

CRUCIAL TIMES

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Suite 5B, 19 Lang Parade
Auchenflower Brisbane Q 4066

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Ph: (07) 3870 1022 Fax: (07) 3371 3842
Email: cru@uq.net.au

EDITORIAL

Jane Sherwin

For some time there have been discussions about the nature of 'quality' in human services for people with disabilities. These discussions have largely been about how to measure quality and how to make the qualities of an organisation recognisable, through systems of accreditation and awards. Frequently, in trying to determine 'quality', measurements are made of those things that are of a lesser importance than those that relate to 'making a real difference' in the lives of people who are served by an organisation. There are many elements of quality (that is, the quality of 'making a difference') that cannot easily be observed or measured and it is critical, in any discussion, to understand that 'quality' is not the same as a set of standards or an accreditation system. It is much more multi-layered than any of these and has more to do with how we think about things than how we measure things.

The root of the word 'quality' is 'qualis', meaning 'of what kind'. In everyday life, we use the word 'quality' to denote a degree of excellence about something – what we might receive, for example, from a restaurant – what was good or poor about it. There is also an element of relativity when we consider quality because some things that make claims to quality can be compared to others. For example, the RACQ compares the quality of motels, using a rating system. In everyday life, we also know

that quality does not necessarily exist simply because a business says that it does.

When services to people with disabilities concern themselves with matters of quality, there are a number of potential traps for the unwary. For example, when a service recipient expresses satisfaction or happiness with a particular service, it could be tempting to equate such statements with the existence of high quality in that service. Extreme caution is needed about accepting such statements as a reliable indication of quality, because there are at least three limitations to this kind of indicator.

Firstly, many people with disabilities have suffered years of social devaluation and wounding experiences as well as never having experienced high quality services, and are therefore likely to express satisfaction with a service when simply receiving an act of kindness or having a minimum need met. Further, for those people with an intellectual impairment, it could be that for some, their impaired cognition could make it very difficult for them to judge whether something is comparatively good or could be improved in some way. A third limitation of this kind of indicator is that a person might express satisfaction for fear of retribution, because many people are so reliant on services for their existence that they do not want to jeopardise the little that they do have.

CRU's MISSION STATEMENT

- To challenge ideas and practices which limit the lives of people with disabilities.
- To inspire and encourage individuals and organisations to pursue better lives for people with disabilities.

Another pitfall for the service is to have a single-minded focus on a set of standards, the measurement of observable things, or on systems of reporting. Such a focus will most likely lead a service into a 'compliance' form of quality. In contrast to this kind of focus, some human service organisations actively engage in the *pursuit* of quality. This constant struggle for quality implies an understanding that it is an ongoing process and that quality is something to be aspired to, but is probably never reached.

One key assertion in any discussion about quality in human services is that quality can best be assessed from the experience of those people who receive the services of a particular organisation. In such discussions there is a fundamental question to be asked: are people with disabilities better off as a result of the particular service being in their lives? When people do have the experience of being better off as a result of a particular service being in their lives, then it is probable that each person experiences many aspects of what could be called 'a good life' – a life that is aspired to by most citizens. Such experiences include: personal development, valued roles, a positive reputation in the organisation that supports the person and in the general community, a personal sense of autonomy, and social networks that include family, acquaintances and friends. If each person who is assisted by the service experiences these things, and if the service does no harm, then *on balance*, it is probable that what is offered is a quality service.

If, on the other hand, people receiving a service from a particular organisation have lives that are characterised by many negative experiences, then *on balance* it is likely that the organisation is not providing a quality service. The negative experiences of service recipients would include such things as: social marginalisation; receiving only basic food and shelter; lives spent in tedious non-activity or low activity; a poor reputation within the service and in the general community; no personal development; family relationships which have been severed by the service; no opportunities for making or maintaining friendships; and no sense of a personal future.

