







































































































































































































evidence that antenatal maternal mood can have long-lasting effects on the psychological development of the child. Raphael-Leff (2001a) notes that several studies indicate that maternal experience can be transmitted directly to the foetus. Experiments have shown that a pregnant woman thinking about having a cigarette, causes the foetal heart rate to increase to the same level as when she actually smokes (Raphael-Leff, 2001a).

In the Fels longitudinal research, foetuses studied before and after the occurrence of severe emotional trauma to their mothers, showed a four- to tenfold increase in activity and an increase of about twenty-five beats per minute increase in heart rate (Raphael-Leff, 2001a). The increased heart rate persisted for several weeks even after the mother's distress had disappeared. After they have been born, these babies were more hyperactive and irritable compared to other babies and some had severe feeding problems. Clover and O'Connor (in press) note that severe life-events in the first trimester of pregnancy increase the rate of congenital abnormalities with 50%. It is also linked with preterm labour and low birthweight. Barrio and Burt (2000) report that antenatal depression is linked with low-birthweight infants, preterm deliveries and infants who are small for their gestational age. Antenatal depression also has an adverse effect on maternal antenatal attachment, as well as mother-infant attachment. O'Connor et al. (in press) found strong and significant links between antenatal anxiety and children's behavioural and emotional problems at age 4 years. They postulate that maternal mood may affect foetal brain development which affects the behavioural development of the child.

### **3.5.3 Postpartum mood disorders**

There is an increased risk of disorders during the postpartum period. There is a 16-fold increase in the likelihood of being admitted to hospital during the first three months following childbirth, compared with the 3-month periods from one year before and one year after childbirth (Kendell, Rennie, Clark & Dean, in Wickberg, 1996).

The three postpartum mood disorders, in ascending level of severity, are postpartum blues, postpartum depression and postpartum psychosis.

#### **3.5.3.1 Postpartum blues**

Prevalence rates of postpartum blues are variable. Lucas (2001) states that up to 50 percent of women experience postpartum blues. Raphael-Leff (2001b) asserts that the prevalence is between 50 percent and two-thirds and O'Hara (1995) has found that some researchers report up to 85%. According to Timmermans (2002) and Milgrom et al. (1999) this condition is so common, that it is almost considered a normal reaction to childbirth. It is described as an emotionally labile state on the third to fourth day, which then resolves itself. Some researchers note the duration to be the first week to ten days following birth (Raphael-Leff, 2001b). Its cause is unknown. Raphael-Leff (2001b) believes that the powerful experience of childbirth, the onset of lactation with the corresponding alteration in body image from pregnant to matronly, hormonal changes and the emotional upheaval of becoming the mother of a tiny infant, all contribute to postpartum blues. However, she notes that postpartum blues are also experienced by adoptive mothers.

According to Raphael-Leff (2001a) mild distress is suffered by almost half of all mothers at some time before their child is two. The symptoms are tearfulness, anxiety

and irritability. She suggests that it can be described as the “‘necessary depression of motherhood’ - recognition of the imperfection of reality compared with fantasy and coming to terms with ambivalence” (Raphael-Leff, 2001b, p. 481).

Birksted-Breen (2001) distinguishes between postpartum blues and postpartum depression by stating that the former refer to fleeting feelings of depression relating to the working through of conflicts and anxieties. These feelings of depression often relate to a woman’s struggle with her feelings about good and bad mothering.

Timmermans (2002), as well as Barrio and Burt (2000), suggest that women with ante- and postnatal depression have such high levels of anxiety, that they have a disturbed sleep pattern and poor quality of sleep, over and above the ordinary disturbed sleep of pregnancy and care for an infant. They argue that it can be seen as the first sign of depression, distinguishing between the somatic complaints of pregnancy and antenatal depression, as well as postnatal blues and postnatal depression.

### **3.5.3.2 Postnatal depression**

Several authors state that there is not consensus about the diagnosis of postnatal depression (Cooper & Murray, 1995b; Spangenberg, 1994; Wickberg, 1996). The DSM-IV (APA, 1994) classifies postnatal depression as a type of major depression, making provision for a “with postpartum onset specifier” (APA, 1994, p. 386) the criterion being that the onset is within four weeks postpartum. According to Birksted-Breen (2001) the same problems and conflicts, prevalent in postpartum blues, are present in women who suffer from postnatal depression. However, “they get stuck in the experience of bad mothering, in the need to separate rigidly between good and bad,

and the need to attack themselves for being an inadequate mother, and in so doing for the mothering they themselves received” (Birksted-Breen, 2001, p. 24-25).

Raphael-Leff (2001c) distinguishes between postnatal experiences of persecution and depression. According to her both involve unacknowledged ambivalence, denied aggression and/or desire. The former refers to a sense of externalised threats, paranoid ideas often associated with the baby, self-pity, projection or and/or associated phobia like contamination fears, agoraphobia or claustrophobia. Depression, she states, involves internal pressures from unconscious love/hate conflicts. Emanuel (1999) also notes that unrecognised conflict or ambivalence plays a role and adds that women have a tendency to turn anger inside themselves - to be depressed instead of angry.

Postnatal depression manifests in self-blame, exaggerated guilt, hopelessness, self-neglect, self-loathing, sleep, libido and appetite disorders, feelings of profound self-depreciation, helplessness, self-loathing, despair and suicidal thoughts (Raphael-Leff, 2001a, Raphael-Leff, 2001c).

Nicolson (2001) and Emanuel (1999) point to the fact that depression, and also postpartum depression, always includes some form of mourning and loss. Nicolson (2001) stresses that becoming a mother means a loss of sleep, time to oneself, a sense of personal independence, self-esteem, belief in one's abilities, the shape and usual feelings from one's body, sexuality, occupation, money, patterns of relationships at home and elsewhere and a loss of identity. Although these losses are not all permanent, a healthy grief reaction involves recognition and acceptance of these losses. Nicolson (2001) states that grief in postnatal women seems to be unacceptable.

The onset of postnatal depression varies. A study in 1985 (reported by Dalton & Holton, 1996) found that 46% started within two weeks of delivery, 14% within six weeks, 22% within three months and 18% within six months. Although some researchers limit the definition of postnatal depression as starting within twelve months after childbirth, the norm is rather six months after childbirth (Dalton & Holton, 1996). Dalton and Holton (1996) note that when postnatal depression starts after three months, it often coincides with the end of breastfeeding, starting of menstruation, starting the on the pill or adopting a rigorous weight-reducing diet.

- **Prevalence of postnatal depression**

Researchers are in agreement that it is difficult to establish the exact incidence, partly because criteria differ, but also because many women are not diagnosed. Boyce (2002) note that at least 50% of postpartum depression goes untreated. Raphael-Leff (2001b) postulates that between 6% and 28% of all new mothers suffer from severe depression. Cooper et al. (1999) found in their study that the rate of post partum depression in Khayelitsha was about three times that found in British postpartum samples, stressing the need for interventions designed to prevent postpartum depression. Recurrence of postnatal depression with a following delivery, is about two-thirds (Dalton & Holton, 1996). Despite the relative high prevalence of postnatal depression, Boath and Henshaw (2001) found in their comprehensive review of the literature that the quantity and quality of research on the treatment of postnatal depression is limited.

- **Cause of postnatal depression and contributing factors**

The causes of postpartum depression are not entirely clear. Hormonal fluctuations, physiological or biochemical effects of high-tech deliveries, ambivalence about the pregnancy, social isolation, lack of marital support, poor housing and unemployment are cited as contributing factors. Some researchers claim that a combination of factors play a role, namely childhood vulnerability aggravated by adult adversity and present life events (Milgrom et al., 1999; Raphael-Leff, 2001c). O'Hara (1995) points out that one should also keep in mind that women with major and minor mental disorders do become mothers.

- **Physiological factors**

Endocrine and metabolic factors may play a role. During pregnancy the metabolism is greatly speeded up along with endocrine exchanges related to the pregnancy, and depression may be the down side of the metabolic curve (Bellak & Faithorn, 1994). Bellak and Faithorn (1994) further hold that some postpartum depressions suggest other organic factors, for example after the birth of a male, androgen levels, which rise significantly in the third trimester, fall after the delivery and may result in depression.

Dalton and Holton (1996) link postnatal depression with a sharp drop in progesterone after childbirth. However, O'Hara (1995) asserts that findings from research supporting hormonal hypotheses have been weak and inconsistent. In a similar vein, Emanuel (1999) refers to Corrigan in stating that hormone treatment has never been found to alleviate postnatal depression, while counselling has.

o **Lack of support**

The relative lack of support from the extended family puts an increased pressure on the husband and couple alone for providing a supporting matrix. Research has shown that a lack of support increases a woman's risk of suffering from postnatal depression (Emanuel, 1999; O'Hara, 1995; Raphael-Leff, 2001a; Spangenberg, 1994; Stern, 1995). This notion was confirmed by research done in South Africa by Cooper et al. (1999) in Khayelitsha and Spangenberg (1994) in Bloemfontein. Spangenberg's research showed a significant link between postnatal depression and a lack of social, professional and partner support. Stern (1995) argues that the mother needs to feel surrounded, supported and instructed - a large part of the supporting matrix is instruction. "After all, learning to parent is at best an apprenticeship" (Stern, 1995, p. 177). Emanuel (1999) and Raphael-Leff (2001a) agree:

To mother generously, a mother needs to feel mothered. The absence of a loving mother or partner to support her in reality, or to enrich her from within, can make a woman veer from trying to live up to an idealised idea of herself as the perfect mother she never had, to being a deprived daughter who feels a gap instead of maternal resources (Raphael-Leff, 2001a, p. 143).

However, Mauthner (1998) stresses the fact that the whole concept of a lack of support is complex. She argues that depressed women withdraw and are reluctant to ask for practical and emotional support. There are also the underlying beliefs and perceptions about what it means to be a 'good' or a 'bad' mother in our society which may prevent a mother from asking for support. Timmermans (2002) is in agreement. Another aspect that Mauthner's (1998) research points to, is that often relationships with other

mothers who have young children might play a critical role in a woman's perception of feeling supported.

- **Personal and family psychopathology**

O'Hara (1995) reports that research has shown that many women who experience postnatal depression have been depressed in the past. According to him research has shown conflicting findings regarding the question whether depression during pregnancy is a predictor of postnatal depression. Wickberg (1996) and Milgrom et al. (1999) assert that most studies report a strong association. Women suffering from postnatal depression frequently have a family history of depression and anxiety (Dunnewold, 1997; O'Hara, 1995; Milgrom et al., 1999). Women with a previous episode of postpartum depression are at a raised risk of postpartum depression with a subsequent delivery (Cooper & Murray, 1995b; Dunnewold, 1997).

- **Unplanned pregnancy**

An unplanned pregnancy was strongly related to postnatal depression in Khayelitsha (Cooper et al., 1999). Lucas (2001) also states that the child is sometimes unwanted. He adds that these mothers often tolerate the baby's demands poorly.

- **Ambivalence**

An internal mismatch may also cause distress according to Raphael-Leff (2001a). A woman may feel torn by the orientation she anticipated before the birth of her child and the materialisation of her capacities as mother. She talks of bipolar conflicts and postulates that they are sometimes represented by the woman's two parents.



o **Miscarriages and stillbirth**

Miscarriages disrupt a woman's fertile self-image and damages her self-representation (Pines, 1993; Raphael-Leff, 2001a). Recurrent miscarriages have a profound influence on a woman. Apart from feelings of loss and a need to mourn, a woman may feel like a failure. Questions arise for the woman around her ability to sustain a baby, the goodness of her womb and placenta, and irrational fears of being punished for past misdeeds and guilt feelings about ambivalence or previous sexual encounters (Pines, 1993; Raphael-Leff, 2001a). When a mother becomes aware that her baby has died before the birth, she may feel a mixture of shock, despair, anguish and repugnance for the corpse in her womb (Raphael-Leff, 2001a). It is now realised that parents need time to mourn the death of a foetus or baby. Failure to do the work of mourning may result in postpartum depression with a next baby.

o **Preterm births**

Preterm births are defined as less than thirty seven weeks gestation. It seems to confirm a woman's worst fears of being insufficiently good for the baby. Women often don't feel ready for the baby. Mothers of ill babies feel that they have contributed and might feel ambivalent. They may feel resentment and disappointment, often avoiding attachment in case the baby dies (Raphael-Leff, 2001a).

o **The birth experience**

Tracey et al. (1995) refer to Bion's concept that life experience can be "thought about" to become a part of our inner world, via symbols and abstractions. She and her co-workers postulate that in trauma this "thinking about" cannot take place. It leaves a mother with a traumatic birth and perhaps having a premature baby who might die, in a space which is so unthinkable and unbearable, that no processing can take place. They

argue further that the inner emotional meaning of the infant is lost to the mother. The mother loses her confidence in her good internal mother and there is a serious interruption to her idealised image of a full-term baby. The balance of love and hate, protection and murderousness is disrupted, as well as a non-experience of birth to confirm her as a mother. Timmermans (2002) and Dunnewold (1997) also link negative birth-events with postnatal depression.

Raphael-Leff (2001a) notes that an emergency Caesarean leaves a woman feeling cheated out of a natural birth. However some may feel relief. The long term consequences of a C-section, recuperating from a major operation while caring for a baby, can be problematic to some women. A common reaction after a C-section under a general anaesthetic, is the fear of having been given the wrong baby (Raphael-Leff, 2001a). However, in the Khayelitsha study Cooper et al. (1999) found that depression was not associated with the method of delivery.

#### o **Maternal orientation**

Raphael-Leff (2001a) postulates that precipitating factors of postnatal depression differ according to each woman's maternal orientation. The model that she proposes, suggests broad categories, namely Facilitators, Regulators, Reciprocators and recently also a category for Bipolars. Regulators and Facilitators are in the two extreme positions and Bipolars make room for conflicted people who experience the extreme positions at once. These orientations are not fixed and may change with subsequent pregnancies.

According to her, Facilitators devote themselves to facilitate the baby's well-being pre- and postnatally. Pregnancy is seen as the culmination of feminine identity, feeling merged with her mother who carried her and the baby whom she carries. The Regulator is at the other end of the spectrum and experiences pregnancy as a tedious way of getting a baby. The Reciprocator is more in touch with ambivalence and tries to maintain a balance between inner absorption and an acute awareness of the world outside. She states for instance that a lack of employment can be distressing for a Regulator, but the converse is true for a Facilitator. Marital difficulties arise because of a mismatch of parental orientation, for example, on the basis of his internalised model of parenting a traditional husband may insist that his wife stays home while she is made to feel guilty and reproached for wanting to leave her child.

A Facilitator may suffer depression because of forced separateness, if she has to leave her baby before she is ready, for example a preterm birth or to work because of economical difficulties. She may also feel she has not lived up to her ideal of being a good mother and has become a bad mother to her vulnerable innocent baby. The Regulator might resent the interdependence and might assign the baby a parental role, feeling trapped with a demanding, nagging or neglectful carer who does not fulfil her expectations.

o **The role of the infant**

It is widely recognised that the infant is not passive in the parent-infant interaction, but plays a significant role (Brazelton & Cramer, 1990; Edhborg, Seimyr, Lundh & Widström, 2000; Murray, 1999; Stern, 1995; Waddell, 1998). Recent research suggests that apart from the fact that maternal depression has an effect on the infant,

the infant's temperament also affects maternal mood (Edhborg, et al., 2000; Milgrom et al., 1999; Murray, 1999). The study by Edhborg et al. (2000) has shown that depressed mothers and their partners perceived their children as more temperamentally difficult than couples in families with a non-depressed mother. The result of their study did not indicate whether the depression of the mother was caused by the child's "difficult" temperament, or whether the child was more difficult because of the mother's depression. However, Murray's research (1999) indicates that a difficult temperament and poor motor control of the infant are significant predictors of subsequent maternal depression. She suggests that poor motor behaviour may be linked with an impaired capacity for interpersonal engagement.

- **Other possible causes**

Apart from traumatic background factors contributing to current difficulties such as emotional and/or physical abuse, adoption, being a "replacement" child, deprivation, illegitimacy, etc., Raphael-Leff (2001a) mentions that many people suffering from postnatal depression come from relatively intact homes. However, a high proportion have suffered from previous unmoored abortion, miscarriage or perinatal death in their own childbearing years or family of origin. The loss of a woman's own mother through separation or death, especially if it occurred before the woman was twelve years old, is a significant risk factor (Emanuel, 1999; Timmermans, 2002; Wickberg, 1996). Women suffering from postnatal depression often come from a broken home (Lucas, 2001; Timmermans, 2002). Raphael-Leff (2001a) mentions that some women first recall repressed sexual abuse under the impact of the birth experience or its aftermath.

- **Effect of postnatal depression**

Longitudinal research has linked postpartum depression with adverse effect on the mother in terms of low self-esteem, mood state, marital breakdown (Milgrom et al., 1999) and on the child in terms of emotional, social and cognitive development (Acquarone, 1995; Edhborg et al., 2001; Emanuel, 1999; Hardie, 1999; ; Milgrom, et al., 1999; Murray, 1995; Cooper & Murray, 1995a; O'Hara, 1995). Postnatal depression has its onset at a critical time in the developing relationship between mother and baby, when the baby is very tuned in to the most subtle nuances of feeling and expression between mother and child (Emanuel, 1999; Murray, 1995; Stern, 1995). Infants respond to the sound of their mother's voice in the first 24 hours after birth and are sensitive to the timing and nature of the mother's response. Work done by Maielo (in Emanuel, 1999) found that a depressed mother's voice will be flatter, the rhythm slower, its tone weaker and pitch lower than that of a non-depressed mother. Studies discussed by Chamberlain (1987) show that infants seem to prefer high rather than low-pitched talk. Murray (1995) notes that in a study comparing depressed and non-depressed mothers' interaction with their babies, the former expressed more hostility and criticism.

Emanuel (1999) believes that an easily gratified baby can cheer up a mildly depressed mother. In an extreme form this can lead to an idealisation of the baby where the baby takes care of the mother's emotional needs at the expense of its own. The child is not seen for who he/she is with positive and negative feelings.

Research has shown that mothers mirror the expression on their babies faces and in doing that help the baby to know his/her own feeling (Emanuel, 1999; Murray, 2002).

A depressed mother's ability to focus on and think about her baby, her containment function, is impaired (Emanuel, 1999; Tracey, 2000). Research has shown that a baby shows distress when he/she looks at his mother's expressionless face or when there is mistiming (slower reaction) in her response to him/her, which is frequently the case with depressed mothers (Emanuel, 1999; Murray, 1995). Over a period of time, the baby may withdraw, also becoming "depressed" or very active to elicit a response. Emanuel (1999) is of the opinion that it can be the source of Attention Deficit Disorder.

Several studies have shown that infants of depressed mothers were more insecurely attached than those of non-depressed mothers (Fonagy, 2001; Murray, 1995; Tracey, 2000). Babies of depressed mothers had more behaviour problems, such as sleeping difficulties, eating problems and temper tantrums (Murray, 1995). Research by Ehdborg et al. (2000) has shown that these babies are perceived as more difficult to care for. Their research also shows that postnatally depressed mothers experience stress in parenthood at one year postpartum.

With regard to behaviour problems, a longitudinal study by Murray and her colleagues (Murray, 1995), has shown that boys at the age of five from postnatally depressed mothers, were more likely to show behavioural disturbance on the Preschool Behaviour Checklist, while daughters of postnatally depressed mothers show highly prosocial behaviour, a risk factor for later depression. O'Hara (1995) reports that children from postpartum depressed mothers performed worse on measures of cognitive abilities at age four and a half compared to children of mothers who did not suffer from postnatal depression.

Research done by Edborgh et al. (2001) found that infants of depressed mothers (assessed at 2 months postpartum), had fewer communication skills and were less curious and focused in free play at age 15-18 months than infants of non-depressed mothers. These mothers structured their infants' environment less effectively and perceived their children as more fussy and difficult. Their research also provides evidence that children of depressed mothers develop representations of the mother and the interaction with her as less joyful, beyond the period of the mother's depressed mood.

Apart from the adverse effects on the mother and child, research by Boath, Pryce and Cox (1998) has shown that postnatal depression has a detrimental impact on the marriage relationship, the partner's own mental health and other close family members, for example other siblings. One father in their research describes it as follows: "It's like having two babies" (p. 201). Husbands of depressed mothers are more likely to perceive their infants as more demanding and difficult, perhaps because of greater demands and responsibilities of caring for the infant (Ehdborg, et al., 2000).

### **3.5.3.3 Postpartum psychoses**

Postpartum psychoses is a dramatic mood disorder which is an acute psychotic reaction precipitated by childbirth. It is rare. Most authors (Dunnewold, 1997; O'Hara, 1995; Kaplan & Sadock, 1991) state that between one to two women in 1000 are affected. However, Lucas (2001) argues that the incidence is much higher, more in the order of three in 100 deliveries.

The onset is usually early, within the first three days. Mothers may be severely disturbed, losing touch with reality and can be harmful to their babies or themselves. Symptoms usually occur on the third postpartum day. Early symptoms are insomnia, restlessness, fatigue and lability of mood (Kaplan & Sadock, 1991). Later symptoms include cognitive impairment, depression, delusions and hallucinations, usually related to the infant or mothering, obsessive concerns about the baby's health or welfare (APA, 1994; Kaplan & Sadock, 1991; Lucas, 2001). A family history of bipolar disorder raises a woman's risk to develop postpartum psychosis (APA, 1994; Dunnewold, 1997; Kaplan & Sadock, 1991; Lucas, 2001). The risk of developing bipolar disorder, is 35 times more likely in the first month after childbirth, than at any other time in a woman's life (Timmermans, 2002).

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The importance of pregnancy to re-think and re-work many issues is often overlooked. However, pregnancy can also act as a provoking factor for mental illness such as ante- and postnatal depression with adverse effects on the mother, the infant, the couple's relationship and the family.



## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Orientation

This chapter contains information regarding the method of investigation. The research design, data collection, data analysis, ethical issues and accountability will be discussed.

#### 4.2 Method of investigation

##### 4.2.1 Research design

The way the research developed and the nature of the research problem (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) necessitated a pure qualitative mode of enquiry. It was thus a pragmatic choice because of circumstances (Flick, 1999; Silverman, 2000). The researcher decided on an emergent design (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), because of the realisation that there were many unpredictable factors that could play a role, and therefore needed the freedom to be led by the process. As Guba and Lincoln (1989) put it, facing “the prospect of not knowing what it is that they don’t know” (p. 175).

A single case study was done (Yin, 2003). A case study design is used when the researcher wants an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved (Henning et al., 2004; Merriam, 1998; Punch, 1998). “Case studies are valuable where complex questions have to be addressed in complex circumstances” (Keen & Packwood, 1997, p. 60). Yin (2003) notes that a case study is the strategy to use when the researcher wants to answer “how” and “why” questions about a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context over which the investigator

has little or no control. However, Punch (1998) states that “we cannot study everything about even one case” (p. 193). Thus the aim was to do an in depth study about the representations (of self-as-mother, mother-as -mother-of-self-as-child- and of the children) in an extreme case of postnatal depression where it led to the murder of a baby, what is referred to in the literature as extreme case sampling (Punch, 1998; Schurink, 1998a; Yin, 2003). It is also called deviant case sampling or an instrumental case study. The assumption is that one can learn from the typical by studying the atypical (Punch, 1998). Another reason why this type of sampling is used, is because it provides particularly information-rich data (Flick, 1999; Schurink, 1998a).

The advantage of qualitative research is that it answers the question of not only “*what* happens but also *how* it happens and, importantly, *why* it happens the way it does” (Henning et al., 2004, p. 3). Qualitative research thus aims for depth of understanding (Babbie, Mouton, Payze, Vorster, Boshoff & Prozesky, 2001; Henning et al., 2004; Punch, 1998; Silverman, 2000). Henning (2004) and Merriam (1998) point out that the danger exists that a researcher can bias the study to mean what he/she wants it to mean.

The fact that case studies are often generalised is one of the most common criticisms of the case study (Yin, 2003). However, Punch (1998) is of opinion that a specific case may be so interesting and unique, that it is worthy of study. Secondly, he states that the in-depth case study can give a fuller understanding of phenomena which can suggest generalisability and can be studied further. Mays and Pope (2000) also state that this factor is irrelevant to the strength of the approach. Silverman (2000) adds that

generalisability is present in the existence of any case, while Yin (2003) argues that case studies are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations. He uses the term analytical generalisation.

#### **4.2.2 Data collection**

Any methods of data collection can be used in a case study design (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). The researcher made use of interviews, participant-observation and documents.

##### **4.2.2.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Face-to face interviewing is the most common method of data collection in qualitative research (Babbie et al., 2001; Britten, 2000; Flick, 1999; Punch, 1998; Schurink, 1998b). It is a powerful and flexible tool for investigation (Britten, 2000).

As several authors point out, the researcher is the instrument through which research is done (Babbie et al., 2001; Britten, 2000; Henning et al., 2004; Schurink, 1998a).

Schurink (1998a) emphasises that the quality of the data depends on the ability of the researcher to establish rapport and develop an open and trustworthy relationship with the participant. Schurink (1998b) is in agreement. He notes that empathy and understanding, warmth and relatedness as well as honesty, sincerity and confidentiality, are qualities that the interviewer should strive for.

The assumption that participants' reality can be known by asking the right questions, is questioned more and more (Henning et al., 2004; Schurink, 1998b). This is even more relevant when there are cultural differences between the researcher and participant as

was the case in this study. English is a second language for both the researcher and participant which further complicates the issue, especially for the participant.

Emotionally laden issues should preferably be talked about in one's mother tongue (Brook, Gordon & Meadow, 1998). Thus, although the participant is very fluent in English, talking about emotional issues in her second language, was not the ideal.

Schurink's (1998b) description of an unstructured interview with a schedule is termed semi-structured interviews by other authors such as Britten (2000) and Merriam (1998). The researcher had a schedule as a guideline which contained questions and themes relevant to the research. In this study questions and themes for the interviews were about the experience of the participant around the mothering she received, her perception of herself as a mother, her experiences of mothering her two children and of murdering her baby. Henning et al. (2004) talk about a phenomenological interview when describing the interview about someone's articulation of their lived experience or deeply felt emotions and state that the data are regarded as credible and believable.

One of the critiques of interviewing, is that the process of interviewing cannot be completely neutral because the process of interviewing in itself gives rise to a specific type of interaction (Henning et al., 2004; Punch, 1998). Merriam (1998) stresses the fact that the researcher as human instrument is limited by being human – mistakes are made and opportunities are missed. Another limitation in this study is that because of a time limit, only seven interviews with the participant could be arranged. (An eighth interview was arranged later on in the research process). Thus, the researcher did not have the luxury of saturation point, that is when no further light can be shed on the topics (Schurink, 1998b).

Advantages of conducting interviews as means of data collection are that it allows for subjective meanings and permits exploration of issues (Burman, 1994). Stringer (1996) asserts that interviews not only provides information regarding the participants' views and perspectives, but also symbolically recognises the legitimacy of their viewpoints. A specific advantage of the extended in-depth interview is that the conversation and rapport develop more naturally as the process continues (Henning et al., 2004).

The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Silverman (2000) notes that audio taping interviews allows the researcher to focus on actual details of a conversation, whereas relying on memory or notes alone makes it virtually impossible. Flick (1999) warns that one cannot forget the fact that recording may have an influence on the participant's statements. Audio taping the interviews highlighted the difference in voice quality of the participant. It was very clear that there was still a lot of anger towards her mother as she spoke in an angry voice whereas she spoke very softly in the sixth interview, talking about the baby she suffocated.

#### **4.2.2.2 Documents**

Henning et al. (2004) note that documents are a valuable source of information, but are often neglected in qualitative research. Merriam (1998) and Punch (1998) posit that documents in conjunction with other data, can be important in triangulation. More will be said about triangulation in the paragraph about accountability.

One of the disadvantages of documents are that they may not contain information or insights relevant to the research question (Merriam, 1998). Merriam (1998) further

points out that even records that are supposed to be objective and accurate, may contain built-in biases that a researcher is not aware of. One of greatest advantages of documents is their stability and the fact that they exist independent of the research process (Merriam, 1998).

#### **4.2.2.3 Participant observation**

The researcher made use of field notes, before and after the interviews and also while transcribing the audio-tapes, using guidelines by Schurink (1998a). Observation was more unstructured without using predetermined categories and classification as is usually the case in a qualitative approach (Punch, 1998).

Henning et al. (2004) posit that the principles relating to data acquired by means of interviewing, also apply to observation. What is observed, is also the researcher's version and can thus not be neutral. Merriam (1998) agrees, stressing the fact that human perception is very selective. However, there is consensus that observations in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis substantiate the findings (Babbie et al., 2001; Merriam, 1998).

#### **4.2.3 Data analysis**

Several authors note that there is no right or wrong approach to data analysis in qualitative research (Henning et al., 2004; Poggenpoel, 1998; Punch, 1998).

However, Henning et al. (2004) emphasise that the process of analysis is the heartbeat of the research. Pope, Ziebland and Mays (2000) mention that data generated by qualitative studies are cumbersome and difficult to analyse. Yin (2003) adds that analysis of case study data is one of the least developed and most difficult aspects of

doing case studies. Merriam (1998) notes that the paramount consideration in analysing the data in a case study, is to convey an understanding of the case. As Smith (1995) states, the assumption that one can learn something about the participant's psychological world, necessitates that the transcript is read many times to produce new insights. Thus the following steps in analysing the data, were followed:

- The transcript was read a number of times;
- Themes were determined by using key words to capture the essential quality of what was found in the text and
- Connections between the themes were determined to integrate initial categories into clusters.

Yin (2003) suggests that a researcher has a general analytic strategy apart from specific techniques for analysing case study data. This researcher followed his suggestion by using two general strategies described by him, namely relying on theoretical propositions and thinking about rival explanations. As this study was based on Stern's (1995) motherhood constellation, the theoretical propositions that were followed, are the following:

- the participant's representation of her mother as mother-of herself-as-child;
- the participant's representation of herself-as-mother;
- the participant's representation of her first child and
- the participant's representation of the baby she murdered.

The other general strategy that was followed, was thinking about rival explanations.

This strategy involves the definition and testing of alternative explanations for theoretical propositions.

The specific strategy that was followed for data analysis is that described by Neuman (2000). Data is analysed by organising it into categories on the basis of themes or concepts. The relationships between concepts are examined and linked to each other and interwoven into theoretical statements.

The procedures for the analysis are called coding and analytic memo-writing (Neuman, 2000). There are similarities between this approach and that described by Strauss and Corbin (1990), especially the procedure of coding. Coding involves two simultaneous activities, namely data reduction and categorizing data into themes (Neuman, 2000).

Coding is defined by Punch (1998) as putting labels on pieces of data. It is the analytic process by which concepts are identified and developed in terms of their properties and dimensions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It brings themes to the surface from deep inside the data (Neuman, 2000). This is accomplished by asking questions about the data and making comparisons for similarities and differences between each incident, event and other instances of phenomena (Flick, 1999; Punch, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It leads to the identification of concepts that can be grouped together to form categories, which is more abstract.

Neuman (2000) notes that a theoretical framework can be helpful if it is used in a flexible manner. He states that a researcher can start with a list of themes, or generate the coding themes while reading the data notes, but regardless of which process is used, the researcher makes a list of themes after coding which extends to analytic notes or memos. Coding was applied in various degrees of detail, namely line by line, sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph (Flick, 1999; Strauss & Corbin,



1990). The researcher followed Flick's (1999) basic questions of *what, who, how, when, how long, where, how much, how strong, why, what for and by which* to disclose the text.

The next step refers to the process of refining and differentiating the categories resulting from the first process through inductive thinking (developing concepts, categories and relations from the text) and deductive thinking (testing the concepts, categories and relations against the text) (Flick, 1999; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this second phase the researcher focuses more on the initial coded themes than on the data (Neuman, 2000). Strauss and Corbin (1990) state that initially all concepts, categories and hypotheses are to be considered provisional.

The second procedure, analytic memo-writing, runs parallel with the first procedure, coding. It contains the researcher's reflections on and thinking about the data and coding (Neuman, 2000).

### **4.3 Ethical issues**

Ethics indicate what is right and correct (Strydom, 1998). The importance of moral principles to guide correct conduct in research is increasingly realised (Strydom, 1998). The following was done to meet the requirements of the ethical conduct of research. Written permission was obtained from the interviewee's legal representative and from the authorities from Correctional Services, to have interviews with her, as she was awaiting trial. The fact that permission from Correctional Services was granted only ten days before her trial date, was a dilemma for the researcher. As described in the previous section, it was difficult to know beforehand how talking about the murder

of her baby would influence the interviewee emotionally so shortly before her trial date. As Strydom (1998) postulates, emotional harm is difficult to predict and to determine, but can have far-reaching consequences.

In line with ethical guidelines (Henning et al., 2004; Schurink, 1998b; Strydom, 1998) the researcher discussed what the research would entail in the first meeting. She was informed that the interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed afterwards, that confidentiality will be maintained and that the interviewee was at liberty to withdraw from the research at any time, because of the emotional nature of some of the issues. The interviewee was given the option to think about participation overnight. However, she stated that she was ready to start immediately and signed the letter of informed consent.

The interviewee was also asked to give written permission to the researcher for obtaining information concerning her case as regards her treatment and observation in psychiatric hospitals (Denmar Clinic, Sterkfontein and Weskoppies hospitals), the psychologist who testified at her trial and her legal representatives concerning her case. A very challenging ethical issue arose when the researcher phoned the psychologist who witnessed at her trial to obtain his report. He mentioned that he learned after the trial that she is HIV positive – information that she has not given in the interviews. It could have been a contributing factor to her depression. He had no written report, but was willing to answer questions via e-mail.

Power and status were other ethical issues that the researcher was aware of. Strydom (1998) points out that prisoners might feel compelled to participate, because they

might feel that they have less power or status than the researcher or it might be a way of handling boredom. The researcher also had to make sure that the interviewee had a clear understanding of the fact that participation in the research would not at all benefit her case (Schurink, 1998b). Even after ten years of democracy, it was also possible that the interviewee being black and the researcher being white, might have power implications. The researcher is also at least 20 years older than the interviewee, who mentioned in her interviews that she found it hard to question older people. The researcher tried to convey respect to the interviewee and tried as much as possible to equalise the relationship (Burman, 1994; De Vos, 1998; Parker, 1994; Schurink, 1998a). In the last part of the last session the interviewee was given the opportunity to debrief and to talk about her experience of the research (Strydom, 1998). It seemed as if she found it helpful to talk about her experience.

#### **4.4 Accountability**

“The problem of how to assess qualitative research has not yet been solved” (Flick, 1999, p. 221). The question of trustworthiness or legitimacy is an attempt to answer the question whether the research is scientific (Stringer, 1996), or in the words of Bradbury and Reason (2001, p. 447) “‘Am *I* doing good work’ and ‘are *we* doing good work?’”. *Scientific* usually refers to objectivity, generalisability, reliability and validity (Stringer, 1996). Silverman (2000) notes that validity is another word for truth. “The search for both validity and reliability rests on the assumption that it is possible to *replicate* good research” (Parker, 1994, p.11). He notes that this is just not possible for qualitative research – repetition will bring about a different piece of work. Flick (1999) agrees and states that this understanding of reliability should be rejected. Stringer (1996) argues that we now recognise that scientific knowledge is less stable,

objective and generalisable than previously assumed. He also states that there is an increasing acceptance of the difference between the physical world and the social world.

There seems to be consensus in the literature that new concepts of validity in qualitative research are needed (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001; Levin & Greenwood, 2001; Poggenpoel, 1998; Tindall, 1994). Gaventa and Cornwall (2001) argue for instance, that one needs to measure the quality of participation and the quality of knowledge, while Levin and Greenwood (2001) posit that it should be measured according to whether actions arise to solve problems. For Tindall (1994) the essential notion is consistency, the extent to which the same approximate results will be attained repeatedly under similar conditions. Silverman (2000) uses the word reliability in this regard.

Guba's model of trustworthiness is well developed and often used by qualitative researchers, also in South Africa (Poggenpoel, 1998). She identifies truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality as criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of research. Truth value refers to confidence in the truth of the findings for the participants and the context in which the study was undertaken.

Yin (2003) states that research should be conducted "as if someone were always looking over your shoulder" (p. 38). In the light of this, this researcher uses the term accountability to include all the concepts described above in order to be as trustworthy as possible. This researcher realises as Tindall (1994) points out, that accountability is

not an all or nothing issue, but a matter of degree. In this study, multiple triangulation, a thick description, member check and reflexivity is used to show accountability.

Triangulation is often used in case studies to ensure validity of findings (Keen & Packwood, 1997). This method is used to confirm findings by showing that independent measures of it agree with, or at least, do not contradict it (Cook & Fonow, 1986; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Keen & Packwood, 1997). Smaling (1992) notes that the aim of triangulation is to study the object of research in at least two ways.

Different types of triangulation can be distinguished. In data triangulation two or more kinds of data resources are used. Method triangulation involves two or more research methods, for example, two or more data-collection methods. In researcher triangulation, more than one researcher works on the research project. Theoretical triangulation means research material is illustrated from different assumptions and mental triangulation involves different ways of thinking about the object of research (Flick, 1999; Smaling, 1992). Investigator triangulation involves that a second investigator audit the data analysis and interpretations to determine if the conclusions arrived at, correspond with that of the researcher (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This is also called an audit trial (Babbie et al., 2001). In multiple triangulation more than one type of triangulation is used (Flick, 1999; Smaling, 1992). In qualitative research triangulation also involves that “researcher uncertainty and not knowing are actively engaged with” (Tindall, 1994, p. 143).

This researcher used method triangulation by using interviews, documents and participant observation for data collection. Investigator triangulation was also used.

The data about the interviewee's relationship with her mother was given to two independent investigators to look for themes. Investigator one is a clinical psychologist and works mainly from a psychodynamic frame. Investigator two is a clinical social worker who has worked for years in the psychodynamic tradition. The last couple of years she has been working mainly from a narrative framework. The reason for doing this was to audit the researcher's work and to look for themes that could be used as rival explanations.

