

## **KM, Technical Writer, Halifax, NS**

### **What was going on in your life that led you to seek support?**

**I had this chronic feeling there was something wrong with me, and I felt a lot of shame about that.** I had a difficult childhood. It seems clear, looking back, that my mom suffered from some kind of severe but undiagnosed mental illness. My dad wasn't in the picture and I was scared of my mom a lot. I had to care for my siblings at quite a young age. I ended up in a very abusive relationship in high school and struggled with an eating disorder. I got so thin I had to be hospitalized for three months in college.

### **It sounds like you really didn't have any loving role models.**

**I know that now, but at the time, my family life was just normal to me – I didn't know anything different.** I carried on as best I could, got married and had a son. But I had constant health issues. When my son was young, I had a physical breakdown. My doctor thought I had MS, but the tests all came out negative. In my search to understand what was wrong, I stumbled across the Inner Bonding website. It felt like, "Oh! Now I understand. I have no loving adult whatsoever." I realized I needed to develop a loving adult within.

### **How did you decide to work with Emily?**

**I met Emily in a weekly chat she led.** I was drawn to the gentle and encouraging presence she brought to the chat. It was a taste of the greatest gift that Emily gives me, which is complete acceptance and allowance for whatever is going on in me.

It was revolutionary to me that I could just slow down and be right in the moment with whatever was happening in me, as opposed to trying to get away from myself, or forcing myself to be a certain way. It opened up my eyes to a new way of being with myself. I realized this was the kind of relationship I wanted to develop with myself.

### **Can you give an example of a way Emily has supported you in developing a more accepting relationship with yourself?**

**Yes. After many years at home with my son, I was anxious and conflicted about going back to work.** I felt an urgency to go back, but I also had a critical voice telling me I should be happy being at home. Through the Focusing process and Emily's insightful feedback, I became more attuned to my inner dynamics in a way that brought clarity and confidence in my desire to go back to work.

So I found my current job as a technical writer. It's a position that requires a very large volume of writing in a short period of time, processing meeting minutes. It's pretty intense. Getting the minutes completed on a deadline was draining and left me too exhausted to be present with my family.

My work on this issue with Emily led to a big improvement in my quality of life while I'm writing those minutes. I no longer get beside myself with stress. More and more often, I

finish up with a sense of confidence that I did a really good job. And I'm not wiped out. That is a real change for me in this job.

**Can you say more about how that change came about?**

**I learned a new way to be present with the stress when it came up.** As a result, it stopped taking over like it had in the past. Being present with the stress also helped me realize that my deadlines weren't reasonable for me and I negotiated a new deadline schedule that worked better. Even bringing that up with my boss was a change for me.

**Are there other ways things feel better for you? Y**

**Yes, many things! The thing I notice the most is that I feel so much more connected to my body.** I used to feel like I was constantly scattering into a million pieces, like I had no real sense of having a body with boundaries to it. I understand that's a common symptom of childhood trauma. Now I feel more like a real person. I exist, I have a body, and I can be in it, even at the times it feels hard to be in it.

I'm also much less reactive to the things happening around me. It's like I have some of my own ground to stand on. I have a strong inner critic, but I am learning how to create some space between the inner critic in my head, and the parts of me that are the objects of that criticism. I'd like to have even more physical energy. And there are issues ongoing in my marriage. But I now have internal permission now to be attuned to what is going on in my body. I love that.

The change I value the most, though, is the ever-deepening connection with myself. That's the most important thing to me and where I see the biggest change. I feel more and more at home with myself, and I have a greater sense of well-being.

All of this came about through my work with Emily and the focusing process. Emily models complete acceptance and gentleness in her way of being with me. It's okay to be exactly as I am. Experiencing that has given me so much more trust in myself.

**Based on your experience, who do you think would benefit from this work?**

**Someone who feels stuck, or highly self-critical.** Someone who knows there is something missing in their life, and that they are suffering as a result, but who can't put a finger on what it is or what to do about it. Someone who feels like there is an aliveness missing that should be there for them.

I think Emily is a particularly good fit for a person who is sensitive to their environment and strongly affected by the energy of other people, and who values their spiritual connection, whatever that looks like for them. Her style and approach are designed to teach someone how to navigate that terrain in a way that is much kinder to themselves.

**Thank you so much for your time!**

You are welcome.

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