What, then, does it take for a service to respond to the circumstances of a person with a disability

in ways that demonstrate quality? Most importantly, the service would have a sound knowledge of the history and identity of each person, understand both the human and specific needs flowing from that person's identity and particular vulnerabilities, and work in intense and relevant ways to make a positive difference in the life of that person. By responding in such ways, it is likely that the service has made a long-term commitment to the person, and that those who are employed by the organisation are committed, inspired and competent.

There are also other characteristics that are likely to enhance or inhibit the presence of quality in a service. For example, it is likely that a service that demonstrates quality has an organisational culture that expresses, in all its parts, an explicit values-base and is open to internal and external critique. All of the people in such an organisation are likely to continually strive for a high consciousness about what truly constitutes quality. Such an organisation will also appreciate that the primary impulse of our society is to reject people with disabilities, and will

understand that there are many challenges in working to support children and adults with disabilities

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to have a good life, similar to those without disabilities. There will be a strong consciousness that it will therefore need processes of high relevance and potency to authentically make a difference in the lives of each person that the service supports. The presence of such processes is likely to be an indication of the existence of quality.

In human services that serve people with disabilities and their families, we need to constantly look for the fertile ground where quality is likely to grow or to be enhanced, and to remember that at the heart of quality are the personal qualities of the people who are providing the service. ■

from the president

Mike Duggan

When reflecting on the values and attitudes of our society, those who are concerned about the situation of people with disability often need to 'think about their thinking'. For example, some of the important questions that might be asked could be: What is our thinking about people with disability? How do people with disability become marginalised by society? What are some of the threats that make people with disability even more vulnerable to exclusion?

In my own reflection on these questions, I believe that bio-technology is one of the greatest threats to people with disability. Increasingly viewed by society as some kind of saviour, technological advances have been exalted to a godhood status. In particular, advanced biotechnology is a tremendous threat to people with disability because it strives to alter our very being and even to eradicate us. When society emphasises the advantages of biotechnology and its goal of being able to 'perfect' human life, people with disability are marginalised by this 'more perfect' society.

I believe it is important that we reflect on the kind of thinking that leads to these threatening situations and to ask important questions of ourselves and each other – questions such as: What do we wish for ourselves, both as individuals and collectively? If we can't wish ourselves, as individuals, the very best how can we wish the very best for a fellow-traveller? Until we can wish our fellow-traveller 'all the very best' and really mean it, those of us with disability will continue to be under threat. We

must find new ways of thinking about our society, find new ways of welcoming people and bringing marginalised and vulnerable people into the heart of a welcoming community.

It could be said that community is not something that we can easily define, but it is something that we experience through a sense of belonging.

How will we know that a true sense of being part of the community really exists for people with disabilities? John McKnight, in his paper *Communities that Help People*, says that community exists in the lives of people with disabilities when:

- ✓ Human service systems 'let go' of people with disabilities so that community can truly be found.
- ✓ People truly believe in the capacity of community to welcome people with disabilities, and to become stronger through the sharing of their gifts, talents, and contributions.
- ✓ People with disabilities believe themselves that they have the capacity to be of community.

The stronger our consciousness is about the threats to people with disability, the more likely we are to make sure that marginalised people are welcomed, and have a strong sense of belonging in the community. ■

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Growing Up In Your Own Community

Bev Budden

who is a co-ordinator in the Moving Ahead Program based in Atherton, describes the journey made by a young man from school pupil to young adult, and provides insights into the cultural sensitivities that are needed when working within an indigenous culture and community.

The Moving Ahead Program provides transition support, for a period of up to two years, to young people who have complex support needs resulting from their disability. The program supports young people who are aged eighteen and leaving the school system, and is specifically targeted to those who have no other support options such as pre-vocational training or employment. Young people who are supported in this way are assisted by a co-ordinator to develop, along with their families, a vision and goal for this stage of their lives. Young people and their families choose local community supports and services that will assist them in achieving these goals and help with their transition from school life to adult life in their community.

