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NO! Against Adult Supremacy Vol. 17
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these young people are craving a relationship with mutual respect in which they can receive help navigating the authoritarian society around them.

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ing others, and so are not anarchists, but some have spiritual transformations and become so.

There are at least two ways that mental health professionals can join the resistance: (1) speak out about the political role of mental health institutions in maintaining the status quo in society, (2) depathologize and repoliticize rebellion in one's clinical practice, which includes helping young anarchists navigate an authoritarian society without becoming self-destructive or destructive to others, and helping families build respectful, non-coercive relationships. If a nonviolent anarcho-communitarian (politically conscious or otherwise) is dragged by parents into my office for failing to take school seriously but is otherwise pleasant and excited by learning, I tell parents that I do not believe that there is anything essentially "disordered" with their child. This sometimes gets me fired, but not all that often. It is my experience that most parents may think that believing a society can function without coercion is naive but they agree that it's not a mental illness, and they're open to suggestions that will create greater harmony and joy within their family.

I work hard with parents to have them understand that their attempt to coerce their child to take school seriously not only has failed—that's why they're in my office—but will likely continue to fail. And increasingly, the pain of their failed coercion will be compounded by the pain of their child's resentment, which will destroy their relationship with their child and create even more family pain. Many parents acknowledge that this resentment already exists. I ask liberal parents, for example, if they would try to coerce a homosexual child into being heterosexual or vice versa, and most say, "Of course not!" And so they begin to see that temperamentally anarchist children cannot be similarly coerced without great resentment.

It has been my experience that many rebellious young people labelled with psychiatric disorders and substance abuse don't reject all authorities, simply those they've assessed to be illegitimate ones, which just happens to be a great deal of society's authorities. Often,

there is actual political ideology that encompasses their point of view. They immediately become more whole after they discover that answering "yes" to the following questions does not mean that they suffer from a mental disorder but instead have a certain social philosophy:

Do you hate coercion and domination?

Do you love freedom?

Are you willing to risk punishments to gain freedom?

Do you instinctively distrust large, impersonal, and distant authorities?

Do you think people should organize themselves rather than submit to authorities?

Do you dislike being either an employer or an employee?

Do you smile after reading the Walt Whitman quote "Obey little, resist much"?

Young people who oppose inequality and exploitation, reject a capitalist economy, and aim for a society based on cooperative, mutually-owned enterprise are essentially left-anarchists—perhaps calling themselves "anarcho-syndicalists" or "anarcho-communitarians." When they discover what Noam Chomsky, Peter Kropotkin, Kirkpatrick Sale, or Emma Goldman have to say, they may identify with them. These young people have a strong moral streak of egalitarianism and a desire for social and economic justice. Not only are they not mentally ill but, from my perspective, they are the hope of society.

There is another group of freedom-loving young people who hate the coercion of parents, schools, and the state but lack an egalitarian moral streak, and are very much into money and capitalism. Some of them may have been dragged into the mental health system after having been caught drug dealing, and are labelled with conduct disorder and/or a personality disorder. While these young people rebel against they themselves being controlled and exploited, many of them are not averse to controlling and exploit-

There Is a Better Way

Vicki Larson

The pressures and pace of modern life has made parents and children stressed and miserable. With the rise of dual-earning families, mothers, and increasingly, fathers are struggling with work-life issues, forcing many to lean in or opt out. But is it truly modern life that's at fault or is it our expectation that two people – whether hetero or same-sex – can do it alone and do it well? Is the nuclear family all it's cracked up to be?

Despite the belief that monogamous male-female bonding is how mothers and children were supported and thrived, the anthropologist Sarah Blaffer Hrdy and others believe it was actually female cooperative breeding, or alloparenting – 'sharing and caring derived from the pooled energy' of a network of 'grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, distantly related kin, and non-kin' – that shaped our evolution. Shared parenting is likely in our genes. It works. So why do we cling to the idea that the nuclear family is the best way to raise children?