To further enhance accountability, this researcher attempted to give a thick description. "A *thick description* gives an account of the phenomenon (a) that is coherent and that (b) gives more than facts and empirical content, but that also (c) interprets the information in the light of other empirical information in the same study, as well as from the basis of a theoretical framework that locates the study" (Henning et al., 2004, p.6). Punch (1998) adds that a thick description must specify everything the reader must know in order to understand the findings, as well as providing sufficient information about the context so that the reader can judge the transferability and generalisability of its findings.

A third method that the researcher used to enhance accountability, is a member check. This entails taking the transcripts and analysed texts back to the interviewee to check whether what the researcher constructed from the data is what the interviewee actually said (Babbie et al., 2001). After transcribing and analysing the data, the researcher had another interview with the interviewee to check data and interpretations that the researcher were unsure of.

The researcher also attempted to be accountable by giving a reflexive analysis. The term “reflexivity” is used to describe the researcher’s reflection on his/her own experience and role within the conduct of the research (Burman, 1994; Flick, 1999; Mays & Pope, 2000; Tindall, 1994, Wilkinson, 1988). Tindall (1994) notes that reflexivity is perhaps the most distinctive feature of qualitative research. It is an attempt to make every aspect of the research process explicit and to critically evaluate it throughout. Three types of reflexivity is identified, namely personal, functional and disciplinary reflexivity (Tindall, 1994; Wilkinson, 1988).

Personal reflexivity refers to the acknowledgement of who the researcher is and how personal interests and values influence the process of research from the initial idea to the outcome. “This centralizes, rather than marginalizes or denies, the influence of the researcher’s life experience on the research and the construction of knowledge” (Tindall, 1994, p. 150). The danger with personal reflexivity, is that it is difficult to be critically subjective, gaining a balance between engagement in the participants material and the researcher’s understandings, thus to balance subjectivity and objectivity. Parker (1994) sees the subjectivity of qualitative research as a source, not a problem. He argues, for example, that when researchers believe they are most objective by distancing themselves from their objects of study, they are actually producing a subjective account, because a position of distance is still a position, and is even more powerful if it is not acknowledged.

In functional reflexivity, the focus is on how the course of research is shaped and directed by who the researcher is (Tindall, 1994). It is the continuous critical examination of the process of research to reveal its assumptions, values and biases.

Wilkinson (1988) notes that functional and personal reflexivity is so closely intertwined as to be inseparable. She proposes that personal reflexivity focuses on the researcher and functional reflexivity on the research itself. This researcher agrees with her that the two are inseparable. She notes further that a full reflexive analysis would entail not only asking how life experience influences research, but also how research feeds back into life experience. The third type that can be distinguished, is disciplinary reflexivity. This refers to an analysis of the nature of a discipline to explain its own form and influence (Wilkinson, 1988). This researcher focused on personal and functional reflexivity in the reflexive analysis.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter the method of investigation was described. Attention was given to the research design, methods of data collection and analysis, as well as ethical issues that were taken into consideration. Finally accountability was discussed. The next chapter will be a discussion of the results of the study.



## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the results will be discussed. The chapter starts with a brief clinical background. Then follows a reflexive analysis, endeavouring to make the research process explicit in order to enhance accountability. It is written in the first person because of its personal nature. Thereafter follows the analyses of the interviews, participant-observation and documents. The chapter is concluded by an integration of the different discussions.

#### 5.2 Clinical background

Lerato (a pseudonym) aged 27, is Tswana-speaking. Her story follows, in a nutshell, as details will be given in the analysis of the interviews. She was the eldest of six children. When she was a baby, her mother worked and her aunts, who were still at school, and her great grandmother looked after her. Her parents moved around quite a lot. Her father often abused alcohol and there were many fights (verbal and physical) between her parents. She had a poor relationship with both her parents, but especially with her mother. It seemed as if her mother was very depressed during Lerato's teenage years. School was very important to her and she spent a lot of time in the library, reading up on careers. In standard nine she became depressed, mainly because of the stress at home. She could not go to university after matric, as there was no money for further studies and her applications for bursaries were not successful.

She spent a year at home and then got work as a diesel mechanic apprentice. Later on she worked as a train driver assistant and then as a clerk in an office. She had an affair

with a married man, became pregnant and aborted this baby. She spent a month in a psychiatric hospital for depression, where she had a relationship with one of the workers there and fell pregnant again. She again considered having an abortion, but was advised by a doctor not to go ahead. She then decided to keep the baby, and a girl was born by Caesarean section.

Three months after the birth of her daughter, she was pregnant again. The father of this baby was a colleague at work, married and much older than her. She went to have an abortion, but on arrival at the hospital, learned that they do not carry out abortions there and she had to go to another hospital. Because of transport problems, she decided to keep this baby. When she was five months pregnant, she was admitted for depression at another psychiatric hospital for two weeks. Another girl was born by Caesarean section.

At this stage Lerato was living with her parents again. She had a lot of problems with the baby's father, who had other girlfriends, and with colleagues at work. When her second baby was three months old, she tried to suffocate her. When her parents went to town, she wrapped the baby in a blanket in order to suffocate her, left both children alone at home and went to work. When she came back, her mother had taken the baby to the doctor, as she could not breathe or suck a bottle. Because of all her problems at work, she resigned. When this baby was seven months old, she suffocated her with a plastic bag.

### 5.3 Reflexive analysis

Eight months after my own daughter's death, a friend who is a community psychologist, visited me. She told me about a colleague's niece, who suffered from postpartum depression after her first and second child. She murdered her second baby and was in jail, awaiting sentence. I was immediately interested. I was intensely aware of the fact that depression could kill – my daughter took her own life because of it, and this woman killed her own daughter. Even though our circumstances were so different, I felt a bond with this woman – she was, after all, also a mother who had lost a child.

It took several weeks to get permission from the woman's lawyer and correctional services to conduct interviews with her in prison. When permission eventually was granted, there were ten days left before her trial date, compelling me to conduct all the interviews in very limited time, which is not the ideal situation. I was worried that even if she gave permission to participate in the research, it might not be ethical to have interviews with her so shortly before her trial date. I was anxious that she would be so upset by talking about her experience, that she would not be able to stand trial. I was also concerned that she might be so depressed or aggressive that it would be difficult to get her to cooperate. I had never been in a prison before and was scared that it would be upsetting for me too.

For the initial interview, I planned to get acquainted with her, explain what the research would entail and to get her informed consent to participate. I was very emotional the first day, driving to the town where she was in prison. My daughter was born in that town and we spent the happiest ten years of our family's life there. I

realised that in years to come, the woman that I was about to meet, would have very different memories of this town. It was a beautiful morning in late summer and I was aware of the fact that I could enjoy the scenery while she was confined to a prison cell.

The prison was very different from what I had expected. Although there was the typical government furniture, attempts were made to make it look homely. I could hear people talking and laughing. I later realised that it was the section for people awaiting trial and that it might be very different in the other sections. I was taken to a lounge where I met Lerato. She was small and looked intelligent. She was dressed in a t-shirt, denim shorts and tackies, had a “What Would Jesus Do”-band around her arm and looked like a teenager to me. I found it difficult to imagine her as a mother.

She was neither depressed (she was on an antidepressant) nor aggressive and was quite keen to participate. She was eager to tell me her life story and after an hour and a half, I had to stop her, reminding her that we would continue in the next interview. I had seven semi-structured interviews with her in the course of five days. I was interested to learn about her representations of herself-as-mother, her mother as mother-of-herself-as-a-child and her representations of both her children. I shall discuss the interviews in detail in the next section. At the stage when I had the interviews with her, she had been in prison for almost eleven months, awaiting trial.

My own feelings during the interviews vacillated. Most of the time, I had empathy for her, but I was very upset when she told me how she tried to suffocate her baby and how she left both children all on their own at home and went to work. I wondered how disturbed she had been at that time. I realised that at times she had psychotic traits to a

certain extent, and that I was not dealing with pure postpartum depression as I had been told. Up to the sixth interview, I could not feel any connection with her as a mother, especially not as a mother who had lost a child. In the fifth session she verbalised this and said that she did not feel like a mother who had lost a child. She did not feel any pain and she was not sorry. She said that it felt as if doors had closed in her mind. Something shifted overnight. In the next session she spoke about the time after her second child's birth. She spoke very softly and there were long silences. After the interview, when I had already switched the tape recorder off, she said that she wished it was a nightmare, that it had never happened, and that she missed her child. This resonated very strongly with me. I was on the verge of telling her that I really understand, telling her that I had lost a child through suicide. On my way back, I struggled with what the boundaries should be. In the quantitative paradigm, it is crystal clear – I would be the researcher and she the subject. In the qualitative paradigm, one strives for a more equal relationship. I was not sure whether it was the right thing to keep quiet.

I was also very touched when we said goodbye after the last session. She said I was like a mother to her, I listened and I understood. She had no one to talk to. The jail was a bad place with very bad people. We hugged and she said "I love you". I did not know what to say. I felt I could not in all honesty say the same to her, and yet I felt she needed to hear these words from me.

Transcribing the interviews was a laborious task. Although the noise in the corridors was not disturbing while we were busy with the interviews, it influenced the sound quality of the tapes to a large extent. Where it usually takes about six to seven hours to

transcribe a sixty minute interview (Pope et al., 2000), it took me six to seven hours to transcribe ten minutes of an interview. Luckily, I also took notes during the interviews and it helped considerably to pick up some of the words that were inaudible.

However, I had to take two tapes to a sound engineer. The sixth interview, during which Lerato talked about the time after her second child was born, she spoke very softly. Her speech was almost completely inaudible and I only had my notes to revert to. I tried to arrange to have another interview with her. By now she had been sentenced to eight months in prison. I learned from the prison authorities that she was very aggressive and they asked me whether I could make a recommendation regarding other more suitable placement for her. I was quite nervous about seeing her again.

However, before I could see her, she was transferred to another prison. Again it took me weeks to arrange to have another interview with her. By then I had done the analysis of the interviews. I used this interview to get clarity on certain aspects, for instance cultural issues, questions that arose from doing the analysis and also to validate some of the facts that I had. It seemed as if her depression was worse again and she admitted that the “troubling thoughts” were back. She was being treated by a psychiatrist.

#### **5.4 Analysis of interviews**

The researcher stayed as close to the data as possible and attempted to let the data speak for itself. Reflections after each relationship are given in order for the reader to follow the thinking behind the subsequent discussion. Inaudible words from the transcript are indicated by an empty bracket. The interviewee’s words are in quotation marks and no language corrections were made. The data was grouped chronologically

for each important relationship of the interviewee. Names and places have been altered to protect her identity.

#### **5.4.1 Lerato's relationship with her mother**

Lerato, the eldest of six children, was an unplanned baby. The second child, a boy, died as a baby. Lerato did not know any details about his age or the cause of his death. Her mother was 19 years old when she was born. Her parents were not married at the time, which, according to Lerato, could be customary in their culture at that time. She felt that her mother did not want her:

“You know the things that she used to say, she said I wouldn't be here because of you, you know. She said to me that she thought that I would work for her when I grow up. She didn't expect me, it was like she felt bitter about it. It was like she didn't want me. Or my grandmother said you know this child didn't want her daughter. She almost killed her, something like that. So I grabbed it from there, but my mother also said something. I can't remember what.”

Lerato remembers very little of her pre-school years. They lived with her great grandparents. Her mother was not there as she was working, probably in another town. She said her three aunts looked well after her. They were like sisters to her. She remembers once crying for her aunt while she was at the house of a relative whom she did not know.

When Lerato was 5 years old, they moved to another town. They moved a lot, usually living with her father in a shack in the backyards of family. During her early primary

school years (when she was between 5 and 8 years old) her mother taught her how to keep house and would do anything for her. She started being scared of her mother when she lost R2 and her mother chased her with an umbrella and beat her. She described several incidents when she had been punished severely.

When Lerato was nine years old, her sister was born. Her mother changed, according to Lerato, because of fighting between her parents. Lerato described her as becoming sick because of stress, complaining a lot, still sleeping when she came home from school, being tired all the time and fighting a lot. Lerato was now responsible for the housekeeping and cooking and helped her mother to take care of her baby sister. Looking back, she understands that her mother had been depressed.

Their relationship deteriorated. Her mother complained that she did not listen and compared her negatively with other girls, in spite of the fact that Lerato thought she did a lot for her mother. They never talked about anything, apart from commands about chores Lerato had to do. She said her mother was unreasonable, harsh, rude and called her names. Lerato started to stress because of her parents' relationship, the responsibilities she had and her mother's fighting with her. She believed that the fights between her parents had done some damage to her mother. When asked to elaborate she said:

“Mentally. She is not herself. She can't be a mother. She can't look after her children. She's tired all the time. She's just not herself. She, she can't think for herself. She can't clean the house. I was not really proud of her, you know. She could not stand up for me, she could not fight for me, she could not help me in any way. I am not trusting her.”



They never had a relationship. Being scared of her mother, in addition to her mother's harshness and rudeness, drove her away from her. She remembered her mother saying: "If I can just grab you in my arms I would kill you, you know". Lerato said the following:

"Because I remember when we were kids, my mother would do things not exactly like a mother. I mean I can't trust her to be loving and caring as a mother does and understanding."

During Lerato's high school years, they lived in a big house. Her parents' relationship was very disturbing to her. Her father had a drinking problem and often came home late. Her mother would wake the children to go and look for him. There was verbal abuse between her parents. Her father also physically abused her mother. She felt very responsible to help her parents, but did not know how. She started hating them. "I didn't want to have a family like that. I wanted to have a better family."

Her relationship with her mother deteriorated further. Her mother blamed her for things that were not true, was often angry, fought with her and yelled at her to do the housework:

"I didn't have any understanding. I was just seeing my mother as lazy and she cannot be in control of her life, she cannot fight for herself, she can't do things for herself. She is always asking me to do things for her. She just wants me to do things for her, she just wants people to do things for her, but she can't do it for herself. So she was, I did not like her. She was not the kind of mother that I would want to be. One day I even told her that I don't want to be like her."

Lerato's mother did not want her to have friends over, because she believed they would have a negative influence on her. Lerato thought her mother underestimated her and thought lowly of her. "She couldn't see the good in me. She would only see the bad." Her mother was unreasonable, bossy and bullying her around. They never talked about anything, Lerato was only given instructions about work she had to do. She did not feel known by her parents or that they were interested in her. Lerato mostly locked herself in her room. Once she ran to her aunt because of a fight she and her mother had.

When Lerato was in standard nine, she complained at the doctor's "that something is wrong", she was "shaking on her bed", she could not sleep, could not concentrate, was tired, stressing a lot, worried about everything, especially her parents' relationship and she started thinking too much. She was put on antidepressants.

When asked about thoughts that she had during that time, she replied:

"That she would leave me, she would leave us (silence). She would poison us, you know (silence). But I didn't care about her anymore. I didn't care anymore. I didn't feel sorry for her. She can't stay with a husband beating her. Why doesn't she fight back. She () it happen to herself."

Lerato tried to get bursaries to go to university, but was not successful. She wanted to get away from home, as she could not handle the situation at home any longer. A year after matric she ran away from home. More details about her adult life will be given in the section on her relationship with herself. Her relationship with her mother was difficult. She believed that her mother loved her, because once she asked her not to

leave. Her mother said she could not live without her. Lerato felt “very, very, very,” responsible for her mother. She felt sorry for her that she was treated the way she was by her father, as she believed a woman does not deserve to be treated like that. She wanted to fight for her mother, but didn’t know how to confront her father. Her description of the relationship at this stage, is as follows:

“But our relationship, with my mother, was not good, because we was just there () you know, a child, a mother. But it doesn’t mean anything, you know. I don’t like it. She bored me, you know. But I don’t show her that I don’t like her, she affects me. I don’t show anything. I was keeping it all inside. So I didn’t show it. So I didn’t have a relationship with my mother. I was there, she was there.”

Lerato’s mother didn’t say anything about the fact that she was pregnant. There was still no communication. At this stage her mother sometimes did the cooking. Lerato was depressed and did not appreciate what her mother did.

Her mother helped her the first day after her eldest child was born. Lerato’s aunt looked after her baby for the first three months as she went back to work. She did not trust her mother to look after two children - her mother also had a small child at that stage. It seems as if her mother did sometimes help her look after her child, as she later on said that is how she fell pregnant with her second child. Lerato’s mother was there after the birth of her second child, but didn’t help her. She felt that her mother did not help her with her children, although she was there. Lerato expected a lot from her mother and was often angry if things were not the way she expected it to be, for example like looking for the baby’s socks. After Lerato tried to suffocate her second

child the first time, and left her two children alone at home to go to work, her mother took her child to the doctor when she came home. However, her mother never asked her anything or made any comment about it.

Their relationship deteriorated further after the birth of Lerato's second child:

“Because my mother, you know, my mother, my mother took me like a fool, treated me like a stupid child. More like a stupid child. Just because I was afraid I didn't say anything about it. () I was just a child. She took me for a fool, my mother, she treated me like I don't have brains. I also treated myself like that in front of her, because she treats me like I don't have brains. I would also act like that, like I don't have brains. Because they don't want to hear a word from me. It felt like she was taking advantage of me

Interviewer: In what sense?

Interviewee: Like I'm stupid, she can, she, she can make a fool of me. She can tell me to do this and do that, you know the way my mother wants me to do, to do, to do. She can control my life, you know. You sit down and I'll just jump and sit down, stand up. She was more like that, she wanted to have control over me. But she didn't have control over my life.”

When her mother visited her in prison, she did not want anything to do with her.

However, since she has been in jail, she understands her mother's behaviour in the light of all the stress her mother had as a result of her relationship with her husband:

“She was stressing because of the fights. If you are involved in a world of violence, there is a lot that is affecting you. For an example, me, you

know, I was very affected by what was happening in the house and I was worrying too much, I was thinking too much, you know. So my mother was also going through the same thing. She was thinking too much.

Maybe she was not having money so that she could leave the house and she would think what to do. She doesn't have any move. She's trapped. (Silence). (Sigh)."

"So, she was, she was not in control of her life anymore. You see, all the beating had made her stress a lot. When you are stressed you are not in control. The stress is the one that is in control. So you are listening to it most of the time."

- **Reflection on Lerato's relationship with her mother**

A theme of an unwanted and unplanned baby started with Lerato's mother being pregnant with her. Another theme that emerges, is that of a destructive mother – a mother who could kill, who poses a real danger for her child. Lerato was not protected from this knowledge, it was openly said by her grandmother in front of her. Lerato's representation of her mother is thus that of strong negative feelings about having her.

It is not certain whether Lerato's grandmother was a part of Lerato's mother's support system, although the great grandparents were there. The grandparents were divorced. One wonders how well Lerato's aunts could look after her as they were at school.

The family had little stability and suffered the additional stress of poverty. Her mother's anger got out of control, contributing to the destructive mothering that Lerato received. Her mother even verbalised the real danger that she could kill her child. The

realisation grew further that her mother could not be trusted. She was not loving, caring and understanding as a mother should be and Lerato realised this. This is an indication of Lerato's representation of an ideal mother and of her representation of her own mother not only of lacking in these qualities, but also of being dangerous.

Lerato's mother became depressed not only because of the relationship between her and her husband, but possibly also suffered from postnatal depression after her sister was born. Lerato was a parentified child who had to fulfil her mother's needs. Her representation of her mother is of someone who did not fulfil her responsibilities, who expected a lot of help from her and who was always fighting.

Her mother was very dependent. Lerato knew what she missed – a mother who could be there for her. Her representation of herself is affected negatively by the criticism from her mother, but she could still hold onto a sense of knowing that she was doing a lot for her mother. She started to realise that she could not trust her mother. The theme of a depressed mother who could not look after her children emerges and influences Lerato's representation of her mother.

She felt responsible to help her parents, but was helpless and powerless as she did not know how. The responsibility was also passed onto the children to look for their father. Physical and verbal abuse was the norm in this family, as well as uncontrolled anger, all eventually becoming a part of Lerato's representation of a parent.

Her mother remained very dependent. The marital abuse was passed onto Lerato. The fact that she did not want to be this kind of mother showed that she already had insight

into how a mother should be. It underlines what was said in a previous paragraph regarding a negative representation of her mother in her role as mother and the forming of an ideal representation of herself-as-mother.

Acts of self-protection (locking herself in her room, running to her aunt) might have been the start of a pattern of running away from problems. She recognised the good and bad in herself, but her mother only saw the bad. Thus, at this stage Lerato's self-representation was still balanced, but her experience informed her representation of her mother as of someone seeing only the negative in her. It is possible that her mother used splitting as a defence mechanism and projected her own badness onto her child.

Her description of shaking on her bed could possibly be an indication of panic attacks. Her own depression became so deep that she did not feel anything and seemingly did not care anymore. She also realised that her mother need not put up with all the marital abuse.

There was a relationship of no connection between mother and child, a repetitive theme “I was there, she was there”. As an adult she believed her mother loved her, but one wonders whether her mother did not only need her. She carried a heavy responsibility. She started showing compassion for her mother when she became an adult. Her representation of her mother now included someone who loved her, but also someone who was very dependant and needy. Her feelings of helplessness became intense – she wanted to fight for her mother, but could not.

Another theme of not talking but bottling up feelings became repetitive. The theme of not talking about important matters is very evident when nothing is said about Lerato's pregnancy. Depression during pregnancy impacts on a mother's readiness to have a child and will be discussed further on.

As a part of the cultural tradition the grandmother is there for the young mother, especially with the first child, but Lerato's mother was there only on the first day. Thus Lerato had very little support, the effect of which will be discussed later. She took her child to her aunt – perhaps evident of the fact that her mother could not be trusted with a baby. It is possible that her mother was almost like a sister, as she herself had a small child at that stage.

The fact that Lerato's mother could take her child to the doctor after Lerato's first attempt to suffocate her, showed that she did know what a baby needs, although she often did not respond to the children's needs. Again, something very important happened, but it was not talked about. One wonders why her mother did not ask or say anything – perhaps an indication that for her mother it was “normal”, or that she just did not care.

It seems as if Lerato's depression after the birth of her second child became worse and contributed to the fact that all her relationships deteriorated. The fact that her mother did not have a balanced picture of her by seeing only bad in her, or possibly projecting her own badness on her, resulted in Lerato acting that way. As an adult, Lerato's representation of her mother is that of someone who thinks she is stupid, but now her self-representation echoes this. This will be elaborated on in the discussion. “She



didn't have control over my life" – one wonders whether killing her child could mean that it is one thing her mother could not stop her from doing.

Lerato shows insight in her mother's behaviour in stating that stress was in control. She also knows how living in a world of violence impacts on a person. She knew her mother also felt trapped as she did. Her mother was not in control of her life in the same way as Lerato was not in control of hers.

- **Reflection of investigators**

The data about Lerato's relationship with her mother (not the reflections), was given to two independent investigators to look for themes. As was explained in the methodology chapter, the reason for doing this was to audit the researcher's work and to look for themes that could be used as rival explanations.

The themes from both these investigators were mostly the same as that of the researcher. There were no discrepancies. Investigator 1 commented on the fact that both Lerato and her mother had high expectations of each other, was critical of each other and compared each other with peers. Investigator 2 added that Lerato's story was "heartbreaking" and that she showed remarkable wisdom and resilience as a child to still thrive at school under those circumstances.

#### **5.4.2 Lerato's relationship with other mother figures**

Lerato's three aunts looked after her as a baby and in her pre-school years. Two of them were still at school and one was a teacher. She believed they looked well after her. It is possible that her great grandparents looked after her while they were at

school. She felt close to her teacher: “I felt like I could love her like a mother because she was more understanding than my mother”.

- **Reflection on Lerato’s relationships with other mother figures**

Very little is known about Lerato’s substitute mother figures. Her representation of substitute mother figures is positive. Lerato’s need for love and understanding is very evident.

### **5.4.3 Lerato’s relationship with her father**

During her pre-school years, Lerato did not see her father often, as her parents were not married and she stayed with her mother at her great grandparents. She remembers once sleeping with her father when her mother was not there. She loved her father. They had a good relationship. According to her, he did everything for the kids.

During her primary school years, her father drank a lot and their relationship deteriorated:

“So I wasn’t having any problem with my father (silence). So the problems started when they started fighting. I didn’t see any reason why he should be fighting with my mother or hit her the way that he used to hit her. I started hating him. And all these things, they started pushing me away from them.”

Once in her early teens, when her father was drunk, he asked her who her boyfriend was. She felt embarrassed by his question and felt that he did not really know her. At that stage her school work was very important to her and boyfriends were not on her

mind. When she was about fourteen he asked her whether she was accusing him of molesting her. He was drunk again and again she felt embarrassed. At that stage she did not know what the word 'molesting' meant. She never felt that her father looked at her in a sexual way.

When he was at home, the children were not allowed to watch TV. He wanted to listen to his own music. She did not want to see him and went to her room when he came home, without confronting him: "You're not suppose to question adults". They did not talk, except when they went shopping, they would talk about groceries or money. She pretended to be happy to see her parents. She described her feelings about her father when she was in high school, as follows:

"Still I didn't feel like () or thanking him for what he had done, so I didn't appreciate anything that he was doing for me (silence). So since then we just stayed in the house like strangers. I felt like I wanted to fight with him. I wanted him to hear what I have to say to him but I couldn't, I was too scared to say (). I wanted to (), to scold him and tell him what he's doing is not right. I just kept quiet. I was scared, I was, I hated my father. I didn't want to, I didn't even want to talk to him. I didn't even want him near me. I don't even want to listen to what he has so say."

Her father physically abused her mother, but not the children. However, there was one incident when Lerato dropped a candle:

"My father just came in there and he kicked me and he asked me what was I doing with the candle, you understand () always the things that are pushing me away, but he was doing things for me, and he would buy, buy

things for me and I would be happy, you know. He used to do everything for me.”

Although her father wrote a letter to her work when she had problems there to explain the situation, she did not trust him to help her with anything. She could not start a conversation with him. According to her, they did not have a relationship, they were like strangers. She was scared to confront him about the way he treated her mother, as she feared that he would beat her.

When she fell pregnant with her first child, her father did not say anything or treat her badly. After the birth of her second child, their relationship deteriorated further. Once he said to her he was leaving and not coming back home and she had no say in the matter. She could not discuss anything with her father. She saw her father as a coward who could not face his problems.

- **Reflection on Lerato’s relationship with her father**

There is too little information to theorise about their relationship during her pre-school years. One can see elements of the Oedipus complex in her sleeping with her father when her mother was not there and the fact that she loved her father.

Problems with her father arose because of the way he treated her mother. As she said, she lived in a world of violence. The theme of uncontrolled anger is also evident in her father’s behaviour. In this family children needed to be scared of their parents – parents could be dangerous. As a result, feeling scared is also a theme. Even as an

adult she was scared of her father. Lerato's own feelings of anger were suppressed and became a pattern in her life.

There was very little communication. A relationship of no connection is also evident here – they were like strangers living in the same house. She did not feel known by her father. Parents could not be trusted to help.

Ambivalence is evident. Her dad would buy things for her and then she would be happy. The parenting style is very authoritative – children are not supposed to question parents. There is no space for children's needs. She started hating her father.

Her father's questions when he was drunk embarrassed her. His question about molesting is very strange. One wonders whether he had such thoughts and could only verbalise it under the influence of alcohol. Her father had a drinking problem.

Alcoholism is often seen as self-medication for depression.

He also said nothing about her pregnancy – it was ignored. As was said before, all Lerato's relationships deteriorated after the birth of her second child, possibly an indication that her depression got worse. Her feeling of helplessness is also a theme from childhood that carries on into adulthood. Her father was leaving and not coming back and she was not allowed to question it.

#### **5.4.4 Lerato's relationship with herself**

Lerato's description of herself revolved more around her high school and adult years. Even as a young child, she never spoke about her problems to anyone. This tendency

continued in her high school and adult years. She saw herself as a pleaser, especially in relation to her parents, and pushed herself to do things. She enjoyed school. She was good at reading and studying and spent a lot of time in libraries reading about a career. Although her appearance was important to her, she was not interested in boys. “I was not ready. The only thing that was on my mind was my career, you know. My future was on my mind.” She often thought that she did not want to lead a life like her parents. She saw herself as sensitive, independent and the only one she could trust.

When Lerato was in standard nine, she began to think there was something wrong with her. “I started thinking too much. Questions without answers.” She thought her problems came because of her parents’ fights, what she saw they were doing wrong, the fact that she was dealing with it on her own and didn’t know what to do. She experienced a lot of pressure – she did not know what kind of person her parents wanted her to be. She did not feel accepted by them. She went to a doctor who prescribed antidepressants. She could not remember for how long she took the antidepressants. Her depression got worse – she felt out of control and realised that she was not doing things the way she should or wanted to.

A year after she left school, she ran away with a friend. After three months she left her friend to go to her aunt, without telling him. She wanted any job to get away from the problems at home, thinking she would feel better if she was away from her problems. She started drinking something to give her energy and smoking to relieve stress.

She described her depression as having difficulty concentrating, making decisions and plans and losing her ambition.

“I left my first job because I can’t use my mind, I can’t think of anything different I could do. I was not ambitious, you understand. I say, no, I can’t stay, I’ll go there, maybe something different will show up. I’ll be positive, maybe I’ll become a different person (). Things was not happening the way I want them to.”

At the age of twenty one, she had an affair with a colleague at work. She fell pregnant and aborted the baby. Three or four months after the abortion, she left her job. She was on antidepressants again and was abusing sleeping tablets. She could not do the housekeeping anymore. Her mother also did not do it and Lerato blamed her mother. Once she ran away and stayed with a boyfriend. Her mother came to take her home and she went with her, although she did not want to.

Her relationship with her parents was very bad:

“No, I didn’t want to be in that kind of a situation, because I don’t have to say anything about it (). Even if I see that there is something wrong, I shouldn’t say anything, you understand. I know I am not a part of the family, you understand. If I see something is wrong, then I should just keep quiet, because most of the time I would sit there, you know something is wrong, you understand, or it will go wrong. I will tell myself I will just let it go wrong. I’ll just tell myself I don’t care. My father doesn’t care, my mother doesn’t care. (Long silence).”

Lerato was scared of how her depression impacted on her. She could not do the things she wanted to do, she felt as if she could not use her brain and it lead to her doing

things without thinking. She felt that she had lost her feeling of control. She felt her mother controlled her life. She was uncertain, tired, and could not function at work. Although she earned a substantial amount of money, she was disorganised and careless with her money. She described herself as unstable in the sense of moving here and there and leaving jobs.

She saw herself as good, wise and understanding, and a hard worker. She believed that her school friend, with whom she had little contact as an adult, would also describe her as wise and understanding, and added that she would think that Lerato was a good person. She had always expected a lot of herself. She saw herself as a perfectionist and didn't want anything to go wrong.

She became very angry and frustrated with herself and her mother after her first child was born, because she felt she was not living up to her own standards. It became worse after the birth of her second child. Her self-esteem was very low. In response to a question about her feelings at that stage, she said: "Really bad. Really bad. I didn't appreciate the person I was (silence). But I couldn't help myself (silence)". She believed all the "stupidity" of her actions was caused by the fact that she could not talk to her mother.

After the birth of her second child, she had very disturbing thoughts. She thought that the planets would collide, or the world would fall, or the moon would fall on their house. When a song played on the radio, she would think the song was about her. There were also thoughts about herself – who she was, the situation and change in our country, her work and why her colleagues wanted to kill her. She felt as if she was



losing her mind. She heard voices which told her she was a useless mother and voices that asked her if she knew Jesus. She would do something and the voices would tell her not to do it. She then would not know what to do.

- **Reflection on Lerato's relationship with herself**

She could only rely on herself as her parents could not be trusted. She could not trust her parents enough to talk to them. The theme of not talking about problems is strong throughout. She was almost cast in the role of being a pleaser – she had to be there for her parents. Perhaps it was a way of hoping that she could earn their love. It was also what her parents expected from her. She excelled in school, possibly because it was the only place where she received some recognition. In primary school and her early high school years she had a positive representation of herself, especially, herself-at-school. Her representation of herself-as-child-of-her-parents was more negative, but still hopeful – if she worked hard enough, she believed she could please them.

Her feeling of helplessness intensified as she got older: she did not know what to do about her parents' problems and how to be to be acceptable to them. Perhaps she unconsciously thought of herself as being the reason for their problems, as she was the product of their union and her mother did not want her. Her depression resulted in a feeling of being out of control and not doing what she wanted to or should do – a recurrent theme in her life. Her representation of herself changed as result of depression and this will be explained in the discussion.

Her desperation is evident after she left school. The fact that her dreams to study further could not materialise and she was unemployed for more than a year on top of

her depression, made matters worse. She hoped to get away from her problems by running away. Drinking something to give her energy and smoking to relieve stress are perhaps also indications of her desperation.

Even after she got a job, the desperation continued. She hoped finding another job would make her feel better, it would change her and she would become a different person. This suggests a self-representation that is getting more negative. The theme of unrealistic expectations is a thread throughout her adult life.

The question arises whether leaving her job had something to do with her affair. One wonders whether the fact that her mother came after her was because she really cared or whether she needed her to do the housework. There were two depressed women in the house, possibly resulting in chaos. Lerato described her depression as thinking too much, especially at night. Perhaps her abuse of sleeping tablets was a way of trying to escape all these thoughts.

The theme of feeling isolated became stronger. As an adult she did not feel part of the family. Her helplessness and powerlessness to do anything about the problems suggest that at that stage she was giving up. Giving up is also evident in the theme of not talking about anything – it would not help. She was also giving up in the sense of joining the club – (at home,) no one cared. The theme of giving up suggests a deepening of her depression.

Impulsiveness – acting without thinking, is seen by her as a result of her depression. There is also a loss of a feeling of control – like her mother. Her mother controlling

her might have been a part of the family pattern – father controls mother, who then controls Lerato. Her carelessness with money, lack of stability and wanting to have sex made the researcher wonder whether Lerato might have been suffering from a bipolar mood disorder. However, there is not enough evidence to confirm this.

The fact that she saw herself as good, wise and understanding reflects perhaps not only her ideal-self-representation, but also how she wished her mother would be.

Interestingly, this is also how she saw her children, as will later be seen. Despite negative messages from her parents, she could hold onto some good in herself. This is even more remarkable if one takes into account that she is a perfectionist and had high expectations of herself. As was seen in the reflection on her relationship with her mother, she did internalise her mother's criticisms. Perfectionism and depression are often a fatal combination, because the gap between the ideal self and real self becomes very large. This will be elaborated on in the discussion.

After the birth of her first child she felt he was not living up to her own standards. The theme of perfectionism is carried further. It led to anger, criticism of herself and her mother. Frustration and anger were building up. She was letting herself down. She was becoming more helpless. Her depression was getting worse and her representation of herself suffered.

After the birth of her second child, there are signs of a loss of contact with reality. It is not clear how severe it was or how long it lasted. However, more light will be shed on this in the analysis of the documents and the further discussion.

#### **5.4.5 Lerato's relationship with the father of her first child**

Lerato felt she did not really know him. She didn't enjoy being with him. Although she said she did not like him, she was not sure whether she loved him and was scared of showing love to him. She could not sleep with him in her parents' house. She described herself as shy and disorganised with him. Although she said he was good to her, she fought with him and "tortured" him, verbally and physically. Eventually she chased him away and did not regret it, because she did not really love him. She denied being angry with him. According to her, she fought with him because she did not want him and did not know how to tell him that.

- **Reflection on her relationship with the father of her first child**

She is very ambivalent. She is not sure if she loves him. Their relationship echoes that of her parents', apart from the fact that she was the "persecutor". It is possible that the fact that she could vent her anger on him, spared the life of her eldest child. This is the first time that she is not suppressing her anger. It is interesting that she denies being angry. This could possibly be one explanation why she eventually murdered her child – she denied it, suppressed it, and eventually it erupted.

#### **5.4.6 Lerato's relationship with her first child**

A friend persuaded her to talk to a psychologist to get help for her depression. She was sent to Weskoppies for a month. She still did not talk about her feelings or problems. She met one of the workers there and they started a relationship. As a result she fell pregnant, at the age of twenty three.

"I slept with a man knowing I will fall pregnant, you know, without using a condom. And I don't even know the man (silence). I don't even know if

he is sick or not sick. I don't even know where he's staying, I don't know his home.”

When she was eight weeks pregnant, she went for an abortion. She contradicted herself, because she first said that the doctor persuaded her not to have an abortion and then later that she did not have money for an abortion. She also said she changed her mind and decided to have the baby, because the baby would make her happy and if the baby's father was there, she would have nothing to worry about. She was scared of how her parents would react if they found out she was pregnant. However, it does not seem if that fear was one of the reasons for thinking about an abortion. She did not really think about the baby, although she did wonder about the sex of the baby. She had no feelings when she found out she was expecting a girl after going for a sonar.

She had intense feelings: she worried about her life, her mind, her way of doing things – she could not stand the fact that she was acting without thinking. She was getting tired of that kind of life. She became angry. She was also angry about the house that was not clean and she was too tired to clean it herself. She had no energy and felt other people took control of her life. “It was upsetting. I was getting angry and angry and angry, without showing it or talking about it.” She felt life was not what she wanted. She could not sleep and was anxious about going back to work as she had problems with colleagues. She felt alone and hurt and regretful. She also felt out of control.

“So I was not trying to make any sense at all (). I was seeing myself as something else, like I was not ready to be a mother. I was not ready to be a mother... But I didn't realise that I was pregnant. It didn't mean anything

to me that now I'm a mother, I'm a grown up woman. This will be a change of my life, I better change my mind. Because I think that I was doing something wrong... I want to make my life right, but I don't know how, where to start. I was hoping that if I have this baby that I will start acting like a mother, or that my mind will change, you know (). It will record something like that now you are a mother. Then you have changed. You know, something like that. I was hoping it will change. It will happen automatically... and I was not feeling safe that I will be able to act like a mother. I was not thinking that I will be able to act, to act like a mother. You know, the way that I think that I want to treat my child...The feeling that I had, I was, I was feeling scared and insecure, all by myself (silence) (cracks her fingers). I wasn't feeling safe. It's just like when you are being left alone then you are scared to be left alone (). Scared of it. It's just you and your thoughts that are coming to you. But it was, it was the fear that I had for all these years. So, it, it never went away. That I'll be able to stand on my own, that was it, you know, it was that kind of fear. I was very insecure.

Interviewer: Would you say you were angry because you fell pregnant?