I first started supporting one young man from the indigenous community when he was aged about sixteen. For this young man, life was pretty miserable – he had just been expelled from school and he wanted to forget the bad experiences of his schooling. He is now aged twenty and lives with his mother, and prior to that, they had both lived with members of their extended family. He has many aunts, uncles and cousins who have always looked out for him. His education had been very limited with the result that he has extremely low literacy and numeracy skills. This has greatly impacted on his day-to-day activities such as money management, reading and writing. When he left school there was little or no support to help him make the transition from school to community,

although his mother and extended family have been a constant support in his life.

After meeting with the young man and his mother a few times, a number of goals were identified and we went about putting together a support plan for him. At that stage of his life he was not yet receiving support from the Moving Ahead Program, but receiving four hours of

paid support from our community-based organisation. This arrangement gave the young man and his parent some insight into what kind of support was offered and also gave them the opportunity to decide if they wanted support from our organisation. As I continued with the support of the young man I talked to him and his mother about the Moving Ahead Program. Once they were clear about the purpose of the program, they applied for program funding, and a plan was developed around the various interests that the young man wanted to pursue.

The first part of the Moving Ahead Program was focused on vegetable farming and we set up support through a local farm that is owned and run by a local indigenous organisation. At that time, the farm was managed by an uncle and aunt of the young man and this was an extra bonus because his mother was happy for him to stay at the farm four nights each week. This meant that he was also starting to establish his independence. He was involved in all aspects of the farm enterprise such as planting, picking, sorting, packing and making deliveries, as well as general maintenance such as gardening and lawn-mowing. Other workers saw him as a

valued member of his community for the first time in his life.

The second part of his Moving Ahead Program was focused around his interest in woodwork. As luck would have it we received an application from a skilled carpenter who was interested in doing some work with a person who had a disability. When talking about this idea to the young man and his mother she believed that working with an older man would be good for her son as he needed someone who would be a positive role model and they all met in an informal interview. After some thought, they all decided to try this plan and our organisation employed the carpenter as a support worker for the young man and, once again, we developed a plan.

A venue for the carpentry work had to be found and a number of places were checked, but eventually we approached the old primary school in Atherton now used as a community centre for various organisations and activities. We negotiated to use an empty workshop underneath the building that had previously been used for woodwork classes. This venue was used for almost a year by the two men who had their own key so they could come and go as needed. During this time the young man learnt various aspects of woodwork and the use of electrical equipment. With very little difficulty he made bar-stools, teapot stands, boomerangs and didgeridoos. The two men were asked to make sixty frames for the works of local indigenous artists that were to be sold at the shop of the Community Development and Employment Program. Through the support of the older man, this young man has achieved abundant personal development. He now has a large degree of independence and his growing maturity is expressed in his own ideas and interests. His self-esteem and confidence have grown to such an extent that he has begun to think about having his own business.

Unfortunately the support worker had to resign due to his own family commitments and this came as a shock to the young man as their relationship was more than just one of 'client' and 'support worker' because the support worker had helped him through personal issues – he had been a good role model and remains a trusted friend. We now had the task of finding another support worker for the young man and I suggested to him and his mother that they may want to be the ones to find a suitable worker as they knew what they were looking for in such a person. They already had someone in mind – a

trusted family member – who, the mother believes, will have a positive influence on her son and be a good role model as well. We employed this person and have another support plan in place.

Again, we focused on using resources within the indigenous community. The young man chose three areas in which he would like support: living skills, including cooking, budgeting, shopping, and literacy and numeracy skills. The young man's second area of interest is for exposure to an office environment and for this we approached one of the local indigenous organisations where the young man will be supported to experience all aspects of the day-to-day running of an office, learning the use of office equipment, reception skills, typing, filing, mailing, and telephone messages. The third area of interest will involve our organisation with a local shire council, negotiating for the young man to have access to the Indigenous Ranger program. It is hoped that though this program the young man can experience at first-hand, the role of an indigenous ranger in the local area.

