

A metaphoric journey

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We are feeling a little nostalgic here at Total Communication Services CIC, and at the turn of a new year have looked into the archives to find the material for this month's blog which is a piece of creative writing written by Alison in the early 1990's. She was encouraged by her Dramatherapy colleague to express frustration with her attempts at encouraging services to change the way they communicated with people with learning disabilities, she decided to put pen to paper



Dramatherapists will tell you not to explain the metaphor and to allow individual interpretation, however it possibly warrants some explanation at least. Some of the thinking was an attempt to describe the way we all need to share responsibility for developing communication, which in the story is the key to inclusion, and which is at the heart of the key symbol we are using today as Total Communication Services CIC.

If we are serious about real inclusion, about providing truly person centred services then we cannot ignore communication. We share a responsibility to recognise, support and use other forms of communication. The following story provides a metaphor for our journey ...

Once upon a time a boy was walking through the town. As he passed by a wall he could hear children laughing and playing. The wall surrounded a beautiful garden. Carefully, he tried the handle of an old door. It was locked. As he carried on walking he saw a small piece of gold. He turned it slowly in his hand and looked carefully at its shape. The piece of gold was actually part of a key. The boy had a feeling that he seen other parts of the key many years ago when he was quite small. As he walked past the garden, and down towards the beach an idea occurred to him. He knocked on the door of a sailor's house and showed him the small piece of gold. Together they planned a journey. The boy crouched down and drew pictures in the earth which was baked hard by the summer sun.

They began to walk towards the pier, the boy pointed to an island in the distance, and together they set sail in a small rowing boat. The sailor rowed hard all morning as the sun climbed higher in the sky. The sailor grew hot and tired. As they looked back they could see a group of people, tiny in the distance waving on the shore. The boy leaned over the side of the boat and drew pictures in the waves, which were carried away on the tide. Reluctantly the sailor turned the boat around and headed back for the shore as the sun began to set. When they arrived back at the sailor's house, the boy showed the small piece of gold to the family standing on the shore. They all agreed to try again the following day.



Next morning, the sailor was dismayed as the family loaded up the boat with luggage and supplies for the journey. It was almost mid-day by the time they set sail. This time when the sailor got tired other people took turns to row. The family shared what food they had with the sailor and the boy. When they unpacked their bags, another small piece of the gold key was found.

As they drew nearer to the island, the family kept watch for rocks as the sailor steered the boat towards the shore. Eventually they landed safely, on soft white sand. The boy began to walk towards a wood in the distance. Warily, the rest followed slowly up the hill and eventually they reached a clearing where they saw a beautiful waterfall and a deep glistening pool.

The boy sat by the side of the pool as the others gazed in astonishment as they saw the face of a man. The boy reached into the pool and found the remaining piece of the key. Now, at last, he could join the others in the garden.