Interviewee: (Silence). Well, I wasn't angry. I wasn't angry. I wasn't angry (silence). But something I remember I said () how can somebody have a baby without saying I want to have a baby, you know. But at the time I was, my mind was, was rolling in another direction (). Now I can see that I was wrong (silence).”

When asked if she ever thought about how it would be for her to be a mother, she said that she thought she would be a good mother. She also had these thoughts while being pregnant. She responded:

“I have. I thought of me, of me as being a very good mother, and very understanding and loving, you know. I, and, I will even think of the things that I would buy for my, for my children, the things I will do for her. I would make her very happy, you know, I would look well after her, you know. So, but my mind was, was full of things. The baby was not one of it, was not one of those things on my mind (silence).”

The baby was born by Caesarean delivery and she did not see the baby directly after birth. She knew that she was going to have a C-section and preferred it, because she was scared of a normal birth, as she reasoned a vagina is too small for a baby to pass through.

Her child was small and sweet. She said she loved her child and was happy to have her. However:

“...my thoughts about my mother and my father, you know, the way I feel, they're still there. That they were not going to be happy about the child you know. Even though when they came to see me in the hospital, I was just pretending as if I am happy to see them, but I felt like I don't want to see them, I don't want to be with them. So the other thing that upset me was that you know, I was expecting myself to be a good mother or you know, I would do anything, anything for my child. I would see to it that she eats, she, she, the way she sleeps, you know, the way I prepared things

for her, but I wasn't, I wasn't preparing things for her, I was always tired, I was always angry, you know, I was filled up with anger. So, that anger was broking my ways. You know I couldn't see the way forward or the way I could do things, the way I want, I want them to be done. (Long silence). (Sigh).”

She did not spend a lot of time with her baby. She worked night shift and slept during the day. The first three months Lerato's aunt looked after her baby. She did not want her mother to look after the baby. One of the reasons was that her mother also still had a small child. However, at times, she did.

“So when the child was born, I, (silence) I was still working but I didn't want to stay with my parents. Like sometimes I would leave her with my mother, you know, I was, it was not making any sense, you know. The way I was acting. I was not acting like a mother.

Interviewer: Can you be more specific?

Interviewee: OK, I got used to the life that I was used to. It was in me, in me, you know and I was still in that mode of the way I like to do things. I wasn't settled, I was not, my mind didn't register I was pregnant and I am a mother, you know, that I have that understanding and I should be acting like a mother, I have a child and the things that I should do for the child I wasn't doing them. I wasn't thinking about now I have to wash the napkins or now I have to feed the baby, or. These things were not there (silence). And () sometimes I would leave the child with my mother and go to the place to meet my, the other boyfriend...I didn't see the baby, you know. I am having a baby now, now what to do, you know, the things that



I should be thinking about, you know, what to do next. It was just the baby there and there's nothing that I could do about it."

Lerato had an affair with an older married man while she was pregnant with her first child. At first she did not know he was married, she "wanted to try sex, was being naughty". Three months after her first child's birth, she was pregnant again. She also had financial problems by then.

She believed that she had her child before God made her ready to have children. She believed God wanted her to help her family to have a family life before having her own family. She needed to make peace at home. "I was wrong to have that kid." She was still angry with both her parents, but with her mother in particular. "So, (sigh) that anger, it was there all the time. It was, it was there from my childhood. I, I grew up with it." She was also angry with herself, because she was doing the wrong things.

Sometimes she would try to make her baby laugh by acting funny or once by dancing for her. But mostly there was no interaction between her and her child: "She was just there. It was just like maybe, my, my, my aunt's child, something like that, you know."

Her description of herself as mother, is as follows:

"I, (sigh) I don't see a mother there. (Long silence). () while the baby was there so I was just acting as I am having a baby. You know, not like a mother, loving and understanding you know, the baby's just there, so I have to be around. I'm going to work but I have to go and see the child,

but sometimes I'll leave her with my, with my mother. That's how it got possible that I, I fell pregnant, with the second child. She never taught me how to raise my child or how to handle her, you know, things to do with her, you know, because I think I know better, you know. I have experienced a lot in life, so I know better about babies and how I should take care of them, but with my child I was not practising that. I was very careless. It was not like I am careless. My mind was just functioning in that way that I was careless.”

When she compared the way she acted towards her baby sister with how she was with her first child, she said that she was calm and natural with her sister. She was able to handle a crises and she was accepting. With her own child she was not accepting, she was tired and depressed and “I couldn't do the things the way I thought that I could do them.”. It disturbed her that:

“I was becoming more like my mother (silence). Lazy and not in control, you know, always worrying and not doing the right things that I, which I would see myself doing. (Long silence). ...Yes, I always thought of myself as that (good, wise and understanding) and I could be like that in the future. So, I was amazed that, it was a surprise to me that I was becoming, you know, like I'm not making any sense, acting very foolishly, you know, in front of other people. Or even in front of God. But, it was the anger that was taking over and the pain that I was feeling. So it was making me do the wrong things all the time (silence).”

She saw her eldest child as someone who could help her. When she tried to suffocate her second child the first time, she experienced her child as wanting to stop her, intelligent and wise, she could help her think, could see what was going on and could come up with suggestions as what to do:

“She took a, (silence) a book of songs, (a Bible songbook) because one day I was, I took it and I was singing for them. So she took that book and gave it to me that () stop doing that, you know. So I didn’t listen to her. So I see her like she, she, she understands what is going wrong, she can see what’s going on and it is wrong.”

She believed her eldest child saw her:

“As a good person, the one that would not hurt her. Like my first child, one day that I was, I was leaving her to cry, she was, she was crying and I, I didn’t pick her up or make her to be quiet, or she wanted me to hold her or what was happening and she was, she said no, you know, she, she said like, you know it is not possible for you to do this, you’re not that kind of a person that would do this to me, you know, you are a good person. (Long silence).”

- **Reflection on her relationship with her first child**

The fact that she wanted an abortion suggests not wanting the child. Her first child was thus an unwanted and unplanned baby as she herself was. Her baby was not thought about. There is a strong realisation that she was not ready to have a child. An inner sense of mothering, maternal preoccupation and a primary relatedness were missing. She did not receive what a mother should give to a child. She knew how a

mother should be and she wanted something else for her child than what she received. However, she felt helpless to provide it, according to her, as a result of depression. Her representation of herself-as-mother is very negative and echoes that of her representation of her mother-as-mother-of-herself-as-child. Her mind was occupied with worries and troubles and not with her future baby, in spite of the will to give her child the good mothering that she did not receive. Thus, the gap between her representation of the ideal mother and herself-as-mother was huge. The motherhood constellation suffered and this will be elaborated on in the discussion.

She protected her child by not leaving her with her own mother – she took her to her aunt, who was a mother figure to her. The fact that her mother was still busy with her own small child, possibly added to her feeling that her mother was not there in a maternal role for her.

The theme of being scared of her parents is still there – she could not stand on her own in spite of the fact that as a child, she saw herself as independent. She did not expect support from her parents: they had never helped her then and would not now. She also had unrealistic expectations again and hope was projected on her child – her baby would make life better, would make her happy. Again huge responsibility was placed on a child. – her needs needed to be fulfilled by her child, as she tried to fulfil her mother's needs. Thus, even though she did not think about her baby, these thoughts and feelings about her future baby indicate what kind of a representation of her child was beginning to form.

Her fear of a normal birth and lack of belief in her body's ability to do this, is a wish to retain maximum control. One wonders if it could also be an indication of a negative representation of herself-as-mother in the sense that she did not trust her body to be a mother.

She was still pretending to be happy, which meant that a lot of her emotional energy was going into hiding her real feelings – again an ongoing theme. The theme of anger that is not talked about is running right through. Anger was building up. The effect of her depression in being too tired to do what she wanted to do or knew needed to be done was frustrating and difficult, especially for a perfectionist. She felt like a failure. Her helplessness and anger that she was not the kind of mother she wanted to be, is strongly emphasised. There was an acute awareness of the gap between her representation of an ideal mother and herself-as-mother.

Why she was so sure that her parents would not be happy about the baby, is not certain. It might be because she could not trust that they were honest about their feelings, but it is also possible that she projected her own feelings onto her parents. Even as an adult, she still carried the responsibility to rectify what was wrong in her own family, to such an extent that it felt not right for her to begin with a new family. It is interesting to note that she projects this feeling on God.

There is no connectedness between her and her child, as with her and her parents. The theme of a parent and a child “just there” features strongly throughout. Sometimes she tried hard to compensate, resulting in a false interaction. There is the realisation that she was acting out of character, which is what depression often lead people to do. She

could not act on what she knew babies need, namely love and understanding, what she herself needed as a child, again an indication of the large gap between her representation of an ideal mother and her representation of herself-as-mother.

She projected her own wise understanding part of herself, or perhaps her ideal self, on her child. The similarities between Lerato as a child who saw what was wrong but was not able to stop it, and her own child, is evident. As a result of splitting she lost the good part of herself, she could not hold on to that, but she believed her child saw it. Her representation of her child at that young age is very similar to her representation of herself when she was a child. Thus her representation of an ideal mother is projected on her child, and her representation of herself-as-mother is that of a bad mother, like her own mother, who did not respond to her child's needs.

#### **5.4.7 Lerato's relationship with the father of her second child**

Lerato's relationship with the father of her second child became very bad. He was much older, in his late thirties or early forties. At first she saw him as very responsible, he would respect her and she hoped he would make life better for her. He said he loved her. Later, she found out that he was married and had relationships with a few women. She felt humiliated – he talked to their colleagues about their relationship and about the other women in front of her. He gossiped about her and said that she was “mad” when she was admitted to a psychiatric hospital.

“So I thought he was a very responsible man and very loving and caring man. So, he wouldn't do anything bad to me. He would help me. He wouldn't say ugly things about me, like the things that he used to say in the office in front of me, like the time when I, when I was leaving for the hospital, you know, he

was so happy. He was talking to the other colleagues, that by now I should be mad, now, I'm leaving for ever.”

He did not react at all and said nothing when she told him she was pregnant. He never asked about her pregnancy or how she was. He took her to hospital when she wanted to have an abortion, but abortions were not carried out at that specific hospital. She felt angry and hurt. She felt betrayed, as she did not expect he would be doing these things to her, because he said he loved her and wanted her. “I hated him (silence). I would kill him (silence) (sigh). Because he had done me wrong. He treated me really bad. (Long silence).” And then she adds: “So, (silence) but sometimes I don't blame him, you know, people are having problems all around this world.”

- **Reflection on her relationship with the father of her second child**

Again she had unrealistic expectations. She was desperate for someone to make life better for her. She was looking for someone to help her, as there was no help from her parents and she could not help herself.

She had unrealistic hopes, as was pointed out before. She hoped he would make a change in her life. Her unrealistic hopes are followed by disappointment. Again the theme of not talking is apparent – there was no talking about the pregnancy. She was so angry she could kill him. She killed his child, perhaps a projection of that anger. This man treated her badly, like her father her mother. She allowed this, even though she said with reference to her father, that she did not believe a woman should be treated that way. In spite of all of this, at times she had compassion and understanding in stating that everyone has problems.

#### 5.4.8 Lerato's relationship with her second child

Lerato was very depressed while she was pregnant with her second child. She had a lot of problems with colleagues at work and the relationship with her second child's father turned very sour. She was scared of the reaction of her parents and the father of her child if they should learn that she was pregnant again. She was also worried that people at work would think that she was very stupid and careless and that it was easy for people to take advantage of her. She felt she was losing her self-esteem and dignity. She made an appointment to have the baby aborted when she was between three and four months pregnant. The hospital that she went to did not carry out abortions and she did not have transport to the other hospital where it could be done.

Thus she said she was not "fully accepting" of her baby. "In a way I resented the pregnancy. I hadn't accepted it." She was absorbed with thoughts and feelings about the child's father and his behaviour towards her. She did not think about the baby:

"No, I'm just telling you that (laughs), it's like you are disturbed and you are just far away from, from, from things which are happening to you. You are not yourself at all and those things, it's like you don't know something. So even if you tell me that, for an example I was pregnant, but I, I didn't, I didn't notice (silence) or it didn't come to my mind that I was pregnant and you know, I would change the way I am or the way I do things or that I would start acting positively, or, in a way that, that would, (silence) (sigh), would make me to be more of a mother. So, (silence) so, sometimes I think that I was in a world where I had to prove myself. I had to stop things to happen to me. So, I was in that world (silence). But, I myself, I was living in my own world, (silence) that I created, or which was created by the way I was treated.



I went to that world to live there all by myself. I was not living according to the standards of other people or of the world. I was far away from the world or from reality. (Long silence).”

She also had a Caesarean delivery with her second child. Her feelings at the birth of her second child were the same as with her first child: “It was just the same. Uh, and I felt like I don’t want her, you know, I can’t do anything for her, because she was looking more like her father and it was really disturbing me if I look at her. Oh, I, she was there. There was nothing I could do about it (silence).” She did not show the way she felt about the baby to her mother. “I would just act like I’m happy, everything is fine, where as inside I felt like you know, nothing is right.” It felt to her as if her baby wanted to be close to her. She considered leaving her child in the hospital with the nurses, but was scared about how her mother would react. As with her first child, she hoped that having the baby would change her or change her life. “I’ll become more positive, I’ll become a mother to my children.”

Her feelings were very disturbing to her. Again she did not feel ready for a baby, she felt her mind did not register that she was a mother, she felt frustrated and felt that the child’s father used her sexually:

“I took it very bad. I but I still don’t (). I didn’t feel like I’m ready for a baby. I don’t feel like a mother. () but the thing is that I didn’t feel like that my mind had registered that I’m a mother. It keeps worrying me, keeps worrying me, what is happening. I was still not feeling like a mother. I have, still, not feel any changes in me...Because you know, some of the things were just small things but the thing is, the thing is that I

didn't have anyone to, to share my feelings with, the way I feel. I couldn't tell my mother afterwards, you know, something happened to me at work and I'm feeling like this or I want to cry. I wouldn't cry, but I felt like crying. Because it was hurting. And I, I, everything was locked up inside (silence). So, I didn't cry. I didn't say anything. I didn't say anything to anyone. There was no one there. So there were all those things. If I could just say to anyone, you know what happened today at work or I could just tell them, but there was no one."

It seemed to her as if her baby liked to be held. She slept better while sleeping in Lerato's arms. Her second baby was bigger than the first one. She found her more difficult to bath and carry around because she was heavier (Lerato is very small). She said that she did not take proper care of her children:

"Sometimes the children would cry. (Long silence). I would just, just feel bored. I don't want to pick up the children because I was not breastfeeding. (Long silence). Like one day I left them in the house. My mother was, my mother went to town and my father. I was going to work. I, in the morning before I went to work, I put the small child, the second child, inside the blanket, cover it all over like trying to suffocate it. Then again I tried to suffocate it with a plastic. So and again when I left for work I left the small one, (silence) the small baby, she was looking more like she was struggling from breathing. I left her there with her sister (silence). There was no one in the house. So, I just locked the burglar () and the key inside () and left them, both of them. (Long silence). Then I went to work."

That day she felt let down by her family. They had gone to town and she had to go to work. “I felt like nothing is in order. My family knew I was going to work. How can they all leave to go to town. Nothing in this family is in order.” She could not remember what else she was feeling that day, she thought she might be angry with the baby’s father about something. She could not remember thinking anything. She said that there were no voices in her mind that day telling her to do it. She could not remember what she told herself. When she came home from work the baby was alive, but sick, she could not suck or eat. Her mother had taken her baby to the doctor. Lerato bought food for her baby. She was not concerned or scared. She just took the baby and went to sleep. Although it seems from this extract that she also used a plastic bag on the same day to suffocate her baby, she explained later on that it was on a second occasion when the baby was seven months old, three weeks before she killed her, again suffocating her with a plastic bag.

She was stressing a lot and felt hurt. She was feeling down, lazy, tired and troubled all the time. Her self-esteem was low. She felt scared of being in the world, she was scared somebody or the devil would kill her. She was also angry: “I was angry that I was becoming more like my mother and father. (Long silence). So, I didn’t feel safe at all. You know even before, before that () in my parent’s house I didn’t feel safe. It felt like, like I was a prisoner in my own home, you know (silence). So, I was very angry.”

She once left her children with her mother and went to her aunt for a week without telling her mother that she was leaving because of something that happened at work. She said that she could not and did not want to talk about it (meaning in the interview).

She felt her colleagues were attacking her and saw them as murderers, but saw her boyfriend (the second child's father) as behind that – “It was part of his attack to me”. She had thoughts about people at work wanting to kill her. She said it was not voices in her head, but she was scared because of what her colleagues said and how they treated her. She felt that she could not trust anyone, not even her manager or the psychologist at work. She felt if she was becoming mute, “disabled to talk”. She became scared and decided to leave.

Once when she visited a relative and the woman took her child and gave her something to eat, she was very angry. “What was she doing to my child?” Although she was very angry, again, she didn't say anything or showed any anger. There were also tenants in the house, which was disturbing to her. She felt helpless.

She always thought that she would be a good mother as she loved children and were used to looking after them.

“You know, a lot of kids grew up in front of me, like my young sister, my aunts' children. They grew up in front of me, when they were babies. So I loved children. The way I was acting was something new, but it is the results of the way things were happening to me. (Long silence). But I was, for an example, like animals, you know, they, their babies are there, they, they feed them and they take care of them, they don't leave them. Like even when () they feed them, they don't leave their babies, you know. So, I, I was not having that. I am having a child now, I have to do things for the child, you know. It was like I have to be programmed first, you know, to be in that mode before I could do anything. So like I say it was before the Creator

determined for me to have a child, to have a family, you know. It wasn't that time (silence). So, you mustn't expect a lot when you are pregnant (silence). You'll struggle. It depends on, on what's, what's in your head, what is going on in your head. (Long silence).”

She felt she was a bad mother. She treated her children badly by not attending to them when they cried or by beating them at times. She did not want her children:

“The other thing was that I, (long silence) was feeling like, (long silence ) I don't want the child. I was feeling angry towards them. I didn't want them. I don't have love. I didn't feel connected to them like a mother should be to her children. (Long silence). It was just like, I felt like I hated it, because I was hating the father. So, (long silence) I was feeling tense. (Long silence). So, (silence) everything was more like a tension to me. (Touched her head, shook her head). (Long silence). (Sigh).”

Lerato felt that her mind was not working well. She describes her mind at that time with expressions like “it was like corrupted”, “it was not in order”, “I couldn't think straight”, “it's like a scrap car, something doesn't work anymore” “like a computer that does not process information” “mentally and physically out of order” “like a radio playing on two stations at the same time”.

She saw her second baby as someone would help her a lot and who would help her to make decisions. She described her baby as follows:

“And she looked very strict, like a very strict child. (Laughs). You know, that she could tell you what to do. That you should do this, you should do that, you know. My first child was a very loving and caring somebody.

Interviewer: I’m interested to know, what did this baby do or what made that you perceived her as, that she is strict, or that she could be strict and that she could control you?

Interviewee: The way she looked. You know, she looked very serious most of the time.

Interviewer: Mm. And how did that make you feel?

Interviewee: No, good, that I’ll have somebody like that in my home.

(Laughs). Somehow good, but it didn’t really show that I felt good.

(Sigh). Well, she’s not there anymore. (Long silence).”

Apart from the fact that her child looked like her (the baby’s) father, she reminded Lerato of herself in the sense that she saw herself also as serious and quiet. In another interview her description of her baby was as follows:

“Mmm, She doesn’t cry easily, or now and then. She, the way she looks at me (silence) mm, like she could really see me (silence). She, (silence) uh, I don’t know how to describe about her. I can’t put it into words. (Long silence). I would say she was, she was like God. (Laughs). Yes, if I can imagine God the way He is (silence).” When asked to elaborate, she said:

“Like God is, He want to give you rules. (Laughs). So, that, He is very serious. He doesn’t joke with you. If He tells you to do something, you must do that thing. You mustn’t go like you don’t want to do that thing, you must just do it.”

When asked about her hopes and wishes for her second child, she replied that she never thought about it, her mind was too troubled about the issues at work. She did think her youngest child saw her as a good and very loving mother, one who would do anything for her child.

At another time, not long before she suffocated her baby, she took her kids and left, because of problems at home with and between her father and her mother. She only packed nappies for her baby, not even clothes for anyone of them. She felt that she would look after them, she just wanted to get away from her mother. She did not care about being in an accident and wished it would happen.

The day she suffocated her baby she was thinking about her life and how miserable it was. She was angry because she didn't have money to buy the children food. "I saw her like a stumbling block in front of me and that was her I had to get rid of her. So I killed the baby and that was it."

After the tape was switched off, she said that she could not understand that she did not feel any pain, that she was not sorry that she did not want them. In the last interview she said her child only wanted her to hold her in her arms, she was full of love, she wanted to be loved, to be taken good care of. When asked about it, she said that was what she was feeling then, thinking about her child then (meaning in prison) – when she murdered her child, she did not feel anything, she didn't think of her child, her mind was too busy thinking of all her troubles.

- **Reflection on her relationship with her second child**

Abortion and an unwanted baby is an ongoing theme. Her description of the very lonely world of depression is an indication that her depression was getting worse. She was isolated from everyone, even from herself and from what was happening in her body. She could not even cry, all her feelings were locked up inside. At first her house was a prison to her, now she herself became the prison.

Her mind was so busy with her worries and troubles that her baby was not thought about. She could not prepare for motherhood, even though she was already a mother. Again she had the insight that she was not mothering the way she should or wanted to. Even though she knew how to mother, what to do for a baby, she was not able to put it into practice. The gap between her representation of her ideal-self-as-mother and herself-as-mother, is apparent. It is ironic that she warns against unrealistic expectations when one is pregnant. The irony lies also in the fact that one does expect a lot when one is pregnant – one's life is going to change irrevocably. Thus again, her representation of herself-as-mother is very negative and even though she is not thinking about her baby, her negative feelings about the pregnancy suggest that a negative representation of her baby might be forming. Her fear of what other people would think about her is a representation of herself.

Immense turmoil is apparent with the birth of her second child. She acted happy, while everything just felt so wrong. There was no space for her real feelings when she was with her mother. She developed a false self with her mother. One wonders whether her mother was depressed when she was a baby. Again unrealistic hopes were linked with a baby. What was expected from her child was to save her from misery.



Again, a child had to rectify what was wrong. She considered leaving her child at hospital, which is another indication of rejecting her child. Her representation of her baby was negative, especially because she looked like her father. On the other hand, as with her first child and herself-as-child, the representation of her baby also included being someone who could rescue her. She must have felt that her baby was failing her, seeing that she hoped that her baby would change her into a mother, possibly influencing her representation of her baby negatively.

A feeling of boredom is often associated with depression. Her child wanted connectedness and she was aware of that. However, she was not able or willing to give it. She did not communicate with her baby, echoing the lack of communication between her and her parents. It is interesting that she found a bigger baby more difficult to handle – it is usually the other way around. At this stage this baby was only two months old. It might be an indication that the responsibility for caring for her child was too big, or that her depression was too deep and that she literally had no energy.

The theme of not feeling safe and that she could be killed continued. She could not trust anyone, perhaps because she could not trust herself. The theme of anger is there, but now it was directed at her from people outside of the family. It is difficult to know what exactly was going on at work and if there was any reason for her persecutory thoughts. Although she could never talk, because there was no one who would listen, she now felt unable to talk even if she wanted to. The theme of running away is there again. She ran to her aunt, who was a substitute mother figure for her.

The day she tried to suffocate her baby the first time, she again felt not supported by anyone. It is possible that anger at her baby's father and/or her anger at her family, was projected onto her baby. The theme of anger runs through, at this stage it was about becoming like her parents – the last thing that she believed would happen or wanted to happen. Her beating such small children was a repetition of severe punishment and uncontrolled anger, like her dad beating her mother and her mother beating her. She talked mostly of her second baby as "it". Her representation of herself, especially as a parent, was becoming more negative. The theme of feeling scared and not feeling safe is there, suggesting that she could not provide safety for her child. One wonders about the meaning of suffocating. Could it be: "Do not talk to me, do not cry, do not make any connection with me"?

Her description of feeling lazy and tired all the time is a description of depression – she used almost the exact words to describe her mother when she was a child. Her description of how she struggled to make sense of what was going on in her mind, suggests that her depression was getting worse and some psychotic traits were present. Her persecutory feelings of being killed might have been a projection of her own murderous feelings, or it might have been linked to psychotic traits.

A baby who could tell her what to do, reminds one of her mother. However, she denied that her child resembled her mother in any way. It could have been on an unconscious level that murdering her child could also mean murdering her mother. It is interesting though, that she said a baby like that could help her make decisions – again the theme of a parent needing a child to help with adult responsibilities, features. Her representation of her second child is in this aspect the same as that of her first

child and of herself-as-child. The fact that her child looked serious might be an indication of a depressed baby, which is often the case when the mother is depressed. One also wonders about the possibility of brain damage after the first suffocation, as the baby had found it difficult to breathe. However, there is no information as to how long her baby suffered before she was taken to the doctor by Lerato's mother.

Her child reminds her of God, in her framework the ultimate One to obey, who could "really see". In this description of her child, her projections on her child are even stronger. In a way her child becomes her Superego. People often project the traits of their own father onto God. One also wonders what was it that this baby saw that she felt uncomfortable with. Perhaps because she lost her own sense of the good in her, she felt all her baby could see, was her badness.

Her description of how she thought her child saw her, echoes her ideal-self-representation – how she wished to be and also how she wished her mother would mother her. Again it is quite clear that she was too preoccupied with her worries and troubles to think about her baby.

It is clear that her depression deepened just before she finally suffocated her child. There was now suicidal ideation – a wish to be dead. When she suffocated her child it could have been her own wish to be dead that she acted out in killing her child. The theme of running away of problems is present again. However, what was also present at that stage is a willingness to look after her children and a belief that she could. Unfortunately, the ability to think clearly about their needs was lacking.

At some level there was a thought that her baby made her life miserable. She was angry about the lack of money and she projected that anger onto her child. Before she tried to suffocate her child the second time and when she finally did, she again felt that she had no support. One wonders whether her words “and that was it” suggest that the topic is closed for further discussion or whether they underline the fact of the irreversibility of her child’s death.

At the time the interviews took place she had the insight to realise what her children needed. Previously, her mind was too preoccupied with her own troubles to think about her children, her depression too overwhelming.

### **5.5 Analysis of participant-observation**

This researcher found it difficult to draw a line between data from participant-observation and that which forms a part of reflexive analysis, as they are so closely linked. It was decided to include global impressions and the personal reflections in the reflexive analysis and to focus on the more specific details in the various interviews in the analysis of participant-observation.

As was mentioned in the reflexive analysis, Lerato did not look her age. The second day she wore a dress. Even in a dress, she looked like a teenager. The researcher found it very difficult to think of her as a mother. Although she was not shy or timid at all, she acted with much more self-confidence from the third interview onwards. She also made more eye contact. Perhaps she just felt more at ease.

In the second interview she talked mostly about her two children. She yawned a lot, her voice was very soft and there were long silences. The researcher wondered whether the silences could mean that there was more resistance to talk about her children, especially the second child, or whether it was more an indication of how difficult it was for her to talk about her two children. The researcher was aware of very different feelings through this interview. At times the researcher felt empathy for her, at times upset (when she talked about suffocating her baby), at times worried about her eldest child and about her. Towards the end of the second interview when she described her thoughts, more or less the last month before she killed her child, the researcher was aware of feeling uneasy. She sounded confused and the researcher wondered about Lerato being psychotic at that time.

The researcher was struck by the intensity of the anger in Lerato's voice when she talked about her parents, especially her mother. She also talked at a faster pace when talking about her parents. Her voice was soft and at times very soft when she spoke about her children. There were much more sighs and more and longer silences when she talked about her own feelings and about her children.

It was also noticeable that she often replied that she could not remember details of her pregnancies and the time after her children were born. The researcher was not always sure how to interpret it. It could be that she was too depressed at that stage and that she really did not remember everything because she was too worried about her problems, or it could have been resistance to talk about it. Another possibility is that she was denying very painful memories.

It was interesting to see how she touched her head, making a circular movement as people sometimes do to indicate that someone is a little bit mad, when she talked about her mother's stress. She made the same movement when she discussed how the stress of her parents' fights disturbed her and in one of the other interviews where she talked about troubling thoughts that she had.

She laughed twice when she talked about her father being drunk and asking her about boyfriends and then again when he asked her if she was accusing him of molesting her. It could have been a way to disguise her embarrassment. In the fifth interview she laughed when she described her feeling of being far away from what was happening. The researcher was not sure whether being of a different culture made it more difficult to understand the meaning of the laughs at these particular stages.

She cracked her fingers a few times during the various interviews. It occurred while talking about her mother criticising her, talking about her visits to the psychologist and psychiatrist and about feeling scared and insecure.

In the first interview the researcher became aware of a feeling of sadness when Lerato spoke about her regrets and she repeated twice that her behaviour had cost her a lot. She also said: "So, (silence) look at what happened." Later on in the same interview she said: "Because your actions () determines your life, you know, but () something that you don't know". Again the researcher was aware of feeling sad. The researcher also thought about her own child and how her action of suicide impacted on so many people's lives. In the fifth and sixth interviews where Lerato talked about her second child, the researcher also felt sad at times. In the fifth interview she remarked upon her

second child, saying “Well, she’s not there anymore”. Again the researcher thought about her own child and felt very sad. There was a heavy feeling in the room during the sixth interview and she spoke very softly, sometimes almost in a whisper, when she talked about the time just before and when she suffocated her baby.

She emphasised important feelings by repeating them, for example, “I was really getting angry, and angry, and angry”, or “I was feeling very down, very down.”. Lerato often used the words “I don’t know” in telling her story, or saying that her mother did not know.

Lerato used the phrases “you know” and “you understand” constantly throughout the interviews, but not in a questioning way as if to make sure that one understands. The researcher interprets it as a wish to be understood.

Listening to the tapes, the researcher realised again that she is a good listener.

Although she was sometimes very silent during the interviews, she made a lot of encouraging and empathetic utterances.

## **5.6 Analysis of documents**

### **5.6.1 Documents from the first psychiatric hospital**

A short one page report was obtained from the first psychiatric hospital Lerato attended. Lerato was referred to this hospital for evaluation by a private psychiatrist. She was on Cipramil 20 mg daily and Normison 20 mg nocte. She presented with depressed mood and suicidal thoughts. Her DSM IV Diagnosis at the time was Major Depressive Disorder.

According to this report, she had a history of alcohol abuse and multiple suicide attempts by drinking drain-cleaner, paraffin and sleep medication. A week before her admission, she had taken Rattex. The report confirmed that her depression had started in standard 9. She was treated with 20 mg Fluoxetine and discharged after a month, for follow up at her local hospital.

### **5.6.2 Documents from the second psychiatric hospital**

When Lerato was five months pregnant with her second child, she was admitted to another psychiatric hospital for two weeks. She was diagnosed with recurrent Major Depressive Disorder of a severe degree without psychotic traits. She was treated with Cipramil 20 mg and Stillnox and received individual and group therapy.

In an assessment report, she wrote that her eldest child was always happy to see her and laughed a lot when she talked to her. About her mother, she said that she was always tired and sick, adding “I know why”, without writing anything further. She stated that her father drank, but was changing. On a question about her family’s feelings about her admission, she replied that they felt nothing, because they did not know what was happening to her and they were very ignorant. She said that she felt as if she had no future and would never have it. She reported having no friends and turning to cigarette smoking for support.

She verbalised that her life was in a mess and that she did not know where to start to solve her problems. Stressors were stated as work stress, domestic problems and personal stress, having an eight month old baby and being pregnant with the second one. During her stay there she had vaginal bleeding and was seen by a gynaecologist.



According to the report she was relieved to know that her baby was OK. She also discussed the fact that care for her new baby would be a problem to her. Adoption was discussed with her.

### **5.6.3 Documents from the third psychiatric hospital**

Three months after she had murdered her baby, she was admitted to a psychiatric hospital for a month for observation. She was diagnosed by a psychiatrist with depression with psychotic features, capable of standing trial, “managing her own affairs” and able to appreciate the wrongfulness of her actions and to act in accordance with such appreciation.

Handwritten notes from the state psychiatrist revealed the following: Apparently there were times when she “virtually didn’t answer a single question”. A set response was “I don’t know”. She apparently also sighed often, averted her gaze and covered her face with her left hand. According to the psychiatrist she was at times dismissive and even disdainful.

His notes confirmed a very difficult relationship with her mother. Her mother once called her a “straatmeid” (whore). Her parents’ abusive relationship, her mother’s abuse and fear for her mother also featured strongly in the interviews he had with her. She added that apart from sleeping excessively, her mother also ate excessively.

Her depression since standard 9 was also confirmed in his notes. What was added is that she often had headaches, was worried that she would gain weight and would binge eat and vomit, and that she generally felt bored. Her eating disorder was better when

she started working. Apparently she also once had a suicide attempt – she tried to cut her wrists. She had shopping sprees when she would spend her month's salary in three days.

She felt that she was a threat to her colleagues at work, as she would get their positions. She was frustrated at work in 2002 as she was not promoted nor transferred. She felt betrayed. A month later, she “argued” with voices that she was hearing. She believed the people at work were poisoning her with muti.

In an interview that the state psychiatrist held with her aunt and uncle (one of the aunts that was a substitute mother for her), they reported she had frequent headaches between the ages ten and twelve. They confirmed that family relations were very difficult in her teenager years, because of her parents' fights and her father's drinking. According to them, she “cannot get through to her parents”. They became her confidants. She sought advice from them concerning relationships and her work. They tried to talk to her parents. In her twenties they could hear “anger in her talk”, she started to smoke excessively and started drinking.

They also stated that there were bouts of verbal aggression, she was easily frustrated, slept excessively, had an erratic appetite with bingeing and vomiting and she misused money. According to them they saw her at the end of 2002 at a funeral. She then stayed with them for a week. She looked unstable, read the Bible incessantly, talked about “this is now war”, had a decreased appetite, but was not suicidal. They reported that she had discovered that she was HIV-positive. When they saw her a few days

after the offence, she appeared to be in a daze, but was coherent. She said that she could not remember what had happened.

According to the intern psychologist's report, she heard voices which told her to kill her child. This report stated that she was previously admitted to two psychiatric hospitals, not only for depression, but also for behavioural problems.

According to an interview that the intern psychologist had with Lerato's brother, she was a "good" child and always quiet. When she started working she said to her mother that she was scared of the night. She broke all the windows in her parent's house in 2003. She often treated her children badly. His explanation was "I think it was because of the father", meaning the father of her second child. The last two months before the offence, she was suddenly always fighting. The day before she suffocated her baby she had an argument with the tenants in the house. Her brother reported that she had been very calm the day of the offence.

According to the police record, Lerato's brother reported seeing Lerato being aggressive with her children during the last three months before the murder took place. He saw her hitting her child through the face with a cloth and hitting her with a fist on her chest. It is not clear whether he referred to the eldest or youngest child when mentioning these two incidents.

According to the report cards of the psychiatric nurses, Lerato denied hearing voices, seeing visions and having suicidal thoughts. She admitted that she had suicidal thoughts in the prison. She was well orientated, answered questions relevantly, had no

delusions or hallucinations. There was no history of mental illness or epilepsy in the family. She was mostly quiet and well behaved, but mixed minimally with fellow patients. Her behaviour in the ward was described as manipulative and attention-seeking. After two weeks in the psychiatric hospital, they reported that she was paranoid and that there was underlying aggression. A week later she had a fight with a fellow patient, swore at her and hit her with a chair on her arm. Four days later she was again involved in an argument with another patient.

#### **5.6.4 Information from her psychologist at work**

As the psychologist from work was in a town 400 km away from her, they never had face-to-face interviews, but had regular telephonic contact since 2001. He was instrumental in helping her to get hospitalised at the first psychiatric hospital in 2001. There was little contact in the beginning, but at times she phoned three to four times a week and conversations were often an hour or longer. She made very frequent contact during her pregnancy with her second child and after the birth.

She was anxious and depressed. There were no phobias, although she feared life in general. Since her childhood she felt that she did not fit in. She had underlying aggression towards her parents and the world in general. He confirmed the difficult relationship with her parents, especially her mother. There were sometimes signs of depersonalisation. He confirmed that she had a suicide attempt before they started having contact, but he did not have any details.

He confirmed that she tried to escape from problems. She voiced her feelings as “always sad, angry, tired and bored. I cannot face my problems, I am useless and

stupid. I am pretending all the time”. According to him, she isolated herself from her colleagues. Before she left her job, there were signs of a delusion of persecution and he urged her to get medication. She asked for partitions in the office. His assumption was that it had to do with the father of her second child.

She admitted that she sometimes had impulses of killing her second child. He linked these impulses with feelings of persecution at work. He reported that she had more compassion for her elder child than for the younger. He mentioned that her depression was complicated by her feelings for the father of her second child, the possibility that she and her child was HIV-positive and caring for her two children while battling to take care of herself emotionally. The day he testified at her trial, she said to him that she could not understand why she was not getting ill from being HIV-positive.

### **5.7 Discussion and triangulation with the literature**

Lerato was surprised that she was not the good mother that she wanted to be and had thought she would be. Two factors played a role, namely her depression in and of itself, and problems in the motherhood constellation. The interplay between these two made it worse. Because of the interaction between these two factors, it is difficult to draw a line between them. However, the focus will first be more on depression and then on the motherhood constellation.

- **Depression**

A strong theme is that of depression. There is not enough information to know whether Lerato's mother suffered from depression when Lerato was a baby. Her mother definitely became depressed more or less at the time her third child was born, according to Lerato, because of the fights between her parents. Although the abuse certainly played a major role as a cause of the stress and depression, other factors might have contributed, for example poverty and instability (moving a lot), but possibly also postnatal depression after the birth of her third child. However, this researcher argues that the precise cause of the depression is of less importance than its impact on the mothering role.

Lerato's mother was very dependant. It could have been a part of her personality, but it is also possible that it was as a result of her depression. However, her dependency and depression and perhaps her parenting style, contributed to a huge responsibility that was placed on Lerato's shoulders which in the end became too much for her and she too became depressed. Apart from the responsibility she had to carry, her mother was not available for her, especially not emotionally. The effect of her mother's depression on Lerato was severe.

