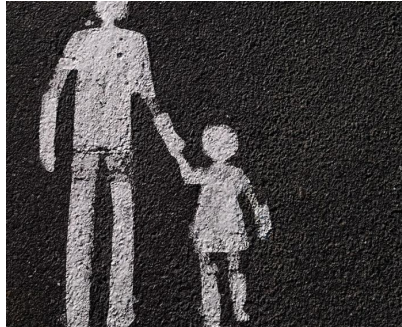
- **Inclusion X:** Children are not included in the group. This may be a temporary, self-selected choice (e.g., "I would like some alone time") or a more constant state that feels externally imposed (e.g., "I am not welcomed").
- **Inclusion Y:** An adult intentionally provides one-on-one attention to a child separately, but has not yet taken the step to invite or involve them in the larger group activity.
- **Inclusion Z:** An adult actively invites and includes the "least among the group," helping them join and become part of the peer community.

Activity: Personal Reflection on Inclusion

- Think of a time in your own practice when you found yourself in each of these modes of inclusion.
- Reflect on what prompted that specific mode and how it felt for both you and the child.
- You may complete this reflection individually or discuss your experiences within your small groups.

Inclusion

Think about the communities that you are a part of, particularly those communities where you feel you most belong. What does belonging feel like to you?



Self-Reflection Begin by taking a few moments for individual reflection. Think about the various communities you belong to and play a role in. These might include your school, workplace, church, home, sports teams, or any other social circles where you feel a sense of connection.

Partner Discussion After a few minutes of self-reflection, split into pairs. Discuss with your partner what it feels like to be part of these groups and what makes you feel truly included in those spaces.

Group Sharing We will then open the floor for a few people to share their insights with the whole group.

- **Facilitator Note:** If the group is hesitant to share, it can be helpful for a coach or facilitator to lead by example and share one of their own experiences first to get the conversation started.



You may recognize this video from our previous session on connection. Last time, we focused on how the simple environment and the **simple toy** used didn't limit the deep bond between the teacher and these three children. Today, I want us to watch this same interaction through a different lens: the lens of **Inclusion**.

Group Discussion After watching the video, ask the group: "What did you notice this time?" Try to gather specific details about how the teacher ensures each child is part of the moment.

Context and Backstory To truly appreciate this interaction, it helps to understand the setting. This took place in an orphanage in China. The caregiver is a former farmer who took this job to support her family. The children have significant individual needs:

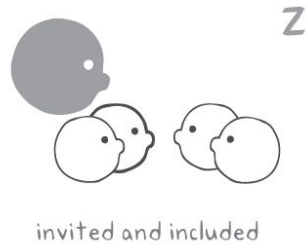
- The girl on her lap is 8 years old and has cerebral palsy.
- One boy has Down Syndrome.
- The other boy has limited use of his arms and legs.

Overcoming Obstacles It would be easy to look at an orphanage setting and see only the obstacles to learning and growth. We often do the same in our own environments when things feel overwhelmed or less than ideal. However, this video proves that profound connection and inclusion can occur in even the smallest interactions, regardless of the circumstances.

Connecting to Your Practice This is the same vital work you do every single day. You lean into connection, you practice reciprocity, and you intentionally invite and involve every child. As you watch, use all the skills we have discussed to see how she turns a challenging situation into a beautiful example of community.

Belonging

What are some strategies you already use in your classroom or in your program to create a sense of belonging for children?



So really think about the ways that these interactions show up and the time that you're spending in each one and also really focus on that Z area. What are the tools that you are using? Just as we saw in the video clip, what are the tools that we are using to invite and involve all. - This can be a large group activity/ conversation.

Something we all need in order to feel the fullness of life: It's not only a sense that we belong on our planet, but also that we belong in other people's lives—that we are loved, lovable, and capable of loving.

- Fred Rogers



Walk a Day in My Shoes



How to Play:

1. Each teacher or group draws a card and takes on the perspective described.
2. The group or teacher works to determine what they can do in their classroom to include this child or make them feel both welcomed and included.
3. For a few minutes, imagine a typical day for that child, thinking about both the challenges and the joys that child might experience in an inclusive classroom setting.
4. After reflecting, each person shares what they might need or appreciate in their daily interactions and routines from teachers and peers to feel included and supported.



