

# MY FAVOURITE SRV CONCEPT - IMAGERY

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*Meg is a learner, educator & writer committed to the implementation of SRV. For 2 decades Meg has witnessed the effectiveness of SRV in assisting people develop authentic selves in the heart of community.*

## My daughter is 21 and her developing, but fragile socially valued role of 'adult' is paramount in her life at this time.

Due to her particular impairment she is very at risk of being seen as a forever child, viewed as trivial, ridiculous or as so intellectually compromised that the social norms of adulthood do not apply to her. If this is not countered or ameliorated it is likely that she will indeed be seen and therefore supported to become a child in an adult's body.

She holds a job at the local Bakery Café and looks after children at the local gym in the crèche. It is vitally important that her adult status is validated in order for these roles to be confirmed in the eyes of others. We live very close to the beach and my daughter loves to dig in the sand. This can have profound impacts as it projects a child role, which she is already at risk of. If a co-worker, customer or parent of a child she cares for witnesses her digging in the sand it would rapidly confirm for them a role of child thus undermining her adult status in one fell swoop.

The knowledge of devaluation and SRV has given us, her family, the tools to honour our daughter's life passions in a way that defends her image and therefore status as an adult.

Firstly, she never ever digs alone. Ideally children are encouraged/recruited to join in as it is quite appropriate for an adult to accompany children in this pursuit.

Secondly, if children are not available, other adults join in

the enterprise and embark on creative sculpture, creation of villages or spa pools on the waters edge.

Thirdly, we take garden shovels to the beach. This enables what we call 'industrial digging' and usually elicits curious interest and humour in relation to 'where are the bodies?' or 'are you digging to China?'

In addition our daughter wears a triathlon swimsuit. This further embeds a highly valued adult sporting image, while keeping all a young woman's bits and pieces in order while being involved in a very active endeavour.

Since we instituted these simple measures all manner of positive things have happened. Many people come and talk to her about what she is up to with interest and often admiration due to the vast amounts of sand being moved about. Children come and join in as it's too much fun to resist therefore supporting the first strategy mentioned, that is, never digging alone. Additionally, parents with very young children and babies come and enjoy pools created on the water edge and show immense appreciation at the ingenuity of her thinking.

In addition to image at least two other SRV themes appear in this story. Being more consciousness of vulnerabilities helped us identify that our daughter's adult status is always at risk and the Conservatism Corollary helped us think of ways to compensate for that reality. SRV informs us of the many ways we can assist people with devalued status honour their authentic personhood and subsequent choices in ways that enhance rather than diminish valued social roles in the community that are so hard fought for.

## ADVANCED ISSUES IN SOCIAL ROLE VALORISATION

*PROFESSOR WOLF WOLFENBERGER, PHD, 1934-2011*

### About the book:

In-depth discussion about SRV related issues by world renowned human service reformer, Wolf Wolfensberger (Syracuse University).

Dr Wolfensberger's last written contributions on SRV theory: based on his International SRV Conference speeches, and which he refined & finalised in the months prior to his death.

Most of the content is published here for the first time.

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