

CHAPTER 8

INTRA-INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS OF ANTOINETTE'S EXPERIENCE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

At the time of the interview Antoinette (pseudonym) was working as a volunteer at a Christian based Crisis Centre in her community. She is a lay counsellor at the Crisis Centre as well as a police reservist at her local police station.

She lives with her four children and grandchild in a previously "Coloured" designated township on the East Rand. Antoinette's oldest daughter fell pregnant at the age of fifteen and dropped out of school. Her eldest son (22 years) also dropped out of school, and was unemployed at the time the research was conducted. Her two youngest children are still schooling.

Antoinette's four children and grandchild are all financially dependent on her. Although Antoinette does not earn a salary, her involvement in community work has put her in contact with friends and community members who sometimes supply her family with food, basic necessities and small amounts of money.

Antoinette got married at the age of seventeen and stayed in the abusive marriage for eighteen years. At the time the interview was conducted she had been divorced for four years.

The researcher was placed into contact with Antoinette after approaching the management of the Crisis Centre where Antoinette works as a volunteer. After a telephonic conversation with a staff member of the management of the Crisis Centre, the researcher faxed a brief outline of the research study, explaining the purpose of the study and what would be expected from the participant (see Appendix I). As the Centre is situated in a previously "Coloured" designated community the researcher reasoned that "Coloured" women who left abusive relationships may have made use of the services

rendered by the Crisis Centre. As it turned out, Antoinette who works as a lay counsellor at the Centre fit the criteria for prospective participants in the study.

The researcher met briefly with Antoinette to discuss the purpose of the study and to set up an appointment for the interview. The interview was conducted on a Saturday morning at the offices of the Crisis Centre where Antoinette works as a volunteer.

8.2 INTERVIEWER'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE PARTICIPANT

Antoinette presented as casually dressed but well groomed. She wore make-up and her blond-dyed hair was neatly tied up. She is of average height and weight. Her overall appearance was one of vibrancy, youthful energy and confidence.

Despite this lively presentation Antoinette expressed some reservation regarding the interview. Apparently, this reservation was brought about by some family members who warned her that her interview with the researcher might be exploited for financial gain. The researcher briefly reiterated the nature and purpose of the study as well as re-engaged Antoinette in a brief discussion on the issues of confidentiality and her voluntary participation in the study. Antoinette proceeded to sign the participant release agreement without hesitation (see Appendix III).

The interviewer's overriding impression of Antoinette was one of extreme confidence and optimism. Antoinette expressed herself well verbally, but often in a defensive manner. She would often express herself in the third person and the interviewer often had to probe deeper into her statements in order to encourage introspection, as well as to gain a truer sense of the phenomena she was describing.

Although Antoinette is fluent in both English and Afrikaans, she chose to have the interview conducted in Afrikaans. However, during the interview both English and Afrikaans was used, as is common among "Coloured" people. Both the interviewer and Antoinette found the language usage relaxed and comfortable.

The interviewer experienced Antoinette as interpersonally open and approachable and it was not difficult to establish a warm level of rapport although the interviewer initially sensed a degree of resistance, from Antoinette, which she suspects originated from their different religious backgrounds (the interviewer being Muslim and the interviewee Christian). However, as the interview progressed the differences in religion did not appear to be an issue of concern.

8.3 TRANSCRIPT OF THE INTERVIEW WITH ANTOINETTE

The interview transcript detailing Antoinette's experience is presented in Appendix V. The interview was transcribed verbatim. The participant mainly expressed herself in Afrikaans. From time to time English expressions were however used. In these instances the English expressions were written in italic format. Grammatical errors were also italicized while the bold format was used to illustrate words that were uttered with emphasis or strong emotions. Significant non-verbal gestures were placed in brackets.

The transcribed interview was analysed by using phenomenological procedures. The procedures included *horizontalizing* the data and regarding every horizon or statement relevant to the topic (the experience of “Coloured” women leaving abusive spousal relationships) as having equal value. From the horizontalised statements, *meaning units* were listed. These were clustered into common categories or *themes*, removing overlapping or repetitive statements. The clustered themes and meanings were used to develop a *thematic textural description* of Antoinette’s experience of leaving an abusive spousal relationship.

8.4 A THEMATIC TEXTURAL DESCRIPTION OF ANTOINETTE’S EXPERIENCE

The following verbatim excerpts represent the clustering of the delaminated meanings into core themes of Antoinette’s experience of leaving an abusive spousal relationship.

8.4.1 LEAVING IS A DIFFICULT AND LENGTHY PROCESS

Prior to leaving the abusive relationship Antoinette experienced a number of significant processes that culminated in her finally leaving the abusive relationship. These processes were long and difficult. What follows is a detailed account of these processes.

8.4.1.1 RESOLVING THE UNCERTAINTIES ASSOCIATED WITH LEAVING WAS DIFFICULT AND TOOK TIME.

For Antoinette the prospect of leaving the abusive relationship presented a challenge filled with uncertainties.

- Uh die antwoord wat ek gesoek het, was uh ek kan nie vir jou verduidelik nie, was so moeilik. Dit was so moeilik. Die antwoorde was uh: "As ek uit kom, sou ek miskien lewendig daar uit kom? As ek daar uit kom, sou dit vir my 'n beter mens gemaak het? Wat sou ek vir my kinders kan beteken?"

Gaining perspective and clarity regarding these particular uncertainty's required strenuous effort and time. These individual but interrelated processes are elucidated below.

8.4.1.1.1 It Took Time and Strength to Overcome the Fear (Would She Get Out of the Marriage Alive?)

For Antoinette leaving the abusive relationship was difficult because it took time and strength to overcome the fear of being killed by her husband who often threatened to kill her and badly assaulted her in the past.

- Man, dit was baie moeilik om uit dit uit te kan kom. Dit verg baie krag, want jy is bevrees en uh daar's uh, op daai oomblik voel jy daar's niemand om jou nie. So dit is nie eintlik maklik om uit dit te kom nie.
- Maar soos ek vir jou sê dit verg tyd...dit verg so tyd en krag, because jy uit vrees uit sit jy in daai huwelik.
- Dit vrees jou want jy is bang die man gaan jou dood maak, want hy het hoeveel keer het hy al vir my gedreig en hy het my al so lelik aangerand.

But eventually Antoinette came to the conclusion that leaving was in fact the only way to preserve her life.

- So as jy nie nou hier uitgaan nie, uit die huwelik uit nie, dan gaan die man jou dood maak.

Antoinette's fear was not only confined to her physical safety but she also feared that staying in the abusive relationship would eventually compromise her psychological emotional integrity.

- Jy gaan *either* van 'n *stroke* dood either jy gaan **mal** raak.

The following theme i.e. "The Process of Introspection" will shed some more light on this issue of maintaining her psychological and emotional integrity.

4.1.1.2 *The Process of Introspection is Difficult and Time-Consuming*

(Would Leaving Make a Better Person of her?)

In order to answer this question for herself, Antoinette needed to look at the person she currently was. She went through a process of introspection, which she describes as looking into a mirror. This process of introspection was difficult because it takes time to be able to take an honest look at oneself. From behind her beautiful exterior, Antoinette had to confront her feelings of despair, grieve, anxiety, acrimony and animosity.

- Vir my het dit baie jare gevat voor ek dit kon besef. So...dit is baie moeilik, ek moet dit vir jou sê. Omdat dit vat soveel tyd om in daai spieël te gaan kyk en *whatever is going to reflect back to you, it will never lie to you. Because that woman in that looking glass, ... that depression, that hurt, that fear, that bitterness, that anger! And... and yet your so beautiful.*

It took time for Antoinette to come to the conclusion that her husband was not worth the pain and suffering that she endured.

- En uh, maar soos ek sê, ek belowe jou soos tyd gaan... Ek het gebid een oggend, vir die Here gevra, toe sê ek vir Hom: "Ek glo nie ek deserve, die lewe wat ek nou lewe nie, want geen man is dit werd nie".

The process of moving from a depressed fearful woman to an assertive woman who believes that she deserves a better life will be elucidated upon under the theme of "Self-awareness". The theme of "Self-awareness" sheds significant light on the complexities and dynamics of this lengthy and difficult process of introspection, which eventually lead to the answer to Antoinette's question of whether leaving would make her a better person.

8.4.1.1.3 *Redefining Her Role as a Mother Took Time*

(What Would She Mean to Her Children if She Left the Abusive Relationship?)

The prospect of leaving the abusive relationship posed a challenge to Antoinette's sense of motherhood. She considered leaving quite early on in the abusive relationship but feared that should she leave she would risk depriving her children of sustenance and shelter.

- En toe ek uit die huwelik wou uit stap nê, toe het ek mos nou, ek het vier kinders, *you know*, en vir my was dit so moeilik, ek het nie 'n ma hier nie, ek het nie 'n pa hier nie, ek is op my eie, ek is so jonk, ek is een-en twintig-en-'n-half, ek was nog nie twee-en twintig nie, baie jonk getrou, ek was omtrent sewentien. En uh met die klomp kinders, wie gaan vir my plek gee? (Speech very rapid.)

She was unhappy and dissatisfied with the condition of her marriage but stayed for the sake of her children.

- Die liefde is ook nie meer dieselfde nie, niks voel weer dieselfde nie. Maar jy gaan maar net aan vir die *sake* van die kinders, jy't nie bly plek nie, as ek hier uit gaan waar gaan ek my kop neer sit vir my kinders...

Although both strangers and family members encouraged her to leave the marriage, they could not provide her with practical support like financial assistance or a place to stay for her children.

