

## The Unmade Bed

I had learnt to be rigid out of a place of fear and powerlessness.

Routines were critical.

As a child breakfast was served a 7.00 am. My birth mother washed clothes, and my biological father cleaned all parts of the tiny house every day. Under my mother's strictest instructions, my father polished the school shoes of my two brothers and me. My mother made all the beds immediately, and they were not to be touched, let alone ruffled or laid upon, until night. Mother folded washing placed in baskets laid on the beds. Mother ironed each item required on any particular day. The ironing board and the iron would then firmly disappear.

The controls in the house were precise until they were absent in the most outrageous fashion.

There were sexual, physical and emotional assaults and affairs from both parents. We were three young children under five and half-years years, left unsupervised, night after night, year after year.

The bed in the first house I lived in as a university student did not have sheets. I had yet to learn how to manage money, cook, shop, and do housework. I lived in chaos until I shared a group house with a woman a few years older. She was a mature-aged university student, and she taught us all to stay home and to cook a little.

Later as a young professional woman, I was either obsessive or drunk. There was no in-between. The state of my bed reflected these extremes.

It was not until I had children and then grandchildren of my own that I began to see my bed as a place of profoundly refreshing and safe sleep. The bed's state was no longer rigid or chaotic; instead, it was changeable and flexible depending on its function. My bed became a refuge, literally full of love and playfulness.

I especially love my bed when it is unmade, warm and glorious in freshly sun-dried sheets!

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