The nuclear family can be extraordinarily dangerous for children. Some – often children of educated and privileged families – are buckling under pressure to succeed and are committing suicide at alarming rates. Those in the United States who experience parental divorce are overwhelmingly being raised in poverty, which has lifelong ramifications on their health, wealth and education. At the extreme, some 500 children a year are murdered by their parents in the US, and millions more are abused and neglected, with inadequate systems to help them until damage is done. But even in so-called 'normal' families, children can't escape some sort of dysfunction, whether they're being raised by a parent who is depressed, adulterous, emotionally cold, smothering, absent, angry, passive-aggressive, narcissistic or addicted. The moral philosophers Samantha Brennan and Bill Cameron suggest

that love-based marriage, with the 'instability, tension, and even violence that too often forms a central part of romantic conflict,' doesn't always offer children the stability and security they need.

Parents, too, struggle. It is a lonely, isolating and exhausting business, especially for mothers, who still typically do the bulk of childcare. They pay a huge price for it. Not only do many forsake career opportunities and income, but they also are subject to societal idealisation of motherhood and then shamed and blamed for any perceived failings, most often by their own children.

With all that, can we raise children better? Yes. Rather than leave childrearing solely in the hands of one or two people, it would help everyone if we approached it more along the lines of the old African proverb: 'It takes a village to raise a child.' We should take alloparenting to the next level: quality and trained caregiving that is shared, continuous and, most important, mandatory. For the philosopher Anca Gheaus, communal childrearing makes a lot of sense. In a series of papers, Gheaus explores what childrearing ideally would look like based on children's rights and emotional needs. While acknowledging that some parental power and decision-making is essential until children can care for themselves, parents often use their power arbitrarily and in their own best interest – not necessarily their child's. Being a parent shouldn't automatically give someone a 'monopoly of care' over a child, she says, especially since anyone can become a parent without having any training or undergoing any testing to see if he or she's up for the job. Which is why Gheaus suggests that some non-parental care should be mandatory. If childrearing became more of a communal obligation, all children, whether subject to disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds or just bad parenting, would benefit. More people would be invested in their lives, and the children would be exposed to a variety of opinions and lifestyles that would enhance their budding autonomy. Having numerous caregivers would expose bad parenting earlier, too, and help to mitigate it. And as they grew into adulthood,

Among young people diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), psychologist Russell Barkley, one of mainstream mental health's leading ADHD authorities, says that they have deficits in "rule-governed behavior," as they are less responsive to rules of authorities and less sensitive to positive or negative consequences. A frequently used research tool that distinguishes alcohol/drug abuser personalities was developed by Craig MacAndrew (commonly called the MAC scale), and it reveals that the most significant "addictive personality type" have discipline problems at school, are less tolerant of boredom, are less compliant with authorities and some laws, and engage in more disapproved sexual practices.

I have encountered many people who had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and other psychoses, and who are now politically conscious anarchists, including Sascha Altman DuBrul, author of Maps to the Other Side: The Adventures of a Bipolar Cartographer. DuBrul, several times diagnosed with bipolar disorder, has lived in rebel communities in Mexico, Central America, and Manhattan's Lower East Side, worked on community farms, participated in Earth First! road blockades, demonstrated on the streets in the Battle for Seattle, and he reports that many of his anti-authoritarian friends also have been diagnosed with mental illness. Teenagers, as evidenced by their musical tastes, often have an affinity for anti-authoritarianism, but most do not act on their beliefs in a manner that would make them vulnerable to violent reprisals by authorities. However, I have found that many young people diagnosed with mental disorders—perhaps owing to some combination of integrity, fearlessness, and naïvity—have acted on their beliefs in ways that threaten authorities. Historically in American society, there is often a steep price paid by those who have this combination of integrity, fearlessness, and naïvity.

While DuBrul and his friends have political consciousness, my experience is that most rebellious young people diagnosed with mental disorders do not, and so they become excited to hear that

let it be about your control over anyone. Let it be about how much light all of you can muster up and give out to the rest of the world.

