

Thank God I was Taken into Care

Jenny Molloy

The day I finally walked into a police station in East London, and surrendered my will and my life to the hands of Social Services was the end of one life and the beginning of another.

The absolute sadness, fear and anxiety that I felt, and continued to feel for much of my life for and against my parents, could not be underestimated. I loved them, yet feared their behaviours and consequences. They loved us - yet they were totally unable to view us as children who needed and deserved to be protected, nurtured and openly loved.

Yet due to the love, affection and stability that I received in care, I was able to break that cycle of poverty, abuse, deprivation and degradation that addiction can bring.

In residential care, I was loved. This is not wishful thinking or naivety - I was. I knew where I would be sleeping, who would protect me, who would tell me off(!) and whom I could turn to when I needed a cuddle. My social workers, BOTH residential and field social workers, spent quality time with me, repeatedly reminding me that I was special and worthy of a future.

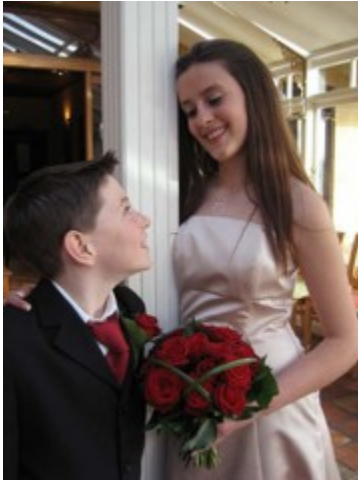
They taught me that it was safe to trust and be trusted.

They taught me how to love, and how to be loved.

They taught me that I had a choice about my future, and that this choice could include dignity, compassion and kindness.



I accepted that choice and the love that they offered, and learnt how to love and nurture my children.



Both of my children have given permission to use this picture. They are both adults now.

My children learnt what I learnt in residential care: kindness, generosity, safety, compassion and most of all - that they were and always will be, the centre of my world.

Today, I attended my third Children's Home reunion, and it feels like I would imagine it feels when going home.



Permission to use this photo has been given by Audrey Hepburn from my last children's home at our reunion this year.

In care, I had a sense of belonging. Today, I feel blessed for knowing and feeling this. I want this for all Looked After Children.

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