

Conversation about Men & Violence
Maggie Carey, Rob Hall & Shona Russell
April, 2011

Shona: I was just thinking, going back into the history, remembering where those notes came from. I remember a 5 day intensive in Adelaide Michael did in September—was it 2007 or 2006? Working with the effects of violence and abuse. Did those notes that we are referring to come from that particular training?

Rob: Yeah, I attending that training. Michael was also very generous in acknowledging me. A lot of those notes came from that training as well as conversations we had together.

Shona: Maggie Rob and I took those notes and studied them again. And talked about Rob's current work and Maggie's and my current work, and looked at which of those notes we wanted to extend on to share in teaching in detail. That became the focus of our work for the first year together.

Rob: Also, we were lucky enough to have a number of clients with whom we could all work together around these issues, and to help us.

Shona: Could you say a bit more about that?

Rob: I've done a lot of my work seeing clients of my own and their partners. You and Maggie sat in on a number of sessions, and reflected on the conversations and also on the themes. You were also involved in the therapeutic work. That helped me to throw an even clearer narrative light on the work that I was doing.

Maggie: I think it is important to recognize the amount of time that it takes to do that sort of collaboration, to have that time to work together and fleshing out some of those notes that Michael left, and that come from those workshops. He was pretty clear that those were notes that needed more locating in actual practice and conversation to really do them justice. That's what he had earmarked time to do with you, Rob.

Shona: That's what I enjoy about the initiative that we took up. We studied those notes to pull some relevant themes, making them come to life through our own work, and bringing that into teaching. I remember that first workshop—was it three or two days?

Rob: Two days.

Shona: It was quite exciting at the end of it because people in Adelaide who were very involved working in the field came up, enthused and excited with the ideas that we were sharing. There was a sense for me of something really being on the move. I guess I'm building on something you were saying Maggie. We weren't just taking something we had seen written and

reproducing it. We were challenging ourselves, and drawing from experiences of people's lives, and inviting workers to take that further.

Rob: In an ongoing sense, that counseling work still continues, which is what Michael saw as being central. Also the training is now incorporated into the broader training of our certificate course. We all work together.