

Play  
(Excerpt)

Dealing with the old you. That person you once were and who you no longer strive to be.

## Facing the old you

### Characters

**Stage Manager:** female, Black jacket, pants, bowtie, white shirt, cane, hat.

**Man #1:** Gray t-shirt, shorts, sneakers

**Man#2:** Casual dressed, clean shaven

**Man #3:** Long hair, muscles, no shirt, shorts, sneakers

**Man #4:** Even trimmed facial hair, casually dressed, sun glasses

**Woman #1:** Print dress, sandals, purse

**Woman #2:** Dark pants, shirt, cap

**Woman #3:** Old coat, gloves, smudged face

**Large group of people mingling about**

**The entire play takes place in the Boston Commons area in downtown Boston MA, 1994**

**Scene:** The large grassy Commons area stretches across acres of land, where people were scattered about in varied capacities of activities ranging from picnic baskets, Frisbee toss, softball throwing, rollerblading, biking, jogging, walking and a few assortment of other moments where groups of people and individuals were enjoying the great outdoors and its beautiful weather. People sat on park benches, children skipped rocks across the pond, and others tossed bread and fed the ducks and swans. The commons was guarded by the historical statues of soldiers from days of old, high above on their individual perch; even the old Buffalo soldiers had a place in the park. Then a scream silenced the joyful noise and serenity. What transpires afterward is a sequence of issues where individuals will confront themselves from days of old.

*(Woman screams. The park is stilled; people stop to listen, looking to locate the source).*

**Stage manager:** *(race out on stage, study faces of people. Goes from person to person, trying to locate the victim of what she is sure is a random act of wrongdoing by someone who has struggled with who he or she is or was. Shuffles a group of people to the center of stage, pulls one man from crowd, smiles then suddenly raise voice).*

What to you sir, may I ask, does **EMPATHY** means to you?

**Man #1** *(fully steps forward, looks around, locates woman he believes was the victim of a recent purse snatching, and hugs the woman)* This is the face of my victim. *(Waves hand over crowd).* You were all my victims. As I have done to one, I have done to you all; selfish acts of random violence in which I am ashamed to have done. *(Looks toward sky)*

Which I say today, I take full responsibility for and shall never repeat. I shall serve mankind until my dying days. Though, I ask not for your forgiveness but for your patience of an old blind fool. *(The woman appears frighteningly surprised, steps back but man follows, takes her hand, pulls her close to him, pushes her away into a spin, and trails after her. The two of them dance across stage, as crowd follows, began dancing themselves, clapping joyously, spinning, twirling and shouting for the redemption of the victim, while praising the man for his honesty. The man stops reaches deep down in his pocket, remove every coin and note then clasp his treasures in the palm of the woman's hand. The crowd gathers around the two)* May the good lord bless the remainder of your days with joy, laughter, good health and all the treasures your arms can carry. *(Man race off)*.

**Stage manager:** *(Nodding head vigorously, watch man run off, turn to crowd)*. Yes! *(Glance over crowd on her toes, as though she is looking way out yonder)*. I say for your sake, you are not all bad people, but for the wrong choices you once made. Open your hearts and mind and allow remorse to seep through your veins. Allow redemption to floss your victim, past and present. *(Faces different man)*. To you sir, I ask, what does **REMORSE** truly mean to you?

**Man #2:** *(Springs forward, as stage manager backtrack)*.

**Stage Manager:** *(Spread arms out)* Stand back folks. This is a live one.

**Man #2:** *(Glare at stage manager with empty look on face, turn to crowd, immediately fall to knees begin crying profusely, apologizing for the wrongs he has done in his past. Two others, a man and a woman, got down on their knees and cried with him, patting his shoulders, telling him he is forgiven for his unknowing ignorance. He was helped to his feet. He went around shaking hands with his forgivers, vowing to be a better person)*.

**Stage Manager:** *(Assist woman out of crowd)*. **INSIGHT**, madam, if you would be so kind to enlighten us all as to what this means to you. *(Tiptoe around the woman, glaring at her curiously)*.

**Woman #1:** There! *(Points here and there, glancing toward the sky, face contorts. The visions of all that she had done wrong in her past, which brought her to this point and time, to a dead-end in her life, began to appear. She scan the faces in the crowd, saw in them all the pain that she had caused, the meanness she once was, the hurt, ugliness and pain, all those things she had been in her past, when she was a little girl, as a teen, young lady, older woman. She struck the face of them all)*.

*I know who you all are. You are me, the old me, the wrong me. The root of you shall never grow in me again. You are forever cut from my bloodstream. I declare from this day on...no more!*

**Stage Manager:** *(Stands before crowd, points)* And you madam, step forward and explain yourself. Reveal that old **CRIMINAL** you once held in high regards and unleashed onto the unsuspecting community. *(Step back)*.

