



Book Review:

Rocking the Life Unexpected

by Jody Day

The Derbyshire/Yorkshire MTL book group recently read Jody Day's book, then eight women met at the home of Katy, our RMC, for a discussion.

The subtitle of the book is "12 Weeks to Your Plan B for a Meaningful and Fulfilling Life Without Children" and the content is based on the programme Jody Day runs through her Gateway Women groups (the friendship and support network for childless-by-circumstance women she founded), so it is very much a workbook to go through at your own speed, or to use with other women in a workshop setting.

There is a helpful overview of each chapter given so that you can pick and choose whether you want to read one or not; the content ranges from talking about how and why women without children are marginalised in society, why motherhood has been so commercialised, how to liberate ourselves from the opinions of others, etc and each chapter is followed by several personal exercises for you to do.

The book is full of thoughts, ideas, experiences, reflections, that Jody uses to help explain why women who are childless have such a hard time in our society, and how to change that for ourselves, so it very much combines the personal with the political.

To give an idea of what we thought, here are some of the comments made during the afternoon: "really interesting, makes you think about a lot of things", "a bit much all in one go, better to take a chapter at a time", "a good book, I liked the linking of our experiences to the culture in which we live, particularly how the media treat women", "very comprehensive, honest and helpful", "a book I could come back to, depending what was going on in my life", "a bit too much 'therapizing' for me", "women with children should read it as well".

We all thought the book was written in an easy to read style, but that the content can obviously trigger many types of response, some of which can be very painful, so that using the book with a group could be very helpful. However, we all felt the book was liberating and inspiring in the sense that Jody writes about us as women, women who have our own experience which is just as important as the experience of motherhood, and think it's about time that experience was recognised and validated.

A highly recommended read.

Wendy Neilson
MTL Member