

Session 2 Drama II

(Told by a Narrator) In this role-play a woman speaks to the audience about her past. She has carried a pain throughout most of her life that has roots in her childhood. What do you think it is and how has the Church been a surprising source of solace and help.

Actor: When people look at me all they see is my anger. I guess I am an angry person since I don't have a lot of friends right now. Everyone likes bouncy people with their big smiles and bouncy fun personalities. I'm not that person and I suppose I never was. It has taken me all these years to realise this and to understand just why.

I went to a talk recently and listened to a lady giving an account of her experiences. It's funny how hearing someone else's story doesn't make yours sound so bad. But it is when it happens to you and it is you who must deal with it - then it's bad. Just like that lady I had no enthusiasm for life, no spirit. The enthusiasm was battered, bashed and flattened - any little flicker of light I ever had it was always extinguished.

My life as far back as I can remember was dull and dark, there was always a rock deep in the pit of my stomach, that horrible heavy feeling. That huge dark black cloud that greeted me each time I opened our front door - it never changed. The rock somehow seemed to get bigger and that cloud darker.

When I was a young child I could bury it. I could forget just for a little while, pretend when I was out playing with friends. But when the time came to go home that all too familiar feeling, the tummy, the cloud, a sinking feeling... As I got older it was much harder to pretend. Yeah I went through the motions, I fell in love (kind of), I got married had three kids and it was just watching my children and their vitality that really made me realise how much affection and warmth had been denied me in my own growing up. For a while I thought the past was behind me. I thought I could cope fine but every now and then that heavy feeling, that cloud would appear.

I remember coming home for his funeral, seeing him there in his coffin in the funeral home. His face looked peaceful (more peaceful than I had ever remembered him in life) the tension the anger that was always there seemed to have drained away with his life. He looked peaceful. I kissed him. I made my peace. He was dead and I wanted to let him go! But it didn't die. It didn't go.

If only he had shown just a little love, just a little sign, a hug, just one kind word, even...just a smile.

But the shouting, the yelling, the cruel harsh words - even sometimes the words that he

spoke softly they pierce my heart - always a put down, always negative towards me, disapproving, always my fault no one else's but mine....

Even at my wedding he almost refused to speak at the reception and when the time came he looked joyless and disappointed. No words of affection, nothing to suggest he really loved me or what I may have meant to him. I knew already how little I did. You wouldn't believe it. He spoke about me as if I were a farm utensil or a tractor, "She's grand, she's always there when you need her, she never lets you down (he lying of course). I thought for once he will show his affection, make a public statement of how much he loved me but there was nothing. They applauded to fill in the void, the staggering absence of love and warmth.

Maybe if I had told him how he made me feel. Had I stood up to him and made him feel for once what he made me feel. O God, the anger rises in me again, why is it my fault? Why am I so cross, so angry...?

I started reading self-help books, but I know it would have come out anyway, in a different way. I read those books and it put me in touch with my wound. I understood a lot. And I got angrier, if only if onlyIf only my father hadn't been cold. If only society was fairer, if only women had equal rights and power, if only men weren't so damn macho! If only....Well, I got angrier and angrier. I froze up inside like an iceberg. I was hardest on myself, my husband, my kids, and then on those around me, the parish, my friends, everyone! God, I fought - and I was right too! It is unfair. It is a damned shame that lives, especially women's lives, can be forever ruined so easily. It is unfair to live in a world that isn't fair to us.

Yeah, my anger ruined my marriage. It ruined my relationship to a church I once loved and respected. It ruined my happiness. I was crying out for help, I had emptiness, a longing but no one understood. I wish somebody could understand. Sometimes I think that's true, even of God! I had grown tired of praying. For awhile I wondered was there even a God. I looked and searched everywhere for a sign

I've such mixed feelings. But something inside of me wants to let go. I want some life back, some joy back, some love back. I wasn't born this angry. I don't want to die this angry! I don't want to be this angry. Funny, through all this, the anger, the bitterness something did come to me, a little hope, a little help, a little understanding.

I stepped into a church one cold winter's evening, and the first thing to meet me was the quiet, then the heat, a lovely warm feeling. I sat for a little while. The silence, the peace, the calm, it really surrounded me. I felt this calm inside me, a peace, which made me stay for quite awhile. As my eyes scanned the church, several times, in a nervous sort of way, my eyes kept returning to the cross at the front of the church. I

Monologue of a Emotionally abused Daughter

studied it for a long time.

I don't know how to explain it, even to myself, but somehow that symbol gives me the hope that, somewhere, somebody does understand.

The scene fades with a piece of religious music.