In seeking to provide support for a young man who has a growing sense of being a valued part of the local community, we have tried to be as creative as possible and to involve the young man's own community as well as the wider indigenous community. Indigenous people have a different value base from to the non-indigenous community; material possessions are not a high priority. It is important to remember that family and extended family are an important part of an indigenous person's life. It is vital that the family is always consulted, in conjunction with the individual person, when decisions are being made. It is not only parents who have a say about an issue concerning their son or daughter, but also grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, and even older cousins can be involved in such decision making. It is not uncommon for indigenous people to have a shared responsibility for other family members.

When services support a person from the indigenous community, it is essential that indigenous workers be employed, even if that person is a family member, because they understand the lifestyle and the importance of family. Indigenous support workers are in a better position to help the person they are supporting to become more aware of his or her own identity, and more able to help the person to identify with other indigenous people in their community. ■

Anne Archdeacon illustrates the importance that is played by hope and high expectations when creating a vision of a good life. Anne describes the vision that has become a forceful motivator as her son becomes a young adult.

HOPES & HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Education units in mainstream primary schools, and Learning Support centres in high school arrived as David seemed to need them. However, we had not accessed any additional support services as David grew up. This was for three reasons: David had a congenital heart problem with a prognosis for a very short life expectancy; an extended family network made us self-sufficient; and we felt that as long as David was loved, comfortable, and happy then that was all we needed.

When David was seventeen he had a health scare and saw a new cardiologist who pronounced himself very happy with David's heart status, took him off all medication and told us that David could expect 'another twenty years'. This meant that we saw David's future very differently from what we had earlier been led to expect. At the same time, however, our family situation was changing: grandparents were becoming frail, David's siblings were going off to university or interstate careers – and here we had a vigorous seventeen year old, looking for a future.

Once again, help was at hand in the form of the Transition

Guidance Officer at David's high school, and a Moving Ahead program co-ordinator, who both described plenty of options for David and supported us, his parents, as we swung between hope and despair. David's early prognosis had not prepared us for the need to have a vision of this new stage of his life, however, we were given a new perspective after meeting the parent of a young woman with high support needs, and who lives independently with good support. Ideas such as applying for public housing or for shared independent housing had never occurred to us. We began to ask ourselves: What are other young people typically doing at eighteen? What sort of things do we need to do in order for David to achieve a typical lifestyle? These questions were so vast that we put them aside for a time and concentrated on goals that might be achievable in the short term.

One of the initial difficulties was finding leisure activities that might appeal to David and then persuading him to participate in them. Gradually, things began to take shape. David contributed to the local Meals on Wheels service once a week, and on

If there was ever a 'right time' for a child with a disability to be born, our son, David, chose it. David was born in 1981 (International Year of Disabled Persons) and it seemed that available supports grew in conjunction with his needs, whether we recognised the need or not: Early Intervention, Special

another day he regularly did his banking, shopping, library and video exchanges. These arrangements made a difference to David's attitude and incentives were also introduced. For example, when David succeeds with some task such as booking a taxi and travelling by himself he can 'trade' this for a special outing. After a year of the Moving Ahead Program David is now engaged in regular activities three days a week. I have only had to be firm about one point and that is that David learns to cook at home rather than at the facility of his support service

– it seems much more sensible for him to use the appliances in our own household.

In the second year of the Moving Ahead program David is building on the skills he developed in the first year. He attends a numeracy and literacy course at TAFE. He's thrilled to be going to 'college' and his tutors have been astonished by his achievements. David is being encouraged all the way, and so are we, by almost everyone with whom we come in contact. David now attends more social events with his

peers and has a willingness to try new things such as rollerblading, and we see him establishing his own identity.