It seems as if Lerato's depression never lifted since she was seventeen years old. In fact, her depression became progressively worse, to such an extent that she became apathetic. With the depression came feelings of helplessness, powerlessness and a loss of control. It also resulted in feelings of isolation that grew, so that she later on said "I am not a part of the family". She even became isolated from what was happening in her body while being pregnant, which impacted on the motherhood constellation.

When someone is depressed, they are preoccupied with their own feelings and thoughts, as Lerato described. Thus maternal preoccupation suffers – during pregnancy and afterwards, the baby and child is not thought about. Depression also results in feelings of failure. It is clear that Lerato did not feel like a good mother. Her perfectionism made it worse. As was said in the reflections, perfectionism and depression are a fatal combination. Perfectionism is about having control, whereas depression is about losing control. For a perfectionist that is the worst thing that could happen. This links with Jacobson's (1971) suggestion that depression is associated with a gap between self-representation and ego ideal. Perfectionism results in an ego-ideal that is unreachable, even more so when one is depressed. As was discussed in the reflections, there was a huge gap between Lerato's representation of herself-as-mother and her representation of an ideal mother. She felt, therefore, that she was acting out of character. This is evident in the lack of maternal care that her children received. She was able to help her mother with her younger sister and she wanted to give her children the mothering that she had not received. She shows insight into what a baby needs from a mother. However, as a result of depression, nothing of this knowledge is put into practice with her own children.

When one has depression, emotional energy runs low as it is. Lerato spent some emotional energy to hide her real feelings from her parents by pretending to be happy in front of them, which in the end aggravated her depression. Lerato's depression impacted on all her relationships, especially with herself and her children, which deteriorated drastically.

Depression during pregnancy impacts on a mother's readiness to have a child. The motherhood constellation suffers. Even without the depression impacting on the motherhood constellation, there were enough factors that indicated that Lerato would have a problematic motherhood constellation.

- **The motherhood constellation**

The motherhood constellation consists of the three discourses that come into play with pregnancy and the four related themes that emerge (Stern, 1995). The discourses are with the pregnant woman's mother, herself and her baby. The themes are life-growth, primary relatedness, supporting matrix and identity reorganisation (chapter 2).

- **Representation of mother as mother-of-self-as-child**

The first discourse is with the woman's own mother, especially as mother-to-her-as-child. Lerato's representation of her mother-as-mother-of-herself is very negative. Her mother did not want her, was destructive, could not be trusted, physically and verbally abusive and emotionally absent. Lerato was aware of the fact that her mother "almost killed" her according to her grandmother. The severe punishment from her mother is evident of her mother's anger which was often out of control. Her mother's words "If I can just grab you in my arms I would kill you" and Lerato's fear that her mother would poison them, are evident of the destructive mothering that she received and that she could be in real danger.

The theme of an unwanted and unplanned baby runs throughout. Lerato was unplanned and unwanted by her mother. All three of her own pregnancies were unplanned and unwanted. Her first pregnancy ended in an abortion. Although women



often are rejecting of a pregnancy in the beginning, they usually accept the pregnancy in the later phases, and if not, there is acceptance once the baby is born. With Lerato and her mother, it is clear that the negative attitude towards their baby carried on into childhood. Lerato never felt accepted by her both her parents, even as an adult.

○ **Representation of herself-as-mother**

The second discourse is with herself, especially herself-as-mother. It is clear how pathogenic Lerato's representation of herself-as-mother was when she described herself as mother. She was aware that she was not ready to be a mother, she did not register that she was pregnant, even though she knew she was. There was no integration of what was happening in her body with what was happening in her mind. She said she did not feel safe that she would be able to act like a mother, and she did not. Even after her second child was born, she still did not feel like a mother and knew she was not mothering the way she wanted to or thought she would.

There might be two reasons for Lerato's pathogenic representation of herself-as-mother. In object relations theory it is argued that the child internalises parental figures (Hinshelwood, 1989; Klein, 1980a, 1980c). Pregnancy leads to a reorganising of self-identity (Lederman, 1996; Pines, 1993; Raphael-Leff, 2001a; Smith, 1999; Stern, 1995). The shift from daughter-of-her-mother to mother-of-her-child entails that a part of the fixed representational world of the new mother shifts irreversibly (Stern, 1995). Identification is defined as the modification of the self-representation to resemble the shape of the object representation. In Lerato's case, the object representation is of her mother as mother-of-herself-as-child. In the reflections it was

pointed out how her representation of herself-as-mother echoed that of her representation of her mother-as-mother.

This links with Tracey's (2000) notion that a depressed mother has lost her central core of identity. She has no sense of being protected by a good internal mother. It is evident that Lerato did not in the first place have a good mother to internalise. Tracey (2000) argues that at the core of a depressed mother is an internally dead mother, or an internally dead baby, or a destructive mother who kills babies or a destructive infant who kills mothers. It is evident that both Lerato and her mother had a destructive internal mother. However, Lerato had a sense of what a good mother should be and thought she would be that for her child. In spite of that, she could not hold onto that representation, which brings us to the other reason for Lerato's pathogenic representation of herself-as-mother.

In Klein's understanding of depression, the adult failed to cope with the depressive position as an infant (Likierman, 2001). This might have been the case with Lerato, although as was shown in the reflections, there is evidence that as a child, in spite of her mother's criticisms, she had a more balanced representation of herself. Roth (1999) states that Klein's use of the term 'position' in describing the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, refers to two different states of mind with its own constellation of anxieties, other feelings, defences and ways of relating to objects, in spite of the fact that Klein described these two processes developmentally. This researcher argues that when a person becomes depressed, that person moves to a paranoid-schizoid state of mind where splitting is used as a defence mechanism, and the ability to integrate is lost. Through the process of projection unwanted parts of the

self-representation are added to the representation of the other (Fonagy, 2001). This researcher believes that it is not necessarily unwanted aspects that are projected on another, but aspects that a person with depression cannot identify with. As was shown in the reflections, Lerato projected the good, wise, understanding part of her self-representation on her children, especially on her eldest child.

○ **Representations of her first and second child**

The third part of the motherhood constellation consists of her discourse with her baby. As was shown in the reflections, Lerato stated openly that she did not want to have her children, apart from the fact that with both her first and her second child she seriously considered aborting the baby. The fact that Lerato's second baby resembled the baby's father, added to her negativity towards this baby. She wanted to leave this baby at the hospital with the nurses.

She hated the father of her second child and said "I would kill him". Her anger towards her children was evident in the severe punishment she gave them, the abuse that her brother described, the three attempts to suffocate her baby and the fact that she verbalised her hate towards her second baby. She vaguely remembered that the first time she tried to suffocate this baby, she was angry at the baby's father. It is quite possible that she projected that anger on her child. She mostly referred to her second child as "it". She expected from both her children to change her and to make life better for her, placing unrealistic expectations and hope on them. They were set up to fail her. Her second child was almost her last hope to change everything and the child was failing her. It is possible that she projected the split-off aspects of her own self-

representation on her child in the sense that her child became the symbol of her own failures. Thus killing her was also a way of trying to get rid of her own failures.

Primary relatedness refers to a mother's ability to engage with her baby in an emotional authentic manner (Stern, 1995). It is closely linked with her reflective function, which entails her ability to identify with her infant and contain difficult feelings that the baby provokes in her, as well as her ability to respond appropriately to her baby's needs (Murray, 1991). In chapter 2 the effect of depression on primary relatedness and the mother's reflective function was discussed. It is clear that Lerato's depression impinged seriously on her ability to be in tune with her children. She said she was bored and on more than one occasion that the baby was "just there". She did not respond to her children's emotional needs. As in her relationship with both her parents, but especially her mother, there was no connectedness.

Research has shown that a lack of support is one of the causes of postnatal depression. It goes without saying that a lack of support for a woman who is depressed when she falls pregnant and then has a baby, is detrimental. Her mother was not there for her in a maternal role and only helped her the first day after her first pregnancy. This lack of support is evident throughout her whole life, but seems to be worse after having her second child. When someone is depressed, they feel isolated from everyone else and it often plays a role in distancing themselves from other people. Thus Lerato failed in creating and permitting the necessary support system. The fact that Lerato's relationships deteriorated after the birth of her second child, points in this direction. This could have contributed to her turning to other people to meet her needs, to make

her life better, resulting in having unrealistic expectations of the fathers of her two children and the children themselves.

Both Lerato's mother and Lerato did not respond to their children's needs, especially not their emotional needs. On the contrary, the reverse was true. In this family a child was there to fulfil a mother's needs. Lerato was a parentified child who became a pleaser. She helped her mother with housekeeping tasks and caring for her baby sister. She felt responsible to help her parents with their marital problems and to rectify what was wrong in her family. The children were also expected to look for their father when he was drunk and did not come home. As was discussed in the reflections, Lerato felt she could not have a family of her own before she could help her family. Stern (1995) states that a new mother must give up these fantasies about repairing, redoing or correcting her childhood. In a family where so much responsibility was placed on a child, this is very difficult to do. Lerato on the other hand, expected from both her children to make her life better, to save her from misery, to make her happy, to help her make decisions and also to rectify what was wrong.

Living in a world of violence and growing up with anger impacted on her. Frustration and anger also built up in Lerato. She hated her parents. Lerato's way of dealing with her anger was to deny and suppress it. Only later on did she vent it. Even though she denied being angry with him, her anger erupted for the first time with the father of her first child. She openly stated that she "tortured" him and was verbally and physically abusive to him.

Her anger also turned against herself. She was angry that she was not the kind of mother she hoped to be and that she became more like her own parents. She saw her anger (and her pain) as the reason for making the wrong decisions all the time.

Thus, Lerato constantly was the recipient of her mother's anger, at times of the anger of her father, of the father of her second child and of that of her colleagues. Her anger on the other hand, was directed at her mother, her father, the fathers of her two children, her two children and herself. Apart from venting her anger towards her first child's father, she vented her anger towards both her children, but particularly her youngest baby. She admitted beating both the children and her brother reported her at the police for slapping her youngest baby through the face. The first time she tried to suffocate her baby, the baby was three months old and her eldest twelve months. She left them both alone at home and left for work. In the end, when her youngest was seven months, she died after Lerato suffocated her. Lerato failed in the most basic task of the life-growth theme, namely to maintain the life and growth of her baby.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

Chapter five contained the research results and interpretations. To enhance accountability, a reflexive analysis was given where the influence of researcher's life experience on the research was acknowledged. Thereafter information gathered during the semi-structured interviews, participant observation and documents were analysed and discussed. Finally the chapter concluded with a discussion which attempted to integrate the results and interpretations.

In chapter 6 conclusions will be drawn from the literature and research results. The limitations and strengths of the study will be discussed. Recommendations regarding future work and research will also be made.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter conclusions concerning depression and maternal depression will be drawn from the case study presented in the previous chapter, as well as from the literature reviewed for the purposes of this study. The aim of the study was to give an in-depth understanding of the representations of a depressed woman who killed her baby. The representations were based on “The motherhood constellation” by Stern (1995) and focused on the woman’s representation of her mother as mother-of-herself-as-child, herself-as-mother and her representations of her children. A critical evaluation of the study will be given and finally recommendations will be made for further work and research in this area.

#### 6.2 Conclusions

The conclusions which this study brings to the fore are not all new. However, they underline the importance that should be attached to such known factors in pregnancy and parenthood. From this study the following conclusions can be made:

##### 6.2.1 Conclusions regarding the impact of depression on the motherhood constellation

Depression impacts seriously and negatively on the woman’s representation of herself-as-mother. However, not enough attention is paid to this issue. As was pointed out, the symptoms of depression, pregnancy and the postpartum period (such as fatigue, sleep disturbances and changes in appetite) show similarities. Therefore depression can easily be overlooked by women and health practitioners.



The impact of depression on the woman's representation of herself is greater when the pregnancy is unplanned or unwanted. The themes of unplanned and unwanted pregnancies which run so strongly through this study, raise a red flag about the attention that any woman in the situation of an unplanned and/or unwanted pregnancy should receive. If a baby is unplanned or unwanted, a pathogenic representation of herself-as-mother or/and her baby might form. This does not imply that the representations of wanted babies are in all cases healthy, but the risks in case of unwanted and unplanned babies are greater.

A woman's discourse with her own mother, especially as mother-to-her-as-child, is another important factor in determining the impact of depression on the mother's representation of herself. In this extreme case where Lerato herself received destructive mothering, it influenced her own representation of herself as mother. This need not be the case if the woman's reflective capacity is competent to re-work it sufficiently, so that it does not impact on her representation of herself. What is not clear is the impact of depression on a person's capacity to reflect. The researcher is of the opinion that depression can impinge on this capacity to reflect. On the other hand, it is also possible that depression is a warning signal that maternal representations are not healthy. The interplay between these two aspects makes it impossible to say what comes first. Further research could cast light on this interplay.

If the woman's representation of her mother as mother-of-herself-as-child is pathogenic, it might influence her representation of herself-as-mother negatively. As the literature shows, pregnancy leads to a reorganizing of the self-identity, which means a modification of the self-representation to resemble the shape of the object

representation. Thus, in pregnancy the representation of self-as-a-mother might echo the representation of a woman's mother as mother-of-herself-as-child. Therefore, it can be concluded that if the woman experienced destructive mothering when she was a child, the impact is likely to be that her child will receive destructive mothering, as is borne out by this study.

Depression during pregnancy could be a warning signal that unrealistic expectations are being placed upon the pregnancy and/or the baby to better the life of the mother, or that pathogenic representations are present or developing. Further research is necessary to investigate this issue.

Perhaps the literature concentrates so much on the concept of postnatal depression that very little attention is paid to people who are already depressed before they fall pregnant. It seems as if the depression gets deeper during pregnancy. It stands to reason, since a depressed woman can already not cope with what is on her plate. The baby is then seen as an additional burden, as was demonstrated in this study.

As was reasoned in the discussion (chapter 5), depression can lead to a paranoid-schizoid state of mind where splitting is used as a defence mechanism and the ability to integrate is lost. Through the process of projection, parts which a person with depression cannot identify with are projected onto another. This can lead to a mother losing her positive self-representations. It is also possible, as Fonagy (2001) pointed out, that unwanted parts of the self-representation are added to their representations of the other, and that the parent can project the negative parts onto a baby, as had happened in this study.

Perfectionism and depression together have been shown in this study to be a fatal combination – to both mother and baby. The risk of feeling a failure as a mother is greater when depression decreases the quality of maternal care. Perfectionism and depression in combination lead to an even greater gap between the ego ideal of mothering and the representations of the self-as-mother, and possibly also a greater gap between the phantasized baby and the real baby.

### **6.2.2 General conclusions**

The past history of the mother profoundly affects her mothering of her new baby.

“The ghosts, we know, represent the repetition of the past in the present” (Fraiberg et al., 1980, p. 166). This was clearly illustrated in this study. Fortunately the literature stresses that history is not destiny. Parenthood can also become a time of renewal.

The ghosts can be chased out of the nursery by helping the mother to see the repetition of the past in the present. The affective link, recognising and remembering the feelings, helps a parent not to repeat the past in the present - “...it is the parent who cannot remember his childhood feelings of pain and anxiety who will need to inflict his pain upon his child” (Fraiberg, Adelson & Shapiro, 1980, p. 182).

All the literature agrees that primary relatedness is a basic necessity for effective mothering. This study has shown how depression impinges seriously on the ability to be in tune with a baby and how it can lead to no connectedness and even to infanticide.

A lack of support is one of the causes of postnatal depression. When a woman is depressed, she does not permit and/or create the much needed support system, which in turn makes the depression worse.

This study also shows that where good-enough mothering has not been experienced, especially in a context of deprivation, the perception can be formed that care should be given by young children to their parents and that parental responsibility is to be carried by the child. In this particular study, high and even unrealistic expectations were placed on children – both on the interviewee as a child and subsequently by her on her children. This led to the interviewee not having had the freedom to be a child, having had too much responsibility, inevitably failing her mother, and later on her own children failing her.

The demanding needs of a baby can cause many frustrations and possible anger. When pregnancy and depression occur in a context of cultural and personal violence and anger, the new baby is particularly at risk.

### **6.3 Critical evaluation of the study**

Yin (2003) suggests that a case study can be evaluated by applying five criteria, namely that such a study has to be significant, complete, consider alternative perspectives, display sufficient evidence and has to be composed in an engaging manner. This researcher uses the criteria proposed by Yin (2003) for a critical evaluation of this study.

- The criterium that the case study has to be significant refers to the fact that it must be unusual and of general public interest. Underlying issues must be of international interest either in theoretical or practical terms, or it must be revelatory in the sense that it reflects some real-life situation that had not been studied in the past. This case is unusual in the sense that it is an extreme case involving the death

of a child by the hand of its own mother. To the researcher's knowledge, no study concerning the maternal representations of a mother in a case of infanticide has been published. The impact of depression on the maternal role is of public interest.

- The case study has to be complete. Yin (2003) states that it is extremely difficult to describe this criterium operationally. In a complete case, the boundaries of the case are given explicit attention. A weakness of this study is that the boundaries of this case were partly determined by time. As was pointed out in the chapter on methodology, saturation point was not reached because of time limits set by the judicial system and thus only seven interviews could initially be arranged (an eighth interview was later arranged and used as a member check). Another limitation was the fact that the effect of the participant's HIV-status on her depression could not be checked with her.

A second way of defining completeness involves the collection of evidence. This researcher is satisfied that the relevant evidence was collected in the interviews, and supporting material was collected from other sources.

- The third criterium regards the considering of alternative perspectives. The purpose of the study included putting this specific theoretical framework to the test to see if it is a useful way to understand the raw material. The study does not imply that there are no other possibilities of ordering the facts, only that this specific framework is useful and clarifying. The fact that two independent investigators confirmed the themes in the interviewee's relationships to her mother, supports the confidence in the view held by the researcher.

- The case study has to display sufficient evidence. The researcher attempted to give the most relevant evidence so that the reader can reach an independent judgement regarding the merits of the analyses. However, the researcher realizes that other judgements are possible. Strict adherence to qualitative research methodology is the best safeguard in preventing prejudiced selection of material.
- The fifth criterion refers to the fact that the case study has to be composed in an engaging manner. This case study is in itself engaging, as it is a true story with extreme situations that are quite intriguing.

#### **6.4 Recommendations and future research**

From the literature review and this particular study, South Africans will benefit from the following recommendations:

- This study illustrates the tragedy of the lack of prevention. In our country we have limited resources. Apart from the fact that prevention is better than cure, it also is more cost effective. The integration of psychological services into primary health care at all levels of our health care systems is necessary. Although it is set as a norm for government policy (The Primary Health Care Package for South Africa, 2004), not much of this has been happening in practice.
- Training for mothers, especially in disadvantaged communities, to provide support and help to mothers of new infants, as in the Thula Sana Project in Khayelitsha, can provide a supporting matrix that is both economic and practically viable. Consideration could be given to start training during pregnancy.

- A concerted effort to increase psycho-education, aiming at the prevention of mental health problems and development of human potential (Roos, Taljaard & Lombard, 2001), is needed on all levels of society. Especially pregnant women and their health care workers should be involved. Programmes on television to educate young mothers (as in Canada) could be very useful in this regard.
- Much greater vigilance regarding the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of depression during pregnancy is necessary. Particular attention should be paid to the symptoms which mimic those of depression at other times and which are similar to difficulties experienced during pregnancy and early parenthood, like disturbance of sleep, appetite change and fatigue. The short form of the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) is a very useful tool that can be used in this regard. It should be routinely applied. Health practitioners should specifically enquire about a history of depression or an existing depression.
- In cases where a baby is unplanned and the woman decided against terminating the pregnancy, such women should receive special attention. The method of representations as used in this study could be very useful in structuring such special attention intervention.
- Special attention should be paid to screen for risk factors as regards ante- and postnatal depression, such as previous termination of pregnancy, bereavement during pregnancy or other current loss, and a personal and family history of depression.

- Perfectionism in combination with depression during or after pregnancy should be recognised as another red flag signifying a risk, indicating that special care should be given.
- Positive ways of handling anger should be part of every person's education and abilities. In a country like South Africa, where so many people live in a cultural or personal milieu of violence and anger, this issue should be addressed in school programmes.
- Greater provision of support and counselling services should be given in the antenatal period in order to improve maternal and child health outcomes.
- Intervention programmes should be given *during* pregnancy, as the mother's defence mechanisms are then less rigid than at any other time of her life cycle.
- Programmes that promote the *emotional well being* of pregnant women and that would enhance the *relationship* between mother and child are necessary, as both mother and baby will benefit. At present ante-natal classes focus on preparation for birth and practical issues such as physical care of the baby (which the researcher fully supports), but not enough attention is given to what the emotional care of a baby entails or to the prevention of relationship problems between mother and child.
- Mental health programmes and/or psychotherapy for mother-infant couples are necessary to reduce the impact of depression on the parent-infant relationship.



- Stern (1995) mentions the possibility of a three or four-year training course, specialising in infant mental health. One could perhaps think of a BPsych. course, with infant mental health as specialisation. The researcher would like to see interventions starting during pregnancy.
- The area of battered babies can be studied by making use of the theoretical approach of parental representations.
- The interviewee was hospitalised for two weeks in a psychiatric clinic during the fifth month of her pregnancy. Yet, she murdered that baby less than a year after her hospitalisation. It confronts us, as psychologists and mental health workers, with the question where our responsibility ends. With pregnant women not only the mother is involved, but also her child. Perhaps we should consider doing some kind of follow-up in such cases.

## **6.5 Concluding remarks**

The aim of this study was to give an in-depth understanding of the maternal representations of a depressed woman who killed her baby. The researcher used an extreme case to illustrate the link between depression and pathogenic maternal representations and the necessity of early intervention to prevent heartbreaking stories of mothers and children, such as this case was an illustration of. The concept of maternal representations is the only approach that opens the possibility to start working at the earliest point of prevention, because intervention can start even during pregnancy. Other approaches can only start after the birth of the baby. Intervention during pregnancy is the ideal, because defence mechanisms are less rigid during pregnancy and women are more in touch with their entire life cycle, as was discussed in chapter 3. Brazelton (in Stern, 1995) stresses that it is ideal to intervene at “touch points”, his term for the start of a new developmental phase, because the individual and the whole system is more open to change. If there is a “relationship problem” between a mother and her unborn baby, intervention during pregnancy could be beneficial to both.

## REFERENCES

Acquarone, S. (1995). Mother-infant psychotherapy. Psychoanalytic thinking applied to parents and infants in distress. In *Congress on infant mental health. 11-13 January 1995. Proceedings*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Alvarez, A. (1992). *Live company. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy with autistic, borderline, abused children*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.

APA. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. DSM-IV*. Fourth edition. Washington: American Psychiatric Association.

Babbie, E., Mouton, J. M.; Payze, C., Vorster, J., Boshoff, N. & Prozesky, H. (2001). *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Balbernie, R. (2001). Circuits and circumstances: the neurobiological consequences of early relationship experiences and how they shape later behaviour. *Journal of Child psychotherapy* 27(3), 237-255.

Barker, C., Pistrang, N. & Elliott, R. (1996). *Research methods in clinical and counselling psychology*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Barrio, L.M. & Burt, V.K. (2000). Depression in pregnancy: strategies for primary care management. Dealing with an under diagnosed and under treated problem. In

*Women's health in primary care*, 3(7). Accessed from

<http://www.womenshealthpc.com> on 25/01/2003.

Barrows, P. (1997). Parent-infant psychotherapy: a review article. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 23(2), 255-264.

Bellak, L. & Faithorn, P. (1994). *Crises and special problems in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy*. Jason Aronson, London.

Berthiaume, M., David, H., Saucier, J-F. & Borgeat, F. (1998). Correlates of prepartum depressive symptomatology: a multivariate analysis. In *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, Vol 16, 45-56.

Bick, E. (1988). Child analysis today. In E. Bott Spillius (Ed.), *Melanie Klein today: development in theory and practice* (pp. 168-176). London: Routledge.

Bion, W.R. (1988). A theory of thinking. In E. Bott Spillius (Ed.), *Melanie Klein today: development in theory and practice* (pp. 178-188). London: Routledge.

Biringen, Z., Matheny, A., Bretherton, I., Renouf, A. & Sherman, M. (2000).

Maternal representation of the self as parent: connections with maternal sensitivity and maternal structuring. *Attachment and Human Development*, 2, 218-232.

Birksted-Breen, D. (2001). The experience of having a baby: a developmental view. In J. Raphael-Leff (Ed.), *'Spilt milk.'* *Perinatal loss and breakdown* (pp. 17-27). Institute of Psychoanalysis, London.

Blatt, S.J. & Ford, R.Q. (1994). *Therapeutic change. An object relations perspective.* New York: Plenum Press.

Blum, B.L. (1980). *Psychological aspects of pregnancy, birthing and bonding.* New York: Human Science Press.

Boath, E. & Henshaw, C. (2001). The treatment of postnatal depression: a comprehensive literature review. In *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 19(3), 215-246.

Boath, E.H., Pryce, A.J. & Cox, J.L. (1998). Postnatal depression: the impact on the family. In *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 16, 199-203.

Bochner, A.P. (1997). It's about time: narrative and the divided self. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(4), 413-438.

Boyce, P. (2002). Edited highlights: a brief intervention for postnatal depression. *1st South African conference on postnatal depression - depression and childbirth in the South African Context. 5-7 April 2002*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Bradbury, H. & Reason P. (2001). Conclusion: broadening the bandwidth of validity: issues and choice-points for improving the quality of action research. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury, (Eds.), *Handbook of action research* (pp. 447-455). London: Sage Publications.

Bradley, E. (2001). Pregnancy and the internal world. In J. Raphael-Leff, '*Spilt milk*' *perinatal loss and breakdown* (pp. 28-38). London: The Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Brazelton, T.B. & Cramer, B.G. (1990). *The earliest relationship. Parents, infants, and the drama of early attachment*. Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc.

Britten, N. (2000). Qualitative interviews in health research. In C. Pope & N. Mays (Eds.), *Qualitative research in health care. Second edition* (pp. 11-19). London: BMJ Books.

Britton, R. (1992). The Oedipus situation and the depressive position. In R. Anderson (Ed.), *Clinical lectures on Klein and Bion* (pp. 34-45). London: Routledge.

Brook, D.W., Gordon, C. & Meadow, H. (1998). Ethnicity, culture and group psychotherapy. *Group*, 22(2), 53-80.

Burman, E. (1994). Interviewing. In P. Banister (Ed.), *Qualitative methods in psychology: a research guide* (pp. 49-71). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Campbell, S.B. & Cohn, J.F. (1997). The timing and chronicity of postpartum depression: implications for infant development. In L. Murray & P.J. Cooper (Eds.), *Postpartum depression and child development* (pp. 165-197). New York: The Guildford Press.

Celani, D.P. (1993). *The treatment of the borderline patient: applying Fairbairn's Object Relations Theory in the clinical setting*. Madison: International University Press Inc.

Chamberlain, D.B. (1987). The cognitive newborn: a scientific update. *British journal of psychotherapy*, 4(1), 30-73.

Chodorow, N. (2000). The psychodynamics of the family. In S. Saguro (Ed.), *Psychoanalysis and woman. A reader* (pp. 108-202). London: MacMillan Press.

Clulow, C. (1996). Introduction. In C. Clulow (Ed.) *Partners becoming parents* (pp. 1-14). London: Sheldon Press.

Cohen, L.J. & Slade, A. (2000). The psychology and psychopathology of pregnancy: reorganization and transformation. In C. Zeanah (Ed.), *Handbook of infant mental health* (pp. 20-36). New York/London: Guildford Press.

Colman, A.D. & Colman, L.L. (1971). *Pregnancy: the psychological experience*. New York: Seabury Press.

Cook, J.A. & Fonow, M.M. (1986). Knowledge and women's interests: issues of epistemology and methodology in feminist sociological research. *Social inquiry*, 56, 2-29.

Cooper, P.J. (2002). Personal communication at the *Congress on infant mental health. Infants in changing cultures*. 3-5 April 2002, Cape Town.

Cooper, P.J. & Murray, L. (1995a). The impact of postnatal depression on infant development: a treatment trial. In *Congress on infant mental health. 11-13 January 1995. Proceedings*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Cooper, P.J. & Murray, L. (1995b). Course and recurrence of postnatal depression. Evidence for the specificity of the diagnostic concept. *British journal of psychiatry*, 166, 191-195.

Cooper, P.J., Tomlinson, M., Swartz, L., Woolgar, M., Murray, L. & Molteno, C. (1999). Post-partum depression and the mother-infant relationship in a South African peri-urban settlement. *British journal of psychiatry*, 175, 554-558.

Copley, B. (2000). Family explorations. In M. Rustin & E. Quagliata, *Assessment in child psychotherapy* (pp. 120-144). London: Duckworth.

Cox, J.L. (1986). *Postnatal depression. A guide for health professionals*. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone.



Crowell, J.A. & Feldman S.S. (1989). Assessment of mother's working models of relationships: some clinical implication. *Infant Mental Health Journal* 10(3), 173-184.

Dalton, K. & Holton, W.M. (1996). *Depression after childbirth. How to recognise, treat, and prevent postnatal depression*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Vos, A.S. (1998). Introduction to the research process. In A.S. De Vos, (Ed.), *Research at grassroots. A primer for the caring professions* (pp. 40-51). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Daniel, P. (1992). Child analysis and the concept of unconscious phantasy. In R. Anderson, *Clinical lectures on Klein and Bion* (pp. 14-23). London: Routledge.

Diamond, D. & Blatt, S.J. (1994). Internal working models and the representational world in attachment and psychoanalytic theories. In M.B. Sperling & W.H. Berman (Eds.), *Attachment in adults. Clinical and developmental perspectives* (pp. 72-81). New York: Guildford Press.

Drummond, A. (1996) *Research methods for therapists*. London: Chapman & Hall.

Dunnewold, A.L. (1997). *Evaluation and treatment of postpartum emotional disorders*. Sarasota: Professional Resource Press.

Durkin, S., Morse, C. & Buist, A. (2001). The factor structure of prenatal; psychological and psychosocial functioning in first time expectant parents. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 19(2), 121-134.

Edhborg, M., Lundh, W., Seimyr, L. & Widström, A.-M. (2001). The long-term impact of postnatal depressed mood on mother-child interaction: a preliminary study. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 19(1), 61-71.

Edhborg, M., Seimyr, L., Lundh, W. & Widström, A.-M. (2000). Fussy child - difficult parenthood? Comparisons between families with a 'depressed' mother and non-depressed mother 2 months postpartum. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 18(3), 225-238.

Emanuel, L. (1999). The effects of post-natal depression on a child. In *Psychoanalytic psychotherapy in South Africa* 7(1), 50-67.

Emanuel, L. (2002). The impact of domestic violence on infants and small children. *Congress of Infant Mental Health. 3-5 April 2002*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Flick, U. (1999). *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.

Fonagy, P. (1999). *Transgenerational consistencies of attachment: a new theory*. Paper to the Developmental and Psychoanalytic Discussion Group, American

Psychoanalytic Association Meeting, Washington DC, 13 May 1999. Accessed from <http://www.psychematters.com/papers/fonagy2.htm> on 10 January 2003.

Fonagy, P. (2001). *Attachment theory and psychoanalysis*. New York: Other Press.

Fonagy, P., Steele, H. & Steele, M. (1991). Maternal representations of attachment during pregnancy predict the organization of infant-mother attachment at one year of age. *Child Development*, 62, 891-905.

Fonagy, P., Steele, M., Steele, H., Moran, G. S. & Higgitt, A.C. (1991). The capacity for understanding mental states: the reflective self in parent and child and its significance for security of attachment. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 12(3), 201-218.

Fonagy, P., Steele, M., Steele, H., Moran, G. S. & Higgitt, A.C. (1993). Measuring the ghosts in the nursery: an empirical study of the relation between the parents' mental representations of childhood experiences and security of attachment. *Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association*, 41, 957-989.

Fraiberg, S., Adelson, E. & Shapiro, V. (1980). Ghosts in the nursery: a psychoanalytic approach to the problems of impaired infant-mother relationships. In S.H. Fraiberg (Ed.), *Clinical studies in infant mental health. The first year of life* (pp. 164-196). London: Tavistock.

Framo, J.L. (1992) *Family-of-origin therapy: an intergenerational approach*. New York: Brunner/Mazel Inc.

Freud, S. (1971a). Instincts and their vicissitudes. In J. Strachey (Ed.), *The standard edition of the complete works of Sigmund Freud. Vol XIV (1914-1916). On the history of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works* (pp. 109-140). London: Hogart Press.

Freud, S. (1971b). The unconscious. In J. Strachey (Ed.), *The standard edition of the complete works of Sigmund Freud. Vol XIV (1914-1916). On the history of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works* (pp. 159-216). London: Hogart Press.

Gaventa, J. & Cornwall, A. (2001). Power and knowledge. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury, (Eds.), *Handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice* (pp. 70-90). London: Sage Publications.

Gibson, K., Swartz, L. & Sandenbergh, R. (2002). *Counselling and coping*. Cape Town: Oxford University press.

Glover, V. (2002). Long-term effects of antenatal maternal anxiety on the child. *1st South African conference on postnatal depression - depression and childbirth in the South African Context. 5-7 April 2002, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.*

Glover, V. & O'Connor, T.G. (in press). *The effects of antenatal stress and anxiety: implications for development and psychiatry.*

Gomez, L. (1998). *An introduction to Object Relations*. London: Free associations Books.

Green, J.M. (1998). Postnatal depression or perinatal disphoria? Findings from a longitudinal community-based study using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, (16), 143-155.

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. New York: Sage Publications.

Haft, W.L. & Slade, A. (1989). Affect attunement and maternal attachment: a pilot study. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 10(3), 157-172.

Hardie, D. (1999). The transition from late adolescence to young adulthood: student life. In Hindle, D. & Smith, M.V., *Personality development: a psychoanalytic perspective* (pp. 158-173). London: Routledge.

Hay, D.F. (1997). Postpartum depression and cognitive development. In L. Murray & P.J. Cooper (Eds.), *Postpartum depression and child development* (pp. 85-110). New York: The Guildford Press.

Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W. & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Hinshelwood, R.D. (1989). *A dictionary of Kleinian thought*. (Second edition).

London: Free Association Books.

Ivey, G. (1990). *An introduction to object relations theory*. Durban (University of Natal): Unpublished paper.

Jacobson, M. (1965). *The self and the object world*. London: Hogart Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Jacobson, E. (1971). *Depression*. New York: International universities.

Johns, M. (1996). Why are three-person relationships difficult? In C. Clulow (Ed.), *Partners becoming parents* (pp. 44-54). London: Sheldon Press.

Kaplan, H.I. & Sadock, B.J. (1991). *Synopsis of psychiatry. Behavioural Sciences. Clinical psychiatry*. Sixth Edition. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins.

Keen, J. & Packwood, T. (1997). Case study evaluation. In: C. Pope & N. Mays (Eds.), *Qualitative research in health care* (pp. 59-67). London: BMJ Publishing Group.

Klee, T. (2002) *Object relations theory*. Accessed from <http://www.objectrelations.org/overview.htm> on 11 October 2002.

Klein, M. (1997a). Some theoretical conclusions regarding the emotional life of the infant. In *Envy and gratitude and other works 1946-1963* (pp. 61-93). London: Vintage.

Klein, M. (1997b). Our adult world and its roots in infancy. In *Envy and gratitude and other works 1946-1963* (pp. 247-263). London: Vintage.

Klein, M. (1997c). On observing the behaviour of young infants. In *Envy and gratitude and other works 1946-1963* (pp. 94-121). London: Vintage.

Klein, M. (1997d). On identification. In *Envy and gratitude and other works 1946-1963* (pp. 141-175). London: Vintage.

Landman, M. (1995). Adapting the 'healthy start' model in South Africa. In *Congress on infant mental health. 11-13 January 1995. Proceedings*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

LaRossa, R. (1977). *Conflict and power in marriage. Expecting the first child*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Leach, P. (1996). Who comes first - partner or child? In C. Clulow (Ed.), *Partners becoming parents* (pp. 32-43). London: Sheldon Press

Lederman, R.P. (1996). *Psychosocial adaptation in pregnancy. Assessment of seven dimensions of maternal development* (Second edition). New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Leifer, M. (1980). *Psychological effects of motherhood*. New York: Praeger Publications.

Levin, M. & Greenwood, D. (2001). Pragmatic action research and the struggle to transform universities into learning communities. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury, (Eds.), *Handbook of action research* (pp. 103-113). London: Sage Publications.

Levitt, M.J., Coffman, S., Guacci-Franco, N. & Loveless, S.C. (1994). Attachment relationships and life transitions: an expectancy model. In M.B. Sperling & W.H. Berman (Ed.) *Attachment in Adults. Clinical and developmental perspectives* (pp. 232-255). New York: Guildford Press.

Lieberman, A.F., Silverman, R. & Pawl, J.H. (2000). Infant-parent psychotherapy. In C.H. Zeanah Jr. (Ed.), *Handbook of infant mental health* (pp. 472-484). New York: Guildford Press.

Likierman M. (2001). *Melanie Klein: her work in context*. London: Continuum.

Lucas, R. (2001). Puerperal psychosis: vulnerability and aftermath. In J. Raphael-Leff (Ed.) *'Spilt milk' perinatal loss and breakdown* (pp. 82-97). London: Institute of Psychoanalysis.



Lyons-Ruth, K. & Zeanah, C.H., Jr. (1993). The family context of infant mental health: 1. Affective development in the primary care giving relationship. In C.H. Zeanah, Jr. (Ed.), *Handbook of infant mental health* (pp. 14-37). New York: Guildford Press.

Mauthner, N.S. (1998). Re-assessing the importance and role of the marital relationship in postnatal depression: methodological and theoretical implications. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 16, 157-175.

Mays, N. & Pope, C. (2000). Quality in qualitative health research. In C. Pope & N. Mays (Eds.), *Qualitative research in health care. Second edition* (pp. 89-101). London: BMJ Books.

McGrath, E., Keita, G.P., Strickland, B.R. & Russo, N.F. (Eds.). (1993). *Women and depression. Risk factors and treatment issues*. Washington: APA.

Meissner, W.W. (1991). *What is effective in psychoanalytic therapy. The move from interpretation to relation*. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications education*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *An expanded sourcebook. Qualitative data analysis. Second edition*. Thousand Oakes: Sage Publications.