- Uit te kom, ja, want hulle was altyd daar. Hulle het my gesien. Maar hulle het nou nie vir my geldelik gehelp nie of kan vir my 'n dak gee vir my kinders nie.

On one occasion Antoinette and her children went to stay with her sister. She found the adjustment of staying with her sister frustrating because she had to remove her children from their comfortable home to a house where there was no lights and electricity.

- Ja, hy het my uit daai omstandighede, het hy my uit gedryf ...uit my uh...uh gerieflikheid vir my kinders. Hy't my daar uit getrek, you know.

She accidentally burned herself with boiling hot water because she got distracted by the anger she was feeling towards her husband for pulling her and her children out of their comfortable home.

- En ek het net daar omgekantel. En uh ek het in die hospital het ek regtig waar myself bykom toe kom kry ek ek lê in die hospital. En die dokter wou nie glo ek het sò gebrand. Toe sê ek: "Nee, ek het so gebrand, ek kan onthou ek het kwaad geraak.

Although Antoinette initially stayed in the abusive relationship for the sake of her children, the impact of the abuse on her children eventually prompted her to leave the relationship.

- Maar toe sê ek vir die een vrou die een dag:" Ek weet nie ek... ek kan dit nie meer hou nie, my arme kinders is.. is ... hulle is so vreesbevange.

The last abusive incident, which almost cost her life, inspired Antoinette not to go back to her husband. It is significant to note that it was not just a matter of preserving her life but she was also determined not to let her children loose a mother.

- Daai was nou die ergste en dit was die laaste...toe my kinders my amper verloor het. En ek het gesê *no more turning back*...

Leaving required that Antoinette transformed from a mother who was mainly concerned about her children's physical wellbeing to a mother who also places a high premium on her children's emotional wellbeing. Both Antoinette and her children have learned to overcome the limitations of physical deprivation and to attain joy despite adversity.

- So wat het ek toe besluit is uh, ek staan op my woord, maar dit het moeilik gegaan want daar is nou nie meer kos in die huis vir die kinders nie, you know.
- Ek wat nie 'n salaris verdien nie, ek wil vir jou sê, ek voel baie gelukkig, ek en my kinders. Al is dit net daai droë sny brood, ons (laughing) voel baie gelukkig.

This transformation has allowed her to have the courage to face the uncertainty of not always being able to provide in her children's material needs.

- Hier werk ek nou al meer as drie jaar voluntary, ek het vier kinders, ek het 'n kleinkind, ek het myself. Baie mense dink ek kry 'n salaris. Ek kan nie vir jou sê nie, as ek net kom kry dan gee my vriende vir my, daar staan, 'n pak kos op my tafel, suiker, rys, toilet papier, *toiletries*, en 'n vyftig rand in 'n *envelope* en dan gaan ons weer aan, dan... Ek het nooit gekla nie, daar is nie kos in die huis nie. En is nou meer as drie jaar werk ek sonder 'n salaris en ek is so gelukkig, daar's niemand wat vir my afrem in my huis nie.

Thus, for Antoinette the answer to her question: "What would I mean to my children if I leave?", was mainly that she would become a mother who through her own happiness inspire her children to attain lives filled with love and joy, in spite of not being sure of where your next meal will come from.

- Dan sê ek vir die kinders: "Ek weet nie kan julle onthou nie, daai tyd en daai tyd". En dan sê hulle nogal vir my: "Haai, Mammie en kyk hoe's Mammie nou", *you know*.
- *I'm full of love and joy, never angry when I get out of bed, never angry when I go to sleep*, ek sal dinge uitsorteer voor ek gaan slaap-ek wil goed voel, ek wil nie met 'n suur gesig dood gaan nie, ek wil goed voel en dit is hoe ek my kinders ook leer.

Antoinette has also made a conscious effort of educating her children on the dynamics of abuse but this took time.

- Ja, *you know*. En jy kan dit oordra in die huis in. *I think it starts at home, because you have to start at home and give it over to them, you have to educate your family about it (abuse) and then you go out there*, verstaan jy. So dit is, **dit is** baie belangrik. En ek uh, dit het tyd gevat, ek wil jou sê dit het tyd gevat.

On account of it being so difficult and taking so long to resolve the uncertainties that leaving presented her with, Antoinette learned to cope with the abuse. But as time progressed, her coping mechanisms broke down to a point where she felt that she was not able to endure the abusive life anymore.

8.4.1.2

IT TAKES TIME TO REACH A BREAKING POINT

Antoinette describes the last abusive incident as the worst and one that prompted her to finally leave.

- Maar daai was die moeilikste en daai was die laaste. Daai was nou die ergste en dit was die laaste...toe my kinders my amper verloor het. En ek het gesê *no more turning back*...dit is wat ek nog kan *onhou*...en ons is nou nog daar.

But Antoinette also describes less drastic but emotionally intense moments in her marital life during which she felt she could no longer cope with the abusive life. Her children's deteriorating psychological well being made her question whether she could continue to cope with the abuse.

- Maar toe sê ek vir die een vrou die een dag:" Ek weet nie ek... ek kan dit nie meer hou nie, my arme kinders is...is ... hulle is so vreesbevange.

- Maar soos tyd aangaan raak jy mos groter en jy *deel* met baie dinge en jy *deel* met baie verskillende mense, en toe sê ek vir myself, toe ek een-en-twintig maak, toe bid ek een oggend toe sê ek: "Here ek wil uit hierdie uit huwelik kom, ek kan nie meer nie."

She confronted her confusion and decided that she could no longer endure the kind of life she was living.

- Ek het baie, ek was baie *confuse* gehad, *my eyes*. My oë het dit gesê. Jy kon dit sommer op my gesig sien. *And the answer is: "What are you going to do about it. Are you going to sit down, lie backwards, and not do anything or are you going to do something.* En ek het besluit: "Ek gaan uit ...nie langer as dit nie".

A major component in Antoinette's resolution of her uncertainties and confusion was understanding and defining her husband's behaviour as abusive.

8.4.1.3 *IT TAKES TIME TO UNDERSTAND ABUSE*

Initially Antoinette did not define her husband's behaviour as abusive. She did not understand the meaning of abuse and it took time for her to educate herself on the nature of abuse.

Through educating herself, Antoinette came to the conclusion that the abuse she was subjected to was not just a mere mishap but as a violation of her rights.

- Ek **ken** my regte van 'n vrou, want ek het nie verstaan wat beteken *abuse* nie.

Realising that she had rights meant that she did not have to accept the abuse anymore.

- Jy **moet** dit ken, as jy dit nie ken nie, jy gaan net aanvaar, want jy moet dit kan verstaan wat beteken *abuse*.

But this realisation took time to come to pass.

- So dit (understanding of abuse) is, **dit is** baie belangrik. En ek uh, dit het tyd gevat, ek wil jou sê dit het tyd gevat.

For Antoinette, the experience of leaving the abusive relationship was not confined to individual processes only. The experience was intricately linked to the people in her life. This aspect of the experience will be illuminated upon in detail under theme 8.4.2 (the influence of people).

At this stage reference will only be made to the theme of "time" as it relates to the people in Antoinette's life.

8.4.1.4. IT WAS DIFFICULT AND TOOK TIME TO SHARE WITH OTHERS

For Antoinette the abusive experience was characterised by a great sense of loneliness.

- Jy is alleenig, jy voel jy is in 'n gat in en daar's niemand om jou eintlik nie.

It would appear that disclosing the abuse was instrumental to Antoinette leaving, but it was difficult and took time for her to be able to share her experience with others as she reached a stage where she stopped believing in people.

- Ek het niemand weer geglo nie. En ek sal ook vir jou sê, dit was moeilik.

Ultimately, eventually sharing her experience with others brought her to a point where she realised that she could no longer endure the abusive life.

- Maar soos tyd aangaan raak jy mos groter en jy deel met baie dinge en jy deel met baie verskillende mense, en toe sê ek vir myself, toe ek een-en-twintig maak, toe bid ek een oggend toe sê ek "Here ek wil uit hierdie uit huwelik kom, ek kan nie meer nie."

But reaching this breaking point, where she realised that she could no longer endure was not enough, she had to take action. But this was difficult, since she experienced the abuse as a defeat.

8.4.1.5. LEAVING IS A DIFFICULT PROCESS OF RECOVERY

Antoinette experienced leaving as a process of recovery. She describes the process of being abused as a defeat. But after being thrown down you have to get up. But it is difficult and it takes strength "not to continue lying down".

- Jy moet uitgaan, jy kan nie daar bly lê nie, want as jy bly lê dan gaan daar erger dinge gebeur. En dit uh, ek wil vir jou sê, dit is baie moeilik, *you know*, om oor dit te kom.
- Maar die **belangrikste** van alles is, ek het nie daar bly lê nie, dit het regtig waar krag gevat om daar uit te kom, maar ek het uit gekom, **baie moeilik**, dit het... baie moeilik het ek daar uit gekom.

These lengthy and difficult processes, (i.e. the resolution of uncertainties; reaching a breaking point, understanding abuse, sharing of the experience and recovery), although discussed individually, are all interconnected.

8.4.1.6. THE PROCESS OF SYNERGY TAKES TIME AND EFFORT.

Antoinette experienced leaving to be the result of the synergy among a variety of processes. To attain this synergy takes time and effort. Antoinette likens this process of reaching synergy to pieces of a puzzle that takes time to finally fit.