As I sit here at the start of David's second year after leaving school, I can hardly believe how much he has achieved in such a short time, and do not dare to predict what is ahead but there is no doubt that the cumulative vision, effort and enthusiasm of everyone involved in establishing support for David has been the key to unlocking a previously unimaginable future. ■

OPENING DOORS & SHARING WORLDS

Relationships are the glue that bind human

beings to each other. Relationships are important because we need one another to get through life. I believe it is through relationships that we learn how to *behave* but it is through friendships that we learn how to *be*. Friends open doors to each other's worlds.

We often think of friendship as some kind of warm and fuzzy thing and indeed, the warmth and intimacy we share with our friends are very enjoyable, but most friendships offer a lot more. Friends offer opportunities, they challenge us to try new

Sandra Kalms tells a story that captures some of the rewards of friendship motivated by a willingness to share lives. From seemingly small actions, surprising friendships can develop.

endeavours, and provide practical assistance when needed. Friends also provide us with suggestions and advice – sometimes very different advice from what we might get from families or professionals. Friends often tell us 'how it is' even when we don't necessarily want to hear it, and they often protect us from hurtful situations. Friends often share our ideas, hopes and dreams. Friends can make life worth living.

Yet many people with disabilities lead lives with few friends or none at all. The

absence of such friendships is not only felt through the absence of

affection, love and companionship, but also means a loss of opportunities for people with disabilities and the rest of the community. Many doors have never opened simply because their worlds are never shared. For people with disability living in isolated and segregated settings there are huge barriers that prevent them from meeting others outside of their setting and from developing friendships with them. But these barriers are sometimes broken down, often by seemingly small actions, and surprising friendships can develop,

changing the lives of those involved.

John and David are two people who introduced me to the idea of friends opening doors and sharing worlds. John is a gentle, tall man in his late sixties. He loves to reminisce about the past, particularly with stories about growing up. John is quiet and thoughtful and is always offering his assistance to others although John himself has very little eyesight and needs guidance wherever he wants to go. John shares a room with three other men in an accommodation unit for thirty people located on the grounds of a larger institution for two hundred people. He has lived there for the past thirty years, following the death of his father.

Ironically John grew up in a neighbourhood that is only a few kilometers from the institution where he now lives. In those days he had been a member of the local church, a member of the Lodge, a first-aid volunteer at the local football club, and was neighbour and friend to many. When John entered the institution, all these contacts were severed – the doors that opened onto his world were firmly shut.

Not long ago, John was introduced to David through an initiative taken by a parent action group that seeks to facilitate and support the development of relationships between residents of the institution and members of the

general community. David is a quiet, thoughtful young man with an interest in history, particularly the history of the local area. When he met John, David had just finished university studies and was working as an architect. Their mutual love of history and their quiet natures led to an immediate rapport. David has grown to admire John's patience and gentleness and feels he has learnt much from John about the tenacity of the human spirit.

John often told David about his own personal history, growing up in the local area and attending the neighbourhood church. He said that he would like to go back there but the problem was that there was no one

to accompany him. John had been told by his service providers that there was insufficient staff to accompany him to church. Besides, they said, the institution had a minister who visited regularly so he didn't really have to go to the neighbourhood church.

Although David is not a church-goer himself, he knew that this was important to John and it seemed unfair that John couldn't go to church just because he couldn't get there. David, acting as a friend would, simply called in at the church, and spoke to the Minister. Within a week the Minister had arranged for a couple who lived nearby to pick up John on their way to church services. When John

at last returned, a few church members remembered him, saying they had missed him and were happy to see him again. John has since become a faithful member of the church community.

John still lives at the institution, and despite the fact that some other residents have moved out, he is reluctant to fully return to the community that rejected him. However, the relationships that are now being built between John and his old community could mean that if and when John does move out of the institution, there will be people in the community who he knows and who will welcome him. It may even be that the friendship with

David and those at his church

will give John the courage to make such a move.

