

## **Appendix G: 2**

### **Case Vignette two: Joan**

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***Personal details have been altered to protect the client's anonymity***

Joan is a slim fashionably dressed 44-year-old. She is divorced and currently single. She lives alone with her cat and works as an account manager for a training network. Her work involves a high level of client contact some of which is "cold calls". She is not currently in a sexual relationship. She has a few female friends with whom she occasionally socialises.

Joan referred herself for therapy having talked to a friend who had found cognitive therapy helpful. She was finding work increasingly stressful, as she was not able to meet the sales performance criteria. She found herself snapping at work mates and becoming tearful. Over the past ten months she was increasingly finding her life "out of balance", spending time either at work, home alone, or running competitively. She had recently had a running injury and had had to stop. She wondered if she was running to please her personal trainer. She said "I can't support myself in the way that I used to" in that she found it difficult to "recover" from stress. She said she lacked motivation and felt physically exhausted, waking early and worrying about work. Although she was often upset she found it difficult to cry. She also reported feedback from work colleagues to the effect that she was "over focussed" and "like a school teacher".

Her parents separated and later divorced when Joan was 3 and her younger brother 1 year old. At this stage her mother was already pregnant as the result of an affair. Her father took her to live with her paternal grandmother in another town. No-one explained what had happened. Her younger brother stayed with her mother. A significant memory from the age of 4 is a visit from her mother. When saying goodbye at the railway station her father said "you can go with your mother if you want to". Joan recalls feeling confused by this. She chose to stay with her grandmother and father. But always felt ambivalent about the choice.

As the only child in her grandmother's home her childhood was solitary. A memory of day care is often being concerned that no one would fetch her. Her father was a psychiatric nurse and travelled frequently when he became an audio-vision tester. He was a problem gambler and this resulted in some time spent in jail. Joan did not know this as a child but recalls that she seldom saw her father. She reports being treated kindly, well brought up with

a lot of emphasis placed on good manners. She was made to feel that she was the lucky one with more advantages than her brother from whom she had been separated.

Joan did very well at school. A strong memory of childhood is having a different sort of family which she had to "explain".

She left school and married immediately, in an attempt to be ordinary. She describes this relationship as like "a brother and sister", and the marriage broke down after three years. Subsequently she has had two other significant relationships with men, described as superficial, one younger, (I felt like his mother) and an older man. She describes herself in relationships as, "disconnected, blocked from feeling something," she finds it easy to walk away from them.

Joan describes herself as "introspective" and "reserved" often feeling that she was on the outside. Others describe her as outgoing with a sense of humour, sometimes somewhat critical of others.

Joan was well groomed. She arrived very well prepared with notes written about what she wanted to discuss. She engaged well with the therapist. She was frequently tearful during her account of her history particularly in relation to her step grandfather. She displayed good insight.