

For Broadcast: 21st February 2021

ADAM'S ANGER

Interview

Adam: *“I was real agro and you in a wheelchair you wouldn't expect much strength but all of a sudden I had full strength and I pounded a brick out of a double brick wall!”*

Announcer: I'm Richard Fox and this is Messages of Hope. Anger can be a powerful force. It can give us the adrenaline to lash out destructively. Or it can drive us on to make an unjust situation better. Anger, in itself, isn't good or bad – it's what we do with it that matters. Adam had a very good reason to be angry but facing up to it changed his life.

Adam: I love my bike riding. My business was Adam the First Gardener and I used to pull 250 kilos of horticulture tools behind my pushbike! That's part of me, that's part of me but I'm never allowed back on a pushbike because of the accident.

I got hit by a car. I was basically written off. Coma for 8 days. I had full memory loss, internal head injury and a knee injury, I was pretty messed up. I had to rebuild my whole life again.

How frustrating it was? It was very frustrating because I had my mind, I had what I could remember, I had some of my mind. Because I've got like short term memory loss I'm sorry if I jump around a bit. I apologise for that. I'm trying to do the best.

They had to teach me how to use my hands again, how to walk again, how to build up my strength, my balance, everything. I had to learn everything.

Another bit of my rehab was they said keep a diary. I've always done my writing since I was at school. It's mostly poetry because that's the way it was simple for me to communicate. I had to do tedious tasks for the first month and then they got me writing the poems so I could produce something. That's how my story came around.

Announcer: Poetry is a great way to express yourself that's not so dependent on your short term memory?

Adam: Yes

I'd like to read one of the poems you wrote before the accident, that ended up relating to what you went through in your recovery.

What About Me?

*He gets the mickey taken out of him all the time.
There's no glimmer in the smile of the man.
No one who cares if he was dead or alive.
Feels like no one loves him. No friend in the world he thinks.
He's a few cans short of a six pack and he's not all that smart, they say.
Do you like me?
I'm human, not a monster.*

Adam: That's the early 90s. We had some bullies in our class and they were picking on someone. I don't know why. I was sitting watching that one day, them picking on him and I said "hang on that's me!" Am I being, have I picked on this guy, or am I the guy that's being picked on? After my accident there were some things like that happening in rehab. You get some people that are just 'raarr' at you.

Well there were some people trying to knock me down and I just went "you want to tell me I can't, I've got 2 words I can tell you which I won't say but if you're saying that I can't do it, I'm going to prove you wrong and do it!"

One time they took me up to physio and I wheeled my chair over and they said "You're angry" and I went "yeah I want to be left alone" and they said "fair enough". I was real agro. I'd had a bad night that night and I just wheeled myself over privately and I hit a double brick wall. In a wheelchair you wouldn't expect much strength but all of a sudden I had full strength and I pounded a brick out of a double brick wall! So you can imagine they were scared of me, the staff that day, no one wanted to come near me. And I can understand that too. Now looking back, well, can you imagine, you've just had your life shattered by an accident and all your dreams. Looking back at it I must have been angry at the driver.

They said "Why are you upset?" and I said "because I'm a Christian I should not be angry at the driver." And they said "Can we get you a reverend?" I said "yes, I want to talk to someone." They found five Christians and we prayed. And then someone said "OK you know what you've got to do. You've got to forgive the driver."

You need help with that. I had to take it step by step. With God's help and myself and families help and a lot of counseling went on. I was still in my wheelchair and as soon as I forgave the driver things started happening. Forgiveness is the best gift I can give anyone. And 10 days later I was walking, only around the bed but I was up physically walking and I got such improvement that they released me on the 11th of March, which is my birthday. Hey how good a gift could you get on that?

Announcer: Another significant poem you wrote during your rehab is called 'The Person I See in the Mirror'.

Adam: This is a good analogy for anyone. This was an exercise I had to do as part of my recovery and they said, what makes you a special person? What makes you, you? I went and asked people around me and I said how does the world see me, how do you see me?

The Person In The Mirror

*Why am I special and do I recognize the man in the mirror?
Do I dress well and do the colours of my clothes say something about me?
Am I male or female?
What's the colour of my eyes, skin, hair?
How short or tall am I?
The things I like and my hobbies are all part of me.
Am I caring, sharing, reliable, fit, hardworking?
Can I write poems?
Can you tell me?
What does the world see in me?
And the man inside of me, the spirit of God too.
Can I smile at what I see in the mirror?*

Announcer: Can you smile at what you see in the mirror?

Adam: Yeah I actually can these days. For many days, while I was recovering, I was going "I'm going to beat you, I'm going to make you the person I should be." I'm physically, physically a little bit less but I think I'm still the same person. These days I can smile at the person.

Announcer: And what's made that possible?

Adam: God's love in me. God carries me he walks with me and throughout my life God has been there. As I've been saying, "Can you look at the bloke in the mirror?" These days I can smile at the person because I like the man I see and in the shadow of that image is God standing there going "hey I'm walking with you. I'm carrying you."

Announcer: Have you struggled to deal with anger in a positive way, especially when it feels justified? Does anger get the better of you and do you wish there was some way to deal with it in a better way? Contact us for a free booklet about MANAGING ANGER. It'll help you understand what's behind anger and how to turn it into something positive. You'll also discover how God can pick you up when your anger gets the better of you. For your free booklet on MANAGING ANGER call 1800 353 350 or order your free copy at www.messagesofhope.org.au

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