- *You have to pick up the pieces somehow. Dis amper soos puzzles, ongeag wie sê wat, you know, then you have to start from there. Because sometimes is daar een puzzle wat jy nie weet waar hy in fit nie en dit gaan baie tyd vat om daai puzzle dan by die regte plek in te sit*

8.4.2 THE INFLUENCE OF PEOPLE

People's reaction to Antoinette's decision to stay in or leave the abusive relationship shed's significant light on the complexity of the experience of leaving the abusive relationship. The current theme also sheds light specifically on why it took so much time for her to be able to share her experience with other people.

Some people in her life encouraged her to leave the relationship while others encouraged her to stay.

8.4.2.1. RECEIVING CONTRADICTIONARY ADVISE

An aunt and a stranger told Antoinette that she did not need to accept the abusive life and that she should leave but she always had hope that her husband would eventually change.

- En ek ontmoet een ou vrou eendag, en sy sê vir my : "My kind, kyk in die spieël in en kyk net watter, uh, uh, mooi mens is jy. Jy het nie nodig dat iemand jou so moet kavoert nie." En... ag toe dink ek is ook maar net een van daai praatjies, jy weet mense *like* mos ook maar dinge praat en so, my *auntie* het vir my gesê: "Jy sal so sit dat iemand vir jou so karniffel. Dan sê ek: "Ag, hy sal verander."

After leaving at one stage her brother persuaded her to go back home to her husband.

- En hy sê: "Antoinette, gee jou man nog 'n kans". Ek sê " Ek het die man al soveel kanse gegee, julle was nie daar nie, julle verstaan nie", *you know*. En hy sê "Antoinette gee hom nog 'n kans". Die laaste kans was amper my dood.

In addition to receiving contradictory advise, the experience of leaving the abusive relationship was further complicated for Antoinette by people who judged both her decision to leave or stay in the relationship.

8.4.2.2 **BEING JUDGED**

Because of the abuse Antoinette feared being among people. She felt inadequate because people judged her negatively.

- Ja, en dan sê ek "Nee man, nou moet ek hierdie werk, ek...ek kan nie werk nie. " Ek kan nie kosentreer op die werk, ek kan nie tussen mense is nie, ek...ek is bang vir mense. Ek het nie geweet wat om vir hulle te sê nie, want ek het soos 'n *stupid* gevoel. Want die mense het gesê: "Jy wil dan nie hoor nie. Jy hou daarvan". Maar hulle het nie verstaan nie. Hulle het nie verstaan hoe ek voel nie. Ek kon net nie ...ook deel met sekere mense nie.

When she eventually left the relationship people also had negative things to say.

- Ja! As jy **uit** kom dan gaan daar baie mense is wat negatiewe dinge van jou te sê het, *you know*. Want dan uh, uh dan sê hulle nie die **man** was sleg nie, dan gaan hulle sê jy was sleg. Om dan in **jouself** te kan bewys, nie **die mense** te kan bewys nie, *you have to get up there and do something for yourself, you know, and your children*. Want as jy aan jouself begin

8.4.2.3 **A NEED TO BE AMONG PEOPLE**

Despite feeling grossly misunderstood by people Antoinette still had a need to be among people while she was in the relationship.

- En dit gaan ook nie net om dit nie, ek wil ook goed voel, ek wil tussen mense beweeg ek...ek wil uit dit uitkom...

8.4.2.4. **SEEKING HELP FROM PEOPLE WAS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LEAVING**

After her brother persuaded her to take her husband back, Antoinette approached social institutions and elderly people for counselling. But her husband's adamant refusal to participate in counselling only made her blame herself for the condition she found herself in.

- Ja en uh ek het ook geprobeer om na kerke toe te gaan, ek het ook probeer om groot mense in te kry, maar dit het nie vir hom saak gemaak nie. Ek onthou een keer toe gaan ek uh na FAMSA toe by House of Mercy. Sister Therisa was daai jare daar. En uh dit was die tyd toe ek uit die hospital uit kom, wat my been so gebrand het. En ek sê toe vir haar ek het uh huweliks probleme, en ek sê toe vir hom hulle wil vir hom sien daar binne. Hy sê: "*I haven't got blady time to talk to nobody*." En sy sê toe vit hom: "*Well, I need five minutes of your time*." Hy sê: "*I haven't got five minutes of my time for you*." En uh toe vertel sy hom, soos hulle nou praat, sê sy vir hom: "Wel nou sien ek regtig waar jy is 'n probleem, jy is nie bereid om te werk aan jou huwelik nie". Maar nog het dit nie vir my ingedring nie!, *you know*. Vir my het dit uh beteken: " Kyk hierso, nee man, miskien is daar iets fout met my".

8.4.2.5 *ULTIMATELY THE DECISION TO LEAVE IS AN INDIVIDUAL ONE*

The advice she received from people only served to confuse her so that she eventually put everything people told her down to "just talk."

- Ander mense gaan jou nie alles sê...jy raak so *confuse* dat jy ook nie eens weet aan die einde van die dag nie: "Wat praat die mense? Praat hulle regte goedte of, *you know*. En by die einde van die dag was dit: " Ag is ook maar net een van daai praatjies".

Eventually Antoinette decided that leaving was the only way to deal with the abuse.

- Ek het maar self besluit: "Dit baat nie ek gaan na ander mense toe nie, ek moet uitkom".

Not only did Antoinette come to a point where she realised that she had to leave, she also came to the conclusion that leaving started with herself.

- Exactly, jy moet by jouself begin, *because why* jy kan nie iets doen omdat jy uh die mense wil *please* nie, aan die einde van die dag gaan mense maar nog altyd iets hê om te sê. Baie lelike dinge het om van jou te sê, maar om goed te voel moet jy by jouself begin.

For Antoinette "starting with herself" was a long process of introspection leading to an increase in self awareness.

8.4.3 SELF AWARENESS

As was mentioned in theme 1.1.2, Antoinette went through a difficult and lengthy process of introspection. The current theme of "Self-Awareness" sheds some light on some of the factors that made the process of introspection so difficult and time-consuming.

8.4.3.1 *REALITY*

Antoinette likened the process of introspection to looking into a mirror. For her the reflection from mirror revealed her reality-the truth.

- **INTERVIEWER:** Is 'n klomp emosies wat jy moet aanstaar. **ANTOINETTE:** *Exactly! And that reality because that's the truth.* Wat jy moet daar in sien, as jy in daai spieël in kyk en jy het 'n puisie in jou gesig in, die spieël gaan nie leuns vertel vir jou nie. Die spieël gaan vir jou wys daai puisie is daar en daai puisie lyk nou so. En dit is die expression in your face, in your eyes.

8.4.3.2 *CONFUSION*

When Antoinette looked at her image in the mirror, she was forced to confront her confusion and this propelled her into making a decision.

- **INTERVIEWER:** Wat het jy gesien toe jy in die spieël kyk? **ANTOINETTE:** Ek het baie, ek was baie *confuse* gehad, *my eyes*. My oë het dit gesê. Jy kon dit sommer op my gesig sien. *And the answer is: "What are you going to do about it. Are you going to sit down, lie backwards, and not do anything or are you going to do something.* En ek het besluit: "Ek gaan uit ...nie langer as dit nie".

8.4.3.2.1 *Not Conceptualizing Husband's Behaviour as Abusive Caused Confusion*

Antoinette could never understand why her husband abused her. During times of tranquility, when she confronted him with the issue, he could not give her a satisfactory answer. When she wanted to be affectionate towards him he accused her of being unfaithful.

- Maar ek het nooit geweet waarom gaan die bakleiery nie. *You know*, ek het al gevra vir hom, as ons vrede is in die huis in: "Wat is dit, wat doen ek verkeerd, sê vir my", hy sê "Nee daar's niks wat jy verkeerd doen nie. Wat meen jy?" As ek miskien loving wil wees met hom, dan vra hy vir my kom ek van my hoer-manne af.

An important source Antoinette's sense of confusion was her initial failure to conceptualise her husband's behaviour as abusive.

- Dit was so confusing gewees dat ek... ek het dit nie verstaan nie. Ek... ek het nie geweet eintlik wat beteken abuse nie, en ek het ook nie geweet wat beteken sexual abuse nie, you know. Ek het al gevra: "Hoekom wil jy elke aand met my slaap, wat is dit?" En toe sê hy : "Het jy dan nie geweet ek het met jou getrou net om seks met jou te hê nie?", you know.

Her initial inability to explain her husband's behaviour and what was happening to her contributed to Antoinette turning to irrational beliefs to try and make sense of the abuse.

8.4.3.3 *IRRATIONAL BELIEFS*

- **ANTOINETTE:** Ek het al beginne glo: "Kyk hy slaan my omdat hy lief is vir my. En as hy my nie gaan slaan nie dan is hy nie meer lief vir my nie." Ek het sulke dinge beginne glo.
- **INTERVIEWER:** Om te probeer sin maak uit die...
- **ANTOINETTE:** **Exactly**, because ek het al geglo, dit was nou klaar al 'n gewoonte.

- En ek het ook geglo dat die man is lief vir my. En as hy my nie gaan slaan nie, hy't 'n verhouding. Ek was al klaar gewoont al.

In addition to making use of irrational beliefs to make sense of her husband's abuse, Antoinette also blamed herself for the abuse. This self-blame was mainly connected to the emotional abuse she was subjected to.

8.4.3.4 *EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND SELF-BLAME*

The emotional abuse that Antoinette was exposed to made her feel so inferior that she started believing that she was the one with the problem.