This story demonstrates that as family members, advocates or service providers we can be catalysts for the development of friendships and provide opportunities for strong community connections. No one makes friends by passing people in the street; friendship forms when people spend time together and get to know each other. The more opportunities a person has for meeting and sharing experiences with others, the more likely it is that friendship may develop – doors will open and worlds will be shared. ■

friends open doors to each other's worlds

MANAGERIALISM: WHEN ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HUMAN NEED

The last ten years have seen a fundamental shift in the relationship between government and community sector organisations. Whereas governments were once primary providers of human, financial and technological resources for the care of those who are physically, intellectually, and socially disadvantaged in the community, this is no longer the case.

There has been a shift in government policies which now places emphasis on community responsibility that is reflected by the withdrawal of the provision of welfare services and the de-institutionalisation of people whose care in the past has been the responsibility of the state. The state is assuming a 'corporate mindset' and at the same time the economic elite has revoked its traditional responsibility of noblesse oblige. Caring now comes from private philanthropy, the family, or the community.

This shift has meant a number of changes at the operational level. In the name of giving community organisations more involvement in decision making and greater control over the allocation of resources, processes have changed. There has been significant change to the way that funds are allocated by both state and federal government departments, and at the federal level, an emphasis on so-called 'collaboration and

Through insights that come from their roles as Commonwealth employees and their current research studies, Lynda Shevellar and Robert Hogg describe the impact of government policy and practice on community organisations.

partnership' has ignored the diversity of aims of community organisations. Regardless of the rhetoric and program changes, community groups are still pitted against each other in the battle for limited dollars. Despite recent reforms, the community sector is in crisis and the most vulnerable

people are suffering.

What is driving governmental withdrawal from community services? The answer lies not in empirical research conducted by government to ascertain the best method of providing for the disadvantaged, nor does it come from the practical experience of workers in the field or experienced public servants; it comes presumptively, from ideology.

The dominant ideology in the western world today, and the one to which all Australian governments subscribe, is what most Australians would know as 'economic rationalism'. In fact, economic rationalism is only one term used to describe an ideology that also goes under the names of corporatism, managerialism, or new capitalism. While these labels can mean slightly different things (and will be used here to describe different aspects of the dominant ideology), they are all based on the philosophy of neo-liberalism espoused by Frederich Hayek and Milton Friedman, which rests on the notions

of freedom of choice, market forces, and quality by competition. Their philosophy opposes trade unionism, government intervention in the economy and, significantly for the community sector, state welfare. Each of these, it is believed, distorts and inhibits the free and efficient workings of the market. It is believed that state welfare is wasteful, depresses competition, and reduces incentives. According to their philosophy state judgements are inevitably biased, whereas market judgements are not, with the market seen as embodying a superior rationality.

The term 'economic rationalism' refers to the belief that economic resources are better allocated through market forces than through government intervention. Other definitions of the term go further, claiming that economic rationalism is a belief that only the market can legitimately allocate goods and services in society at large – not just the economy. Under this definition, services such as health and disability services would be considered best delivered by free markets rather than by the state.

Managerialism (or corporatism) holds that the basic unit of society is the organisation: corporations, associations, government agencies, and so on. The managerialist society is one in which choice, influence, and decision making are mediated and exercised by organisations. Society adjusts to conform with the decisions made by the management of various organisations in their transactions with each other.

In this view of the world, government is merely one 'player' among a number of organisations. In this environment economic measures are the priority criteria for measuring success and the quality of life. Society and its economy are run like a market. Human effort can be counted as a commodity and in organisations financial accountability is the primary criterion for success. It seems that individuals (and personal values) have virtually no place in a managerialist society. Concepts such as social justice, equity, diversity, and self-actualisation are conspicuous by their absence in expressions of the managerialist creed. It is the absence of qualities such as these, as well as its narrowness and

exclusivity, that make managerialism a problematical ideology.