Psychiatry and Resistance
Bruce Levine

The mass media equates anarchism with chaos and violence. However, the social philosophy of anarchism rejects authoritarian government, opposes coercion, strives for greatest freedom, works toward "mutual aid" and voluntary cooperation, and maintains that people organizing themselves without hierarchies creates the most satisfying social arrangement. Many anarchists adhere to the principle of nonviolence (though the question of violence has historically divided anarchists in their battle to eliminate authoritarianism). Nonviolent anarchists have energized the Occupy Movement and other struggles for economic justice and freedom.

In practice, anarchism is not a dogmatic system. So for example, "practical anarchist" parents will use their authority to grab their child who has begun to run out into traffic. However, practical anarchists strongly believe that all authorities have the burden of proof to justify control, and that most authorities in modern society cannot bear that burden and are thus illegitimate—and should be eliminated and replaced by noncoercive, freely participating relationships.

My experience as a clinical psychologist for almost three decades is that many young people labeled with psychiatric diagnoses are essentially anarchists in spirit who are pained, anxious, depressed, and angered by coercion, unnecessary rules, and illegitimate authority. An often used psychiatric diagnosis for children and adolescents is oppositional defiant disorder (ODD); its symptoms include "often actively defies or refuses to comply with adult requests or rules" and "often argues with adults."

children would be more likely to be compassionate – or at least open-minded – toward people whose beliefs and values differed from their parents'. But how to make that happen?

The collective childrearing on Israel's kibbutzim has been lauded for giving children high-quality care in a supportive environment, despite problems with its approach to communal sleeping in its early years. While many parents might not opt to live in a communal setting, there are other ways to provide children with a network of people, ideally not related, who care for them. It could take the form of formalised, but non-religious godparenting, in which children are assigned caregivers who live outside the family home and are willing and able to help care for them several hours a week while they are young, and then become trusted confidantes as they age. There are many men and women who either don't have children or whose children are grown – or perhaps disenfranchised – but still want to make a difference in a child's life. Allowing more people to be involved with the lives of children would create a real, communal investment in the future.

It's easy to see how parents would benefit. Having a trusted, loving network of caregivers would give moms and dads a much-needed break to spend time with each other or alone. They would feel less overwhelmed, especially if they have children with learning challenges or physical disabilities, or have erratic work schedules. It would also help them better manage the ambivalent feelings that parenting elicits, which is 'inevitably accompanied by anger, frustration, and occasionally even hatred,' Gheaus writes.

In some ways, we are already doing a form of alloparenting. Many children are raised with multiple parents, whether through same-sex coupling, divorce, open adoption, polyamory or reproductive technology. The sociologist Karen Hansen notes that dual-employed parents rely on friends, paid caregivers and relatives to help. Teachers, coaches, tutors and mentors often fill in the gaps. But many come and go. And that's the problem. Children can be cut off from loving caregivers, often because of parental needs or

whims. Sometimes they lose access to relatives after a divorce, or to beloved neighbours because of moves or rifts; long-term nannies or babysitters are fired with no regard to a child's desire to continue the relationship. Parents have no moral right to do that.

Besides helping children and parents, alloparents would benefit, too; they'd have richer, deeper relationships with more younger people who just might be more inclined to care for their caregivers as they age. It would, of course, require a revolution in childrearing, Gheaus admits. And parents would have to get over the jealousy they often feel when their child loves someone else. But as parents struggle with work-life issues and the divide between the haves and have-nots grows, who is truly keeping our children's best interests in mind? Alloparenting is the best way for both children and parents to flourish.

Schooling as Genocide

In the late summer, as villages began the preparation for winter, the trucks would tour the villages. They knew where to go and what to say. The man from the government would explain the children were being removed, taken away from their homes and their families and given a place at a residential school. If anyone complained or protested, they were told they were blocking what was best for the child. If that didn't stop the words of dissent, they were warned they'd be arrested and they could spend the year in jail. So the children left, with tears in their eyes and confusion at what they had done and where they were going.