- In die **begin** het ek gevoel "kyk hier, ek is die probleem", hy het my so laat voel. Hy het my minderwaardig laat voel, ek het regtig waar so gevoel, hoor.
- As jy miskien dit gedoen het dan sou dit miskien nie gesê gewees het nie, *you know*. Hulle maak jou dat jy dat **jy** minderwaardig voel, dat jy voel jy is die problem in die huis in.

The emotional abuse broke her spirit to such an extent that she started doubting herself in everything she did and started believing that she could not do anything right.

- Ja, jy, jy *doubt* jouself, in alles wat jy doen, jy doen niks reg nie. Jy voel dit so, want hy't dit al klaar afgedwing, geestelik is jy so afgerem deur die dinge wat hy vir jou sê, hy kraak jou af.

8.4.3.4.1 *Overcoming the Self-blame*

Overcoming the self-blame was instrumental to her leaving the abusive relationship.

- Ek het geloop want ek het myself beginne ondersoek, ek het gekry daar's niks fout met my nie, die man is die probleem, *you know*.

8.4.3.5 *RELINQUISHING THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGING HER HUSBAND*

This process of self-awareness did not only facilitate Antoinette's triumph over the phenomena of self-blame but it also granted her permission to abdicate herself from the burden of changing her husband's behaviour.

- Jy gaan uit die een huwelik na die ander, van die een verhouding na die ander en dus hulle, hulle *change* nie, hoor todat hulle nie hulleself behandel nie. Jy kan maar toe maak en tel *because* jy kan nie 'n man verander nie. En niemand kan 'n vrou verander nie. Daai vrou moet haarself, sy moet met haarself beginne werk, 'n *inner healing* moet sy kry, verstaan jy. So, jy kan nie vir my sê nie iemand anders het jou *gechange* nie.

It would appear that this entire process of self-awareness, but particularly the aspect of relinquishing the responsibility for changing her husband, allowed Antoinette to make a decision that was in her best interest, i.e. "leaving".

8.4.4 LEAVING

For Antoinette the experience of finally leaving the abusive relationship included making a decision and taking rational action.

8.4.4.1 MAKING A DECISION

The lengthy difficult, and complex processes of facing her uncertainties; sharing her experience with others; understanding abuse and attaining self-awareness were vital experiences that brought Antoinette to the point of leaving the abusive relationship but Antoinette believes that these processes had to culminate into making a decision.

- *No it is **much** more deeper than facing reality. You can face reality, but if you didn't **decide** this is what you're going to do, this is what you want to do. This must be from inside. You have to make...decide yourself, not somebody to decide for you.*
- En ek het besluit : "Ek gaan uit ...nie langer as dit nie".

In some respects Antoinette was also propelled into making a decision to leave. The fear of losing her life and her sanity left her with no other choice but to leave.

- Daai was nou die ergste en dit was die laaste...toe my kinders my amper verloor het. En ek het gesê *no more turning back*...dit is wat ek nog kan onhou...en ons is nou nog daar.
- Jy gaan *either* van 'n *stroke* dood *either* jy gaan **mal** raak.

To assume, however, that Antoinette made the decision to leave because she was confronted with her own mortality or the fear of going insane would be simplistic. The impact that the fear of losing her life or her sanity had on her decision to leave should rather be seen in the context of all the aforementioned processes. For example, if she still adhered to the irrational belief that if her husband does not beat her, he does not love her, probably, no amount of fear would have caused her to leave the relationship.

This example serves to illustrate the interconnectedness between all the aforementioned themes. It was only when all the previously mentioned processes reached a point of

synergy that Antoinette could make the decision to leave. As was mentioned previously, Antoinette likened this point of synergy to pieces of a puzzle that takes time and effort to fit.

Only when all the pieces of the puzzle came together could Antoinette take rational action to deal with the consequences of her decision to leave the abusive relationship.

8.4.4.2 RATIONAL ACTION

This rational action included preparing her children for the prospect of leaving as well as a realistic assessment of what might happen should she leave.

- Ek dink toe vir myself: "Hier moet ek 'n lyn trek." En ek het besluit, ek het met my kinders gepraat, toe sê ek vir hulle dit is wat ek nou gaan doen, ons is nou uit die huis uit en ek gaan skei. Maar ek kan, dit kan 'n moontlikheid is dat ek alles gaan verloor.

For Antoinette, leaving the abusive relationship was not the end of the abuse, however. Not only did the abuse continue for some time but she had new struggles to face as well.

8.4.5 AFTER LEAVING

Immediately after leaving the abusive relationship Antoinette had to cope with her husband's aggressive retaliations. This required sheer courage and determination. She also had to adjust to her new status of being single.

8.4.5.1 LEAVING WAS NOT THE END OF THE ABUSE

Immediately after leaving Antoinette's husband continued to threaten her and damaged her property.

- Hy't my goedte gebrand, hy't my couch gebrand, hy't al die ander goedte verkoop. En uh soos tyd gaan het ek terug getrek in die huis, maar dit het so moeilik gegaan want hy't my so *gethreaten*. En hy't aan daai deure en daai vensters het hy kom kap. En ek het elke dag het ek agter slot en grendel het ek gebly.

But Antoinette felt that she had to remain determined and courageous to stand by her decision to leave the abusive relationship.

8.4.5.2 *COURAGE AND DETERMINATION*

- Nog in vrees. Maar ek het gesê: "Ek, ek kan nie die deure oop maak nie, want as ek nou gaan trug trek dan gaan erger dinge nog met my gebeur. Miskien kan ek sonder oë sit, miskien kan ek sonder bene sit, want hy het my al reeds al so lelik aangerand, en ek kan nie nou trug trek nie, want anderste gaan ek my kinders verloor by die einde van die dag, of my kinders gaan sonder 'n ma sit.

Not only did Antoinette have to be determined and courageous to deal with the further threats of abuse, she also had to deal with the practical consequences of leaving, which in her case include not being able to provide in her children's physical needs.

- So wat het ek toe besluit is uh, ek staan op my woord, maar dit het moeilik gegaan want daar is nou nie meer kos in die huis vir die kinders nie, *you know*.
- En ek sal ook vir jou self sê, dit was moeilik. *But you have to get out there*.

When Antoinette moved back into her house, her friends and neighbours feared for her safety but because of her courage and determination she was triumphant in the end.

- Tot die egskending deur is en ek het my huis gekry en ek het terug in my huis ingetrek, vir die mense was dit: "Hoe kan die vrou trug kom na die huis toe, die man gaan die vrou dood maak". My vriendin oor die pad vra: "Sien ek reg of wat, is daai vrou mal, daai man gaan haar dood kom maak". Toe staan ek met my **wit gown, satin gown**, (smiling) ek sal nooit vergeet daar op my stoep en ek waai vir almal: "Goeie môre, hoe gaan dit?"

After eventually leaving the abusive relationship safely, Antoinette had to adjust to being single.

8.4.5.3 *THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING SINGLE*

After leaving Antoinette felt uncomfortable about being alone and was also judged negatively by people.

- Ek het gevoel soos ek is 'n *stupid* en ek is nou alleen, en ek het nie weer 'n man by my nie, en almal het nou daai wat hulle sê ek is die slegte een. Baie vrouens moet een ding onthou: "As jy uit 'n huwelik uit stap dan gaan daar nie goeie dinge gesê word van jou nie".

Not being exposed to her husband's constant emotional abuse was a relief but she did experience loneliness as a result of losing a companion.

- Niemand wat vir jou *nag* nie, niemand wat vir jou vloek nie, nou en dan voel jy *lonely, because you need somebody to talk to!*

Not only did Antoinette have to adjust to being single but she also had to deal with the aftermath of the abuse she suffered at the hands of her husband.

8.4.6 WORKING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE

After leaving Antoinette found it very difficult to come to terms with the entire experience of having been abused and having left the relationship but she eventually managed to do so.

- En dit uh, ek wil vir jou sê, dit is baie moeilik, you know, om oor dit te kom.
- Ek het oor dit gekom. Ek voel goed.

Although it was difficult to work through the experience Antoinette believes that it is important since failure to do so can lead to detrimental consequences in the future.

- Jy moet uitgaan, jy kan nie daar bly lê nie, want as jy bly lê dan gaan daar erger dinge gebeur. En dit uh, ek wil vir jou sê, dit is baie moeilik, you know, om oor dit te kom

Antoinette has moved beyond the abusive experience to such an extent that she can now comfortably work as a volunteer counsellor with both perpetrators and victims of spousal abuse. But it took time for her to attain this level of comfort.

- Ek kon dit maklik doen! Because why ek het deur counselling gegaan, ek het deur mense beweeg, en uh dit was toe maklik vir my. Maar dit het **tyd** gevat, dit het tyd gevat, so...

8.4.6.1 BEING HARD AND BITTER

For some time after leaving the abusive relationship Antoinette was very resentful and hostile towards men.

- En ek het baie hard begin raak. Ek het baie mans begin haat. Ek het onbeskof beginne raak. As enige mans met my praat dan lyk dit ek het daai, ek kan die man nou dood maak. Jy raak so **hard**, you know. Jy raak so **verbitterd** teenoor hulle.

8.4.6.2 MOVING ON

Antoinette felt that she had to move beyond the abusive experience. But this was a difficult process because she could not just "bury" the experience. She required "inner healing" for which she sought counselling.

- Jy moet aangaan. *There's no way*, maar jy kan dit ook nie net weg was nie en begrawe nie. You have to deal with it, sien jy. Dit is hoekom jy na *counselling* toe gaan, *inner healing*, jy, jy moet dit kry.