Milgrom, J., Martin, P.R. & Negri, L.M. (1999). *Treating postnatal depression. A psychological approach for health practitioners*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Miller, L. (1999). Babyhood: becoming a person in the family. In D. Hindle & M.V. Smith (Eds.), *Personality development: a psychoanalytic perspective* (pp. 33-47). London: Routledge.

Misri, S. (2001). *Depression during pregnancy*. Accessed from <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle> on 25/01/2003.

Möhler, E, Resch, F., Cierpka A. & Cierpka, M. (2001). The early appearance and intergenerational transmission of maternal traumatic experiences in the context of mother-infant interaction. *Journal of child psychotherapy* 27(3), 257-271.

Murray, L. (1991). Intersubjectivity, object relations theory, and empirical evidence from mother-infant reactions. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 12(3), 219-231.

Murray, L. (1995). A prospective longitudinal study of the impact of postnatal depression on child development in the first five years. In *Congress on infant mental health. 11-13 January 1995. Proceedings*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Murray, L. (1999). The role of infant factors in maternal depression. *The international journal of infant observation*, 3(1), 63-73.

Murray, L. (2002). A longitudinal UK study on the effects of post-natal depression on child development. *Congress on infant mental health. Infants in changing cultures.* 3-5 April, 2002, Cape Town.

Murray, L. & Cooper, P.J. (1997). The role of infant and maternal factors in postpartum depression, mother-infant interactions, and infant outcomes. In L. Murray & P.J. Cooper (Eds.), *Postpartum depression and child development* (pp. 111-135). New York: Guildford Press.

Neuman, W.L. (2000). *Social research methods. Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Fourth edition.* Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.

Nicholson, P. (2001). *Postnatal depression. Facing the paradox of loss, happiness and motherhood.* Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

O'Connor, R. (1997). *Undoing depression. What therapy doesn't teach you and medication can't give you.* New York: Berkley Books.

O'Connor, T.G., Heron, J., Golding, J., Beveridge, M., Glover, V. & the ALSPAC Study Team. (in press). *Maternal anxiety and children's behavioural/emotional problems at 4 years.*

Odendaal, V. (2003). *Identifisering van 'n hoë-risiko kliënt vir depressie met aanvang in die postpartumperiode.* Johannesburg: M. Cur.-verhandeling, R.A.U.

O'Hara, M.W. (1995). Childbearing. In M.W. O'Hara, R.C. Reiter, S.R. Johnson, A. Milburn & J. Engeldiner (Eds.), *Psychological aspects of women's reproductive health* (pp. 3-25). New York: Springer Publishing Company.

Ogden, T.H. (1992). Misrecognitions and the fear of not knowing. In *The primitive edge of experience* (pp. 195-221). London: Maresfield.

O'Shaughnessy, E. (1988a). W.R. Bion's theory of thinking and new techniques in child analysis. In E. Bott Spillius (Ed.), *Melanie Klein today: developments in theory and practice, Volume 2* (pp. 177-190). London: Routledge.

O'Shaughnessy, E. (1988b). The invisible Oedipus complex. In E. Bott Spillius (Ed.), *Melanie Klein today: developments in theory and practice, Volume 2* (pp. 191-205). London: Routledge.

Papousek, H. & Papousek, M. (1997). Fragile aspects of early social integration. In L. Murray & P.J. Cooper (Eds.), *Postpartum depression and child development* (pp. 35-53). New York: Guildford Press.

Parker, I. (1994). Qualitative research. In P. Banister, (Ed.), *Qualitative methods in psychology: a research guide* (pp. 1-16). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Patel, V., Rahman, A., Jacob, K.S. & Hughes, M. (2004). Effect of maternal health on infant growth in low income countries: new evidence from South Asia. *BMJ Public*

*Health Journals* (328), 820-823. Accessed from

<http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/328/7443/820> on 20/08/2004.

Paul, C. & Thomson-Salo, F. (1997). Infant-led innovations in a mother-baby-therapy group. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, Vol 23(2), 219-244.

Phillips, S. (1991). *Beyond the myths. Mother-daughter relationships in psychology, history, literature and everyday life*. London: Penguin Books.

Pines, D. (1993). *A woman's unconscious use of her body. A psychoanalytic perspective*. London: Virago Press.

Piontelli, A. (2001). 'Is there something wrong?': the impact of technology in pregnancy. In J. Raphael-Leff (Ed.) *'Spilt milk' perinatal loss and breakdown* (pp.39-52). London: Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Poggenpoel, M. (1998). Data analysis in qualitative research. In A.S. De Vos, (Ed.), *Research at grassroots. A primer for the caring professions* (pp. 334-353). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Pope, C., Ziebland, S. & Mays, N. (2000). Analysing qualitative data. In C. Pope & N. Mays (Eds.), *Qualitative research in health care. Second edition* (pp. 75-88). London: BMJ Books.

Punch, K. (1998). *Introduction to social research. Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage Publications.

Raphael-Leff, J. (1996). Reproductive narratives of pregnancy and parenting. In C. Clulow, *Partners becoming parents* (pp. 66-85). London: Sheldon Press.

Raphael-Leff, J. (2001a). *Pregnancy. The inside story*. London: Karnac Books.

Raphael-Leff, J. (2001b). *Psychological processes of childbearing*. Revised edition. Great Britain: Biddles Ltd., Guildford and King's Lynn.

Raphael-Leff, J. (2001c). 'Climbing the walls': therapeutic intervention for post-partum disturbance. In J. Raphael-Leff (Ed.) *'Spilt milk' perinatal loss and breakdown* (pp 60-81). London: Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Reading, A. (1983). *Psychological aspects of pregnancy*. London: Longman.

Rees, C. (1995). The dialectic between holding and interpreting in Winnicott's psychotherapy. *Psycho-analytic Psychotherapy in South Africa*, 3, 13-30.

Richards, S. & Perri, M.G. (2002). *Depression. A primer for practitioners*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Roos, V., Taljaard, R & Lombard, A. (2001). *Developmental interventions: programme development*. Pretoria: Roos, Taljard & Lombard.

Rosenblum, K.L., McDonough, S., Muzik, M., Miller, A. & Sameroff, A. (2002).

Maternal representations of the infant: associations with infant response to still face.

*Child Development*, 73(4), 999-1015.

Roth, P. (1999). General introduction. In R. Riesenberg-Malcolm, *On bearing unbearable states of mind* (pp. 1-7). London: Routledge.

Scharff, D.E. & Birtles, E.F. (Eds.) (1994). *From instinct to self: selected papers of W.R.D. Fairbairn*. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson.

Scharff, D.E. & Birtles, E.F. (1997). From instinct to self: the evolution and implications of W.R.D. Fairbairn's theory of object relations. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 78, 1085-1103.

Scharff, D.E. & Scharff, J.S. (1991). *Object relations family therapy*. Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aronson.

Schurink, E.M. (1998a). Designing qualitative research. In A.S. De Vos, (Ed.), *Research at grassroots. A primer for the caring professions* (pp. 252-264). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Schurink, E.M. (1998b). The methodology of unstructured face-to-face interviewing. In A.S. De Vos, (Ed.), *Research at grassroots. A primer for the caring professions* (pp. 297-313). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Seedat, M., Kruger, P. & Bode, B. (2003). Analysis of records from an urban african psychological service: suggestions for mental health systems research. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 33(1), 44-51.

Segal, H. (1993). Foreword. In R. Anderson, *Clinical lectures on Klein and Bion* (pp. ix-x). London: Routledge.

Seglow, R. & Canham, H. (1999). Intra-uterine life and the experience of birth. In D. Hindle & M.V. Smith, *Personality development: a psychoanalytic perspective* (pp. 13-32). London: Routledge.

Seligman, S. (1991). Conceptual and methodological issues in the study of internal representation: a commentary on *Infant Mental Health Journal*, Volume 10.3. *Infant Mental Health Journal* 12(2), 126-130.

Siddiqui, A., Hägglöf, B. & Eisemann, M. (2000). Own memories of upbringing as a determinant of prenatal attachment in expectant women. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 18(1), 67-74.

Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research. A practical handbook*. London: Sage Publications.

Smaling, A. (1992). Objectivity, reliability and validity. In G.J.N. Bruinsma & M.A. Zwanenburg (Eds.), *Methodology for management specialists. Trends and methods* (pp. 302-322). Muiderberg: Dick Coutinho.



Smith, J.A. (1995). Semi-structured interviewing and qualitative analysis. In: J.A. Smith, R. Harré & L. Van Langenhove. (Eds.). *Rethinking methods in psychology* (pp. 9-27). London: Sage.

Smith, J.A. (1999). Identity development during transition to motherhood: an interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Journal of reproductive and infant psychology*, 17(3), 281-299.

Spangenberg, T. (1994). *Die verband tussen sosiale ondersteuning en depressie in die post partum periode*. Bloemfontein: M.A. Verhandeling, Universiteit van die Oranje Vrystaat.

Sperling, M.B. & Lyons, L.S. (1994). Representations of attachment and psychotherapeutic change. In M.B. Sperling & W.H. Berman (Eds.), *Attachment in adults. Clinical and developmental perspectives* (pp. 331-347). New York: Guildford Press.

Spinelli, M.D. (1997). Interpersonal psychotherapy for depressed antepartum women: a pilot study. In *American journal of psychiatry*, 154(7), 128-130.

St. Clair, M. (2000). *Object relations and self psychology. An introduction*. Third edition. Ontario: Wadsworth.

Stein, R. (1990). A new look at the theory of Melanie Klein. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 71, 499-511.

Stern, D.N. (1991). Maternal representations: a clinical and subjective phenomenological view. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 12(3), 175-186.

Stern, D.N. (1995). *The motherhood constellation. A unified view of parent-infant psychotherapy*. New York: BasicBooks.

Stern, D.N., Robert-Tissot, C., Besson, G., Rusconi-Serpa, D., De Muralt, M., Cramer, B. & Palacio-Espasa, F. (1989). L'entretien "R", une méthode d'évaluation des représentations maternelles. In S. Lebovski, P. Mazet & J.P. Visier (Eds.), *L'évaluation des interactions précoces entre le bébé et ses partenaires* (pp. 151-177). Eshel, Paris.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research. Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Stringer, E.T. (1996). *Action research. A handbook for practitioners*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Strydom, H. (1998). Ethical aspects of research in the caring professions. In A.S. De Vos, (Ed.), *Research at grassroots. A primer for the caring professions* (pp. 23-39). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Swartz, L. (2001). Everything must go: psychology, culture and identity in a changing South Africa. *Inaugural lecture presented at the University of Stellenbosch, 3 May, 2001*.

*The Primary Health Care Package of South Africa - a set of norms and standards.*

(2004). Accessed from <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/policy/norms/part1w.html> on 20-08-2004.

Timmermans, T. (2002). Depression following childbirth: postnatal depression. *The specialist forum*, 2(3), 47-52.

Tindall, C. (1994). Issues of evaluation. In P. Banister (Ed.), *Qualitative methods in psychology* (pp. 142-159). London: Sage Publishers.

Tracey, N. (2000). Thinking about and working with depressed mothers in the early months of their infant's life. *Journal of Child psychotherapy*, 26(2), 183-207.

Tracey, N., Blake, P., Warren, B., Hardy, H., Enfield, S. & Shein, P. (1995). A mother's narrative of a premature birth. *Journal of child psychotherapy*, 21(1), 43-64.

Tracey, N., Blake, P., Warren, B., Hardy, H., Enfield, S. & Shein, P. (1996). Will I be to my son as my father was to me? Narrative of a father with a premature baby. *Journal of child psychotherapy*, 22(2), 168-194.

Tronick, E.Z. & Weinberg, M.K. (1997). Depressed mothers and infants: failure to form dyadic states and consciousness. In L. Murray & P.J. Cooper (Eds.), *Postpartum depression and child development* (pp. 54-81). New York: Guilford Press.

Venter, C.A. (1993). *Graphic family sculpting*. Potchefstroom: Brochure, University of Potchefstroom.

Waddell, M. (1998). *Inside lives: psychoanalysis and the growth of the personality*. London: Duckworth.

Watanabe, H. (1995). The future for infants with relationship disorders: expanding the scope of early intervention. Retrieving a positive cultural and social context for infants. In *Congress on infant mental health. 11-13 January 1995. Proceedings*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Watts, J. (1999) Implications of the child's introjection of the mother's containment function. *Psycho-analytic Therapy in South Africa* 7(1), 68-82.

Wickberg, B. (1996). *Postnatal depression. Prevalence, identification and treatment*. Sweden: Doctoral dissertation, Göteborg University.

Wilkinson, S. (1988). The role of reflexivity in feminist psychology. *Women's studies international forum*, 11(5), 493-502.

Winnicott, D.W. (1958a). Primitive emotional development. In *Collected papers: through paediatrics to psycho-analysis*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Winnicott, D.W. (1958b). Aggression in relation to emotional development. In *Collected papers: through paediatrics to psycho-analysis*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Winnicott, D.W. (1965a). The theory of the parent-infant relationship. In *The maturational process and the facilitating environment*. London: Hogarth.

Winnicott, D.W. (1965b). Ego integration in child development. In *The maturational process and the facilitating environment*. London: Hogarth.

Winnicott, D.W. (1965c). Ego distortion in terms of true and false self. In *The maturational process and the facilitating environment*. London: Hogarth.

Wolkind, S. (1981). Fathers. In S. Wolkind, & E. Zajicek, *Pregnancy: a psychological and social study* (pp. 131-146). London: Academic Press.

Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case study research: design and methods. Third edition*. Thousand Oakes: Sage Publications.

Zajicek, E. (1981a). The experience of being pregnant. In S. Wolkind & E. Zajicek, *Pregnancy: a psychological and social study* (pp. 31-56). London: Academic Press.

Zajicek, E. (1981b). Psychiatric problems during pregnancy. In S. Wolkind & E. Zajicek, *Pregnancy: a psychological and social study* (pp. 57-88). London: Academic Press.

Zeanah, C.H. & Barton, M.L. (1989). Introduction: internal representations and parent-infant relationships. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 10(3), 135-141.

Zeanah, C.H. & Barton, M.L. (1991). Representing the internal world: response to Seligman. *Infant Mental Health Journal* 12(2), 130-133.

## APPENDIX A

### Interview 1

As I did not feel it was ethical to audiotape anything before I have explained what I am doing there, the following is not a verbatim of the first part of the session. I introduced myself and said that I have heard from her through my friend whom she had met and who is a colleague of her aunt and uncle. I said that I have informed consent from her lawyer, but that this research will not help her in any way with her court case. I would not be involved in that at all. I told her that I am doing research on postnatal depression and that I would like to learn about her experience of depression and of her mother as mother of herself as child, how she thinks her mother thought about her as a baby, as a child and later on when she herself was a mother. I would also like to learn about how she experienced herself as a mother, how she experienced her first child, her thoughts and feelings during pregnancy, the delivery and her child as a baby. I would also like to learn about her experience of these same things about her second child.

I told her that we would have seven interviews of about an hour and when it would take place. I explained that I will be making notes and that the interviews will be audio taped and then transcribed. I explained that all information would be confidential and anonymous. I am not going to talk to her lawyer or any one else about it and that the information will be published anonymously in my thesis. I explained that it could be emotional to talk about certain issues and that she is at liberty to withdraw anytime. I asked her if she wants to think about it and want to let me know. She said she is willing and we could carry on. She expected me as she was

told that I would be coming for research. I showed her the letter of informed consent, she sighed it and started talking about her depression. She said her depression started in 1994. She had headaches and didn't sleep well. She had a lot of pressure from her mother and father. She didn't know what was happening to her. It sometimes felt if she was losing her mind. I then realised that the tape is not on and I actually did not plan to start immediately. I asked her permission to put the tape on.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about yourself and your family. Where you grew up and how many children you were. Tell me just a little bit about yourself.

Interviewee: OK. Do you want to know about the depression?

Interviewer: No, in general. In this first interview I would just like to get to know you a little bit.

Interviewer: I grew up in Ottosdal in the same house with my great grandfather and great grandmother. My mother worked in Stilfontein. They were four daughters. My grandmother was not married. She was divorced. My three aunts looked after me.

When I was 5 we moved to Stilfontein. My mother was not working at the time.

Then we moved to Klerksdorp. We lived with my father's aunt, in her yard. In the back of the yard. () My mother, she was just a mother. I didn't have any problems with her.

I started school at 6. She would do anything for me. In sub B she taught me how to wash my shirts. () doing my schoolwork. (). The only problem I had with her was that she didn't want me to play with other kids.

She called me names.

I started being scared of her once when I lost a R2. She sent me to the shop. When I came back I told her I lost R2. She started beating me and chasing me with an



umbrella stick. She was just wearing a underrok. So, then I started looking at her in another way. The other thing is that she used to fight with my father a lot (silence). If my father comes late from work, she would fight with my father, they would fight. () My father did everything for us I didn't have issues with my father. (). My mother and father fight everyday.

Interviewer: Did they fight verbally or did they also sometimes fight physically?

Interviewee: Verbally and physically. (). We moved from one place to the other. (). We lived in the back yard of my mother's father. The only thing that I remembered that my mother was complaining about, is that I don't hear. (). So, (sigh) (silence) there was my uncle and my aunt, but from my stepmother's side, my mother's stepmother. My uncle and aunt (). My uncle, he was a dance teacher. () I was dancing, but I stopped. So we were dancing (). The dancing stopped. In 1987. We moved to (). The one day I lost a nice dress. My young brother, I think he took it and throw it in the dustbin. (). I told her the dress was not there. My mother hit me for losing the dress. My father (). We moved again. We were staying in a shack. My mother's grandmother on her father's side. We lived in their yard. So, we stayed there from 1987. (). In 1987 I did not have much problems with my mother. The only thing is I used to loved TV. () I would want to watch the TV, so (). I helped her with my other sister, my younger sister when she was small. She would leave me with her when she was going to town. I took care of my young sister, I didn't have any problems. I washed the napkins. ().

Interviewer: How old were you? What was the age difference?

Interviewee: I was 9.

Interviewer: Nine?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Are you the eldest child?

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer; And after you?

Interviewee: I had a younger brother

Interviewer: And then this sister?

Interviewee: Yes. (). My sister was born in 1988.

Interviewer: Do you have any other brothers and sisters?

Interviewee: Yes, I do. (). I started having problems with my mother (silence). So, I would help her do the things at home, all these things, I would cook. But sometimes she would push me to do it. I don't know () I cooked. I would always cook. () I don't know why () because she used to cook, she would cook for us, but then (). I don't know why she (). I helped her to cook, I would mash the potatoes, I would clean the house. (). I will clean the house. (). She used to cook, she used to do things for us. () So, one day she wanted to hit me with a shoe. () was on top of the table (). She was complaining that other girls, they are doing things for their mothers, but I don't want to do it. But I used to do, I used to help her with cooking. But I don't know, maybe she started to stress (touched her head, made a circular movement like showing someone is mad) because of the fighting with my father. I would help her do everything in the house. (). In 1989 we moved into a big house. The problems started when I was 11. You know, sometimes as a child, you want to do other things, I wanted to do other things, you know, rather than helping her do the things. But I would help her. But then I think that she was becoming lazy. She was becoming sick and sick. (). I think she started to become sick of stress. Because of my father. Because my mother used to do everything. You know, she would prepare things, (), she would clean things, she would (), she used to do everything. But now she was sick and complaining. I think

now she started to stress because they were fighting. I think my mother was becoming lazy, you know, she would sleep a lot. Sometimes when I come from school, she didn't clean the house. She was waiting for me to come and clean the house. When I come from school the dishes were still dirty. You know, that kind of thing. (). I was in high school I was 15 years old. She would give me stress. I wanted to do school work and other things. () I didn't want to have a family like that. I wanted to have a better family. I thought a lot about my future, because of the teachers at school. I was looking forward at a career. (). That was what I was thinking about that time. You know, nothing more. (). I was thinking about the way I want my body to look. All these things. I woke up in the morning. I wanted to do exercise and would watch TV in the morning to do exercise. I (). I used to look after myself.

Then (sigh) I started thinking too much. My mother was complaining a lot. She was becoming sick and sick. Sick and sick. She was becoming very tired. She was fighting a lot. () My life at that time (). I was concentrating (). So I didn't have much (). She was demanding a lot from me. I started dancing when I was 15. Sometimes she stopped me to go dancing, because I have to cook. I think she was tired, she was tired and very sick. I think she was stressing a lot. Because she was complaining, you understand. (Interruption). So, I started stressing myself, because now I couldn't do the things what I wanted to do. (). But I was not lazy to clean the house or do anything for her. It's just that I didn't see any reason why I should be cleaning the house, because she was at home and I was going to school (). So, I was thinking too much about my future and about myself. So, it was disturbing me.

Interviewer Of course.

Interviewee: (). And then she started becoming very angry. She was complaining to me. And I want to go dancing.

Interviewer: What kind of dancing did you do?

Interviewee: I did ballroom and Latin dancing. I was thinking about self () disturbing me ()

() stopped me from dancing. She was still fighting a lot with my father. My father will come late. Sometimes at 2 o'clock in the morning. Sometimes she wake us up and to go look for him. I didn't like it, because now I was becoming older. I was looking at my mother and didn't () the way I want to do them. I don't want to be disturbed. () I don't want to be you know (). So, it was quite disturbing to me that everything was going the way it was. My father, we have to wake up in the middle of the night, my mother use to wake me up and we had to go and look for him, you know, because he was drinking at the time. And some of the things (). We started having money problems. There was money problems. You know, me and my mother, we never spoke like mother and daughter. Things like that. The only thing we talked about is me cleaning the house. That's all. Because she was sick. I think she was sick because of all the pressure, fighting with my father. But she didn't tell me that she was sick, but I could see that she was sick, because of she was fighting with my father and all those things were going on inside her. (Sigh). So that then I, it started disturbing me here (touches her head) (sigh). I was denying it because I was thinking next year. (). Then I (). I started to think there is something wrong. I was very disturbed. I was tired and depressed. I think it was 1994, I started complaining at the doctor. I couldn't sleep well. I can't concentrate at school. But the only thing I know is I was good at reading and studying. So I started complaining at the doctor something is wrong (). I don't like it () tablets for depression. So I was becoming very disturbed.

Interviewer: How old were you more or less then?

Interviewee: I was 16.

Interviewer: So the doctor gave you tablets for depression when you were 16?

Interviewee: No, it was 17. So, now it was too much. I couldn't, I started shaking. I started, I couldn't lie down still on the bed like now I'd taking a nap. (). Now I am taking a nap, I couldn't, I was shaking, I was shaking from mother, because now when she was coming in, you know, she would want me to do things, you know, she would yell at me. She would tell me things that I didn't like.

Interviewer: Like what? What sort of things did she say?

Interviewee: All sorts of things (). She said I am lazy. Sometimes I would go to the shops. She said I was only looking for boys. I was not interested in boys. There are boys at school, there are boys at home. They were just boys at that time (). She was putting things on my mind which are not there (). I started having depression. What my mother (). They don't exist like before that, before this time, before that when I was 12, when I was 14, my father asked me who is your boyfriend. (). My dad was drunk. Who is your boyfriend? Who is your boyfriend? I didn't say. I was telling the truth. You know I was embarrassed. I know I didn't have a boyfriend. So all these things, you know, (laughs) (). I didn't have any thing to do with boyfriends. (). You understand, I was not ready. The only thing that was on my mind was my career, you know. My future was on my mind. So, they didn't know me well, what kind of a child I was, or the things that interested me. We didn't talk about anything me and my mother. So it was very bad. We don't share things. So, it was, (sigh) it was very disturbing. I was very disturbed, because () one day my dad was drunk again. Every time he was drunk (), so we would go to our bedrooms. When he comes in the house he tells us to switch off the TV and the radio. All those things. He wants to listen to his music. Then it will come in my mind what did he buy them for? Is it for the kids or for himself? You know, but I won't ask him. I would go to my room. You're not

suppose to question adults. So I (sigh) would just leave it. I would go to my room. Every time, every time (). We were growing up now. (). We were having our own future. It's such a home life, they were fighting all the time. And you yourself, you can't help yourself. (). What kind of a life do you want to lead when you grow up. (). So I would go to my room at night. One evening my father came to my room. Do you want to tell me I'm molesting you? (Laughs). At that time I didn't know the meaning of the word molesting. (Laughs). I don't remember if I answered him, because he was drunk. (). What did I do. But life would just go on. But I was becoming very depressed. I started thinking too much. Questions without answers.

Interviewer: Ja, that's difficult.

Interviewee: I don't talk to them. You know, even if (). You don't have to () because my mother would say, don't, don't say anything, anything ().

Interviewer: So you kept it all inside.

Interviewee: Yes, I keep it all inside, keep it all inside. Then when I, I started becoming very sick of depression. It was 94, 95. 1995 I was in std 10, 1996 (). I started thinking about going to university and to study further. I didn't have money. You know, the situation (), but I didn't go to my parents (). They didn't ask me what are you going to do. So, we didn't speak. You know, () I would write letters for bursaries.

Interviewer: All on your own?

Interviewee: Yes on my own. I used to go to the library a lot from std 7-10. I would read books about careers and stuff. On my own. (). I would get addresses for writing to bursaries. So, I was quite independent. I worried about what I see what they are doing wrong, and what are they going to do, because I could see they were troubling and they were fighting. How can they lead a life like this? I see this, what they are

doing is wrong, but I couldn't say, you know, people, what you are doing is wrong. I couldn't say it to them. I couldn't share that with them. I started hating them.

Interviewer: Sjoe, ja, ja, I understand.

Interviewee: I started hating them. Oh, (sigh) Oh. My head was (). It was difficult. I wasn't speaking to anyone about anything. I think that's why I started having problems (touches head). Because I was dealing with this all on my own and all the pressure and I didn't know what to do now () school or do the things that I wanted to do. Then at the time I decided I left, with my friend, we used to play basket ball together. It was January, () we said, you know what, we decided because he used to take me go out () playing machines () you know, computer games. (). My mother used to fight with me a lot. There are other girls that she didn't like (cracks fingers). She would tell me that she doesn't like them. Expected me to () because of I mustn't be with them (). So, one day she was fighting with me because of this one girl friend. So I ran, I went to my mother's cousin, I ran to her house (). I told her that (). (Laughs). So, I didn't know what to do. I couldn't be myself. What kind of a person did they expect me to be. I couldn't be myself at all. I couldn't do the things that I wanted to do. I couldn't do anything. So, () I couldn't use my brain. So my mother was having a problem. So, it was () depression (). 1996 I ran away (). I left with my friend to live in Jo'burg.

Interviewer: So you lived with your friend there?

Interviewee: Yes (). Lived with a friend (). My mother didn't want me to leave at that time, I just left. I went away.

Interviewer: Was that after your matric?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Just after your matric?

Interviewee: No. In 1995 I was in matric. In 1996 I stayed at home, but I was very depressed, you know.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: So in 1997 I left with a friend, a boy, so we went to Johannesburg. He had a friend in Johannesburg. We wanted to go and live with his friend. Then we went there and we stayed with his friend (silence). I didn't stay for long. We didn't stay for long. Then my friend got a job as a security guard and so he had to leave me, because he was going to go for a course. () left me (). Then I decided to go and stayed with my Aunt Maggie. She was staying in Krugersdorp. Then I went to her, her place and stayed there. In March I went to Klerksdorp, I came back home. I didn't get a job. I left my friend but at that time I didn't tell my friend that I was leaving. So, when I went back I was still in that state of mind that I can't see where I was going. I, I was just going. Then what happened (). They told me that Spoornet was looking for mechanics. So I decided I want it, I wanted a job (), but I was still having problems. I wanted any kind of job. As long as I could get away I didn't mind what was happening. (). I got appointed, I got appointed for the job. () get out of this place, then things will go better with my head. I was working in Johannesburg, I was a diesel mechanic apprentice.

Interviewer: A diesel mechanic apprentice? Sjoe.

Interviewee: Yes, we were repairing busses (). Transtate bus engines, we repaired them. So I worked in Johannesburg. () 1997-1998. The we moved to Klerksdorp depot. (). They were taking old busses, replenishing them.

Interviewer: OK.



Interviewee: Yes, so, so, we would repair it (). We would do anything in them, engines, we would repair them. So, (sigh) my head () I worried over what happened, everything. It was, it was like a trauma, you know. It was like an accident ().

Interviewer: You got a?

Interviewee: It was like I had an accident.

Interviewer: OK, OK.

Interviewee: It was just there, just there in my mind. And not going away, I'm shocked. So (). That day my mind it was in a state of shock (). So (). Something wrong. Didn't know how to get over this. Then I went () to Klerksdorp. In 1998 my mother, she, she left to Welkom. My father was transferred to Welkom. So () go back to my mother, to Welkom. My mother she (). I think she wasn't right. (). She didn't know what to do, to stay or go there on her own, because she had a small child, a baby (). When I came back from Jo'burg I found out that she had, had a small baby (). Before I got the job () returning from Jo'burg. So () difficult. It was a shock in my mind, it was like a shock () but I can't get over it.

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: So, I would drink things to give me energy. You know (). I can't concentrate. So () then I started smoking. They say it helps, smoking helps with stress (silence). So my mind was (). But I'll just (). The only problem I had was I couldn't plan my things right. I couldn't do the things I wanted to do, I couldn't use my mind to think right, you know, the things I knew that I could do. (). When I was at school I would do (), because now it was difficult concentrating and it was difficult for me to decide, difficult to make decisions.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: So (silence) when I, then my father moved to Welkom and then moved to Ermelo from Welkom. Then I was working in Vereeniging (). Then I would go there, I would go () visit my parents. (). So, when I left my job, it was because of this problem, the state of mind I was in, I couldn't concentrate, I couldn't plan a thing (). I could see this was not right, I can't live like this, I can't live without knowing how to spend my life, () how to do my life. So I was really getting tired of what was happening to me, but I had a job, but I was not happy because of the things was scared (). I want to do the proper (). The things that I want to do, I can't do them, because I can't use my brain. So I again, I just started doing things. You know, I started to get out of control. I used to feel like I was in control of my life. Now, I felt like my mother was in control of my life. I was not in control of my life. I was not in control of my life. I would just do things just to please my mother or my father, you know. I would just push myself to do things, so that's when I started doing everything () control. I can't do things the way I think I should be doing them. So then I, I left my job, I left my first one, () because I, because of my mind. I didn't do the things the way I wanted to do them. So, I left my job(). I cannot get these things out of my mind. Maybe I can solve that problem. Then I left my second company (). I left my first job because I can't use my mind, I can't think of anything different I could do. I was not ambitious, you understand. Then I could stay there, I could make a change in my life. I could get another job, because what my agent tell me is, you know, it's not only mechanics you can do, you can do another job. Then again, I was not sure of myself. I say, no, I can't stay, I'll go there, maybe something different will show up. I'll be positive, maybe I'll become a different person (). Things was not happening the way I want them to. I was going on everyday but I don't see the results of what I was doing, () the way I wanted (), I can't () my life, I saw myself in a (). So,

if I was going on like this, because I was just doing things() and my life (). I was going on everyday but I didn't see what I was doing. So I decided no I can't live this life, but still I had a job () to leave my job because, I was not () properly at work (). I was thinking about my mind and the way my mind function. (). I can't have the things I want to have (). I decided to leave the job because I was not attending properly at work. I will just stay at home because I am tired. You know () of the job, I was feeling tired, tired. I was depressed.

Interviewer: Yes, () because of the depression?

Interviewee: I was feeling cold, my back was cold. And the other thing that happened there, I, I was having an affair with my colleague. Then I got pregnant. I aborted the baby. (). That's the only thing that I wanted when I was in a relationship, I just wanted somebody to be there, to be there for me, you know, someone like a friend, someone who can share (), but it was not working. So, I, but when I got pregnant, I was scared of what my parents will say if I'm pregnant (). I was having a child but without a father. So, () my mind was, (silence). I couldn't think like an adult. I didn't think like an adult, you know, fine I will have this baby. I was just doing things like a chicken without a head, you understand. You know (). So, when I saw things were going that way I thought I can't go on like this. I'm leaving my job, I'm going back home.

Interviewer: OK. How long after the abortion was this?

Interviewee: Mm, (silence). I don't remember, but it was quite a long time. But I have forgotten about the abortion by then. But it was the same year. Oh, it was 3 months or 4 months after the abortion.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: So, I was worried about the way my life was going. I couldn't see where I was going. I had something going on for me, you know. I had a job, it was something you know, but I was not happy about my life, the way my mind was functioning, the way I am doing things. I cannot just do things by just doing them. I had to have a reason why I am doing things, and make sure, you know. (). I was, I mean thinking of my security and other things, I'm sure of the position I am in, you understand. So I couldn't take the way my life was going. (). Now it was starting to stand (). Sometimes I'll, I'll just () throw myself into things without () knowing, because it was starting to happen like that (). So I decided to leave my job and go home. My father and mother was, my mother was still in Welkom. I was, I was also drinking tablets for depression then () but I was not acting like a 21 year old. I was just acting like a chicken without a head. So I was tired of that kind of life (). I couldn't take it.

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: (Sigh). (Silence). So then I went to Ermelo after leaving my job. My mother was still staying in Welkom. My father had moved to Ermelo. He had a job there.

Interviewer: So did you go to your mother in Welkom?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And your father was in Ermelo?

Interviewee: Yes. My father was in Ermelo. So, but they () young brother (). So I went to my mother and it was after a month (), because they were waiting for my other sister to finish school. () just go to (). I was taking tablets for depression and I was taking sleeping tablets. I couldn't sleep. I was thinking too much all night.

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: So, when I (sigh), ja, I misused the tablets. Before I left my job I was also misusing the tablets. The sleeping tablets. (). Sometimes I would ask for a week or two, like the doctor will give me (). I'll just go (). I would use 10 at the same time. And when they're finished I'll just go and ask for them. And it was just not working. So and I, we left to Ermelo () in December 1999. But our relationship with my mother was not good, because we was just there () you know, a child, a mother. But it doesn't mean anything, you know. I don't like it. She bored me, you know. But I don't show her that I don't like her, she affects me (). I don't show anything. I was keeping it all inside. So () I didn't show it. Now I can see what she was going through. So I didn't have () a relationship with my mother. I was there, she was there (). So, but we'll clash sometimes like when we were In Ermelo about cleaning again. Because you see I'm a very sensitive person. I don't want something bad () for a whole day (). When I see things like that I will get very angry. So it was very disturbing to me to see things lying around. So but I was also getting tired. I couldn't clean anymore, I couldn't do housework anymore.

Interviewer: It really bothered you that the house was dirty and that it was not clean.

Interviewee: Ja, I didn't like it. So but I couldn't do it, I couldn't clean the house. I was blaming my mother for the house being dirty. I didn't have the () the energy (). So I just I got the job () but before then I went to Klerksdorp in January. I told my mother I was going to the library. Because I was still getting the money from unemployment.

Interviewer: So you ran away. Your mother didn't know you were going away?

Interviewee: Yes. So I went to Klerksdorp. But ultimately they found out. Because my younger brother was having a cell phone. So they found out that I was in Klerksdorp (). I went to my younger brother. They, my mother found out. () other job

() I went to Klerksdorp. I did () tell them where I was going to work. My mind was still (). I couldn't decide what to do, () go there, because () can't see (). So I went to Klerksdorp and I and I stayed with my boyfriend. We used to dance together. ().

Interviewer: The same one that you went to Johannesburg with?

Interviewee: No that one he was just a friend.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: So this one is a teacher, he's a dance teacher. He's a professional dance teacher. So, I went there (interruption to change tape).

Interviewer: I can see that you are very technical. (Helps with recorder. Laughs)

Interviewee: OK. Then when I was there, because I have just left my job, I didn't tell them where I was going, I tell myself () my (). I was like a chicken without a head. (). I stayed with him. So my mother, because she know where I was, she came to take me.

Interviewer: Oh, so your mother came to Klerksdorp?

Interviewee: Ja, to Klerksdorp. She had hired a car to take me back to Welkom ().

Well, I didn't, I didn't want to go. I couldn't say no, I couldn't say no (silence).

Interviewer: Mmm, OK.

Interviewee: No, I couldn't say no, that I don't want to go because I was old enough to look after myself. So (sigh) I just left, I just left (sigh) I just left. Then the () was there. I went back to work. My father wrote a letter to say that I was having problems at work (). Then my aunt also came that I am not going to work anymore, my aunt Maggie. () she was after that. So you know it was, because I know what I want () but I can't say it, I can't say this is not what I want.

Interviewer: So it was almost as if the other people were taking control of your life?

Interviewee: Ja, other people were taking control of my life. It was really upsetting me. I was really getting angry, and angry and angry, but I didn't show, I didn't tell them you know what people, this is not what I want, I want this, you understand.

Interviewer: So you kept it all inside?

Interviewee: Ja, ja, I kept everything inside. I can't talk to older people. So it was just the pressure that was going all the time (silence). So, just coming to (). The pressure was still there, I'm seeing/feeling it () this people are mad at me. (). I don't want them to do this to me, you understand (). These people are doing something wrong to me.

Interviewer: And you can't tell them>

Interviewee: And I can't tell them, I'm not saying it to them, I don't tell them, I don't show them I don't like this. You know, I'm angry today. Even when I was still in Klerksdorp, I didn't show my mother that I'm angry or something (). Something that will make me angry. I will put it all inside, I will just () make it like I don't see what's happening. Even if I see if I leave this thing to happen, something will go wrong. (). So I couldn't help, I couldn't help them, because I was a child to them. Even if I see it () that, because I couldn't see things (). (). You know (), I will just leave it, because I'm scared talking to my parents. I'm scared of showing them how I feel. I was not myself at the time, you understand, not at all. I'm just hiding myself () everyday. So I also regret it (silence). It really cost me a lot (sigh).

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: It really cost me a lot. So, (silence) () look at what happened. So I, in 2000 I got a job in Ermelo. I got a job. So, I was a train driver assistant. I would travel by train.

Interviewer: OK, that's interesting.

Interviewee: We travelled with a 100 truck train.

Interviewer: Sjoe. I didn't know there are 100 truck trains.

Interviewee: (Laughs). They are so long. So we would work at night. But I was still feeling like my life is not right, not organised properly.

Interviewer: So you could feel it?