**Woman #2:** *(Shove away from stage manager as though stage manager was the authorities. Shoves small boy to stage floor, laugh hysterically. Pull out gun, evil look on face. Wave gun in air, force everyone to floor.)* Nobody moves except for when I tell you to. Now, take off all of your jewelry, cash, any electronic you may have and drop them in the bag and if anybody have on a pair of size 7 1/2 Air Jordan's, I'm going to need those too. Do it! *(Race off with her goods but before she could get away she was apprehended, as police race toward her, draw weapons. She's spread eagle on the floor.)*

**Stage manager:** (*Happily looking at scene where girl getting arrested. Suddenly spin around, poke man in chest with end of cane*). Please sir, if you will, explain to the world what your **INTERNAL TRIGGERS** are. Let them fly now, as you allowed in your days of old, when you were the old you.

**Man #3:** (*Muscles way to front of crowd, pushing and shoving everyone in his way, including children, little girls, old women. He looks out at audience; pump his fist in the air*).

**Stage manager:** (*Mimic mans movements*).

**Man #3:** (*Go on angry tyrant, moving across stage*). Rah, rah, rah. Augh! (*Pounds his chest with his fists, run in circles, leap in air, grab guy, strike him to floor then kick him*).

**Stage Manager:** (*Pull man off of victim*). You sir were mad, angry and foul! (*Shove man away, help victim to his feet, address audience*). Kind ladies and gentlemen, I give you the evidence of a former **INTERNAL TRIGGER** which caused the anger of an individual to seep out of its core and commit a crime against an innocent victim; a once mad man who has dealt with his ugly anger issues, left them all behind and is no longer troubled by them; anger that he allowed to build up inside and waited for *any victim* to set him off and for that, we should all fall down on our face and thank him at once. (*Crowd get down on their knees, as stage manger continues, holding on to the man*). For showing us all how *not* to react, how not to loose control, how not to target innocent people, let alone someone you deem an enemy, how not to react negatively and aggressive toward any individual and feel blessed those mistakes we once made were tools to be learned from, left in the past and *this man* has severely confronted that nasty issue of anger and drove it out of his very soul. Sir, kindly tell us when your turnaround took place. When was it that you felt you should change?

**Man #3:** (*Walk over, sit on park bench*). Well, I'll tell you when. I looked in the mirror at myself one day, after driving everyone who loved me out of my life; the very people I claimed to care about and said no more. I just refused, could not be the person I was anymore. The truth of the matter is, I had no more loved ones who wanted to be around me the way I was acting and the ones who claimed to love me just simply walked out of my life and that to me was enough. I was going crazy without them. I'd gone out in the streets, this time to see all the harm I caused by watching others as they caused harm so, I committed right then and there to maintain a positive and productive change in my life to serve others.

**Stage Manager:** (*Scanning faces in crowd look over top of peoples head then shouted*).

**EXTERNAL TRIGGER!** (*Walk from end to end, until a man made his way toward front*).

**Man #4:** Pardon me, excuse me, pardon, thank you. (*race across stage to four story brick apartment building, glide fingers against outer wall, smile as though this is the place he remembers. Step back away from building, look up*).

**Stage Manager:** (*mimicking what man does*).

**Man #4:** (*Hears car horn, turn, wave at 1978 Cadillac Coup Deville. Passerby, old friend from neighborhood stops by. Two men speak briefly. Other man holds up brown paper bag in one hand, marijuana in other, offers it to old friend. He reaches for the old vices, stage manager shouts*).

**Stage Manager:** Stop. Don't do it. Bad. **EXTERNAL TRIGGERS!** Old habit. Trouble!

**Man #4:** *(Recoils hand, remembers sight of old friend, neighborhood, type of car he once drove, the bad things he did while living in old neighborhood. They are all within sight, his EXTERNAL TRIGGERS. Push away those triggers, the ones in which once caused so much pain and harm in his past, his old friend, rush away).*

**Stage Manager:** Yes, that's it, run. Run far away from those nasty ugly triggers you see. They mean you no good, no good at all. Run until you can learn to deal with them. **SENSORY**, oh **SENSORY TRIGGER** please come out and address yourself. Color you bad boy or girl. Where are you now? You must no longer hide and be afraid. Please bless us all with your presence.

**Woman #3:** *(Old lady stumbles out of crowd, appears to be intoxicated, ragged coat. Dances across stage beating drum, shouting noisily, back flips across stage).*

**Stage Manager:** *(Race over, examine woman up close, glide hand over woman's body without touching her).* Yes, yes, that's it. Show your true self. Help us understand. Expose the beast within. You sense it, be it! *(Dance around).*

**Woman #3:** *(Glide across stage, tap dance then suddenly stops, smell air, licks fingers, as if she could taste that old savory lust that once triggered her old sensory triggers. Then her eyes sprang wide open. She slowly turn around, stare off in the distance then race off).*

**Stage manager:** *(walks back toward center stage).* If you can taste it, smell it, feel it, see it, hear it then you are too close to it if you can not control it. You must leave it in your past. Shake it up then shake it loose. *(Take a bow).* That, ladies and gentlemen, are some of the very reasons you must grab hold of that ornery old bull by the horn, look it straight in the eyes, **face the old you**, rearrange your life then let go of the old dirt, learn a brand new you, a brand new life.

*(Boston commons came back alive once again, back to its normal self, without the chaotic screams of its victims, replaced with shouts of joy and laughter).*

**The end**