- Ek moet die gevoel wat hy gedoen het aan my... ek het dit uitgewis, deur te gaan vir counselling en eers self aan my te werk.

For Antoinette “moving on” meant working on aspects of her herself that made her attractive to abusive men.

- Jy's like, jy's *attractive to abusive men, you know*.

Working through the experience of being in and leaving the abusive relationship, took time but Antoinette is also able to laugh about the experience.

- En ek uh, dit het tyd gevat, ek wil jou sê dit het tyd gevat. Nou en dan dan lag ek. (Laughing). Dan lag ek oor dit wat gebeur het. Dan sê ek vir die kinders: "Ek weet nie kan julle onthou nie, daai tyd en daai tyd". En dan sê hulle nogal vir my: " Haai, Mammie en kyk hoe's Mammie nou", *you know*.

For Antoinette an important component of working through the aftermath of leaving the abusive relationship, was dealing with the impact that the divorce had on her children.

8.4.6.3 BEING A SINGLE MOTHER

Antoinette's experience of leaving the abusive relationship impacted her children both physically and emotionally.

8.4.6.3.1 Finding Alternative Means to Meet Her Children's Needs

Antoinette's reluctance to leave the abusive relationship for fear that she would not be able to take care of her children, came true.

- So wat het ek toe besluit is uh, ek staan op my woord, maar dit het moeilik gegaan want daar is nou nie meer kos in die huis vir die kinders nie, *you know*.

But having left the abusive relationship and having only herself to rely on, Antoinette found alternative ways in which to meet her children's needs. Although Antoinette does not earn a salary, her involvement in community work has put her in contact with friends and community members who sometimes supply her family with food, basic necessities and small amounts of money.

- En ek sê toe vir myself: "Man ek sal moet iets doen, ek moet maar mense gaan join en uh sien wat ek vir myself kan doen, want as ek hier bly lê dan gaan ek niks in die huis in kry nie. Want niemand

sal net kom en sê hier's 'n stukkie brood vir jou kinders nie. Maar ek sal nou definitief moet ek maar nou 'n effort maak om iets te doen.

- Hier werk ek nou al meer as drie jaar voluntary, ek het vier kinders, ek het 'n kleinkind, ek het myself. Baie mense dink ek kry 'n salaris. Ek kan nie vir jou sê nie, as ek net kom kry dan gee my vriende vir my, daar staan, 'n pak kos op my tafel, suiker, rys, toilet papier, *toiletries*, en 'n vyftig rand in 'n *envelope* en dan gaan ons weer aan, dan... Ek het nooit gekla nie, daar is nie kos in die huis nie. En is nou meer as drie jaar werk ek sonder 'n salaris en ek is so gelukkig, daar's niemand wat vir my afrem in my huis nie.

8.4.6.3.2 *Individuating from Her Children*

Since the divorce Antoinette's children experienced emotional turmoil as a result of various traumatic events. But Antoinette came to the conclusion that the best she could do for her children was to encourage them to be active and seek help through counselling.

- Maar die kinders by die einde van die dag het 'n groot knou weer gehad. Dit is hoekom baie ouers voel hulle moet in die huwelik in bly, deur die kinders... hulle vat die verkeerde rigting, hulle wil nie weer skool toe gaan nie, hulle skoolwerk gaan agteruit en hulle verstaan hulle self nie by die einde van die dag nie.
- Met my kinders het ook ingetree vir counselling. Hulle is nou nie 'n honderd persent soos uh ek hulle graag wil hê nie, maar die ergste wat hulle deur gemaak het, het oor gewaai. Hulle verstaan sekere dinge, en deur uitgaan om hulp te gaan kry. Jy moet uitgaan, jy kan nie daar bly lê nie, want as jy bly lê dan gaan daar erger dinge gebeur. En dit uh, ek wil vir jou sê, dit is baie moeilik, you know, om oor dit te kom

8.4.6.4 *FAITH IN GOD*

Antoinette's faith in God was instrumental in helping her work through the experience of being in and having left the abusive relationship.

- So aan die einde van die dag moet jy vir jouself, jy moet 'n lyn trek. En jy kan net ontslae raak van al die dinge ontslae raak as jy jou toevlug na die Here toe neem.

Antoinette's faith has helped her to let go of the past and to focus on the future.

- Jy kan alles doen, ongeag watter *religion* jy behoort, *you know*, as jy nie jou toevlug na die Here toe neem nie, jy kan maar maak wat jy wil, jy sal nie daar kan uit kom nie, want baie dinge gaan jy nog aan vasklou en Hy kom en hy was alles weg en die fokus is vir die toekoms en vir jou kinders.

Although Antoinette has worked through the experience of being abused the experience has had a profound impact on the way in which she approaches potential intimate relationships.

8.4.6.5 *IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RELATIONSHIPS*

Antoinette passionately believes that if you have not worked through the aftermath of an abusive relationship, chances are good that you will enter into another abusive relationship.

- Baie werk, want baie keer, nê, dan, dan, sny jy alles af. Jy *try* om af te sny, maar jy het nog nie *gedeel* met dit nie. Dit is hoekom jy aanhou sal seer kry want, want jy het jou verlede met nog nie eintlik mee gedeel nie. *You have to deal with it.* Anderste gaan jy maklik in 'n ding in stap.

Antoinette believes that you need to deal with your emotional "baggage" from a previous relationship before you enter into a new relationship.

- So as ek nie met my verlede gaan deel nie en jy nie met jou verlede kan deel nie, kan ons nie 'n verhouding het nie. Al moet ons saam gaan vir *counselling*, saam gaan om 'n sielkundige te gaan sien, en en dan gaan daar nie 'n verhouding wees as ons nie gaan nie.

8.4.6.6 *WORKING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE IS A PROCESS*

It is important to note that for Antoinette working through the experience of being abused and then having left was not a once off event. Working through the experience should rather be seen as a process of stages that one progresses through since one is confronted with various issues at different points in time.

- En **dit** is wat vir my gehelp het, en jy moenie dink dit is net 'n deel want dit gebeur van, miskien soos uh, uh die jaar sê *eighty six*, dan gaan dit weer vir jou tref sê *ninety*, dan gaan dit jou weer tref *ninety two*, dan gaan dit you weer tref sê *ninety six*, dit vat jou in *stages*. Dit is hoekom moet jy uitgaan daar vir *counselling*.

For Antoinette it was not only important to work through the experience for the sake of her future and her children, but the process of working through the experience also allowed her to find meaning in that she could use the experience to help others.

- *I don't hate him, I used to hate the things that he used to do to me, but not him.* Want as jy aanhou verbitterd, *you have to*, jy moet wegbreek van daai punt af, moet jy wegbreek, *because* anderste sal jy nooit iets beteken vir iemand anders nie. Die beste manier om deur dit te gaan is om deur *counselling* te gaan.

Not only did her desire “to mean something to people” help her to work through the aftermath of the abuse it also helped her find meaning in the experience of being abused.

8.4.7 FINDING MEANING

At some level Antoinette regrets not leaving the abusive relationship sooner.

- Ek raak emosioneel as ek dink, nê, hoekom het ek nie die dinge vroeër raak gesien nie,...dan was ek van hulp vroeër vir die volgende persoon.

8.4.7.1 CONTENTMENT

But she finds contentment when she thinks of the long abusive experience as being a period of preparation.

- Ja, want as ek dit miskien vroeër kon raak gesien het, dan was... dan kon ek baie mense gehelp het, maar dan sê ek ook aan die ander kant vir myself as ek miskien dit vroeër raak gesien het, dan was ek nog nie reg om ander mense te help nie. En uh... ek was so gebrei en gekap, dat niemand gehoor het nie. Dis amper soos bytels, hammers, grawe, sae, wat gekap was, sonder dat niemand hoor en sien, die Here my so voorberei het. Toe't Hy geweet ek is nou reg nou, verstaan jy.

8.4.7.2 THE RIGHT TIME

For Antoinette time is an important concept in helping her make sense out of why she did not leave the abusive relationship sooner.

- En ek ... ek glo aan elke ding het 'n tyd, *you know*, en ek dink dit is my tyd gewees wat dit moet geëindig het, sodat ek nou iets kan beteken vir die volgende mens. Sodat ek uh...uh vir jou kan sê: "Nee man, jy kan dit so hanteer of jy kan dit so hanteer".

The right time for Antoinette to leave was when she was in a position to mean something to other people.

8.4.7.3 MEANING SOMETHING TO OTHERS

Only when she could use her experience of leaving the abusive relationship to the benefit of her fellow-humanbeings, could Antoinette find meaning in the pain and suffering she endured while being in the abusive relationship.

- Dit beteken vir my so...is...is so ...*I value it, I treasure it, you know, because* as ek nie deur dit gegaan het nie, ek sou niks beteken het vir die volgende persoon nie. Baie mense sal dink: "Oh, sy praat *nonsense* man, daai is *stupidigheid*, waar kan 'n mens so... eers deur al die goedte" ek het het

deur dit gegaan, *yes*, dit was seer, dit was bitter, maar die Here het 'n doel gehad hoekom ek deur dit moes gegaan het. Want anders dan sou ek nie verstaan het nie hoe om met sekere mense te deal nie.

Not only does Antoinette find meaning in the experience in how it has helped her serve her fellow human-beings, but the experience of leaving the abusive relationship is also loaded with meaning on a more personal level.

8.4.7.4 PERSONAL MEANING

Antoinette does not regret experiencing the abuse because of how she has experienced leaving the abusive relationship.

