

RobS Story

Facilitating the training workshops for Robs is something we have come to look forward to because one can never be certain how each particular group will respond to the playskills, moreover, how individual people are going to respond to the workshop/playskills. I have continually been amazed by how participants respond to the playskills and their responses although different but powerful. Each participant, in his/her own special way makes the training workshops meaningful and a worthwhile journey even though it can be a difficult process at times. We have so many stories we can tell about each participant that I have had the pleasure and an honor to work with. However, for the purposes of the report we had to choose one story that stood out for me in all the trainings we have conducted and this was a difficult task as there is something special to report about each and every participant.

We have chosen to tell a story of a young woman of approximately 26 years of age. On the first day of the training they all had to create their Book of Loss. This is where participants create a makeshift of a book to tell a story about a person/s that the participant has lost. This is done by putting together pictures, drawings, writings, etc together that will help the participant express his/her feelings associated with that loss or person's death. This particular young woman had made her Book of Loss but felt that she was not ready to share about her experience of death as it was still too painful for her. Her decision to not share was respected as we knew that she could do it only when she was ready. On the following day or so when we read the story of Felix, this same woman started crying hysterically. Her hysterical response came as a shock but it was also welcomed because of the theme of the story read out and of the process of grief. The story resonated or hit too close to home for her that she could not contain her pain and suffering inside anymore. This was experienced by the facilitators as a form of catharsis and that all that this participant had needed was a space where she felt safe enough to allow her deep painful emotions to be depressed. After this cathartic experience, much improvement was observed in how this young woman participated she lit-up instantly. Also on the last day she was in front of the group presenting feedback for her group, which she did superbly, and whilst there she decided to share her Book of Loss with the whole group. This showed a great amount of courage and also being empowered to face her grief and deal with the pain in order to accept and grow from the unfortunate death of a loved one.