Interviewee: Yes. This is not right, this is not right. Something will go wrong() (silence). So (sigh) () It was very tiring. So (). And I am earning a lot of money at the time. But I was so disorganised () what I do with my money. I am so careless with my money. I was not budgeting. I am not () properly (). () I was scared to speak with my mother. I was careless with my money. I was feeling scared of doing things with my money. So I was not in control of myself at all. So, then I decided I want to go to, I told my manager, no my friend at work told me you know what, your kind of people, your kind, will get very sick at the end, they go mad and I don't want that to happen to you. But what was inside of me was pain, and anger, and a lot of regrets.

Interviewer: Mmm, sjoe.

Interviewee: I wasn't happy. I was stressing too much and my head was, I was just doing things for just doing them. And I didn't like it. So my friend told me you know what, why don't you ask these people to go and see a psychologist. So I decided, OK I will ask them. But I don't remember what we spoke about (cracks fingers). So then I decided OK, I will take her advice. I will go to see a psychiatrist. Because, even before I also tried on my own, before I got the job, with the money I was getting from my unemployment, I also tried to get help, because I felt like spiritually I was very sick. Spiritually. My spirit was very sick, I was feeling very down, very down.

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: I was very hurt. Because I don't show my feelings (). I keep on hiding how I feel (). So, then I took my friend's advice (cracks fingers), I told my manager at



work I needed a break. I needed a break. So I see a psychologist, a doctor. Then I decided I want to go to a hospital. I arranged to went and see a psychiatrist, a doctor in Pretoria. He transferred me to a psychiatrist. (). So I was in Pretoria at Weskoppies. So, () or a month for observation, for observation. But still I keep on, I kept on hiding myself. You know, because one thing I realise if you are getting yourself use to doing something, then that thing becomes a routine. It's like you're going to be programmed in that way, you understand. So, () So now I am still going on just like that. I'm still hiding myself. It really cost me a lot (). So, when I was in Weskoppies, I met this man, this man, the father of my first child. I met him there. He told me he was working there at the hospital ().

I was asking him for a cigarette from him.

Interviewer: You were asking him for a ?

Interviewee: A cigarette.

Interviewer: Oh, a cigarette.

Interviewee: Because he was passing by our ward.

Interviewer: Oh, OK.

Interviewee: So anyway he asked me if I could not see him later. But I didn't ask that much, because I got myself used to just doing things without questioning. So, (long silence) (sigh) my life was becoming very bad. So I was giving some people a wrong impression of myself, you understand. So I () tell him I will meet him later. So then later in the afternoon he came and so I met him. He asked me if I didn't want to have a relationship with him (). I told him no I don't, I'm not ready to have a relationship. So in the end (silence) I said to myself why don't you give love a try, you know, give love a second chance. Because I am struggling, I'm alone, () I don't have anybody, I don't have a friend to share (). So I said, OK I'll give love a try (). He will give you

something that is missing in your life (). All I was expecting was a change in my life, you know. So I said OK, fine. I agree to have a relationship with you. But I was just pushing myself, I was not ready. () I don't want a relationship (), but I'm just doing it, you know (). So () I was expecting a change in myself. I agreed. We slept together and I became pregnant. So I went back to Ermelo after a month (). I couldn't sleep, because now I was thinking I have to go back to work. I have been here for a long period now, but I don't feel ready yet to go back to work. I was still not right to go back to work. I wished that I had felt something changing or my mind turning around () and today you are () you can see where you're going (). But I just decided (). I went to, I went back to work. So, I went back to work (silence). My boyfriend stayed on there at the hospital. But I have given him my address and my telephone number so that he could contact me. He was living at the barracks where the soldiers are ().

Interviewer: Ja, OK.

Interviewee: But he was not working. So he came from the hospital, I was at work, () find me () people where I was () or my mother where I was, because my mother had seen ().

It was for the first time that I had to introduce a boyfriend to my parents. So, (long silence) I, I took him in. When I, when I (). They told me somebody was looking for me (). So then we went and look for him (). We went and look for him and found him and brought him home. (). Showed him to my mother. What kind of person is this? I was not expecting myself to have some kind of relationship with anyone. (Laughs).  
(). You know in myself (). You know, () I started again (), but still I was so scared of showing my feelings, I love him or I don't love him () you know. So (sigh).

Interviewer: Did you love him?

Interviewee: Me?

Interviewer: Ja, or were you not sure whether you love him?

Interviewee: I was not sure.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: But I, because I just want to give him a try, you know, if I cannot love () relationship with someone. So it was hard to show him that I love him (). I was living with my aunt and I was very shy. () a lot of (). I was acting too much like I don't make sense. I was just out of control. Just like that. (). So, (sigh) (silence) I couldn't show him that I love him because I didn't sleep with him. Because sometimes when I come back from work, I come back at night, I come back in the morning, I didn't sleep with him, because I was scared, I was so scared of showing my feelings or of doing things. It was still continuing like that (). (Laughs). So after a week went to the doctor I found out that I am pregnant (). I said I wanted an abortion. The doctor said I must not have an abortion. I said no, I want an abortion. (). Do you have money. () don't have money. () not making any sense. So I was not trying to make any sense at all (). I was seeing myself as something else like I was not ready to be a mother. I was not ready to be a mother. Everything was still so disorganised. Not the way (silence).

Interviewer: You wanted it to be?

Interviewee: Ja, not the way I wanted.

Interviewer: Did the doctor persuade you not to have an abortion?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK. So the doctor said you must not have an abortion?

Interviewee: Yes. I thought I was not going to give up the baby (), I won't have an abortion. () the baby (). I started going to (). But the father we started fighting (). I started going mad. I told him that I don't want him, I don't know him and I don't want to be with him (). I don't know where he's coming from. All that. We started

fighting. (). We moved out from my father's house. I looked for another place, because I couldn't sleep with him in my parent's, in my mother's house. That's why I say I was acting like a small child. (Long silence). I () I fought with him. I told him I don't want him. But it, it wasn't making any sense (). I don't want you. But in the end I told him to leave. He left.

Interviewer: How long did you stay together? How many months were you pregnant when he left?

Interviewee: I was 5 months pregnant. (Long silence). So, I have learned something from that. You know you should, you should determine something before you do. You must think about it before you do. Because your actions () determines your life, you know, but () something that you don't know (). (*Listening to the tape, I became very sad - if she only knew. I was also thinking about my own child*). So I learned something (), (laughs), you know (). He left, he left. I gave him money to leave (). My life was becoming a nuisance life. I couldn't make it right. I couldn't change it.

Interviewer: Sjoe. Did you regret it, that you send him away? Or how would you describe your feelings at that stage?

Interviewee: Oh, what can I say. I was not desperate (). Yes, I had that feeling, but my boyfriend, I did not like him.

Interviewer: You were sure you didn't want him.

Interviewee: Yes, I was sure I didn't want him. (Long silence). So, and I, and after a month he came back, after a month he came back (). I took it very bad (). I can not make him () all these things (). So, I followed the wrong path. () that by just doing a small wrong thing (). Ohuuu (sigh). (Long silence).

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: () but I still don't (). I didn't feel like I'm ready for a baby. My mind hadn't register that I am pregnant, you know.

Interviewer: You were pregnant, but you didn't realise.

Interviewee: Ja, but I didn't realise that I was pregnant. It didn't mean anything to me that now I'm a mother, I'm a grown up woman. This will be a change of my life, I better change my mind (). So I had that child, I had it. He was not there. Well, he came back after a month, then he broke my glasses.

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: Then he left. But still I didn't feel I wanted (). I were going to beat him if I found out that he had broken my glasses. Because I think that I was doing something wrong (). I was torturing him. Very badly.

Interviewer: Do you mean verbally, or also physically?

Interviewee: Verbally and physically. (). So it was that these signals showed something was wrong. It's dropping there, you know, it's dropping there without noticing it. Because you are just, because we are human, you know () if something happens (). So () want to make my (), like a chicken without a head, just doing things without thinking. I'm trying a lot I want to make my life (). I want to make my life right, but I don't know how, where to start. I was hoping that if I have this baby, that I will start acting like a mother, or that my mind will change, you know (). It will record something like that now you are a mother. Then you have changed. You know, something like that. I was hoping it will change. It will happen automatically (). Because when you're young () you just grow up () you 're just there () you don't have to make it (). So, things happened, uh, (silence). I was having a child but still everything was just the same. I'm just the same person, still a chicken without a head, but I'm a mother, still disorganised, you know I don't feel like a mother. (). My

mother the first day she was there, she helped me with things, but the thing is that I didn't feel like that my mind had registered that I'm a mother. Something will change in me that I'll start acting differently, like a mother, because I was expecting those things to happen automatically. I was expecting to change automatically. () having something along the way, you understand. So I, I (long silence ) () happened (silence) I meet a man. I was working in an office ().

Interviewer: Oh, OK. So you were working in an office?

Interviewee: Yes. I was doing data, I was a data clerk. So this man, I work in the same office. He was, he was in a bigger position (). My father was also working there. So I was working with my father () job. So he was interested in me. But it was before I had a child, the first child. (). He was an older man. I wanted to try sex, you know. Just like I wanted a man. I wanted to experience sex. I didn't feel like I enjoyed it when I was with my boyfriend. So then, (silence) I, I agreed to have a relationship with this man (). So then I, I was telling myself all the good things. All the good things. I tell myself about it. That he was old. He was older so I thought of him as more responsible, having more sense. He was a Zulu. Zulus, they have respect for people (), you know, about, about (). I saw all the good things.

Interviewer: So you saw all the positive things?

Interviewee: Yes () So I agreed.

Interviewer: What is your first language, your mother tongue?

Interviewee: Tswana. So (long silence) () it's a big thing () more responsible ().

Because my boyfriend, you know, he was like, he was good to me ().

Interviewer: So he did a lot for you?

Interviewee: Ja, he did a lot for me (). I'll come back in the morning, 2 o'clock from work (). I don't blame him () 4 o'clock in the morning, or 2 o'clock in the morning

from work(). Ohh, (sigh). So, then this man in my office (). Also I was being naughty, I just wanted to experience sex with him. But then I was also becoming very stupid on the other side. Then I had that child ().

Interviewer: You're talking about your first child now?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Was your first child a boy or a girl?

Interviewee: It was a girl. So, I fell pregnant again.

Interviewer: How long after...

Interviewee: After 3 months.

Interviewer: After 3 months?

Interviewee: Ja. (Long silence). I was still just doing things without thinking right before I act. Just in that bad line (). You must think before you do something. I was just in the bad light. So my life was () still work (). But I could see that I didn't want that, it was not right (). I didn't have much time. I was going to work every day and I () to eat. I went back to work after one month.

Interviewer: After your child was born?

Interviewee: Yes, one month after my first child was born I was back at work. I was also having financial problems, () money problems (). So in all these things () also all these pressures that I had (). I wanted to make (). I haven't solved any problems that I had. I haven't moved forward to the next level (). (Long silence). So the things that I was starting to have (). I was thinking maybe if I was having a second child I will change (). I'll become more positive, I'll become a mother to my children (). Still I don't see (). Keeps worrying me, keeps worrying me, what is happening. How come I don't see any change. I have a problem but I can't solve it (). That's why I can't go to the next level (). I was just going around my problem, I am just going around them.

() So that was it. I was still not feeling like a mother. I have still not feel any changes in me. I was feeling very frustrated, at work, the father of my child was just using me.

Interviewer: The second child?

Interviewee: Yes, the father of the second child was just using me. Sexually, you know.

Interviewer: You lived together then?

Interviewee: No, he was married. () but what he told me, he didn't tell me that he was married (). He was having a girlfriend (). But I thought maybe he wants to make his life right, maybe he wants to take a step forward. (). Because I was still positive about it at that time. () but my mind was positive. So, I was still thinking of the positive.

Interviewer: We'll have to stop in about five minutes. It's been a long time, a long session for you. I'll see you on Friday again. But I just want you to () use the next five minutes to think what you still want to say before we carry on on Friday.

Interviewee: No, I think it was good () (silence). (). I didn't know him that how he is and what I what I went through, you understand. () felt like it change (), you have to make sure that you make it happen for yourself. You can't expect it to happen automatically. () like that (), when we were young (), when you grow up. It's like now you're still like a child, you know, I'm not matured, because I haven't done my job. () I'm still the 21 year old that I was like 10 years ago, or 12 years ago () today (). (silence) So ().

Interviewer: I want to thank you.



## Interview 2

Interviewer: We stopped on Wednesday where you became pregnant with your second child. Could you carry on from there?

Interviewee: (Long silence). My mind is still (). I'll try to remember.

Interviewer: You fell pregnant with your first child, your second child when your first child was three months old.

Interviewee: (Long silence). I still wasn't feeling like a mother to my children. (Long silence).

I was very wild and you know () because of the (). (Long silence).

Interviewer: Depression?

Interviewee: Mm. This depression (). (Silence). So, (silence).

Interviewer: Can you explain to me what you mean by you were being very wild. Can you describe it for me?

Interviewee: OK. The thing that I used to go to work, (silence) moving now and then from one place to another. So, I was still in that mode (silence). So, I wasn't calm or settled. I was still not settled, feeling settled (silence). I wanted to settle, you know, I wanted to feel that I have a home, I have children (). Still nothing changed. So, (long silence) sometimes the children would cry. (Long silence). I would just, just feel bored. I don't want to pick up the children because I was not breastfeeding. (Long silence). The other thing was that I, (long silence) was feeling like, (long silence) I don't want the child.

When first listening to the tape, I realised the long silences. Was there resistance, was it more difficult to talk about the second child because she killed it? Although I felt I

was very silent during the session, I realised (again) that I'm a good listener and my utterances sound very encouraging and empathetic)

Interviewer: The second child?

Interviewee: Mm

Interviewer: Was your second child a boy or a girl?

Interviewee: It was a girl. So (silence) I was not ready at all to be a mother. (Long silence). There is nothing more that I can say (silence). And my mother was also not helping me.

Interviewer: So you were all on your own? There was no one helping you?

Interviewee: No, there was someone. But, no, I wasn't having someone to help me with the kids. It was just that my mother was there, but she was not helping when they, the kids were crying. Like. the second child, when, one day she was crying in the back room, my mother didn't come there to see if she was all right. (Long silence). I felt like she was not helping at all. (Long silence). So, (long silence) I don't remember, I don't remember some of the things that happened (voice very soft). Don't remember (silence). I was, I was kind of like a bad mother to my children. I was not having love for them (silence). I treated them badly.

Interviewer: Sorry, I didn't hear you.

Interviewee: I treated them badly

Interviewer: You treated them badly? Can you be more specific? What did you do?

Interviewee: When the kid was crying I would not pick them up. Sometimes I would beat them. I was feeling angry towards them. I didn't want them. So, (silence) but also I feel like I was not myself and it was a surprise to me that I would treat my kids like that. But you see because of the way I was going on before I fell pregnant, all the

stupidity ()I was changing, so I was becoming you know () the results of what happened to me, because I couldn't speak things out with my mother, I couldn't talk things out. I couldn't do anything. If I had a problem I couldn't ask her for anything. A serious problem I wouldn't talk about it.

Interviewer: You told me you were surprised that you treated your children the way you did. How did you imagine what kind of a mother you would be? Did you ever think about that?

Interviewee: You know, a lot of kids grew up in front of me, like my young sister, my aunts' children. They grew up in front of me, when they were babies. So I loved children.

The way I was acting was something new, but it the results of the way things were happening to me. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Can you describe some of the feelings that you had towards your first child?

Interviewee: I don't have love, I didn't feel connected to them like a mother should be to her children. You know like animals (). They carry their kids around them. Even a lion () the baby sitting next to it. So it was quite an experience that I would act like that. () make it happen. Make it happen that I am a mother and I should be practising being a mother. So, (long silence) () it was a challenge, a bit of a challenge that I was living in another world where you should be more practical than expecting things just to happen to you not by making them to happen to you. If you say that I am a good person then you should be a good person. Even what you're doing must show that you are a good person. You mustn't say I'm a good person but what you do in front of people, the people is not a good person. So, (long silence) like one day I left them in the house. My mother was, my mother went to town and my father. I was going to

work. I, in the morning before I went to work, I put the small child, the second child, inside the blanket, cover it all over like trying to suffocate it. Then again I tried to suffocate it with a plastic. (Long silence). It was just like I felt like I hated it, because I was hating the father. The baby was looking more like the father. So, (long silence) I was feeling tense. (Long silence). So, (silence) everything was more like a tension to me. (Touched her head, shook her head). (Long silence). (Sigh). So and again when I left for work I left the small one, (silence) the small baby, she was looking more like she was struggling from breathing. I left her there with her sister (silence). There was no one in the house. So, I just locked the () and the key inside () and left them, both of them. (Long silence). Then I went to work. So when my mother came, when I came back from work she, she had taken her to the doctor because she couldn't breathe. (Long silence). So (silence) because she couldn't eat (silence).

Interviewer: How old was the baby?

Interviewee: (Silence). Three months old (silence). When I came back from work she told me she had taken her to the doctor. (Long silence). The way I felt I was so bitter, and I (silence) wasn't feeling like I love my children like a mother or I feel sorry for what happened.

Interviewer: Did you feel sorry or didn't you feel sorry?

Interviewee: No, I didn't feel sorry. So, ja, (long silence) so, (silence) the baby grew (silence). She became well. She grew up. (Voice very soft). (Silence). And still after that, I () beating her. She was 6-7 months. Because I remember once, it was more like I was losing my mind because when I left my job I left, I went to my aunt.

Interviewer: Your aunt Maggie?

Interviewee: Yes. Because something that happened at work. So, (long silence) I went there. Because of the problems at work I left the kids with my mother.

Interviewer: So you left the kids with your mother and you went to your aunt?

Interviewee: Yes (voice soft).

Interviewer: So the kids didn't go with you?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: So, it was something that happened at work. I just left. I didn't tell my mother I was in trouble, but I couldn't tell her I was in trouble, and what kind of a trouble I was in. What could she do to help me, I didn't see. So I just left her.

Interviewer: So your mother didn't know that you were going to your aunt?

Interviewee: No. (Long silence). Then I came back from my aunt. I took a week, because I just left my job. I didn't tell them where I was going (silence). When I came back, I, (long silence) but, I remember once I tried to pack my bags (silence). I didn't have the energy to, or let me say that when you decide that you are leaving today and you know that you have to prepare yourself for your leaving and the things that you should do. I tried to pack my, my suitcase but I felt like I am confused. I don't know where am I going. I don't know why I am (). There is no reason why I should leave, but I felt I there was a need for me to leave. I was scared. So a lot of things happened to me while I was there. So I, but I wasn't able to leave at that point when I packed my suitcase.

Because I asked my young brother that we should go, that we should go together. I was in trouble, but I didn't, I couldn't tell them what was happening to me. I felt like, I felt like I had no place to go. No place where I could ask for help. I couldn't tell my mother, mother, this is what is happening to me. I feel like I should know or what can we do to solve that problem. (Long silence). I couldn't. (Long silence). (Sigh). So, I didn't, I stay (). I was scared. I felt like I was, something will happen to me.

Something is going to happen to me (crack fingers). See, I don't want to talk about it.

I can't put it into details. You know, so I () tell you there and then what happened.

(Long silence). Because I don't know if it was part of the () depression.

Interviewer: Did the psychiatrist diagnosed you as having postnatal depression?

Interviewee: No They just said it is depression () got to the hospital.

Interviewer: When did you go to the hospital? After the birth of your second child?

Interviewee: No, it was 5 months.

Interviewer: Pregnant? 5 months pregnant?

Interviewee: Ja, 5 months pregnant when I went to the psychiatric hospital.

Interviewer: Which hospital?

Interviewee: In Pretoria. Denmar.

Interviewer: When you were 5 months pregnant?

Interviewee: Ja with my second child. (Long silence). (sigh) Because the father of the second child you know, he started acting very funny towards me. (Long silence).

It was just like, (long silence) I felt like, like (long silence) he just wanted to use me. I was pregnant with his child. Didn't mean anything to me. When I was at work, he would, he would talk about me. Even if I, if I'm there. He will tell people that we were working with, that he had slept with me. Even when I was there, you know (sigh), it felt like I was losing my mind. I couldn't believe what was happening.

(Long silence). (Sigh). (Silence). And you know they are older people. They were not my age. He was not my age, not my age (). Talk about what he did to me. So it was part of his attacks to me. Because I had problems with my colleagues, all of them. It was part of his attack to me.

Interviewer: Is that the trouble that you had at work that you could not tell your mother about?

Interviewee: Not that one. The trouble that I had at work was, (long silence) you know, I felt like they are attacking me, they want me out of work you know, but they would say things. You know what kind of people they are, they could see, they are not stupid people. The kind of people they are, they got radio. They would do things to you. (Long silence). So, they treated me bad (grabs knee all the time). And the other thing was (long silence).

Interviewer: It is difficult to talk about.

Interviewee: Ja, it is very difficult, because the things they do, you know (silence). When you go to school they teach you or your mother teaches you should behave around people. In the school they teach you when you got to work or when you get a job, you should treat yourself right, you should treat other people right. How you should do things at work. I don't know, it was quite a surprise that those people, they were acting like they don't know office rules, or they're not being told how to work with other people. (Long silence). You know, they were more like killers to me, murderers. I saw them as murderers. (Long silence). So I couldn't tell any one what, I couldn't put things into details, what was really happening, you know because of I am used to not talking to anybody. It is blocking me, it's blocking everything (Long silence). So I don't know, I don't know if I'll ever be helped or if I'll ever be able to () or what kind of a choice (). I can ask for help from anyone. You know, I was more like becoming mute, you know, something like that.

Interviewer: So you were really troubled inside and you couldn't talk about it.

Interviewee: Yes, yes (silence). And like other things were happening I couldn't even talk about what is happening or am I in trouble or am I not in trouble. (Long silence). (Interruption, someone opened the door). So, (long silence) you know, I'm becoming disabled (silence) in talking.

Interviewer: And this was all during your pregnancy with your second child?

Interviewee: It was a long time happening. Not when I was pregnant, it was a long time happening that I couldn't speak things out. But if I was having a problem I couldn't talk about it.

Interviewer: But the problems at work, with the other people, that was while you were pregnant with your second child?

Interviewee: Yes. (Long silence). So, I left my job, I left my job. The day I left (silence) there was a lot I heard they were talking about, about me. Then I was really becoming scared (silence).

Interviewer: Was it a general feeling of being scared or was there something specific that you were scared of?

Interviewee: I was scared they are going to kill me, because of the way they acted towards me, all the things they said. (Long silence). (I) was not in my mind (voice very soft).

Interviewer: What do you mean by that?

Interviewee: Because I couldn't, I couldn't consult anyone to tell what is happening. You know, I could explain to someone that this and that is happening. And maybe that person could help me, you understand. They could tell me maybe no, you are just overreacting, or it is not true, you understand, or you must calm down or anything, because of the things that I saw that I couldn't elaborate, I couldn't put it into words. It (I) you understand (sigh) (silence). So I decided that I'm leaving because I was scared and I don't know whom to tell. I even started being scared of my, my manager, my deputy manager. I couldn't trust him anymore, I didn't know who to turn to, you understand. Even the social, the psychologist that I was seeing at work, I was also



scared of talking to him because, you know, I don't know that he is against me also, you understand.

Interviewer: So you felt you couldn't trust anyone?

Interviewee: I couldn't trust anyone because of what was happening. Because I told him some things. () I don't know against. So () things happened. I couldn't tell anyone what I see what is happening. Then I just decided I am going to leave. (Long silence). I didn't even trust God in that He will help me. It is better if you talk to somebody that you, you'll feel more safer, than just keep quiet because I was feeling so terribly scared.

Interviewer: Sjoe.

Interviewee: So then I decided to leave. I took my kids and the other thing that happened before I leave, my father had slept out. Before he left he said to me you know what, you mustn't think that you are a woman in this house. He is leaving me that message that he is leaving tonight, that he is not coming back home. You mustn't think that you're the woman of this house. You'll be a woman out there, not in my house.

Interviewer: What did he mean by that?

Interviewee: He meant that he was going to leave and I don't have to say anything about it. () something wrong (). If I say that something is wrong (). I wouldn't even bother myself to talk to them, you know, I never will be able to help. (). Even with my mother I couldn't do anything, because I was becoming so selfish and self centred. I couldn't discuss things with my father, or you know, try to help somehow () to help with. You know, we were not like a family.

Interviewer: But your father worked in that office?

Interviewee: Yes he was there.

Interviewer: You worked together. Was he aware that people were talking about you?

Interviewee: They will talk, like one day we were talking there, I was fighting with him, you know. I asked him what do they want from me. My father was there and they are older men, you know. () I told my father one should respect older people. It was not like that.

Interviewer: Did you feel that your father was against you?

Interviewee: No, I saw him, saw him as a coward. He can't face his problems. And I felt I was becoming more like him. So I was so angry at that. I was angry that I was becoming more like my mother and father. (Long silence). So that's why I left, I couldn't see that they could help me. (Long silence). When I left it was when my father told me that I am not a woman in the house. (Long silence). So, I didn't feel safe at all. You know even before, before that () in my parent's house I didn't feel safe. It felt like, like I was a prisoner in my own home, you know (silence). So, I was very angry. I was asking self a lot of questions. A lot happened. So when my father didn't sleep at home, the next day I was, I didn't want to be in that kind of a family, you know.

Interviewer: Did you think he slept with another woman that night or don't you know?

Interviewee: I don't know.

Interviewer: So you didn't want to be in that kind of a family.

Interviewee: No, I didn't want to be in than kind of a situation, because I don't have to say anything about it (). Even if I see that there is something wrong, I shouldn't say anything you understand, I know I am not a part of the family, you understand. If I see something is wrong, then I should just keep quiet, because most of the time I would sit there, you know something is wrong, you understand, or it will go wrong. I will tell myself I will just let it go wrong. I'll just tell myself I don't care. My father doesn't

care, my mother doesn't care. (Long silence). So the next day when he came back, but I have already told my mother I want to leave. She should give me money. I was thinking a lot, a lot about what was going on at work, all the people and what was happening to me. I told her, I asked her if she was going to give me money to leave. Because my mother, you know, my mother, my mother took me like a fool, treated me like a stupid child. More like a stupid child. Just because I was afraid I didn't say anything about it. () I was just a child. She took me for a fool, my mother, she treated me like I don't have brains. I also treated myself like that in front of her, because she treats me like I don't have brains. I would also act like that, like I don't have brains. Because they don't want to hear a word from me. It felt like she was taking advantage of me.

Interviewer: In what sense?

Interviewee: Like I'm stupid, she can, she, she can make a fool of me. She can tell me to do this and do that, you know the way my mother wants me to do, to do, to do. She can control my life, you know. You sit down and I'll just jump and sit down, stand up. She was more like that, she wanted to have control over me. But she didn't have control over my life (), even the problem she can't solve you know () you know (). I left her (). I left her (). Coming here to see me, I don't want anything to do with her (). So when my father came back, I have already decided that I was leaving. I didn't have money, because I was not working anymore. So my mother gave me a R200 to leave from Ermelo. I felt that no I'll make it, I'll make it. I will be able to look after this children. I don't care that I won't be having food or anything or money, but I will look after them.

Interviewer: How old was your second child then?

Interviewee: She was 7 months.

Interviewer: 7 months?

Interviewee: Yes. So that very same Sunday I left. My father came back and said hey, don't leave. I just left. I didn't have any other plan of going back. I just told myself that I was leaving (). What was I telling self. So I left. But what I tell my father is that I don't care if I have an accident on the road as long as I am far away from my mother. (Long silence). Then I came to Klerksdorp.

Interviewer: Would you say you had suicidal thoughts at that time?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So you didn't want to live any more?

Interviewee: No. I didn't care what will happen to me, because I was travelling without money. So I didn't care what will happen to me even if () on the road () anything will happen to me. So I left ().

I didn't have any clothes, just a small bag () with napkins. I didn't take any clothes for the children or me. (silence) (sigh). So when I get to Klerksdorp () I had a tough time, a really tough time. My thoughts were running wild. I was seeing a lot of things.

Interviewer: You were seeing a lot of things? Can you tell me about some of the things that you were seeing?

Interviewee: I was thinking about the world and what happened to me at work. And you know the black and white situation, you know, how it used to be in the olden days. And how far we have come and who I am, you know and who I'm () and why those people wanted to kill me and it was useless to (leave/live). You know, I thought about a lot of things (silence). And another thought I had ,was that the planets are going to, going to, to, crash, each other and (silence). I, there was this song I used to listen to, this song played on my mind and you know what this song says will happen, you

know, maybe I am that person they talk about (silence). Because we say our lives, that our lives have changed, but we are still the same.

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more about that? What exactly do you mean?

Interviewee: They say humans are, they, human beings are coming from the beast and so the way people used to live in the olden days people who had power to do things to perform magic or miracles, you know so in this world we are living in we are condemned and confused. We are being led into something, into another life but () what had become of me I had forgotten where I was coming from. I was living another life. It is only judgement day that will tell who is who. (Long silence). You know a lot of things is happening to me, it is like I am losing my mind, () it is like I can't think what is happening in the world and where do I stand, I'm just in the air, you know, if the wind is blowing this side, I will go, if it is blowing that side, I will go, you know. At this stage I am feeling like that and I am feeling very scared because of that (). I am feeling really scared (). Where is this world going. (Long silence). Because of (silence) I can't think, I can't think of what to tell you. But there is something that I want to tell you. So, (sigh). I want to tell you about human beings you know.

(Aware that I was concerned about the interviewee being psychotic and again by listening to the tape.)

But, o, something else that I wanted to tell you I felt I was being abused or misused by my parents.

Interviewer: Both your parents?

Interviewee: Yes. You, know, I was being made to do the things that I don't want to do. It is not right to do those things. This is what I want to do, this is what I should be doing. So they were making me to do the things that I don't want to do. Like it is not right you understand.

Interviewer: Can you tell me what kind of things?

Interviewee: Like, I don't remember. But the things I remember was maybe my mother would send me, she would tell me to do something or I am busy doing homework, she would call me to do something else for her but I am busy doing something, you understand. So they were not being careful about how they used me, or send me around to do things. Because sometimes I would concentrating on something and then I will have to do the other one. My mother was starting to be unreasonable. So that is why sometimes my mind it doesn't have a standing point. It was ss, (sigh), (silence) used in another way, the way it doesn't have to function. Like for now I maybe losing my intellect, because I haven't used it. I am a liar today because I, instead of telling the truth, I will tell lies. (silence) Or I am a thief today, because of (silence) busy doing something that (long silence) I (long silence) have to hide that I am () not doing the thing () and nothing else. I was not honest with who I am and how I want to do things ().

### Interview 3

Interviewer: Tell me about the relationship with your mother from when you can remember up to now.

Interviewee: (Shakes head. Long silence). I don't know. I don't know what to tell you. But the things that I know, that we were not talking to each other about matters of life. We don't talk about anything, the only thing we talked about is maybe if she is sending me to the shop, or asking me to do things.

Interviewer: So you only talked when she wanted you to do things.

Interviewee: Yes. But we don't talk about things. If I am having a problem I can't face her (cracks fingers), because she was like rude to me. I can't face her when I'm having a problem. So, she was unreasonable sometimes. She was not the kind of person I can go to if I'm in trouble. So, but most of the time like, because I was living with them, I would rather lock myself in my room. () fight. (). Before I had kids. So we never had a relationship. We were just mother and daughter just like that.

Interviewer: If you imagine yourself as a baby, when your mother had you, how do you imagine was your mother with you when you were a baby? How do you think the relationship was like? What do you know about your mother's pregnancy while she was pregnant with you and your birth?

Interviewee: You know, the things that she used to say, she said I wouldn't be here because of you, you know.

Interviewer: What did she mean by that?

Interviewee: (). She was, I was, I was, I was not working at the time and you know, she said to me that she thought that I would work for her when I grow up.

Interviewer: In the house?

Interviewee: No, I don't know. O outside, because now I was not working anymore.

So

Interviewer: So she wanted you to support her financially?

Interviewee: I don't know, maybe, ja. I thought she did. I didn't leave my job(). I had problems, that's why I left. I felt that I needed a break. If I sort my problems out then I will start having a way forward, a clear mind, you know of where to start now, what to do now, you know. If I stay home and work for my mother and do things for her, or if we could build a relationship you know, something like that.

Interviewer: So you wanted to build a relationship with your mother?

Interviewee: Yes, I wanted my family problems to be finished, because I could see it was holding me responsible for them. Because I couldn't stop thinking about what was happening in the house. All the problems I have left them with.

Interviewer: What do you mean by all the problems that you have left them with?

Interviewee: That I have thought that they were fighting.

Interviewer: Their fighting?

Interviewee: Yes. They had fights. And I couldn't help them with that. I couldn't think about anything that might help them. I couldn't solve their problems.

Interviewer: Did you feel responsible for their problems?

Interviewee: A lot.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: Because I felt all the pressure that I had to do something. I felt it was heavy on me. It was like I am responsible to make them think otherwise. If I cannot help them in a way, because I can see what is going on. And what do I do about that. What am I doing about it, if I see that is wrong. Something is wrong and what am I doing about it. So sometimes I thought that I am very young and I can't talk to these



people, they can't listen to me. They don't want to listen to me, so how can I be responsible for them. To take care of them.

Interviewer: Do you know anything about your mother's pregnancy, when she was pregnant with you? How old was she when you were born?

Interviewee: She was 19. She was like, she didn't, she was not expecting to have me.  
( ) It was like she felt bitter about it.

Interviewer: Did she say something that made you think that she felt this way?

Interviewee: Yes, but I can't remember what was it. It was like she didn't want me. Or my grandmother said you know, this child didn't want her daughter. She almost killed her, something like that. So I grabbed it from there, but my mother also said something. I can't remember what.

Interviewer: Can you tell me more about what your grandmother said that your mother almost killed you. Do you know more about that?

Interviewee: I don't know what made her to say that. (Long silence). So my mother was not expecting me (silence) (sigh).

Interviewer: Can you imagine yourself as a baby with your mother? Do you have any thoughts or feelings when you think about that?

Interviewee: (Silence). I don't have some thoughts, but ( ) what I think how my mother, was, I mean, as a child, as a baby how did she feel about me, you know, I wonder about it., but I don't remember. My mind is not working. Sometimes me and my mother, we never had quite a relationship, you know, like a mother could share with her children. That you can discuss some of the problems that you have, or my mother, she was more like, she was more like she wanted to control me, she wanted to control me.

Interviewer: How would you describe your mother? What kind of a person is she?

Interviewee: She (silence) you see my mother changed because of, of the fights you know. I think it has, it has done some damage to her, also.

Interviewer: The fights between her and your father?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Ho do you think did it damage her? Can you tell me more about that?

Interviewee: Mentally. She is not herself. She can't be a mother. She can't look after her children. She's tired all the time. She's just not herself. She, she can't think for herself. She can't clean the house. I was not really proud of her, you know. She could not stand up for me, she could not fight for me, she could not help me in any way. I am not trusting her. The only person I trust is me. I don't even trust my father to help me () or doing things for me, you know. I am not counting on them for anything.

Interviewer: You said on Wednesday that your mother went to work after you were born and that your aunt looked after you. How old were you when your mother went to work?

Interviewee: I was four.

Interviewer: Four years or four months?

Interviewee: Four years.

Interviewer: Four years. Do you remember anything about your first four years?

Interviewee: No. I don't remember anything. But she was not there.

Interviewer: Where was she?

Interviewee: She was at work.

Interviewer: So she was at work before you were four years old?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And your aunts looked after you?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you remember anything about your aunts? How would you describe them? Were they like mother figures to you?

Interviewee: No, they were more like sisters (silence). Ja, they were more like sisters. They looked after me well. (long silence) But

Interviewer: What do you remember about your mother after, when you were four years old, she was () working when you were a baby?

Interviewee: Ja I think she was working since I was a baby because, or she was. She said when she was pregnant she was working at the surgery, the doctor's surgery. So she had been working before I was born.

Interviewer: You said that you lived with your great grandmother and your great grandfather and your aunts looked after you and you imagine they were like sisters to you. Do you remember any events?

Interviewee; Ja, I remember once we were playing house with my other aunt and even when they, they were at their school, I remember I was, I went there and visited them. I was with them. They left me while they were going to school, but they were at another place, not at my grandfather's house

Interviewer: So they were still at school when they looked after you?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So they were very young?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So you were saying?

Interviewee: They left me in the house where they were staying. It was in a relative's house, our relative. I remember that I was crying there, I wanted my aunt, but she had gone to school. (Long silence). So, but there were other things. I hated my mother (silence).

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more?

Interviewee: I didn't like her. She was not understanding. You know she was not understanding, because she had stress. Because I remember when we were kids, my mother would do things not exactly like a mother. She would be harsh on me, because one time I broke a saucer. So I was washing the dishes. I was in sub A or sub B. I was young in Sub B and I was washing the dishes. I broke that saucer, so she was very harsh on me. She was harsh all the time. But I would forget, you know that something happened, that thing happened. I would forget that my mother used to do that, but tomorrow I would have forgotten about it. So I would not keep a record of what happened yesterday.

Interviewer: You also said on Wednesday that in Sub B or Sub A she

Interviewee: She taught me how to wash my shirts.

Interviewer: Yes and that you remember you were about six years old when you lost R2.

Interviewee: Yes. Ja, and that time she was chasing me with an umbrella stick that I saw you know, that I was starting to be scared of my mother. I couldn't put my trust on her for anything. But these things, it drove me away from mother, you know, it put doubts on me.

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more about the doubts on you?

Interviewee: I mean I can't trust her to be loving and caring as a mother does and understanding, you know, if I may be, if I have a problem I could turn to her and tell her what my problem is or if I have done something wrong, I would turn to her that, you know, I have this kind of a problem, so you know, I couldn't put my trust on her.

Interviewer: Were there other people in your life that you saw as a mother figure or that you felt cared and loved you and nurtured you? Or were there not other people like that in your life?

Interviewee: My teacher.

Interviewer: Tell me about your teacher.

Interviewee: You know, she, I felt like I could love her like a mother, because she was more understanding than my mother. Because my mother would hit me. Like one day that I had broken my flask, so she hit me, you know. So my mother was the kind of mother who was not understanding of the things I would do, you know. So the way she was acting towards me, she was , she was pushing me away, you know. (Long silence). () mind because I don't know what is happening to me. My mind, what is happening to my mind.

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more about that?

Interviewee: I can't remember, (silence) like all the memories have been scratched. It is hard for me to remember.