8.4.7.4.1 The Manner in Which She Left

Antoinette makes meaning of the abusive experience by referring to the tenacious manner in which she left the relationship. It is almost as if leaving affirmed her sense of self.

- Ek is nie spuit ek het deur dit te gegaan nie, want uh... ek het daar uit gekom, ek het so *firm* daar uit gekom, want ek het gesê nou gaan ek nie terug nie. So dit is hoe ek voel.
- En *I'm I'm so proud, I'm a winner, I'm more than a conqueror.*

The person she has become after leaving the relationship has also contributed to the manner in which Antoinette made meaning of the experience of leaving the abusive relationship.

8.4.7.4.2 Leaving Allowed Her to Learn, Grow and Develop

Although Antoinette feels that she learned a lot from being in an abusive relationship, it was imperative for her to leave in order to grow and develop.

- So jy leer so baie dinge, jy is so goed gebrei, jy is so goed *ge-educate*, net *out of that abusive marriage,...* just out of that abusive marriage you learn so much, but you have to step out of that marriage, then only you will learn, I'm telling you.
- Jy sal nooit kan groei nie, jy sal, jy sal agteruit gaan, niks sal regkom nie. Jy sal dink dit kom reg nê, dan's dit maar net weer terug..... Ek wil goed voel **elke dag**, as ek nuwe dinge aanpak dan voel ek goed.

An important part of Antoinette's development after leaving was being able to experience joy again and becoming more assertive.

i) Experiencing Joy

While she was still in the abusive marriage, Antoinette's daily existence was one of being exposed to constant stressful situations as a result of her husband's violent behaviour and drug addiction. Her life consisted of trying to “keep the peace” in the house and pleasing her husband.

- So ek kan aan en aan en aan praat *because why* dit is elke sekonde van die dag moet jy deur gaan as daai man nie werk nie. En as daar nie geld is vir dagga nie, dan kry jy pak, jy kry pak, jy gaan deur loop. Al moet ek die laaste brood geld vat om vir hom te gee om daai *boxie* dagga te gaan koop vir hom, net dat daar vrede in die huis moet wees. Net dat jy ook daai *peace* of mind vir daai dag kan het vir jouself.

But when she left the relationship and moved back into her house again after the divorce was finalised, Antoinette could experience joy again.

- Toe kan ek weer lag.
- **Yes**, is.. is jy pak dinge in 'n different way aan, in 'n different lig sien jy baie ander dinge, *you know*. En uh, jy kan so, jy...*but you will always smile* as jy oor dit kom, ek wil dit vir jou, *you will always smile*.

Antoinette's joy has even transcended the financial challenges she had to face after leaving the abusive relationship.

- En is nou meer as drie jaar werk ek sonder 'n salaris en ek is so gelukkig, daar's niemand wat vir my afrem in my huis nie.
 - Ek wat nie 'n salaris verdien nie, ek wil vir jou sê, ek voel baie gelukkig, ek en my kinders. Al is dit net daai droë sny brood ons (laughing) voel baie gelukkig.

Antoinette places so much value on her personal happiness that she would rather be alone than to be in another unhappy relationship again.

- Daar's nie **een** dag wat ek vir jou kan sê dat ek negatief uit die bed uit opstaan nie, *because there is so much more than money*. Sonder geld nê, kan jy nie, maar met geld is alles ook nie reg nie. En *I'm I'm so proud, I'm a winner, I'm more than a conqueror. Its uhm...What more do I want? Rather without him than **with** a unhappy marriage, you know or a relationship, without that rather.*

The high premium that Antoinette places on her personal joy and happiness has contributed to her becoming more spontaneous and assertive in her relationship.

ii) Being Spontaneous and Assertive

For Antoinette, her joy and happiness is not a facade because she is also able to express her feeling when she is not happy about something.

- En ek gee nie voor nie, *because* ek sê jou hoe ek voel. As ek nie lekker voel vandag nie dan gaan ek vir jou sê. Ek is baie meer spontaan, ek is baie oop met sekere dinge.
- Hoe ek is uh, ek het 'n wyser mens uitgekom ek is *bold* staan ek uit, (laughing) *you know*.

The personal meaning that Antoinette derived from the experience of leaving the abusive relationship has had a profound impact on the manner in which she approaches and deals with issues in her intimate relationships.

8.4.8 RELATIONSHIPS

As was previously mentioned, Antoinette places so much value on her personal happiness that she would rather be alone than to be in another unhappy relationship again.

- En *I'm I'm so proud, I'm a winner, I'm more than a conqueror. Its uhm...What more do I want? Rather without him than **with** a unhappy marriage, you know or a relationship, without that rather.*

But Antoinette also acknowledges that she experience loneliness and the need for companionship.

- Niemand wat vir jou *nag* nie, niemand wat vir jou vloek nie, nou en dan voel jy *lonely*, *because you need somebody to talk to!*

Despite the need for companionship Antoinette is very cautious but confident and assertive where prospective intimate relationships are concerned.

8.4.8.1 CAUTION

- *But* ek ek is so versigtig, ek is nie oorversigtig nie, ek weet ook wanneer gaan ek in 'n ander verhouding instap, die verhouding is nie vir my nie. Sommer die eerste dag as 'n man met my praat dan hoor ek hoe hy met my praat, die stemtoon, die *way* hy sekere dinge sê.
- Ja, ek let al daai dinge let ek op. Ek sal nie weer sommer so in 'n ander verhouding in stap nie. En ek kan dit vir my kinders ook sê, want hulle is groot.

The experience of leaving the abusive relationship did not only leave Antoinette a more cautious person as far as relationships are concerned, but she has also emerged out of the experience being a much more confident and assertive person.

8.4.8.2 BEING ASSERTIVE

Much of Antoinette's newfound confidence and assertiveness derives from her understanding of abuse. The experience of leaving the abusive relationship has left Antoinette with a particular understanding of the dynamics of abuse. Her particular understanding of abuse was fundamental in empowering Antoinette and allowing her to become more assertive in her intimate relationships. Antoinette's newfound assertiveness is reflected in her ability to express herself and her intolerance of any type of abusive behaviour.

8.4.8.2.1 The Assertion to Express Herself

When she was in the abusive relationship Antoinette was terrified to express her feelings because her husband would assault her if she would dare to do so. Despite this experience, Antoinette believes that communicating one's feelings is critical as failure to do so puts one at risk to attract abusive men.

- Ek kon dit nie doen nie! Ek was bang. Ek was bang, as ek my mond oop maak dan kry ek 'n klap. Dit was net 'n een kant ding gewees, daar was nooit kommunikasie nie. As daar nie *understanding, communication and trust* is nie, jy kan maar vergeet van 'n verhouding of, of 'n huwelik, want manne breek vir jou so af, jy bly net stil, jy sê net ja, ja, ja vir alles, jy aanvaar alles en dit is hoekom jy so *attractive* is aan *abusive men*, because alles is maar net 'n ja jy is maar net ja.

It would appear that Antoinette's newfound ability to express her feelings and expectations regarding her intimate relationships, has given her the confidence to be intolerant of abusive behaviour.

8.4.8.2.2 The Assertion to be Intolerant of Abusive Behaviour

Because of her experience of being subjected to abuse, Antoinette has taken the stance to speak her mind, as she believes that neglecting to do so would lead a prospective partner to believe that she would be tolerant of unacceptable behaviour.

- Daai man moet kan verstaan hoe jy voel of jy moet verstaan hoe hy voel, julle moet kan praat oor sekere dinge, jy moet uit dit uit kom en jy moet kan sê hoe jy voel, jy moet bold is, jy sê: "Nee man wil jy nou vir my se uh, uh dink jy nou ek is mal om te aan vaar wat jy nou vir my sê".

It seems that it is easier for Antoinette to end a relationship with somebody ones she has made her expectations clear to him because then she is able to define the kind of behaviour she finds unacceptable.

- En voor ons uit gegaan het het ek die dinge als genoem vir jou en jy wys my jy doen dit, *so which means* jy't nou jy't nou daai houding en jy willie *change* nie, so ek is min. Ek kan dit *bold* sê, ek kan dit *bold* sê, dan voel ek niks nie, *you know*.

For Antoinette, there are no second chances. Once a man has disrespected her needs and expectations, after she has made them clear to him, she ends the relationship.

- As julle mekaar verstaan, van die staanpoor af vir mekaar sê dit is hoe ek voel, en dit is wat ek *like*, *my likes* en *dislikes* and *this is what I'm doing*. *If you don't like it I want you to say now, because* ek gaan jou nie 'n tweede kans gee nie.

The assertiveness that Antoinette now displays in her current relationships appears to stem from her understanding of the dynamics of abusive relationships.

8.4.2.3 *Her Understanding of Abuse*

By implication Antoinette believes that men are able to abuse women because women do not know that they have rights. Learning that she had rights helped Antoinette overcome the fear of expressing her feelings to the person with whom she shares a relationship.

- Ja, ek dra dit, ek ek is nie meer bang nie, want ek ek ken nou my regte. Ek **ken** my regte van 'n vrou, want ek het nie verstaan wat beteken *abuse* nie.

Knowing what her rights are and understanding the dynamics of abuse allows her to reject behaviour which she finds unacceptable.

- Jy **moet** dit ken, as jy dit nie ken nie, jy gaan net aanvaar, want jy moet dit kan verstaan wat beteken *abuse*.

8.4.8.3 GETTING MARRIED AGAIN

Because of her cautious, yet assertive approach to relationships, Antoinette does not fear being “defeated” by a relationship. She demonstrates a sense of confidence and resilience where prospective relationships are concerned.