Activity:

1. **Supplies Needed:** Cards with different “perspectives” written on them, each representing a child with specific needs or challenges (e.g., a shy child, a child with limited language skills, a child with a physical disability, a child with sensory sensitivities, a child with challenging behaviors/ tantrums, etc.).
2. **How to Play:**
 - Each teacher or group draws a card and takes on the perspective described. The group or teacher works to determine what they can do to in their classroom to include this child or make them feel both welcomed and included.
 - For a few minutes, they imagine a typical day for that child, thinking about both the challenges and the joys that child might experience in an inclusive classroom setting.
 - After reflecting, each person shares what they might need or appreciate in their daily interactions and routines from teachers and peers to feel included and supported.
3. **Reflection:**
 - Discuss as a group what strategies could be used to support diverse needs in a way that promotes inclusion.
 - Emphasize that inclusion is about seeing each child’s unique perspective and meeting them where they are.
 - This gives teachers a chance to plan for inclusion opportunities but also to feel how the child would feel when they are included

Inclusion, Belonging, and Equity

How can our everyday interactions promote equity?



Introduce this question but tell the participants that you will be revisiting the question after we review what it all means.

Equality vs. Equity

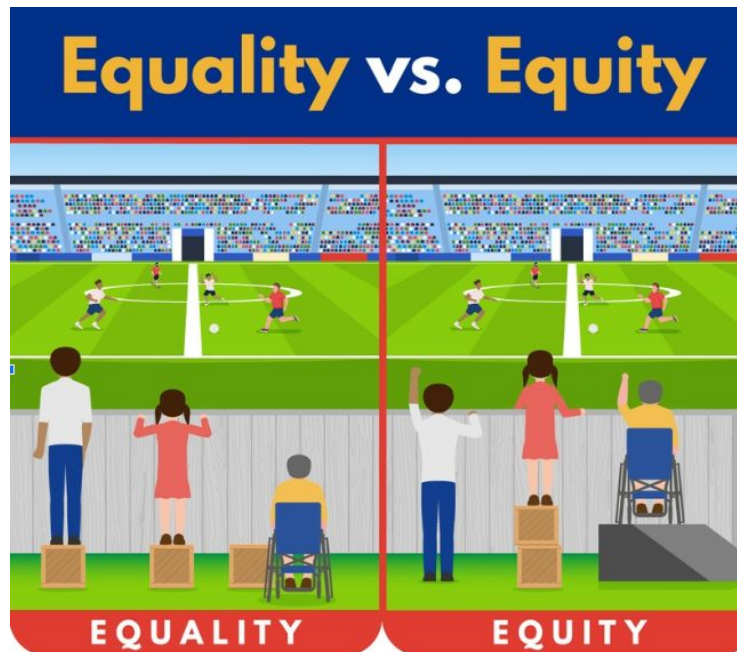
What is Equality?

Equality means everyone is given the same resources or opportunities. Equality assumes that everyone starts at the same point and faces the same challenges.

Equality vs. Equity

What is Equity?

Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and provides the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome. Equity acknowledges that different levels of support may be needed to achieve fairness.



On the equality side of the graphic, everyone receives a box to see over the fence. In a classroom, this looks like every child receiving the same resources/activity, task. However, though they all received a box (equal access to a box), look closely, can they all see the game? No. So, what's the result? In equality, yes, they were all given the same resource (a box), but it didn't meet their individual needs.

Now, look on the equity side of the graphic; everyone pictured received the resources they needed based on their circumstances. The little girl received two boxes to stand on, and the differently-abled man received a ramp.

Equity closes the gap in outcomes. In this example, the result was the opportunity to watch the ball game by looking over the fence.

Inclusion, Belonging, and Equity

How can our everyday interactions promote equity?



[Revisit this question](#)

Why Inclusion Matters



Why Inclusion Matters



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Fred Rogers made a profound impact on this man when he was only five years old. Because of those interactions, that little boy felt seen and important; he knew he belonged and was loved exactly for who he was.

As early childhood educators, you are that person for the children in your care. You work with our youngest learners, and the impact you make is truly incredible. We often say that every child needs at least one person who thinks they are amazing, but it also takes only one person to show a child that they belong and are welcome.

When children feel a true sense of belonging, they gain the security they need to explore. Once that foundation of feeling welcome is in place, there is no limit to what they can learn and achieve.

Message from Fred Rogers

In the day-to-day routine of feeding, diapering, changing clothes, supervising play, wiping tears, it's often hard to remember how essential your adult presence is in the lives of the children who come to you for care. Above all, it's your being there that matters the most. It's the gift of your honest self that makes the biggest difference in your children's lives.



I sometimes wonder if, as caregivers, you ever realize how extremely important you are. You know, none of us can ever be fully aware of the whole story of any child who comes to us, all that's happened at home, all that's going on inside each little body and mind, but what we can know is that every one of them, young and old, longs to be cherished. We long to know there's a welcome for us in this world. I thank you for the way you help children feel welcome by the giving of your own special care and by the receiving of the unique care your children give to you. There's no better gift. I wish you well in all the caregiving and receiving of your life.