



Hi everyone - and welcome to the Birthday Edition of the Wonderful Me! newsletter.

It is now **1 year** since the launch of Wonderful Me! And what a wild, scary, fun, exciting - if at times nail-biting - year it has been! To celebrate, I thought I would take the opportunity to reflect on the story so far, as well as share some exciting updates and new resources that are available or coming soon! So - grab a cuppa and let me fill you in on the past year!

The Vision ...

Over the past few decades our knowledge and understanding of how we work, of how our brains develop, of how we process and understand emotions and mental health has grown exponentially. New technologies - things like MRI scans - have enabled us to more fully understand scripture that says we are **fearfully and wonderfully made** - that we are knit together. We are beginning to better understand now that we are integrated beings - that our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health is all connected and woven together - not separate pieces in separate boxes. But lots of this learning is still new and hasn't always filtered through to the people who need it the most - those working day in day out with children - and so Wonderful Me! is about that - support and training for parents and for churches who are seeking to create safe spaces and approaches that enable every child to feel seen and heard and valued and grow in the knowledge that they are loved by God.

I am passionate about enabling churches to bring inclusive and trauma sensitive approaches that feel safe and welcoming for every child. Approaches that understand and work with children's biology and that model the relational, kind and fierce care and love of Jesus.

THE STORY SO FAR

Throughout this past year, the story I keep coming back to has been the Genesis story of Noah. When God first spoke to Noah, there is no suggestion in the story that there was any sign of the flood that was to come - not even a drop of rain. Yet, despite how crazy it might have seemed, Noah faithfully did what he felt God was asking him to do ... and built the boat. 'Build the boat' has become a bit of a mantra for me this year - and so, here is what the boat is looking like so far!



TRAINING

A huge part of this year has been spent building the Wonderful Me! [training offer](#). To date, we have 4 core training modules that are being delivered.

The first 3 can be delivered either as in person or as online events and each last about 2 hours:

PACE is a brilliant tool, created by leading child psychologist, Dan Hughes, which describes an affirming, relational approach that aims to make a child feel safe. It's an approach that, I think, works for most children and young people, however, it's particularly useful when journeying with children who may have experienced trauma and can transform our understanding of 'behaviour management'.

It's also an approach that I think we see modelled for us by Jesus and in this session, we consider what it might look like for us to bring a PACE approach with the children and young people we are journeying with.



TRAINING (CONT)



The **Brilliant Brain** session begins to explore a little of the world of neuroscience as we look at child brain development.

We use Dr. Daniel Siegel's super simple but very brilliant 'Hand Brain' model as we explore what is going on when we 'flip our lid' and we dig into some practical tools to help us respond when that might happen as well as considering some useful strategies to help children and young people feel safe and avoid times of dysregulation.



The **Trauma Tree**

Trauma is present on our doorstep, in our neighbourhoods and in our churches - and as the church, I believe, that we are called to be part of the healing and repairing process as we bring the hope and love of Jesus! But if we are going to journey that well and create safe spaces that bring healing and restoration then we need to be trauma informed.

In this session, we will explore the Wonderful Me! Trauma Tree tool to help us explore and understand what is meant by the term 'trauma' as well as consider how we can create safe spaces and bring a trauma sensitive approach in our churches.

The latest addition to the Wonderful Me! training offer is our **in person training day** ...



In the **Soothing the Senses** training day, we will be exploring 8 key senses as we consider how to help our children and young people engage well and feel safe in our groups. Our time together will be full of practical ideas to 'up regulate' and 'down regulate' our senses along with some practical strategies in how to structure your provision to help ensure every child feels safe and can avoid sensory overwhelm.

On 5th October in Clitheroe in Lancashire, I will be leading the first Soothing the Senses training day. It's not too late to book your ticket - head over to the [website](#) for all the details!

For more information on how you can host a Wonderful Me! training event at your church, either check out the [website](#) - or [get in touch!](#)

SERVICES



The **Inclusion Support Service** is a little like having access to SENCo support in your church. If you are journeying with children or young people in your church who have additional needs, who struggle with challenging behaviour or who may have experienced trauma and you would value advice and support as you consider how to ensure that every child in your groups feels seen, heard and valued - then the Wonderful Me! Inclusion Support Service may be for you!!!

For a monthly subscription fee, you will receive 1:1 professional supervision each half term, an annual bespoke team training session and ongoing email advice and support throughout the year.

You'll find all the details, including how you can tailor your package to suit your needs, [here!](#)

And while you are there, check out our other services, including consultancy and coaching!



If we are going to journey well with the children in our care it is so important that we are also caring for ourselves and paying attention to our own well being.

Living Well is our sister site which is all about bringing support and resources to enable us to bring curiosity to our own wellbeing as we explore what it might look like to walk with Jesus and follow His rhythms of Grace.

In June of this year, we launched the Living Well 'Rhythms of Grace' course - a 5 week discipleship course for small groups, exploring the Living Well rhythms of Sabbath, Stillness, Wonder and Submission.

On the Living Well website you will find all of the videos and resources you need to host your own course - why not get together with your staff or volunteer teams to sharpen and encourage each other!

And if you are a member of Paraklesis - the Association of Children's, Youth and Families Ministers - keep an eye out for the online Rhythms of Grace course that is happening in the Autumn.



RESOURCES



I have had a lot of fun creating Wonderful Me! resources this year. On the website you will find a growing suite of free resources to support children's workers, along with some free family book reviews and devotionals.

In October, we will be launching a brand new resource - **Exploring Emotions** - with 3 sessions for church children's groups, exploring 3 Big Feelings of Fear, Calm and Worry. Based on Wonderful Me! values and approaches that support felt safety - this resource is jam packed full of activity ideas to enable you to explore how Jesus journeyed Big Feelings with His friends. And each session includes a printable resource for families who would like to explore more together.

Keep an eye on our social media for the latest updates!

SUPPORT

Possibly the biggest challenge of the year, as I have got on with the task of 'building the boat', has been to press in and learn more about what it means to trust God - to trust that the plans for the boat aren't just something I made up myself - to trust that God will open doors that need opening and 'launch the boat' - to trust that He will provide for our needs.

The adventure has probably not played out in the way that I thought it would - but as is always the case - God's way has been way better than anything I could have planned and His Faithfulness and provision has blown us away!

We are grateful for the many prayers, words of encouragement, networking introductions and generous financial support that we have received. If you are able, and would like to find out more about how you can journey with us by financially supporting the work that we do, feel free to get in touch - or check out our stewardship account page:

That is all for this term - Please feel free to share this with your friends!

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

Ephesians 2:10