- So, ek glo nie 'n ander verhouding sal my onderkry nie.

But this time she will only enter a relationship or marriage under very specific conditions.

- Ek gaan nie in 'n ver... 'n huwelik, ek gaan, ek gaan weer trou, ek is nie **bang** daai nie, om in 'n huwelik in te stap nie, ek is nie **bang** om in 'n verhouding in te stap nie, maar ek gaan nie in dit in nie sonder *counselling* nie, met daai *partner*, hy sal moet, moet met sy verlede kan deel, as hy nie wil nie ...uh uh hy moet een ding onhou, ek sal nie. Dit is hoe ek voel. Om 'n gesonde verhouding te het, gesonde idees, moet daar is.....(silence)

The experience of leaving the abusive relationship did not only impact on the way in which Antoinette relates to men on an individual level. She also holds very strong views and feels passionately about the way men and women generally experience life and relate to each other.

8.4.9 GENDER

It would appear that Antoinette experiences the existence of men and women to be very polarised. Men are powerful and use their power to oppress women. As a result, women need healing. But both men and women need to change. However, the impetus to change is much stronger for women than for men, because men seldom take responsibility for their behaviour and are less likely to change than women.

Not only do women need to heal but they also need to empower themselves. For Antoinette men's resistance to change is intrinsically related to the long history of spousal abuse. This history of abuse makes most men prone to abusive behaviour.

8.4.9.1 THE ABUSE OF WOMEN BY MEN HAS A LONG HISTORY

Because most men, irrespective of their social standing, race or religion, abuse women, Antoinette postulates that spousal abuse has a long history.

- Want die meerderheid van die mans, baie van die pastore is dieselfde, baie van die mense wat in die kerke is, is dieselfde, alle die rasse, *even* slamse is dieselfde, *you know*. So ek kannie vir jou sê, dit, dit... party van hulle is beter as die ander ene nie. *So which means* dit kom maar van daai jare af.

8.4.9.2 ABUSE IS A SHARED EXPERIENCE AMONG WOMEN

In Antoinette's experience the phenomenon of spousal abuse is not unique to her or even to a particular type of relationship.

- En... en ek het ook dit nie verstaan nie, maar toe ek baie vriende ontmoet toe is dit dieselfde, dit is basies dieselfde ding. Jy gaan uit die een huwelik na die ander, van die een verhouding na die ander en dus hulle, hulle *change* nie, hoor todat hulle nie hulleself behandel nie.
- Maar dan kom dit so stukkie, stukkie, want ek werk elke dag met gevalle van *domestic violence* en dan is dit preseis dieselfde. En, en ek wil vir jou sê, al daai dinge wat die vrouens deurgaans het ek al reeds deur gegaan.

Antoinette perceives a power dynamic as being operational in the manner in which men and women relate to each other.

8.4.9.3 POWER

Antoinette's encounters with men have lead her to believe that men have an attitude of rivalry when it comes to relating to women.

- Hy't gesê, hy gaan vir my, hy gaan vir my breek. Jy weet die manne het altyd daai manier en sê: "Ek gaan haar wys, sy weet waar sit of staan sy met my", nou dit werk nie so nie.
- Niemand het die reg om jou uh uh jou *dignity* van jou af te gryp nie en vir jou so af te takel nie en vir jou te sê: "Ja, jy is maar 'n *useless* nie", want mans doen dit. Hulle doen dit met graagte.

On the other hand, according to Antoinette, women have attitudes of blind acceptance and agreement, which in turn make them attractive to abusive men.

- ...want manne breek vir jou so af, jy bly net stil, jy sê net ja, ja, ja vir alles, jy aanvaar alles en dit is hoekom jy so *attractive* is aan *abusive men*, *because* alles is maar net 'n ja jy is maar net ja.

Antoinette believes that the unequal power that exists between men and women is born out of and perpetuated by the powerful positions that men assume in society.

- Daar is **verskillende** *tactics* wat hulle gebruik, en uh die arme vrou sy voel nou soos 'n *stupid*. In die kerk in moet sy maar net: "Yes sister, ja pastoor, ja priester". Sy is nou so skaam want haar man is nou 'n pastoor of 'n priester of 'n diaaken of *whatever* jy vir hom noem.

It is also Antoinette's understanding that if a woman attains a more powerful position than her husband this perceived unbalancedness will lead to abuse of the wife by the husband.

- En waar ek dit toe nou opgetel het nê, soos ek vir jou sê ek het vir *counselling* gegaan, mans soos daai as die vrou werk en sy is die broodwinner in die huis in, omdat hy minderwaardig voel, rand hy vir haar so aan. *Emotionally* gaan hy vir haar liederlik afknou, sy moet een ding onthou, dit gaan nie lekker gaan in die huis in nie. En nog 'n ander ding is as die man werk en die vrou werk ook, maar as die die vrou miskien 'n hoër posisie as die man het, moet jy een ding onhou ook gaan hy minderwaardig voel, gaan dit altyd daai *unbalancedness* in die huis in is, *you know*. *Because why*, jy kry meer geld en hy kry nie soveel geld as wat jy kry nie. En hy gaan jou **altyd** beledig, hy gaan **altyd** lelike, negatiewe dinge het om van jou te sê, *you know*.

Antoinette's experience of the power dynamics that exists between men and women does not only shed light on the workings of the abusive relationship but also gives insight into the process of leaving the abusive relationship. She cautions that if one is not cognizant of the influence of power, abused women may even be manipulated by those very same people who are trying to help them.

- En ek is bly vir dit, maar jy moet een ding onthou dat die *power*, baie mense gebruik dit om mense te domineer. Jy moet ook baie versigtig wees om nie jou *power* te gebruik om mense te te manipuleer nie. Baie vrouens kom so uit dit uit ook. En dit is hoekom ek met baie vrouens daarvoor praat. Nie net, nie om op mense te dans nie en mense te *rule* nie en en dis net **jy** wat wil sê is net **jy** wat wil doen.

Antoinette strongly believes that if those people who are trying to help women do not use their power wisely, abused women may remain stuck in the abusive relationships or turn to abusive behaviour themselves.

- As jy daai *power* negatief gebruik dan gaan dit 'n baie lelike uitwerking het op mense om jou. Dit gaan dinge meer, uh, uh mense sal nie verstaan nie hoe om sekere dinge aan te pak nie. Hulle sal vasgevang bly in daai huwelik, omdat jy daai different *power* gebruik op daai persoon, daai negatiewe *power* op daai persoon. En dan gaan hulle dink: "Nee, ek moet maar nou is hier want is reg", *you know* of ek moet my man aanrand, *you know*. Baie mense verstaan nie, hulle weet nie hoe om dit oor te dra nie aan die mense nie.

Antoinette is of the opinion that both men and women need to change in order to combat the situation of spousal abuse. But experience have taught her that men are not likely to seek help or to change.

- En dan wil hulle ook nie gaan vir *counselling* nie, *even* as jy vir hom gaan sê : "Ek dink jy moet ingaan vir *counselling*", hy weier, daars niks verkeerd met hom nie, jy is **altyd** die probleem. Daar's

altyd 'n fout met jou, maar ek wil vir jou sê, daar's niks foute by jou, maar jy gaan so voel, nê naderhand, dat jy is die fout in die huis in. As jy miskien dit gedoen het dan sou dit miskien nie gesê gewees het nie, *you know*. Hulle maak jou dat jy dat **jy** minderwaardig voel, dat jy voel jy is die problem in die huis in.

Thus, according to Antoinette, the onus is upon women to bring about change.

8.4.9.4 CHANGE

Based on Antoinette's experience of leaving an abusive relationship, it would appear that the change that is required from women in order to combat the phenomenon of spousal abuse, is twofold. This change calls for women to both empower and heal themselves.

8.4.9.4.1 Healing

Because the spousal abuse of women has such a long history and has been passed on from generation to generation (as was mentioned in theme 8.4.9.1.), Antoinette feels passionate about the fact that women need to heal themselves.

- Dit is hoekom jy na *counselling* toe gaan, *inner healing*, jy, jy moet dit kry- jy kan nie *by-pass* dit nie, *because its like a generation of generation*, dis amper soos iets wat van daai jare af kom, *because* as jy mooi kom kry, jou oumagrootjie het miskien deur dieselfde ding gegaan. Jy's like, *jy's attractive to abusive men, you know*. Dit is hoekom ons vrouens baie versigtig moet wees vir dit. Jy sal dink die man uh is nou so 'n *nice* mens, maar hy is nie want *somehow* gaan hy *abusive* is met jou, *because* daai *links* is daar.

8.4.9.4.2 Empowerment

For Antoinette empowerment is profoundly linked to women knowing and understanding what their rights are.

- Jy het jou regte. Een ding moet jy onthou, jy het jou regte. Punt nommer een- niemand het die reg om aan jou te slaan nie, niemand het die reg om jou te vloek nie, niemand het die reg om jou seksueel af te rem nie, *you know*. En niemand het die reg om lelike dinge van jou te sê nie. Niemand het die reg om jou uh uh jou *dignity* van jou af te gryp nie en vir jou so af te takel nie en vir jou te sê: "Ja, jy is maar 'n *useless* nie", want mans doen dit. Hulle doen dit met graagte.

Antoinette is of the opinion that knowing one's rights and understanding abuse is critical in combating women's nature of blind acceptance and agreement.

- Jy **moet** dit ken, as jy dit nie ken nie, jy gaan net aanvaar, want jy moet dit kan verstaan wat beteken *abuse*.