Across Canada, for more than 100 years, children of the indigenous population, or First Nation as they are known here, were taken away as part of the policy of "aggressive assimilation", or as one survivor put it, "They tried to beat the Indian out of us." The idea was simple. The government would provide the money and the church would provide the education. Children were easier to

everyone involved realized that we could be doing more to foster more growth in these little lights. Hitting a child to discipline him dims the lights. Yelling at a child dims the lights. Invalidating the efforts of a child dims the lights. We only have to think of the things in our lives that make us feel bright. Once we do that, then we can look at whether or not we give out the behavior we'd like to take in.

Many adults rationalize the spankings they got as children and say, "Well, those spankings did OK by me — I turned out to be a better person because of them." The idea here is that being hit by their parents kept them from doing harmful things. But, people, was the decision to not repeat the harmful acts done out of fear, or out of reason? Children will only make good decisions if they have the ability to REASON — to think or argue logically. A parent who does not take the time to give a child thinking and negotiating skills will raise a child who will become a less powerful adult. Think about it: not being able to reason and negotiate as an adult will cost the adult a job and a good relationship — all because the parent took more time to discipline the child and make him STOP things, rather than taking the time to allow the child to experience and explore things. Granting a child freedom has nothing to do with letting him run all over the place, it means helping the child feel liberated with the ability to eliminate life's barriers — with the skills you give him.

Those in power lead easier lives. There is nothing wrong with granting children easier lives. Whether you envision others having all the power, or whether you equip your child with the ability to harness his power, and use it, is only a decision. Power, when displayed, shapes and molds the way one thinks, sees or acts. Power inspires. It lends vision and fortifies faith. Dig deep and find your power. It's that stuff that makes you creative, confident, able, and loved by others. Then, look at your child, and REALLY observe the power he was born with, and find ways to strengthen what you discover. Put a new twist on the power exerted in your home. Don't

they either can't relate to you, or they're saying things that are adverse to your beliefs. Nonetheless, as an adult, you have the power to tune a person out, or cut communication all together. Unfortunately, children can seldom do that with their parents. Just imagine always being questioned by someone, always having someone tell you what to do, always having someone suggesting her way is the best way, and invalidating your point of view. That's a demonstration of being spoken TO or AT. Being spoken WITH feels much different. There's an actual exchange of communication in the latter. If more adults had conversations WITH children, both parties would benefit from the understanding that would result.

The communication we have with children does not always have to be about jurisdiction, giving orders, implications, inspection, and other "adult interest" topics. Children don't always have the same concerns adults have. Cleaning up the house and finishing homework may be really important topics for adults to address, but it's not about addressing them. It's about being wise enough to cater to a child's interest by finding out what is important to him, and talking about that for a change. The busy schedule and life challenges of a parent cannot supersede the importance of her children's interests. If adults don't lend importance to what children say and think, children will quickly lose interest in what adults say and think. Getting the respect and trust of children cannot be forced. Those values develop out of their experiences with and observations of adults. Children's ideas count, and their viewpoints are valid. Adults only have to listen, watch, and use their wisdom to direct the paths of children.

During a recent book discussion, a wise gentleman likened babies to little suns. He said that when children are born, they shine brightly, and life experiences tend to dim those lights over time. "That's it!" I thought. Can we, as parents and educators, motivate and cultivate children so that those rays KEEP shining brightly, well into their teen years? Can we give them enough tools and happiness to shine brightly as adults? During that discussion, I think

mould, and the education they received would prepare them for life in Canadian society. Their traditions, their language and the heritage would be ignored. "I said hi in my local language to a priest as I walked into the school on my first day. He lifted me by the ears and beat me unconscious. I was six," said one survivor. Canada's first prime minister, Sir John Macdonald, believed the system was the future: "When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with his parents who are savages; he is surrounded by savages."