Interviewer: You said on Wednesday that now you can understand what your mother is going through. What did you mean by that?

Interviewee: She was stressing because of the fights. If you are involved in a world of violence, there is a lot that is affecting you. For an example, me, you know, I was very affected by what was happening in the house and I was worrying too much, I was thinking too much, you know. So my mother was also going through the same thing. She was thinking too much. Maybe she was not having money so that she could leave the house and she would think what to do. She doesn't have any move. She's trapped. (Silence). (Sigh).

Interviewer: Can you describe your relationship with your father from when you can remember?

Interviewee: I used to love father when I was still small (silence). Ja, when I was still small, before I went to school. Because I was not staying with them at that time (). I was still at my great grandmother's house. I was still living there. So I loved my father.

Interviewer: Sorry to interrupt you. How often did you see your mother and your father at your great grandmother's house?

Interviewee: They, my father, I don't know. Like my mother stopped working after some time (silence). No, she was working there, in Ottosdal, where I grew up. She was working there, at the time. So she was coming home every day. So my father was coming after a month. I think it was before they got married, before they got married, yes.

Interviewer: Were you born before they got married?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK. So, you remember that you loved your father and...

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: I just want to make sure. So your mother worked, but you saw her everyday. She came home everyday?

Interviewee; Yes.

Interviewer: OK. But you don't remember having a relationship with her?

Interviewee: With my mother?

Interviewer: Ja.

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: OK. So your aunts looked after you?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And although your mother was there, you don't remember having a relationship with her.

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: OK. So tell me more about your father and the relationship with your father. You loved him when you were still small.

Interviewee: You know, I only remember once that when my mother was not there I was sleeping with my father. He was in Klerksdorp. I think it was the time that we moved to Klerksdorp. So I wasn't having any problem with my father (silence). So the problems started when they started fighting. I didn't see any reason why he should be fighting with my mother or hit her the way that he used to hit her. I started hating him. And all these things, they started pushing me away from them. I started having a problem.

Interviewer: You mentioned that your father drank a lot. When did his drinking start?

Interviewee: So, he was also drinking when I was still small. So he was drinking all the time. But now that we, we were a big family and we lived in a big house he started drinking more. It was more responsibility for my mother and father, you know they should be acting more like a mother and a father, you know. That they should think about us (silence). So, (silence) he was drinking at the time, drinking too much.

Interviewer: And when you were a teenager?

Interviewee: How was it. It wasn't becoming very well, because now I was going out. And like one day, I was 13, I go out with my friends to go and watch TV because our lights, the electricity was off. So we went to other house to watch TV. It was only a street to jump. So when we came back I took a candle to the toilet, you know, because it was dark () candle. The candle fell on the floor. My father just came in there and he

kicked me and he asked me what was I doing with the candle, you understand. ()

always the things that are pushing me away, but he was doing things for me, and he would buy, buy things for me and I would be happy, you know. He used to do everything for me. Still I didn't feel like () or thanking him for what he had done, so I didn't appreciate anything that he was doing for me (silence). So since then we just stayed in the house like strangers. So, the only thing I could think of myself was, that if I could find myself a job, I could get out of that place. That was all that mattered to me, so I was looking forward to that, you know, all the time. I was () my life.

Something that was revolving in my head () to get out of that place, of my mother and father's house. Because I couldn't live with them anymore (silence). So my father he was not living, when he comes in the house like, when he used to fight about, when he comes in the house, he switches off the radio, he switches off the TV. He wants the radio. Every time he comes, I will go to my room, I didn't even want to see him. So, it has always been like that. Every time when I see him, we don't talk, we don't say anything to each other, you know, we don't talk about anything. The only thing we talk about was when maybe we were going shopping we would talk about groceries () or other things, money. She, she, he doesn't even give me money to buy things for me. I don't ask anything from him. So, we never had a relationship. Because I don't even ask for anything () from him, for money, for anything (). Even for help if I have any problem, I don't ask for anything. I don't tell him when I'm having any kind of a problem if he could help me with it. (). (Silence). (Sigh). I am just like a stranger to them and they are just like strangers to me (silence). You know, most of the time I pretend that I am happy to see them or anything. You know I remember the time when he had to when I was in the cell, in the police station cell, I didn't feel like talking to them. I don't want to talk. There is nothing I can talk to them about, I can't talk to



them (silence). I felt they couldn't help me with anything, with any problem that I have, or I could run to them if ever I was in trouble. () don't know what to say. First thing I would say to them (silence).

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more when you say the first thing that you would say to them?

Interviewee: It is hard for me to go to my father and start a conversation with him or talk about anything with him. It's really hard. So we've been living like whenever he comes home, I will go to my room or lock myself in my room. () even when they () I would lock myself in my room.

Interviewer: You have mentioned that you became scared of your mother when you were about six years old. What other feelings did you have about your mother or what feelings do you think your mother had about you?

Interviewee: (Silence). Of killing me, yes. If I can just grab you in my arms I would kill you, you know (silence).

Interviewer: So that's how you think your mother felt about you?

Interviewee: No, she did say that.

Interviewer: O, she said it?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: She said it like I was not a good child. She couldn't see the good in me. She would only see the bad. So I () some things myself. Their () your mind can function in a way that you could see the positive things or good things, or sometimes the mind can change haven't something myself there () you can () change () mind () too much happening. You can't see the good (silence). So, (silence) and good in me. Ja, after the depression () appreciate my father or big () you know () if I wearing ()

they would say I look beautiful but (). That the way I look that I look beautiful () believe(). Anything that was happening () after () believe anything () after. Sometimes like she would () search for me () you know, () it's nothing you know () would do anything. It was hard to appreciate that she had done something. She was cooking for me () but I didn't appreciate anything () so () you know.

Interviewer: So that was when you started to get depression when you was in std 9? So then your mother did do things for you, but you couldn't appreciate it?

Interviewee: No, at that time I was still doing things for her. () when I was working she was cooking () help me sometimes. It was like she wasn't doing anything for me.

Interviewer: So there was a time when your mother behaved a bit better?

Interviewee; Ja. When I was pregnant.

Interviewer: But then you was depressed and you didn't appreciate ()?

Interviewee: () It was like she was doing nothing because I () every day, you know. Even when I had a job, I didn't appreciate (). I had something I could () in the future () having children (). But there is something () I didn't say anything () (silence).

Interviewer: So to get back the feelings that you think your mother had about you, you felt that she, her feelings was of killing you, because she said it at that time and she would say something like if I can grab you in my arms I will kill you and you felt that you were not a good child. Your mother made you feel that you're not a good child. Were there any other feelings that you think she had?

Interviewee: That she would leave me, she would leave us (silence). She would poison us, you know (silence). But I didn't care about her any more. I didn't care anymore. I didn't felt sorry for her. (). She can't stay with a husband beating her. Why doesn't she fight back? She () it happen to herself.

Interviewer: And what feelings do you think your father had about you?

Interviewee: He loved me.

Interviewer: OK, so he loved you.

Interviewee: But I didn't see that. My mother also loved me.

Interviewer: How do you know that?

Interviewee: (Silence). One day she begged me to stay when I told her that I was leaving. She can't live without me and one day also, my father, they were fighting, you know, they were fighting and I told her that I was leaving, so she asked me () if he wants her to leave?/live with me () you know (), she doesn't have a life without me. () wants me to be there (). I can't help her with her problems or hold her. You know, I can't put her on my shoulders () carrying her ().

Interviewer: So you felt very responsible for your mother?

Interviewee: Very, very, very. I felt very sorry for her like, I mean, how can she be treated like that as a woman, you know. And I wanted to fight for her (). Couldn't say anything to my father. Even if I wanted to say something ().

Interviewer: What were your feelings towards your father?

Interviewee: I felt like I wanted to fight with him. I wanted him to hear what I have to say to him but I couldn't, I was too scared to say (). I wanted to () to scold him and tell him what he's doing is not right. I just kept quiet.

Interviewer: On Wednesday you mentioned that when you were a teenager, that your father came home and he was drunk and he said something about you are going to tell that he has molested you and you didn't understand the word molested. Can you tell me a bit more about your thoughts and your feelings that you had?

Interviewee: I didn't have any (). I was scared, I was, I hated my father. I didn't want to, I didn't even want to talk to him. I didn't even want him near me. I don't even want to listen to what he has so say.

Interviewer: Did you sometimes feel that your father was looking at you in a sexual way?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: So, it was only this once.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: that he talked about something like molesting?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK. Is there anything more that you want to say about your mother and your father?

Interviewee: (Silence). (Sigh). No. I thought maybe I cannot count on them for anything.

Interviewer: Thank you.

Interviewee: OK.

#### Interview 4

Interviewer: I just want to make sure that I understand correctly. Yesterday when you talked about () you lived with your great grandmother and great grandfather and your mother, your aunts, looked after you as a baby.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Were they all still at school?

Interviewee: No, the other one was a teacher.

Interviewer: OK. And during the morning when they were at school, who looked after you? Do you know? Your great grandmother?

Interviewee: Yes () my () mother, I think she was there.

Interviewer: OK, So she was also there?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Your mother's mother?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Your mother worked, but she stayed in the same house? Or was she away for times?

Interviewee: You know, she, the times that she was working in Stilfontein, I don't remember, because she worked there and then like one day when they came back from work she brought some toys. You know. I don't remember the period before we moved to Klerksdorp.

Interviewer: OK, today we are going to talk about your first pregnancy, you know with your first child, what you remember about that. Can you tell me about your first pregnancy?

Interviewee: You know, (silence) at the time I was still working. And, but I remember my boyfriend, the father of the child, came to stay with me, but I was fighting with him. It felt like I don't know him, I don't want to spend the rest of my life with him, so I chased him away I told him to go back home. So, I was still going to work, but still I had problems at work with my colleagues, they are, they are not treating me well, you know. So, (silence) but I moved from my home. The feeling that I had, I was, I was feeling scared and insecure, all by myself (silence) (cracks fingers). I wasn't feeling safe.

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more about that. What were you scared of?

Interviewee: It's just like when you are being left alone then you are scared to be left alone (). Scared of it. It's just you and your thoughts that are coming to you.

Interviewer: Can you remember those thoughts? What were you thinking?

Interviewee: (Silence). (Voice soft). I don't remember (silence). But it was, it was the fear that I had for all these years. So it, it never went away. That I'll be able to stand on my own, that was it, you know, it was that kind of fear. I was very insecure. But I'll just move on everyday. You know, I went to work and coming back, but having a troubled mind and troubled thoughts. So it was not nice. It wasn't () no one every day so all the thoughts were troubling me, every day and I was not feeling safe that I will be able to act like a mother. I was not thinking that I will be able to act, to act like a mother. You know, the way that I think that I want to treat my child.

Interviewer: Can you tell me more about that? How did you think you will treat your child and what made you feel that you are not going to be able to be a mother?

Interviewee: It was, I was becoming sick. The depression was making me disabled in a way of being able to do (). It was acting on my body. It was paralysing me mentally. In the beginning of 2000 stopped (). [From () to () was wiped out while transcribing.

Pieces in the middle are notes that were taken down while doing the interview. About 2 minutes of talking were lost]. I went to the doctor again in the middle of the year but I don't remember how (interruption).

Interviewer: Sorry about that. I just want to switch it off. OK you can carry on.

Interviewee: You know, I don't remember quite clearly when was that, but it was after June. Oh, no, it was not after June. I went to a doctor. I remember I was looking for a psychologist.

Interviewer: Yes I remember.

Interviewee: Before I started working, because I had my unemployment money. So, I went to find a psychologist because of. You see the way that I grew up, all the things that were disturbing me, they were troubling me, all the time. So my mind stayed troubled and my () stayed troubled. So I wasn't feeling right. I was not happy about the way I was feeling. So I wanted to feel better, like I know the way I used to feel before.

Interviewer: Were you more depressed when you became pregnant or did your depression stayed the same?

Interviewee: It stayed the same. The thing, (sigh) (silence) I was stressing about other things, you know. I felt like I have a duty to do something. So I can't get myself to do that job. And I was, you know, I was worrying a lot. I was worrying that, that I can't use my mind, I can't think of the ways how to do the things that I want to do. And where must I start if I want to do that (sigh) (silence). So when the child was born, I, (silence) I was still working, but I didn't want to stay with my parents. Like sometimes I would leave her with my mother, you know, I was, it was not making any sense, you know. The way I was acting. I was not acting like a mother.

Interviewer: Can you be more specific?

Interviewee: OK, I got used to the life that I was used to. It was in me, in me, you know and I was still in that mode of the way I like to do things. I wasn't settled, I was not, my mind didn't register I was pregnant and I am a mother, you know, that I have that understanding and I should be acting like a mother, I have a child and the things that I should do for the child I wasn't doing them. I wasn't thinking about now I have to wash the napkins or now I have to feed the baby, or. These things were not there (silence). And () sometimes I would leave the child with my mother go to the place to meet my, the other boyfriend.

Interviewer: The second, the father of your second child?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about the birth of your first child? How was the birth, was it a normal birth?

Interviewee: No, it was a Caesar. So, (silence) I, didn't see the baby, you know. I am having a baby now, now what to do, you know, the things that I should be thinking about, you know, what to do next. It was just the baby there and there's nothing that I could do about it. So my mind is not there, you know, it was not yet programmed to be a mother, you know, so that I could act like a mother. It was not ready yet. So, but I had this children before time, unexpectedly. So it wasn't the right time. Something like that. So, I had done, I had done something wrong. So, it wasn't that time that maybe the Creator had made for me to have children. I didn't listen to what He () of me of what I should be doing. So, (silence) that is why my mind was not ready yet. And I was not acting like a mother.

Interviewer: I am not sure that I understand you correctly. Did you think the Creator made you a mother while you were not ready? Or how did you understand that?

Interviewee: I was wrong to have that kid.



Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: Ja, to fall pregnant.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: I wanted something before the Creator wanted me to have it.

Interviewer: I see. OK.

Interviewee: So, I just thought that now I can't you know, listen to my thoughts, or () He is talking to me now I have to do something, I am under pressure and something makes me think maybe if I have a child, then I, maybe my life would change. But () I felt like there is something I need to do, there is something that God is asking me to do and I cannot get myself getting it, getting to do that, you know. So I had to do something before I would conceded to having children or getting married. Because I thought of getting married and having a family, so it wasn't the time that He was going to give me that you understand. I had to do something before I would have the children ().

Interviewer: Did you have an idea of what this something must be?

Interviewee: Well, (sigh) (silence). You know, something was, was to, to make my family be a family, you know, to bring peace in my home.

Interviewer: OK, OK.

Interviewee: You know, because my family had problems and I could see that they are having a problem but I can't talk to them, they can't, they don't listen to me. You know, they don't want to listen to me, because my, my mother would say I don't want, I cannot be controlled by, by a child. You know, things like that would make me back off. Because she had said that she doesn't want to be controlled by a child. What can I say to her or what can I say to my father. () I haven't told you was that I was so scared of my father. () I was so scared.

Interviewer: Mmm, what were your fears?

Interviewee: Of beating me.

Interviewer: OK Has he ever beaten you?

Interviewee: You know, I was just scared if I would say something that he will beat me, I was just scared of being beaten. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Was there a specific reason why you had a Caesar? Did the doctor decide on a Caesar before the delivery of the baby?

Interviewee: So what they told me was that I, my () part of me was small, so I had to have a Caesar.

Interviewer: So you knew before that you are going to have Caesar?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And how did you feel about that?

Interviewee: No, it was a better way. Because it mean () know, that I my () was small, I would have asked for it, because I was s scared of having a baby like normally.

Interviewer: Where did that fear come from? Did you hear stories?

Interviewee: No, I was just scared of, just thinking about that, that my, my part, the vagina is too small and how a baby can () come out of that small place, so I was scared.

Interviewer: So you were actually relieved when the doctor said it is going to be a Caesar?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And can you remember some of the feelings that you had when you first saw your child?

Interviewee: I was happy. But my thoughts about my mother and my father, you know, the way I feel, they're still there. That they were not going to be happy about

the child, you know. Even though when they came to see me in the hospital, I was just pretending as if I am happy to see them, but I felt like I don't want to see them, I don't want to be with them.

Interviewer: What was their reaction when they heard that you are pregnant? How did they react?

Interviewee: No my mother didn't felt bad or react in a bad way. I just told her that I was pregnant. She was just quiet. My father also, he didn't say anything bad to me about the baby. But because of the way I'm used to the way they are, () you know, I am just thinking of them other way () all the time in my mind (sigh) (silence).

Interviewer: What kind of a mother did you think you will be before you fell pregnant? Did you ever think about being a mother and how that would be for you and how you would be as a mother?

Interviewee: I have. I thought of me, of me as being a very good mother, and a very understanding and loving, you know, I, and I will even think of the things that I would buy for my, for my children, the things I will do for her. I would make her very happy, you know, I would look well after her, you know. So, but my mind was, was full of things. The baby was not one of it, was not one of those things on my mind (silence).

Interviewer: So when you thought about yourself in the future of being a mother, you thought that you would be loving and understanding and you would be a good mother. Was that before you fell pregnant or...

Interviewee: Before. Even while I was pregnant.

Interviewer: Even while you were pregnant?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: So sometimes I, I learned that it's like, its not one of a problem which are made for me (laughs) that I would be expecting this out of myself () but of the Creator () programming people so it? Doesn't think of me the way I think, () my thoughts are not your thoughts, you know. So, sometimes would be expecting, you know, God is expecting something out of us so that's why there is a clash sometimes, but how I, I have seen, seen, seen it from, from, since I came here there are, you know, that my mind starting to go back, you know, that the way I see things, it, you know I am starting to learn some of the things that you mustn't expect the Lord () this life (). It is true when they say, when God says my thoughts are not your thoughts. So I have learned that you must accept anything that He gives you. So at that time I wasn't, I was becoming very rebellious.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: Because everything was not going the way I wanted them to. So I started being very rebellious. I didn't understand. I didn't even want to understand that, you know, I want things to be like this, but they are not going the way I want them to, you understand. So, I didn't think of God what () want me to have this, you understand. I was just thinking I want to have this and what about what God wants, you understand. If He wants you have to go accordingly or the way that you ask Him, you know, the way you ask him, so He's going to do them, maybe either way, but you, the way you're not expecting it to be done. So that's where everything went wrong.

Interviewer: Would you say you were angry because you fell pregnant?

Interviewee: (Silence). Well, I wasn't angry. I wasn't angry. I wasn't angry (silence). But something I remember I said (). How can somebody have a baby without saying I want to have a baby, you know. But at the time I was, my mind was, was rolling in another direction (). Now I can see that I was wrong (silence).

Interviewer: Just remind me, how old were you when you fell pregnant with your first baby?

Interviewee: I was 23.

Interviewer: 23?

Interviewee: (Silence). So the other thing that upset me was that, you know, I was expecting myself to be a good mother or, you know, I would do anything, anything for my child. I would see to it that she eats, she, she, the way she sleeps, you know, the way I prepared things for her, but I wasn't, I wasn't preparing things for her. I was always tired, I was always angry, you know, I was filled up with anger. So, that anger was broking my ways. You know, I couldn't see the way forward or the way I could do things, the way I want, I want them to be done (Long silence). (Sigh).

Interviewer: Can you say more about your anger?

Interviewee: You see, this anger came when my, my mother was making me angry about a lot of things. I would become angry because sometimes I'll do the things that I don't want to do, you know. I would say no, this was not the right thing, because all the time I was fighting for, I was fighting for the right thing to be done, you know. Things the way they should be done. So, I was fighting for that. So I would become very angry that, you know, things will go wrong if I don't do this thing, right, you know. So, I become very angry at my parents.

Interviewer: Mmm. So you were mostly angry at your parents during that time?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: But you also mentioned that you, mm, I think you used the word tortured, your boyfriend. Were you also very angry at him?

Interviewee: No, it was just an act.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: You know, it was just an act, like I don't want him, but I don't know how to tell him.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: You know, I don't want him to be in my life, but the fighting thing it was just an act, but I got used to it (). (Interruption).

Interviewer: Are they getting visitors now? Are they going to disturb us, do you think?

Interviewee: I don't know what will happen. So, (sigh) that anger, it was there all the time. It was, it was there from my childhood. I, I grew up with it.

Interviewer: Did you have angry feelings towards your first child as well? As a baby?

Interviewee: No. I wasn't angry at her. I love her. She was so small and sweet. So, I was happy, in a way, but I wasn't in the mood of being a mother.

Interviewer: Sorry, I didn't hear now. You were not in the?

Interviewee: mood of being a mother.

Interviewer: O, mood of ...

Interviewee: Being a mother (silence).

Interviewer: How would you describe yourself as a mother of your first child?

Interviewee: I, (sigh) I don't see a mother there. (Long silence). () while the baby was there, so I was just acting as I am having a baby. You know, not like a mother, loving and understanding, you know, the baby's just there, so I have to be around. I'm going to work but I have to go and see the child, but sometimes I'll leave her with my, with my mother. That's how it got possible that I, I fell pregnant, with the second child.

Interviewer: Mm, because you left your eldest child with...

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewer: How did the way you thought you would be a mother differed from the way you were actually a mother? Because you had all the, before you fell pregnant you thought you are going to be loving and understanding and. How did that differ from how you were a mother?

Interviewee: Uhh, I was tired, I was depressed. So I couldn't do the things the way I thought that I could do them, you know. Maybe if I come from work I'll wash the napkins, I would see to it that my child is being taken good care of, like, you know, like cuddle her or you know, take her in my arms. (Interruption).

Interviewer: I'm sorry about that interruption. You said that you were very tired and depressed and you couldn't do the things that you wanted to do for your child to take good care of her, like cuddle her and take in her your arms. Is there anything more that you want to add how you, the way you were with your first child, how it differed from the way you thought you are going to be with her?

Interviewee: (Silence). Well, I would get angry at my mother because uhh, (silence) she wouldn't (silence) do the things I, the way I was expecting, expecting it to be done, you know like the socks of, she, of the baby will not be seen. Some of them, I'll will not find them, you know, I don't know where they are. So, I would become very angry that things are not in a in a proper way, the way I'm expecting them to be (silence). So, it was very disturbing (crack fingers). I was expecting a lot from me and my from my mother (silence).

Interviewer: So you were expecting a lot from you and from your mother. Have you always been someone who expected a lot from yourself?

Interviewee: Yes, I'm expecting to be doing things better.

Interviewer: Mmm.

Interviewee: Mmm. You know, in the right way. So, I'm not expecting any mistakes or wrong things.

Interviewer: Mmm.

Interviewee: I was also angry at myself. I think it was also going into my nerves (laughs). (Interruption).

Interviewer: So, you say you were also angry at yourself?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more about that?

Interviewee: I was angry, I was doing wrong things. I couldn't get myself to doing the right things. I wanted to do, I wanted to see myself doing the right things (silence). So, it was very upsetting me and making me very angry (silence). I felt very helpless, stupid. I couldn't understand myself. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Who took care of your first child, mostly?

Interviewee: I was going to work, so my mother was looking after her, but I remember for the first three months I took her to my aunt, yes, I took her to my aunt. So, again I went back my mind was, it was not steady, I was not thinking straight. And I was not doing the things I think I should be doing. I was filled up with a lot of thoughts, troubling thoughts (silence). So, I went again to take the baby from my aunt. () ask myself why did I go to take care because I, I didn't want her to be with my mother and I was going to work. So my mother couldn't take care of two babies at the same time. Like the other one, my mother had a small child (silence). So I don't know why, what made me, I would do stupid things, the way, you know, in a nonsense manner.

Interviewer: Can you give me some examples?

Interviewee: Uhh, (sigh). Like for an example, (silence) I slept with a man knowing I will fall pregnant, you know, without using a condom. And I don't even know the man



(silence). I don't even know if he is sick or not sick. I don't even know where he's staying, I don't know his home (silence). (Interruption).

Interviewer: So were you thinking a lot about the fact that you fell pregnant without even knowing this man?

Interviewee: Yes, so I () remember what were they (). The thought about, about having kids without knowing the father and just meeting a person and you are having sex with the person and you are pregnant tomorrow(). You know. I () remember some of the things I thought about. The way () terrible thoughts, you know. But I, the way I see them, it is terrible, you know. Maybe somebody won't see them as that (silence).

So, (silence) but I was not having any problems. I loved my first child, I loved her.

Interviewer: Can you say more about these terrible thoughts that you had?

Interviewee: I don't remember.

Interviewer: You don't remember them, but you just remember.

Interviewee: They were not good thoughts.

Interviewer: Mmm, mmm.

Interviewee: Yes. You know some of the facts that () would look at as in general () for all of us, is that you shouldn't just go there and have sex with any person () that tomorrow that you are pregnant with this person's child, you know. And you don't know anything, they are, (silence) they are, you know, they are customary according to, to the way children should be raised or anything. If you are going to have any problems with that child in the future, (silence) and you don't know this person, really, what kind of a person he, he is or what kind of a person she is, you know, that if he goes mad sometimes or it is really bad, you don't know, so you are going to, to give back to something that is terrible, you know (silence). So you should always be careful. But, we don't know what God is thinking for us, you know. But, I, I, I on my

side, I think I have done a very big mistake by having the children before the right time. Because I would feel this is the right time, you know. () it will be concerned () as right then you can have a child, not by pushing that I want to have a child or I want to do this without feeling that it is all right to have, to do this thing, because sometimes () you are not you know, working hand in hand with God. So, it is a very big problem. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Very often in a mother's past there are events or people who have an influence on the way the mother thinks and behaves with her child. Mmm. Are there any specific events or people in your past that you think influenced the way you were with your first child?

Interviewee: No, not even my mother.

Interviewer: Not even your mother? Why do you say that?

Interviewee: She never taught me how to raise my child or how to handle her, you know, things to do with her, you know, because I think I know better, you know. I have experienced a lot in life, so I know better about babies and how I should take care of them, but with my child I was not practising that. I was very careless. It was not like I am careless. My mind was just functioning in that way that I was careless.

Interviewer: Mmm, so you didn't want to be careless?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Ja.

Interviewee: I was not expecting myself to do the wrong things (silence).

Interviewer: I remember on Wednesday you said that you took care of your little sister

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: when she was born. Mmm, how were you different with your little sister than you were with your first child?

Interviewee: Well, I was, I would say down to earth, I was more calm, like fresh, you know, you expect anything that, that comes your way, that you would act, you know, accordingly, in the right way even if the situation is not the way it should be, but you just work under pressure, it doesn't matter what is going on, you accept, you know. But with my child I was not accepting.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: I was not accepting what was going on (silence). Oh, je (big sigh).

Interviewer: Are you tired?

Interviewee: Ja, (laughs). It's like () it's time () everything is starting from there.

Interviewer: It is difficult to remember everything again.

Interviewee: Ja.

Interviewer: Mmm.

Interviewer: What role did your feelings about your child's father, of your first child, played in your behaviour with that child?

Interviewee: Since he was not there, but I, but I wished for was, if he was, you know, a very good father that he would take care of the child when I'm gone to work, you know, that he will look very, very well after her. But my wishes were, but, you know, or the thoughts that I had about him. So, so you know, everything was not making any sense. Nothing was making any sense. Everything was out of control. It wasn't making any sense at all. I was not in control of my life at all (silence). I wouldn't practice what I preached. So, it was another experience. A bad one. (Interruption).

Interviewer: Can you describe some of your behaviour with your first child?

Interviewee: (Silence). My behaviour?

Interviewer: Mm.

Interviewee: (Silence). Well, I was, (silence) I would act very funny, you know. I remember one time I was, I was dancing, you know, for her, she was looking at me, to make her laugh, you know, and one day when I was coming from work I, I was doing funny things to make her laugh, you know (silence). But I had some bad behaviour that I don't remember or the things that I felt inside, it wasn't good. So I tried to make myself happy, to make the baby happy, at times, even though it was not the way I was expecting it to be, as much as I wanted to.

Interviewer: Would you say that you sometimes, you talked about, you said you felt terrible things inside, but you acted, you tried to make your baby laugh. Can you remember some of the terrible things you felt and that you thought?

Interviewee: Uhh, (sigh). I don't remember, but I will try. (Silence). OK, I, I was not treating my mother well, I was not helping her, you know, and I felt angry and rebellious towards my mother and hate and without understanding. I was very stupid and careless. (Long silence). That's all I remember.

Interviewer: Am I right if I say that, you know, it I think about what you said on Wednesday that you always kept your feelings inside...

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And that you had all these angry feelings and even hate for your mother, but that you acted happy and...

Interviewee: Yes, I didn't show how I feel, I didn't show how I feel. So this is () why I was troubled (). I was very troubled (), so that's why nothing was going well for me. I didn't even consider God. Not that He is there for me and I could talk to Him to help me solve my problems. I didn't even think about Him. I was always troubled, troubled, troubled. I couldn't even pray. I didn't even remember to pray to God, for God to help me (), because I think at that time He was still bad (). But I didn't see ().

Interviewer: It seems as if you felt very alone, isolated from every person and also from God.

Interviewee: I felt very alone. It was like I was alone in the world. There was nobody around. It was just like that.

Interviewer: And did you have a feeling that your child is there for you or not really?

Interviewee: No, not at all. I felt she, she didn't mean anything, you know. She was just there because I, I don't see her, I don't recognise her, you know, my mind does not register her, you know, so (silence).

Interviewer: So she was there but it was if you were not really in an interaction with her.

Interviewee: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: Yes. She was just there. It was just like maybe, my, my, my aunt's child, something like that, you know.

Interviewer: So, just a baby, not your baby, not your child?

Interviewee: Ja, just a baby, not my baby. Something like that.

Interviewer: OK. Thank you.

### Interview 5

Interviewer: Our focus will first be your first child. Often when a mother is pregnant, she thinks about the baby. She wonders if the baby is going to be a boy or a girl, how the baby is going to look like and which characteristics the baby will have. Can you tell me some of the thoughts that you had about your baby? What did you wonder about when you were pregnant with your first child?

Interviewee: I did ask if it is a boy or a girl. I went for scanning and so I found out it was a girl.

Interviewer: How did you feel?

Interviewee: (Silence). Nothing. I don't remember that I had any thoughts about it.

Interviewer: Did you ever wonder about the baby? How this baby is going to look like or what kind of a person this baby is going to be? Or didn't you really think about the baby?

Interviewee: I don't remember. I didn't think about it (silence).

Interviewer: I remember you said, I can't remember if it was on Tuesday or on Wednesday, but you said that you wanted an abortion, but the doctor didn't want you to have an abortion.

Interviewee: O yes. (). Change my mind eight weeks. I thought that I will be happy if I have the child and the father is there.

Interviewer: How many weeks or months were you pregnant () ?

Interviewee: () Eight weeks.

Interviewer: Eight weeks?

Interviewer: Can you tell me more about what made you change your mind?

Interviewee: () I just thought that I was happy(). I just thought about that, so that I was glad ().

Interviewer: I don't understand.

Interviewee: If I have the child. I just that thought that if I have a child, () the father is there, I don't need to worry about anything. I'll keep it.

Interviewer: Were you sorry about the decision afterwards?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: () How did you think how is the baby going to be like? Did you have any thoughts about what kind of a person the baby is going to be?

Interviewee: I don't remember.

Interviewer: What were your thoughts and your feelings about the baby after the birth?

Interviewee: I think we've talked about that.

Interviewer: After the birth?

Interviewee: O, after the birth. I didn't think about that, I don't remember. I remember I was happy to have the baby. Yes I was happy. But again, I was just thinking about my mother and father, you know that they don't want us, that they have something against it.

Interviewer: Against the baby?

Interviewee: Ja, () wasn't accept. They're not openheartedly. Because they were never honest with me about their feelings towards me () about anything. They never show how they really feel.

Interviewer: How would you describe your relationship with your first child?

Interviewee: I don't remember. (*Resistance?*)

Interviewer: Was your baby difficult to care for or easy? () What kind of a baby was she?

Interviewee: No. She was easy to take care of, to wash. It was easy for me to wash her or to change her napkins. () not difficult (). It was easy to carry her around. She was small enough for me to be able to carry her around. She was not heavy () or tired. Ask mother to help me look after her or wash her.

Interviewer: So would you say she was an easy baby to care for?

Interviewee: Yes. ().

Interviewer: () What kind of a child was, is she? How would you describe her? What are her characteristics?

Interviewee: She's sweet. I can't tell you more. She was easy to love. I don't remember anything else about her ().

Interviewer: Was it difficult for you to look after her?

Interviewee: No. I don't remember. (Silence). There's nothing in my head. There's nothing more. () because I, I also was not there, you know, all the time. () mother () I was at work. You know when I come from work I would sleep for a long time. () In the morning when I come from work, because I was working night shift. () So, I wasn't spending a lot of time with her. Don't remember.

Interviewer: She was three months old when you fell pregnant with your second child, (). Did your feelings change when you became pregnant with your second child?

Interviewee: Uh Uh, I don't remember.

Interviewer: Let's move on to your second pregnancy. Can you describe your second pregnancy? How was it for you?

Interviewee: I was scared (silence) that, that I was pregnant again. I was somehow accepting, but not fully because, when I was five months or four months, I was four



months, I wanted to, no, it was three months or four months, in between, I wanted to have an abortion and I went and made an appointment for an abortion. So I didn't succeed. to go, because it was far and I didn't have transport ().

Interviewer: So would you say that at first when you learned that you are pregnant that you accepted it?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And later on you decided that you'd rather want to have an abortion?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: But then you didn't go for an abortion because you didn't have transport?

Interviewee Yes.

Interviewer: What made you change your mind? What made you first accept the pregnancy and then decided that you rather want an abortion?

Interviewee: Well, I had a lot of thoughts. I was scared of what will my parents say and the father of the child that I am working with and what other, other people would say at work about me being pregnant again, you know, and I would look very stupid to people and careless, very stupid, you know, and it's easy for people to take advantage of me, you know. That all those people () (sigh). So, I was losing (silence) my self-esteem and (silence) dignity, you know. So, I was very careless. (Sigh). (). So I started to question myself a lot, you know (sigh). So I started degrading myself, you know, seeing all the negative things that would come my way. I was saying about myself (). And the people also were behaving negative towards me. I remember one woman there, she was my age, but she said to me you must throw that child in the dustbin. You know at that time I was very sick, I was very sick. Once somebody say something to me it would really ring in my mind, you know. I would seriously think about that and I would see myself, look of myself as very low. () give it deep thought.

I couldn't fight with other people, fight for myself, you know, because you are not suppose to fight, you are suppose to respect each other, other people (). So ().

Interviewer: Did you consider throwing your child in the dustbin?

Interviewee: No, not at all. And the father of my child also was negative towards me. So, he, he wouldn't talk to me, or, or ask me about the child, because even when I was pregnant, I was still working in the same office as he. He wouldn't ask me anything. Because, sometimes I would hear him, he was talking to other women. He would go for a weekend away to another woman in another place. He would call her during the week and would talk. Even when I am there, he would still talk to other women, to other girlfriends.

Interviewer: () And he was married?

Interviewee: Ja.

Interviewer: How much was he, how old was he? You mentioned that he was older ().

Interviewee: Uh, I don't know. Maybe he was forty, somewhere there or thirty something but I don't think he was thirty something, he might be forty, forty something. But I think he was younger than my father, because my father was forty five, forty six, () maybe forty or forty one, somewhere there () older forty. So I thought he was a very responsible man and very loving and caring man. So, he wouldn't do anything bad to me. He would help me. He wouldn't say ugly things about me, like the things that he used to say in the office in front of me, like the time when I, when I was leaving for the hospital, you know, he was so happy. He was talking to the other colleagues, that by now I should be mad, now, I'm leaving for ever.

Interviewer: Sjoe, was that when you were going to Denmar?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: How did you feel about that?

Interviewee: Gmm, I was, I felt very angry and hurt because I wouldn't imagine him doing things like that, because he should be understanding. He's the one that told me that he loved me and that he wanted me. I told myself that he said he loved me and I wanted somebody there for me. You know, I thought that this man wanted to change his life, he wanted to make his life right (sigh) (silence). So, then I went to Denmar.

Interviewer: How many months were you pregnant when you went to Denmar?

Interviewee: Five months.

Interviewer: Five months pregnant? For how long were you there?

Interviewee: I stayed for two weeks. There I told them that at work they say funny things about me, things I was complaining about. Because you know, some of the things were just small things but the thing is, the thing is that I didn't have anyone to, to share my feelings with, the way I feel. I couldn't tell my mother afterwards, you know, something happened to me at work and I'm feeling like this or I want to cry. I wouldn't cry, but I felt like crying. Because it was hurting. And I, I, everything was locked up inside (silence). So, I didn't cry. I didn't say anything. I didn't say anything to anyone. There was no one there. So there were all those things. If I could just say to anyone, you know what happened today at work or I could just tell them, but there was no one. So that's why they were, they were coming more stronger than me. I couldn't share my feelings with anybody, even if I'm hurt.

Interviewer: In which way was this pregnancy with your second child different from your first pregnancy?

Interviewee: There was nothing different. I felt the same way (silence). And the father was never there for me. He never talked to me about it, about me being pregnant. Because the only time I remember was the first time that I told him that I wanted to go for an abortion. He gave me a lift to the hospital. He drove me there to

the hospital. He drove me there, but he never said anything. He was not concerned about anything, about the baby or me being pregnant. () He was the father of the child, but he was not concerned about anything.

Interviewer: I'm not sure that I understand. So, he drove you to the hospital when you said you wanted an abortion?

Interviewee: Yes, for the first time.

Interviewer: For the first time?

Interviewee: Before I went to that other place.

Interviewer: And what happened at the hospital?

Interviewee: O, at the hospital I saw a doctor and he told me that they are not aborting there. They don't carry abortions there. So, I had to go to another hospital, but it was far away.

Interviewer: When did you tell the father of your second child that you are pregnant?

Interviewee: The time I, no he saw me because I was working with him or I told him the same day when I went to the doctor. I went to the doctor and he picked me up to go to work. So I told him no, I'm not going to work and the doctor told me that I am pregnant. But he was not, he didn't hear what I was saying or he was not listening or he didn't care that I was pregnant.

Interviewer: So you told him immediately that you are pregnant?

Interviewee: Yes, I told him.

Interviewer: But he didn't react to that?