In practice, managerialism has a number of consequences, especially for human services:

① The lines of accountability and responsibility are blurred, because it is difficult to hold a non-human entity accountable for actions committed in its name. In this way, government can keep responsibility for policy failures at arm's length. Consider for example the use of round-tables, partnerships and social coalitions in government policy decisions. Who is accountable? Is it the community representatives providing advice; the minister taking the advice; the department implementing the decisions; or the community group carrying out the action? Consider also the construction of Centrelink. Whilst the Department of Family and Community Services is responsible for the development of welfare and social policies, Centrelink is responsible for implementing those policies – that is, providing welfare payments – but Centrelink does not develop the policy on which such payments are based. While this distinction may be clear for departmental staff, the boundary is blurred for the public. Meanwhile, there are strong indications that private sector companies are lobbying government for the work that Centrelink presently does, raising the question: can we assume a further blurring of responsibility by government if this occurs?

② It is even worse if you're not a member of any organisation. Under managerialism, society functions via transactions between organisations. Decisions are made at an organisational level, not an individual level. To the extent that you are outside the organisational network, the less input and influence you will have, and the more things will happen *to* you, and not *by* you, or even *for* you. Many of the people served by community organisations are in this position. Take, for example, the notion of 'mutual obligation': it asserts a relationship between communities and those for whom they provide support.

However the nature of this relationship is not defined by the individual (or even in a dialogue between the individual and the community), but by the organisation, the government, or the department. The individual cannot define the relationship; he or she can only choose to conform or not to conform.

- ③ Managerialism places undue emphasis on the economic. The worth of goods, services or even human enterprise is measured in monetary, or at least, quantitative terms. So human enterprises, the basis of which might be trust, kindness or co-operation, aren't valued. When something ceases to be valued, it receives less attention and ultimately fewer resources. Consider for example, 'community care', which some see as code for 'family care', which in turn means care by female relatives. Their service is not valued in the formal economy and they receive very little by way of support.
- ④ Managerialism values conformity over diversity in that everybody has to sign up to the organisation's goals and principles. People who don't fit the accepted pattern are marginalised, and organisations that don't sign up won't receive funding. This means that welfare organisations have to become more like business corporations. They have to employ an army of managerial staff, institute a hierarchy of labour, and develop a raft of procedures to cover every aspect of their activities. It is little wonder that seventy percent of Australia's welfare is delivered by only twenty organisations. This results in a loss of service differentiation and ideological diversity.
- ⑤ Managerialism equates economic progress with social progress: if Gross Domestic Product is looking good, then we must all be looking good; if it isn't measured by Gross Domestic Product, then it can't be important. In this equation trust, loyalty, cooperation, kindness, empathy, generosity and understanding cannot be deemed important.
- ⑥ What is important, in managerialist terms, is productivity. Technology provides the means by which productivity gains will be achieved. The negative consequences of that technology are ignored: loss of jobs, longer working hours, an increasing divide between rich and poor, and the growing knowledge gap. All of these negative consequences combine to diminish the quality of life for many people.
- ⑦ Individuals are constructed as consumers whose interests are primarily materialistic and economic, rather than as citizens whose interests are political and social. Therefore their power in a pure market economy is based on their capacity to consume – that is, their ability to purchase the goods and services they require.
- ⑧ Public sector activity is viewed as a productive process, the aim of which is improved efficiency and cost effectiveness. Consider for example the current rhetoric of both state and federal governments around 'strengthening communities' and 'building capacity'. There is an uneasy meeting of the long lead-time required for community development programs and the administrative requirements surrounding these programs which include short funding cycles, strict reporting mechanisms, and demands for measurable outcomes. Community organisations as well as government departments are required to identify their outputs, outcomes and value-for-money. The intention may be community resilience, however the fundamental requirement is proof of productivity.

Community sector organisations may currently have greater responsibility for the provision of welfare services, but this has come at a price. That price is a commitment to an ideology that values wealth over people, and sees economic efficiency as more important than human need.



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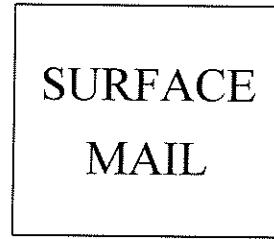
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