The abuse was rampant. Children were raped. Children were abused physically and emotionally. Children were tortured. And children were unloved. In one school, there was even a crudely put together an electric chair where "unruly" boys were made to sit and a current was sent shocking through their body. One man choking back the tears said: "I used to look at the sky and know my parents were looking at the same stars. But I felt alone in the world." Another said "the priest told us we were uncivilised. Then he would take us into a back room and rape us".

The final school closed in 1996. More than 150,000 children had been forced to attend. It's thought up to 6,000 children died during that time. It may be more. Record-keeping was poor and the guilty could hide their secrets. Finally, the survivors as they called themselves realised they had been the victims of abuse. They banded together and took the government to court and won. They received a settlement, the largest of its kind in the world. But they also won the right to a Truth and Reconciliation Commission where they could tell their stories.

For more than five years, the Commission travelled all over the country, gathering evidence and hearing testimony. In a packed function room in a hotel in the Canadian capital, Ottawa, many of those who'd been abused gathered to hear the report. Among them was Annie Johnston. She was sent to a school near her home in British Columbia at the age of five "but it could have been on the moon, I was so removed from my family". The abuse was constant, the humiliation unforgiving. "My brother was at the same school

on the boys side. We were forbidden to talk to one another," she told me, her eyes welling with tears. "The messages that they gave, that we were heathens, we were pagans, my way of life was no good. At five years old you believe everything." It's 50 years since Annie left the school but every day she remembers something; a moment, a smell or a sound and she returns. She said she fed her experiences to her children. "I didn't know how to be a mother, how could I?" And so another generation felt the pain and the anger.

Justice Murray Sinclair – himself from the First Nations – chaired the commission. As he stood and acknowledged Canada was guilty of cultural genocide, those in the room rose with a roar. Their hurt, their anger, their pain had finally been acknowledged. The standing ovation lasted for minutes. People cried, perhaps unable to absorb the history of the moment. "It was nothing less than the systematic and concerted attempt to extinguish the spirit of the aboriginal peoples,", Sinclair continued. "But as the survivors have shown us, they have survived."

Beside me a woman rocked back and forth. "Thank you, thank you," she said almost silently. "Too long, too long." The commission has made 94 recommendations. This, it believes, will help redress the problems the residential school problems have caused, will begin to make amends for past evils, and aid the reconciliation so desperately needed. "It's time to start a new chapter in Canada where everyone is treated equally," said Justice Sinclair. "This is not an aboriginal issue, it's a Canadian issue." The government has said it will look at the findings of the commission, which is short of accepting what needs to be changed.

But for many who made the journey to Ottawa, the report is not the end of the process. It is merely a beginning. For them, for their people and for the country which has always been their home.

Little Suns
Asadah Kirkland

The power of a parent does not come from telling a child what to do, or from having "possession" of a child. And it surely does not manifest itself in the form of hitting a child in order to "discipline" him by instilling fear. It is not having "control" over children, but rather, knowing what characteristics and actions will, when combined, be the perfect recipe for helping a child grow into a good, contributing citizen.

All too often, parents desire to have "power over" young people. Have you even been in a job situation in which a person misused his power and always nagged you, made you do things you didn't want to do, or constantly looked over your shoulder? Annoying, right? What was your feeling? What did you really want to say to him? What did you want to do to him? The behavior he displayed did not make you more powerful. His behavior was disempowering, because it showed lack of confidence in your abilities. It demonstrated a lack of trust. Overall, it made you resent him. Hmmm, does that boss' behavior sound similar to anything a child might experience?

At the top of my concern list is the route parents take when they say they're "pushed to the limit." I have heard it referred to as "the last resort," when a parent feels she has to show her power by yelling at or hitting her child to discipline him. Parents say things like, "I have to talk to them five and six times!" or "He thinks just because he's getting older, he can talk to me any old kind of way?" Yes, parents, I hear you. But there's a reason behind a child blocking out your communication, and there's a way to make sure he doesn't block you out — and it doesn't involve hitting.

Think of it like this: there are people you genuinely like speaking to, because they have things to say that you like to hear, while there are others who may be less appealing to speak to, because