Antoinette is critical of women who refuse to empower themselves.

- Vrouens moet beginne uitgaan daar en hulle moet gaan vir, vir, vir, hoe kan ek vir jou sê- hulle moet gaan na organisasies toe vir opleiding. Baie keer dan dink vrouens nê, as jy gaan vir opleiding, uh uh die mense dink hulle is beter as jy. Dit is dan vir jou, vir jou toekoms. Dit dit gaan jou help, met 'n verhouding, met jou **kinders** se verhouding, met jou verhouding in dië kerk in, waar jy werk.

Antoinette believes that the process of empowerment should not only be confined to women. She is of the opinion that once women have been empowered they should also educate their families and community at large.

- Ja, *you know*. En jy kan dit oordra in die huis in. *I think it starts at home, because you have to start at home and give it over to them, you have to educate your family about it and then you go out there*, verstaan jy. So dit is, **dit is** baie belangrik.

But women do not have to face the challenge of change on their own. In this regard Antoinette exhibits a sense of sisterhood when it comes to relating to abused women.

8.4.9.4.3 A Sense of Sisterhood

This sense of sisterhood includes both supporting and challenging women. When confronted with situations in which a man abuses his wife, Antoinette calls on her strength derived from the camaraderie she experiences with other women to advocate for the victim.

- En dit is waar ek byvoorbeeld vir hom sou gesê het " Daar's vrouens soos ons hier buite man, wat weet hoe om met sulke mens te werk. Ons gaan jou nie slaan met vuiste nie, ons gaan jou nie aanrand nie, maar ons gaan jou met 'n paar woorde gaan ons jou mee slaan, nie vloek nie, nie *emotional* afbreek nie, net vir jou sê waar ons staan.

But at some level Antoinette also experiences some degree of frustration towards women who find themselves in abusive relationships and who fail to take action.

- Baie van die vrouens wil nie daar uit kom nie en saam met ander vrouens koppe gaan meng nie, of na organisasies toe gaan en gaan vra: "Wat kan ek doen nie?" Al wat baie van die vrouens doen is as jy met hulle praat dan se hulle "Hoeveel betaal hulle vir jou."

But she remains empathetic and understanding of the plight of abused women and is adamant that one should not give up on them.

- *Exactly! You know, hulle, hulle verstaan dit nog nie so mooi nie. Want hulle...Hulle weier, party van hulle weier, hulle lewe nog in 'n denial stage. Dit... soos ek vir jou sê, dit vat baie tyd. Ons is nie almal dieselfde nie, en uh ons kan ook nie verwag dat die volgende een soos ons is nie, but we must never give up on women like that. Jy moet daar is.*

Antoinette appears to be very conscious of the phenomenon of femicide as a result of spousal abuse.

- So jy kan maklik, as jy nie daar is vir daai persoon nie, kan sy in 'n erger een in stap, gaan sy in haar dood in in stap, want daar was baie vrouens wat in hulle dood ingestap het, want hulle het nie die regte hulp gekry nie.
- So daarom kan ek vir jou sê as ons nie daar vir vrouens gaan wees nie dan gaan uh uh sy in haar dood in stap.

Finally, Antoinette acknowledges that women are unique and have different ways of leaving abusive relationships. Despite these difference, Antoinette is insistent that women must be supportive of one another.

- So dis *different ways* hoe jy uit daai huwelik uit kom, verstaan jy, *different ways*. So is nie almal van ons wat dit so uit kom nie. Dit is hoekom ons as vrouens, ongeag watter ras jy is, moet ons daar is vir mekaar.

Although Antoinette identifies the polarised existence between the genders as an overarching concept in the dynamics of both being in and being able to leave abusive relationships, she also contextualizes gender relations within the framework of ascribing to a "Coloured" identity.

8.4.10 THE "COLOURED" IDENTITY

Although Antoinette believes that all men are prone to be abusive because of their common ancestry of abuse, she is of the opinion that there are certain aspects of spousal abuse that are unique to "Coloured" people.

8.4.10.1 GENDER RELATIONS

Antoinette believes that the abuse that occurs in Black communities is different from the abuse that occurs in "Coloured" communities in the sense that Black women are socialised to obey their husbands and men pay lobolla when they want to get married to a woman. On the contrary, according to Antoinette, "Coloured" men have it too easy because they just take a woman and get married to her. Thus they treat women as their property and dominate them.

- Die Swartes se abuse is eintlik different met ons se *abuse*. Kyk is *like* hulle *culture*, hulle word groot gemaak hulle moet 'n man *obey*. Jy weet, daai ek werk met die gevalle, is 'n *like* hulle betaal lobolla. Kyk onse mense kry alles te maklik reg. Onse manne het net gekom, gevat en getrou. En so jy is my vrou. Vir hulle is *like you are my property* en hulle is, hulle is 'n baie dominerende nasie, so dit lyk is in hulle in, man.

It is Antoinette's experience that it is typical for "Coloured" men to undermine their wives.

- Sy het vir jou hoeveel kanse al gegee, jy het gevoel jy is reg, miskien as die magistraat vir jou kan sê, miskien voel jy ek is nou 'n vrou, julle wil mos nie gesê word deur vrouens nie, tipiese Kleurling mans, wil nie gesê word deur 'n Kleurling vroue nie 'jy sê nie vir my nie'.

8.4.10.2 VERBAL ABUSE

Because "Coloured" people have the ability to use the most profane language, Antoinette believes that abuse is something innate in "Coloured" people. Antoinette postulates that this dubious verbal ability of "Coloured" men may be the result of their forefathers being subjected to abuse. She further postulates that abuse is a curse that has been passed on from one "Coloured" generation to another. Thus, according to Antoinette, "Coloureds" are a very bitter nation.

- Ek dink, Kleurling, dit lyk so vir my dat die Kleurlinge is so uh, hulle is gebore met die *abuse* sal ek sê. *Because* hoekom is dit dan hulle kan verskriklik lelik vloek. Hulle, hulle gee nie om hoe hulle met jou praat nie vernaam in *public*. Nou weet ek nie is dit omdat hulle oumagroetjies of se groeitjies of wat, hulle was baie *geabuse*. Dit is 'n *link* ding wat doer jare aankom, en dit, dit is oorgedra. Dis 'n *curse* wat oorgedra is van *generation* tot *generation*. Kyk ons almal Kleurlinge kom van een *generation* af. Dit kom van daar af. En dit is uh, uh, ek dink die Kleurling nasie is 'n baie verbitterde nasie.

Because of the experience of being subjected to verbal abuse by "Coloured" men, Antoinette stopped dating "Coloured" men because she believes that all "Coloured" men are verbally abusive.

- Ek het ek het vir myself gesê: "Hoekom is ek so *stupid*", jy weet daai: "Ek is stupid man, ek kan mos nie aan dit vaskleef nie", *you know*. En toe kry ek vir my 'n Swart ou, toe't ek met 'n Swart ou uit gegaan en ek het die wonderlikste verhouding gehad, *you know that loving, caring*- ek het nie iemand gehad wat vir my vloek in die straat nie, ...

8.4.10.3 *PRIDE*

According to Antoinette, "Coloured" people are very proud, in the sense that they do not like to ask or even accept help from other people, especially people who are facing or have faced the same difficulty as them.

- Ek dink is, is in ons in. En ons het 'n *pride* in ons in. Ek wil jou sê Kleurlinge het 'n baie groot *pride* in hulle. *Some of them*, hulle kan lieverste sit met daai ding, hulle kan lieverste so dood gaan in daai, *because* "Wie is sy, ek gaan nie na haar toe nie, sy is nie beter nie, sy het dan net so 'n lewe gehad", *you know*. Maar hulle weet nie is daar, daar is die *strength* dan.

Antoinette feels that, while still in the abusive relationship, she had the same attitude of rejecting help from others and feels that this is unique to "Coloured" people.

- Ek het daai *attitude*, ja ek het dit gehad. Is *like reject, that, that attitude*.
- Weg ja, as mense wil help of *even* jy moet uitgaan vir dit. Iemand wat jou nou sal help en dat "Wat, wat weet jy, wat sal jy vir my kan vertel, lyk jou goedte is beter, jy gaan dan deur dieselfde ding".
- **INTERVIEWER:** So, dink jy dit is uniek aan Kleurlinge?
- **ANTOINETTE:** Dis uniek aan Kleurlinge. Dus **definitief** uniek aan Kleurlinge.

Antoinette feels very strongly that "Coloured" people should move away from this pride.

- *Exactly*, ons moet regtig waar uit dit uit kom, en daai *proudness* van die "Kleurlinge", ons moet-tipiese Kleurlinge, regtig waar!

Antoinette believes that the problem of spousal abuse is as a result of people still hanging on the notion of being "Coloured". Because people are clinging to their "Coloured" sentiments, they are not able to support each other.

- Ek is baie kwaad vir die ras, en hulle sê nou ons is almal Swart, maar ek sê vir jou ons lewe nog in daai in ons is "Kleurlinge". Baie van ons weier as iemand vir ons sê: "Ja jy is Swart". Ons kleef nog aan daai *so called Coloured* vas, *that is why we are sitting with this problem*.
- *Exatly*, ons kan net los en aangaan *or* ons kan aanhou en aan kleef aan daai Kleurling maniere van ons of *ways* wat ons het *or we can let go* -iets kan beteken vir mekaar, want jy gaan nooit iets beteken vir iemand nie, as jy gaan nog aan vas hou aan daai nie. Ek raak baie vies as ek aan dit dink.