Interviewee: No, he didn't. It was like he didn't hear. It was just like, you know, when your mind is absent or you are, you are concentrating on something else, then I tell you something, but you don't hear me. So, it was just like that. So, (silence) but sometimes I don't blame him, you know, people are having problems all around this

world. So I told him, but he didn't hear anything or react to that. But I also had problems when I was there, that my life was becoming very difficult and I didn't understand how come that I was acting the way I was acting ().

Interviewer: I'm not sure that I understand what you mean?

Interviewee: No, I'm just telling you that (laughs), it's like you are disturbed and you are just far away from, from, from things which are happening to you. You are not yourself at all and those things it's like you don't know something. So even if you tell me that, for an example I was pregnant, but I, I didn't, I didn't notice (silence) or it didn't come to my mind that I was pregnant and you know, I would change the way I am or the way I do things or that I would start acting positively, or, in a way that, that would (silence) (sigh) would make me to be more of a mother. So, (silence) so, sometimes I think that I was in a world where I had to prove myself. I had to stop things to happen to me. So, I was in that world (silence). But, I myself, I was living in my own world (silence) that I created, or which was created by the way I was treated. I went to that world to live there all by myself. I was not living according to the standards of other people or of the world. I was far away from the world or from reality. (Long silence). I was doing things just doing them, thinking that maybe things will work out, but, because I wanted to change the way my life was, you know. So, I didn't change anything. I stayed the same. I didn't change (silence).

Interviewer: You said something yesterday about hoping that your first child and again when you were pregnant with your second child, that somehow having the baby will change you or will change something.

Interviewee: Yes. I was hoping that, you know it will just happen naturally. It will, it will be natural. It will come natural that when I am pregnant then I will change, you know, I will, my mind would form into being a mother, you know. So, sometimes it

depends on (silence) what kind of the life you are living in, you know. You mustn't expect that it will be the same (sigh) (silence).

Interviewer: When did you realise that nothing actually changed?

Interviewee: When I was pregnant, when I was pregnant (silence).

Interviewer: Would you say that you almost hoped that the baby will bring some kind of magic into your life?

Interviewee: Yes, but it was, it was, you know something new, you know, in my life. I added something new in my life and my life would change in that, in that way. But I have learned that you have to take a step forward. It don't have to just stay there and think that things will just bring themselves to you, you know (silence). It depends on which world you're living in, you know, not just any, any other world (silence). But I was, for an example, like animals, you know, they, their babies are there, they, they feed them and they take care of them, they don't leave them. Like even when () they feed them, they don't leave their babies, you know. So I, I was not having that. I am having a child now, I have to do things for the child, you know. It was like I have to be programmed first, you know, to be in that mode before I could do anything. So like I say it was before the Creator determined for me to have a child, to have a family, you know. It wasn't that time (silence). So, you mustn't expect a lot when you are pregnant (silence). You'll struggle. It depends on, on what's, what's in your head, what is going on in your head. (Long silence).

Interviewer: I wonder whether you were disappointed or angry or what feelings you had when you realised that what I hoped for

Interviewee: Yes, I was angry.

Interviewer: Angry?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Were you angry in general or were you angry at the baby that the baby couldn't bring the change that you wanted?

Interviewee: No, in general.

Interviewer: In general?

Interviewee: Yes, I would see other mothers, you know, behaving in another way but how come I don't behave in a way. (Long silence).

Interviewer: It seems as if you went from accepting that you're pregnant and are going to have your second child to wanting an abortion, to accepting again, to wanting an abortion again and then you just couldn't get the abortion. Did you eventually accept the pregnancy or did you in a way resented the pregnancy?

Interviewee: In a way I resented the pregnancy. I hadn't accepted it. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Tell me about the birth of your baby. Was your second child also a Caesar?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you remember about the birth?

Interviewee: Uhh, (sigh) (silence). I don't remember much, but I remember her, that she (silence), she, it felt like she wanted to be more closer to me.

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more? How did you experience that, how did you know, what gave you the impression?

Interviewee: I saw it, I saw it (silence), I saw the baby, but I didn't feel like (silence) I thought sometimes that I felt like I would leave the baby, but, you know, because of most of the time I would not make the decision or I was scared of making the decision of saying that I would leave the baby at the hospital with the nurses because I was scared of my mother, you know. Most of the time when I want to do something, the fear of my mother would come my way. Even if I want to decide now that I want to

take a decision, I would say this is what I want to do, you know, I won't be able to do it, because I would think of my mother, you know, what will my mother say about this (sigh). She was standing in my way, I couldn't be myself (silence). I couldn't think for myself, you know, the way I wanted to do things (silence).

Interviewer: Did you have different feelings towards your second child as a baby than towards your first child?

Interviewee: No. It was just the same. Uh, and I felt like I don't want her, you know, I can't do anything for her because she was looking more like her father and it was really disturbing me if I look at her.

Interviewer: I didn't hear that clearly. It was really if you look at her?

Interviewee: It was disturbing me a lot, because she looked more like her father.

Interviewer: How did you feel about her father at that time?

Interviewee: I hated him (silence). I would kill him (silence) (sigh). Because he had done me wrong. He treated me really bad. (Long silence).

Interviewer: So in the hospital you already knew, often considered leaving your second child with the nurses?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: But you were too scared to do that because of how your mother would react?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: How would you describe, apart from feeling scared, how would you describe your feelings at that stage?

Interviewee: Helplessness, or stupid, you know, can't decide for yourself, you know, that way, you know, you cannot stand for yourself, you cannot stand up for yourself. (Long silence).



Interviewer: How did you feel about yourself?

Interviewee: Really bad. Really bad. I didn't appreciate the person I was (silence).

But I couldn't help myself (silence).

Interviewer: And at that stage, how did you feel about your baby?

Interviewee: Oh, I, she was there. There was nothing I could do about it (silence).

Even, I didn't even show the way I felt about the baby to my mother, you know. I would just act like I'm happy, everything is fine, where as inside I felt like you know, nothing is right. That is something I had to do, I should have left the child at the hospital or I should have given it to somebody. () (Interruption).

Interviewer: Just to come back to what you were feeling in hospital, you really felt bad about yourself and you felt about the baby that you should have given the baby to someone else or left her with the nurses and you couldn't stand up for yourself and was scared of how your mother would react.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Did you have any feelings towards the baby like

Interviewee: Love.

Interviewer: Love or hate, positive or negative. What feelings did you have towards the baby?

Interviewee: No, I loved it.

Interviewer: OK. (Interruption).

Interviewer: So you felt also very helpless and again very alone?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And you were acting happy and you were not showing what you were feeling inside?

Interviewee: Yes, I would not show it (silence). Because I did, I'm a very wrong person.

Interviewer: Why do you say that?

Interviewee: Because I would feel when I'm angry, I don't want any mistake.

Interviewer: Are you saying you're a perfectionist and you want things to be just right?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And if it is not right, you're very upset about it? And then?

Interviewee: Yes, I would tell somebody, but if that person don't listen, what am I going to do about it, you understand, if it is that person's duty to do that, you understand.

Interviewer: Did you feel your own anger?

Interviewee: Yes. I did. A lot.

Interviewer: Did it feel to you as if your anger can get out of control?

Interviewee: Mm-mm.

Interviewer: How long were you in the hospital with your second child?

Interviewee: Three days.

Interviewer; Three days?

Interviewee: Mm.

Interviewer: How was it when you went home with her?

Interviewee: Uh?

Interviewer: When you went home, after you have been in the hospital. How did you experience your child at home, your second child, your first child, yourself as being a mother, and your mother?

Interviewee: Uh, nothing. (Long silence). Because you know, I was more concerned about other things than the baby, not like the baby I was concerned about, the baby and the things that I should do for her (silence).

Interviewer: How would you describe your second baby? What kind of a baby was she? She looked very much like her father, but what kind of a person was she? How was she different from your first child? And how was she the same?

Interviewee: Yes, she was the same. And she looked very strict, like a very strict child (laughs). You know, that she could tell you what to do. That you should do this, you should do that. You know. My first child was a very loving and caring somebody.

Interviewer: When you describe your second child as looking like a strict child, that can tell you what to do, she was still a baby, so she couldn't talk. But, that sounds like your mother. Was there any feeling that this child is like your mother?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: No?

Interviewee: No, not the way she looked, you know, when I look at her. That was not the kind of person that she might be.

Interviewer: I'm interested to know, what did this baby do or what made that you perceived her that she is strict or that she could be strict and that she could control you.

Interviewee: The way she looked. You know, she looked very serious most of the time.

Interviewer: Mm. And how did that make you feel?

Interviewee: No, good, that I'll have somebody like that in my home. (Laughs).

Somehow good, but it didn't really show that I felt good. (Sigh). Well, she's not there anymore (*Feeling heavy own feeling*). (Long silence).

Interviewer: How do you feel about that?

Interviewee: (Sigh). It doesn't help to think that way, (laughs) she's still not there.

(Long silence).

Interviewer: What were your hopes and wishes for your second child? Did you have any?

Interviewee: (Silence). My mind was troubled (silence), about the issue at work. You know, I was thinking a lot of things. (Long silence). (sigh).

(After the tape was switched off: I can't understand that I don't feel any pain, that I'm not sorry)

## Interview 6

(This interview could not be rescued by a sound engineer. What follows are notes taken down during the interview.)

Interviewer: We talked about your pregnancy with your second child and her birth. You said she was different from your first child. She wanted to be with you. Can you say a bit more about that?

Interviewee: I can't tell more. Things that I remember. She was a bigger size. She acted if she wants me to hold her. First time she slept with me in my arms she was sleeping a lot better.

Heavy. Weight. Not easy. I was stressing a lot.

Couldn't lift her up. Not easy to bath her

Emotionally and also physically.

I was feeling hurt. Was feeling down. My self-esteem was low.

My mind was not working well. Couldn't give answers to some of the things that was troubling me. Mixed up.

Feeling lazy and tired. The same.

Mind just like that all the time. A lot of noise.

It was like corrupted? Not in order.

Can't explain it. Couldn't think straight.

Talking to myself. What a lot of things. I don't know. Like a scrap car. Something doesn't work anymore.

Computer that doesn't process information.

Out of order mentally and physically.

Head not functioning well.

Like a radio playing on two stations at the same time.

Not sure.

Klerksdorp voices.

Interviewer: Was it other peoples voices or was it your own voice in your mind? Or how would you describe it?

Interviewee: Yes it was other peoples voices, because I was like, I was even () you know. Or I would do something and they would say no, you know, something like that. I don't know what he want me to do then.

Accusing me of being a useless mother and another thing was asked if I know Jesus Christ. Scared that somebody wanted to kill me. Devil wanted to kill me.

The baby was seven months old ().

Scared of being in the world. Thinking about the planet. Where I am ? I remember.

Song play. A mind the house will fall, world will fall. Felt like buttons. Press buttons, will I react. They.

Felt changing now and then. Scared devil was after me.

Other people's voices. I was in a test. Would say something say, no, devil.

What do you want me to tell them.

Interviewer: You told me in one of the other interviews about the day you wanted to suffocate your baby.

Interviewer: Can you remember what you were feeling and thinking that day?

Interviewee: She was two months old. Still in Ermelo. Hadn't left job. Still working at the time. No voices of people talking to me. I don't remember thinking anything. That parents left to go to town. I felt like nothing is in order. My family knew I was going to work. How can they all leave to go to town. Nothing in this family is in order.

Interviewer: So you felt your family is not there for you?

Interviewee: () They are looking at the situation in the house. They're not there.

Just nobody.

They're not connected to us and what was happening around to us. () Living somehow in space. They don't see what was really happening. They're not even concerned (silence). So I left the baby with there with her sister. She was sleeping on top of the bed. Locked, left the door open. The burglar.

Left for work.

Interviewer: I am not sure what did you lock? You left the door open, but what did you lock?

Interviewee: ()

Interviewer: O, OK. So you left for work. What were you thinking?

Interviewee: ()

Come back at night. Baby was still sick. Still alive.

Couldn't suck the bottle, couldn't eat. She had taken her to the doctor. Never asked me what I did to this child. Nothing. Didn't.

Wasn't scared. Not scared. Not concerned. Took her to sleep.

Still working. Don't remember what I was feeling. Angry at father about something.

What was going on. Don't remember what I told myself.

Put her inside the blanket and covered her all over. She was two months old. Loud the baby. Had feeling.

Saw it as useless to have the baby.

Another day tried to suffocate her with a plastic bag. Don't remember what happened.

Three weeks before I killed the baby.

Remember father phoned me. Received my payslip R2000.

Went to get to buy the baby's food. Only having milk for the small one.

So I left them with my younger brother and his girlfriend.

Went didn't get R2000. Got R150. Bought food for the baby. Then I went back and

when I got there I went to my father's sister. They don't have the same mother.

It was the first time. I didn't know her name, I know she was my father's sister.

I was, we were in the house. She took the baby to the bedroom. She.

I gave her the baby. I was tired. Then she must just hold her.

I was feeling tired all the time. My mind was troubled all the time. Couldn't.

Took baby to bedroom. Say something.

(Disruptions. People came into the office to use the microwave to heat food)

Interviewer: Ok, you were telling me?

Interviewee: No, just heard doing something to the baby.

Got very angry. Couldn't show anger.

Said something about.

People do things to baby.

Telling her something. Gave us food to eat.

Didn't want the food. Didn't tell. Looking at my child. Playing with her.

Child was looking at her like she knows her.

Like she was brainwashed. Felt angry towards this woman. Never spend life with her.

Don't know how her.

Relations. Angry at her. What is it that she was doing to my child.

So she gave us food. We ate. Then we walked me to my home.

She said didn't know anything.

Talking about family and what was.

What happened to your mother.



Just like they have.

Like they have killed her spirit.

It. Then I got.

She cannot fight for herself. Remember to me.

Dad she can't take control. Was in the house. First going in my father's house. Now come there.

Scolded to come there. Didn't want her there to come into the house.

Passing by.

Then she left. Something else, I had taken my kid. Some people came. They came to take their kids. Form. The. They.

They were arrested. Parents took their things out of our house.

Felt bad. Why? Don't have anything. Whose things am I going to use.

So I kept on thinking how stupid I am. I didn't think I must go back.

One day I took them to my neighbour. She used to come to visit my mother.

Went there to her house. But I didn't see anything that was wrong with her.

First day that I went to town. Another one when came. She said to me I was a whore.

Because me, I'm a good person. When I left me anything.

Didn't know what I happened. Didn't fight with her. Felt like fighting with her. Just thought

Felt like. Go to her house. Used to have a tuck shop. Food on credit there.

She was drunk that day. Leave her husband.

Didn't like her. Felt some things. Don't want her near me. Wanted money from me.

Must buy her.

So one day I left my children to go to the tuck shop. Bought a cigarette. Went to her house. Took the small one. They gave me food to eat.

Didn't have food.

I didn't want them.

Want to protect my children from things happening. Simba chip. Told her she mustn't. Finger. Didn't. Don't want them to do anything to my children so.

Smoking a lot. Didn't have money to buy cigarettes.

Wasn't thinking of anything. Step to future.

Didn't think about those things.

Brother.

Other tenants in house. Guy wanted to see my bedroom. Told him to get his things out of my bedroom.

I was being unreasonable.

I didn't have the courage to fight.

Used other's bedroom.

Was also disturb.

Whole situation was disturbing. Was feeling helpless. What to do now. Had to put myself in order.

The child was playing with the baby, her little sister.

The day the thing happened. Terrible day.

Didn't have food to eat. Took some beer bottles to buy vet cakes and.

I was hungry. Something. No.

Devil is after me. Anything can happen.

At night sleeping. See picture of globe, world. Mind all those things. Scared the moon will fall on our house. Will fall on our house. I was scared.

So something told me. Must eat.

Food. Body react. When you have something. Hungry feeling a lot better after I had eaten. Thoughts again. Thoughts. Thinking about my life and how miserable it was.

Don't have money to buy them food. What am I going to do?

So I got angry. At times I would feel radar talking to me or about me. Song being sung for me. I would hear that. All these things were affecting me. Kind of a test.

Those things not happening anymore. So I killed the baby and that was it.

I saw her like a stumbling block in front of me and that was her I had to get rid of her.

Interviewer: Any other thoughts or feelings?

Don't remember any.

Interviewer: When did this all happen?

Interviewee: April last year.

Interviewer: Thank you.

### Interview 7

Interviewer: This is our last interview this morning. Is there anything that you still want to tell me about how you experienced your mother?

Interviewee: (Silence) I don't think. I can't think (silence). Oh, she was bossy and bullying, she was bullying me around. I didn't like it.

Interviewer: How do you understand why your mother was like that?

Interviewee: No, she was, she was not in control of her life anymore. You see, all the beating had made her stress a lot. When you are stressed you are not in control. The stress is the one that is in control. So you are listening to it most of the time.

Interviewer: So you think it was because of her relationship with your father that wasn't, the marriage that was not going well?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK. When did you start to understand that, in that way?

Interviewee: When I was here.

Interviewer: (Coughs). Excuse me. Here, in jail?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So it is only during the last few months that you began to understand it in that sense

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: How did you understand it when you were still at home?

Interviewee: I didn't have any understanding. I was just seeing my mother as lazy and she cannot be in control of her life, she cannot fight for herself, she can't do things for herself. She is always asking me to do things for her. She just wants me to do things for her, she just wants people to do things for her, but she can't do it for herself. So

she was, I did not like her. She was not the kind of mother that I would want to be.

One day I even told her that I don't want to be like her. I don't want to () my child like her (silence).

Interviewer: Is there anything more you would like to say about how you saw yourself as a mother?

Interviewee: As a mother?

Interviewer: Mm.

Interviewee: Uhh, I was becoming more like my mother (silence). Lazy and not in control, you know, always worrying and not, not doing the right things that I, which I would see myself doing. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Were you aware of that, while you had your first and your second child?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So you were seeing yourself as becoming like your mother?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And you didn't want to be like that?

Interviewee: Yes, I didn't want to be like that.

Interviewer: Mm (silence). You never said anything about a best friend? Did you have a best friend?

Interviewee: No, I didn't have a friend.

Interviewer: You didn't have a friend?

Interviewee: I, only school girls, like sometimes, one, one day others came to my house in the morning, we were going to school. So they were going to school and they asked me if I was, if I was going to school then. I was staying at home. But, so then my mother had a problem that, you know, she doesn't want to see my friends coming at home. You know, they will influence me in a bad way, but I didn't have bad

friends. Because, I myself, I can choose for myself, you know, the things I like, I prefer, so she didn't know what kind of a person I am, was, what things do I prefer more. So she was just underestimating me or thinking in a low way about me.

Interviewer: Mmm, (silence). I wanted to ask you how your best friend would have described you as a mother, but it seems as if there wasn't anyone that at that stage you could call a best friend.

Interviewee: No, I had somebody.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: But, uhh.

Interviewer: How did she see you as a mother?

Interviewee: I was there by her house. She, (silence) oh the only thing that she commented was with the baby, that you know, I must be careful that place is not good (laughs). That you know, after four weeks I will see my baby becoming small and losing weight, wondering what is going on, you know, that those people are like witches.

Interviewer: Which people did she refer to?

Interviewee: The uhh, the ones that are staying in same street with.

Interviewer: Mm. (silence). So she didn't say anything about how she saw you as a mother?

Interviewee: She would see me as a good mother. Because she knows me (). So she didn't say anything bad about me then that would keep me down about myself.

Interviewer: What did she see in you that she saw you as a good mother? What are the good qualities that she saw in you?

Interviewee: Uhh (sigh). Well, the things that we, we, we went to school together. We were in the same class. So she used to like me and I used to like her a lot. So we,

the things that I think that she would like about me is that I'm wise, (laughs), and I'm a good person, you know, I have a lot of understanding.

Interviewer: So do you think she would describe you as a good, wise understanding mother?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Mm So that is how she would describe you?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Mm (silence). Could you see that about yourself?

Interviewee: Yes, I always thought of myself as that and I could be like that in the future. So, I was amazed that, it was a surprise to me that I was becoming, you know, like I'm not making any sense, acting very foolishly, you know, in front of other people. Or even in front of God. But, it was the anger that was taking over and the pain that I was feeling. So it was making me do the wrong things all the time (silence).

Interviewer: So, you would say that you thought of yourself before you had children, that you would be a loving, wise, understanding, mm...

Interviewee: A very hard worker.

Interviewer: Hard worker? But also as a mother? That is how you thought you would be as a mother?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: And in the end because of the pain and the anger and everything that happened you felt you were not the kind of mother that you...

Interviewee: That I saw myself as I would become.

Interviewer: Mm. How do you feel about that?

Interviewee: Really bad. (Long silence). You know, I just thought that, you know, there is someone who is after me and the devil is making me do the wrong things

(laughs) you know. So, there is something else that I wanted to tell you. When I came back to Klerksorp that I was telling myself that I wanted to fight for my life and for my mother's life, you know. I, I wanted to find out what is really happening to me. I wanted to find answers for what is happening to me and I would to fight for my life. If ever there was someone after me I would fight with that person. So that was then again that I could see that my life was, I was becoming a nuisance, you know, and I was acting like a nuisance. So I, I just told myself that something is wrong, and, you know, and I feel all the stress and all these things like my life is not in control and I'm not in control anymore, you know. (Long silence).

Interviewer: I know this is a difficult question because your first child was still very young and mm and she couldn't really talk, but how do you think would she describe you as a mother? How did she see you as a mother?

Interviewee: As a good person, the one that would not hurt her. Like my first child, one day that I was, I was leaving her to cry, she was, she was crying and I, I didn't pick her up or make her to be quiet, or she wanted me to hold her or what was happening and she was, she said no, you know, she, she said like, you know it is not possible for you to do this, you're not that kind of a person that would do this to me, you know, you are a good person. (Long silence).

Interviewer: And how do you think would, would your second baby if she could talk, how would she describe you as a mother?

Interviewee: She, she would also say I think, that I'm a good mother, a very loving mother, you know, one who would do anything for her, you know (silence). But I saw her that she would help me a lot, you know, to decide, like my first child also. One day that I, I remember, I, I tried also to, to, to suffocate the baby she...

Interviewer: Your first child?



Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Interviewee: She took a, (silence) a book of songs, because one day I was, I took it and I was singing for them. So she took that book and gave it to me that () stop doing that, you know. So I didn't listen to her. So I see her like she, she, she understands what is going wrong, she can see what's going on and it is wrong.

Interviewer: Mm.

Interviewee: () it is what do you see then. (Long silence).

Interviewer: You said that you saw your second baby as a stumbling block.

Interviewee: It was like that. The way I have done it, you know, because of the things that was going on in my mind. So it was like I, I was getting rid of her, you know, but (silence) now, I, I am, I am not doing the things that I thought that I would do (). I am in prison. (Long silence).

Interviewer: Mm, do you think, or why, why did you see your second child as a stumbling block and not your first child? Or did you also see your first child as a stumbling block?

Interviewee: Not that I really saw her as a stumbling block, you know, I, the way I had done it, it was like, because of the thoughts that were running in my mind, it was just like a picture of this is something, something blocking, she is standing in my way. So, it is not that I, I saw her as a stumbling block or she was a stumbling block, she was not.

Interviewer: So your first child was not a stumbling block?

Interviewee: Even the second child.

Interviewer: Even the second child?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: OK (silence). What did you hope, how would your life be different if your second child was not there, if she was not alive?

Interviewee; Shh, I didn't think of, about that (silence). It's not that she was standing in my way. It was not that I was picturing myself () or a kind of life without her. You know, I was not thinking that way. (silence) I was thinking that I needed to fight and you know, where is my power, you know, where is my inte, intelligence, you know. The nature the one I was born with to fight or where, where is my army, you know (silence). All about that, that I found myself helpless and I couldn't fight. You know, I was having problems (silence).

Interviewer: Did you see anything of yourself in your first child?

Interviewee: (Silence) (voice very soft, almost a whisper) I don't remember, I don't remember.

Interviewer: Did your first child remind you of anyone?

Interviewee: No (silence).

Interviewer: You said she was very sweet.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: A very sweet child. Can you say a bit more about that, can you give me some examples?

Interviewee: (Silence). I don't remember anything about her (silence). Oh, the thing is that she, she, she can help me think. She can come up with some suggestions, suggestions of what to do. She's intelligent. She's very wise. She can also see what is going on and come up with suggestions of what to do.

Interviewer: Can you give me an example?

Interviewee: Like that, that, that day I tried to suffocate the baby, she gave me a Bible songbook. So she, she, she wanted to stop me from what I was doing. Because by taking that book she would calm me down. (Long silence).

Interviewer: And she was only nine months older than your second child? What was the age difference?

Interviewee: She was, she was a year old and six months.

Interviewer: When the baby was born?

Interviewee: Uh-uh, when the baby was 7 months.

Interviewer: When the baby was seven months, OK. (Silence). You said about your second child that she was strict and that she looked as if she could control you. Mm, can you give me some examples? You said she looked serious, but can you give me some examples of how you felt she could control you or what she did that made you feel she is a person that can be controlling?

Interviewee: Mmm, she doesn't cry easily or now and then. She, the way she looks at me (silence) mm, like she could really see me (silence). She, (silence) uh, I don't know how to describe about her. I can't put it into words. (Long silence). I would say she was, she was like God (laughs). Yes, if I can imagine God the way He is (silence).

Interviewer: Can you say a bit more? Did you feel she was judging you?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: Not judging you?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: OK. But if you say you think she was like God, can you say a bit more?

Interviewee: Like God is, He want to give you rules (laughs). So, that, He is very serious. He doesn't joke with you. If He tells you to do something, you must do that thing. You mustn't go like you don't want to do that thing, you must just do it. ()

Interviewer: So, it was something in the way she looked at you?

Interviewee: The way she looks like.

Interviewer: The way she looks like?

Interviewee: Mm.

Interviewer: Because you also said she looked a lot like her father.

Interviewee: Ja.

Interviewer: So, was there any one else that she reminded you of?

Interviewee: Of myself.

Interviewee: Of yourself? In what way?

Interviewee: Being very serious and (laughs) I am a very quiet person. I don't, I don't talk easily, you know, with people or with anybody. I only talk once and that is it.

(Long silence). (Cracks fingers).

Interviewer: So, she was a very serious baby, she didn't cry easily, but she also, she gave you the impression that she wanted to be with you.

Interviewee: She wanted me to hold her in my arms. She was full of love. She wanted to be loved, to be taken good care of (long silence). (*I was feeling very sad*).

Interviewer: It sounds difficult to describe her as a person.

Interviewee: It's not that, it's just my mind. I can't get things out of it. () My mind is not functioning () you know (laughs) () things out ().

Interviewer: How did she make you feel, your child?

Interviewee: No, I didn't feel anything (). You know, I was troubled.

Interviewer: So your mind was so busy with all your troubles?

Interviewee: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: So you didn't really...

Interviewee: I didn't even think of her or of being anything, it's just that now I remember her the way she, she was. Now that I can think all those things about her. That time I () what was going on.

Interviewer: So, it's now afterwards that you can remember these things?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: So while you had her you were so busy with all your troubles.

Interviewee: Yes, I was more like blind. () Is this what I like, is this what I want, you know. (Long silence). (Cracks fingers).

Interviewer: It's almost a year now, mm, it was April last year that you said you suffocated her. What happened in this year with you, how was it for you?

Interviewee: (Sigh). I thought I was going to die. I thought I was going to lose my mind. It was hard for me to move on. But I didn't think about the child. I didn't see her, I didn't imagine her, you know. That maybe I can say that thing that I have done, you know, what have I done or something. Nothing came, so () It was difficult, difficult, yes. So there's nothing more I can tell you about that.

Interviewer: How was it for you to talk to me about your life and about your pregnancy, and your mother and yourself as a mother and your two children? How was it for you to have these interviews?

Interviewee: How was it. I cannot describe it. There's nothing I can say about it. The only thing that I can tell you is that it was like you have come to help me out of where I was trapped.

Interviewer: How did I help you? Because I think you have helped me.

Interviewee: No, talking about it, talking about the things which were inside me, all those things. I don't have anyone to talk to about anything. You know, I never talk to anyone or anybody about anything.

Interviewer: So it was good for you just to talk about everything.

Interviewee: Yes, it was.

Interviewer: Did anything change for you by talking about I?

Interviewee: Well, I () talk to people easily, but I don't want to talk to people, I don't feel like talking to people. You see, I am this other person. You know, people they talk nonsense to me (laughs) you know, and now that I have to talk to them I am also being like a nuisance you know. I don't make any sense. So, I just talk to people, but it drives me mad. There are things that I can talk about, there are things that I can't talk about. So, () Ja I () that you're here.

When we greeted she said I was like a mother to her, because I listened and she said I love you.

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW ‘R’: INSTRUCTIONS

(Translated from the French “L’entretien ‘R’” developed by Stern, Robert-Tissot, Besson, Rusconi-Serpa, De Muralt, Cramer & Palacio-Espasa, 1989)

#### I Description of the child

##### 1. Verbal description of the child – spontaneous

Ask “Can you describe your child? What type of baby is he/she?” For each description given by the mother, give an adjective (if this is not already in the list) and write them on the answer sheet Q1. Let her finish without giving any suggestions.

##### 2. Verbal description of the child – with guidance

If the mother has given less than 5 describing elements, give her two suggestions.

Wait after each one.

2.1 “Have you thought of all the characteristics, good or bad?”

2.2 “Have you forgotten anything?”

Write the list of adjectives obtained after the adjectives on the answer sheet Q2.

##### 3. Description of the perceptions concerning the child

Show the mother the list of characteristics Q3 on the answer sheet. Give the necessary instructions and let her fill it in. However, before doing this, add to the list of adjectives that the mother has previously used to describe her child, and which are not yet on the list of characteristics, i.e.: capricious, amusing. Then find the opposite so that the “likert scale” may be filled in. If there are no opposite words in the given language, use the negative form, i.e.:

not capricious ----- capricious.

#### **4. Episodical versus semantic description**

Ask the mother to illustrate two of the chosen adjectives by using a specific example as recent as possible, preferably from the previous 24-48 hours. Choose the two “strongest” adjectives and the most likely to provoke interesting happenings, i.e. stubborn, independent, rejecting, etc.

## **II The role of important past events in the child’s life**

#### **5. Verbal description of important past events in the child’s life**

Ask “During your pregnancy or delivery or immediately after, were there important events/happenings (for yourself, your family or your child) which could play a role in the manner you think about or perceive your child (or in the manner in which you behave with him/her)? There might be events other than those of medical nature which could have played a role?”

Make a list of these important events. Fill Q5 in on the answer sheet while the mother is talking.

#### **6. Perceptual description of the important events**

Ask the mother how each of these events could have influenced her way of thinking or her behaviour with her child.

Fill in list 6 with the more significant events told by the mother regarding Q5. Ask the mother to fill in the scales of Q6.



**111 Self-description of her maternal behaviour**

**7 Verbal description of her perception of herself as a mother – spontaneous**

Ask “Can you describe what type of mother you are? How would you describe yourself as mother?”

For each of the describing elements mentioned by the mother, choose an adjective (if it is not already as such) and write her spontaneous list under Q7. Let her finish without giving her any suggestion.

**8 Verbal description of her perception of herself as a mother – with guidance**

If she has not given 5 describing elements, make two suggestions. Wait after each one.

1. Have you thought about all the characteristics, good or bad?
2. Have you forgotten any?

Write on Q8 the list of adjectives obtained after suggestion.

**9 Description of the perception she has of herself as a mother**

Ask the mother to fill in the list of “maternal characteristics” Q9 with all relevant directions. However, before doing that add the adjectives that she has given spontaneously and which are not yet on the list. Invent the opposite word, etc.. (see Q3).

**10 Episodical versus semantic description of herself as mother**

Ask the mother to illustrate two of the chosen adjectives by giving a specific example as recent as possible, preferably from the previous 24-48 hours. Once again, choose the “strongest” and the more likely to provoke interesting episodic memories.

#### **IV The role of her own mother**

##### **11 Verbal description of her own mother – spontaneous**

Ask “How was your mother’s behaviour with you when you were a little girl? How would you describe her?”

For each of the describing elements mentioned by the mother, choose an adjective (if it is not already as such) and write her spontaneous list under Q11. Let her finish without giving her any suggestion.

##### **12 Verbal description of her own mother – with guidance**

If she has not given 5 describing elements, make two suggestions. Wait after each one.

1. Have you thought about all the characteristics, good or bad?
2. Have you forgotten any?

Write on Q12 the list of adjectives obtained after suggestion.

##### **13 Description of the perception she has of her own mother**

Give her the list of maternal characteristics Q13 to fill in. However, before you do that, add to the list the new elements used spontaneously by her to describe herself as a mother as well as the new describing elements that she has used to describe the maternal care given by her own mother.

##### **14 Episodical versus semantic description of her own mother**

Ask the mother to illustrate two of the chosen adjectives with a specific example as recent as possible, preferably from the previous 24 to 48 hours. Once again, choose the “strongest” and the more likely to provoke interesting episodic memories.

## **15 Changes in the relationship with her own mother**

Show her the maternal characteristics list Q15 and ask her to fill in the various scales as questions are asked.

*Communication:* Ask “Do you have the feeling that the amount of contact between you and your mother had changed since your child was born? By contact I mean that you see each other more or less often, visit each other more or less often, call or write each other more or less often.

*Commitment i:* Ask “Do you have the feeling that you think more of her attitude with you when you were a child since the birth of your own child?”

*Commitment ii:* Ask “Do you feel closer or more detached to your mother than before the birth of your child?”

*Commitment iii:* Ask “Do you now feel more positive or negative towards your mother than before the birth of your child?”

*Commitment iv:* Ask “Is your relationship with your mother (with you as a daughter) the same as before the birth of your child? Is your commitment in the mother-daughter relationship (which you have always had) stronger, weaker or the same as before?”

*Commitment v:* Ask: “Do you now have a better understanding and view of your mother, of what she was as a mother and human being than before the birth of your child?”

## **V Resemblance with the family**

### **16 Verbal description**

Ask “To which member of the family does your child most resemble?” Let her speak.

If she gives only physical characteristics ask her to give some traits/characteristics.

**17** Use the adjectives that she has given for Q1 and Q2. For each of these adjectives ask the mother from whom the child has **inherited** these characteristics.

**18 Perceptual appraisal**

Ask the mother to fill in the list of the own private traits Q18.

**19** Ask the mother to fill in her husband's private traits Q19. The basic list should include all the adjectives which have been added in Q1 and Q2.

**VI The influence of the mother's past and present**

**20 Verbal account**

Say to the mother "Very often, in the mother's past, there are events or people who have an influence on the way she thinks about and behaves with her child. These influences come sometimes (stop after each question and, if necessary, propose a,b,c,d.). The way in which the questions are asked should follow the pattern "any specific event of your childhood (special people/illnesses, etc) which would be important in this context?" While she speaks, fill in the empty spaces of Q20.

**A** How she was treated when she was a little girl at home, for instance, "I was beaten and I promised myself never to do that to my child" or "We had our meals together and I thought I would do the same".

**B** At other times influences come from special people in our past, i.e. an aunt who did special things for you and who was a model in her way of dealing with children or sometimes an ex-boyfriend whom you have never forgotten, or that your child reminds you of a dear girl friend.

C Sometimes it was an illness from which you have suffered or somebody else in your family, or

D a death in the family which somehow still plays a role in your life.

### **Perceptual evaluation**

Then ask the mother to appraise the influence of each event on her way of thinking and of behaving with her child, filling in Q20.

## **VII Emotions linked to the representations**

### **21 Choice of the main emotions**

Say to the mother “Mothers think about or are with their children, they feel various emotions. Which are the three strongest emotions that you think you have for your child?” Write down the three emotions on Q21.

### **22 Perceptual appraisal of the emotions**

Say to the mother “I am going to give you a list of many emotions that most mothers feel at one stage. Indicate whether you feel them often or not at all when you think about your child. Ask the mother to fill in the scales on Q22.

## **V!!! Desires and fears**

**23 What are your strongest wishes for your child? Write them on Q23.**

**24 What are your strongest fears for your child when you think about the future? Write them on Q24.**

**25 What are your strongest wishes for yourself as mother for the future?**

Write them on Q25.

**26 What are your strongest fears for yourself as mother for the future? Write them on Q26.**

**IX Self Esteem**

**27 Ask the mother “During the past months did you feel good about yourself or not? Ask the mother to fill in the scale Q27.**

**X Other**

**28 Ask “Is there anything else that you have not spoken about and which could play an important role in your way of thinking or in your behaviour with your child?**

In a non-structured manner investigate all the themes which would deserve a deeper investigation, particularly those that seem to play an important role. The interviewer is free to continue as he/she wishes.

**Interview R: Notations chart**

Code:

Date:

Case no:

Coder:

**1 List of the describers for the child – spontaneous**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**2 List of the describers for the child – with guidance**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**3 Personal characteristics – child**

Inactive \_\_\_\_\_

Active

Quiet \_\_\_\_\_

Excited/restless

Aggressive \_\_\_\_\_

Peaceful

Introvert \_\_\_\_\_

Sociable

Forward \_\_\_\_\_

Shy

Cheerful	_____	Sad
Difficult	_____	Easy
Beautiful	_____	Ugly
Not clever	_____	Clever
Open	_____	Not very open
Aloof	_____	Warm-hearted
Independent	_____	Dependent
Fearful	_____	Confident
Vivacious	_____	Dull
Carefree	_____	Worried
Affectionate	_____	Not very affectionate

**4 Description of child – episodic vs. semantic** specific examples for 2 adjectives

**5 List of important events in the child's life**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**6 Influence of the important events**

**Event nr 1**



No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 2**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 3**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 4**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 5**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**7 List of the describing elements of herself in her mother role – spontaneous**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**8 List of the describing elements of herself in her mother role – with**

**guidance**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**9 Personal characteristics: You in your mother role**

Not very affectionate	_____	Affectionate
Indulgent	_____	Rejecting
Fearful	_____	Confident
Available	_____	Busy or preoccupied
Over protective	_____	Casual
Impatient	_____	Patient
Authoritarian	_____	Permissive
Serious	_____	Playful
Controlling	_____	Laissez-faire
Not very giving	_____	Giving
Carefree	_____	Worried
Happy in the mother role	_____	Unhappy in the mother role
Role of mother difficult	_____	Role of mother easy

**10 Episodical description/semantical of herself as a mother:** specific examples of two adjectives

**11 List of the describing elements of her own mother – spontaneous**

- 1.
- 2.

3.

4.

5.

**12 List of the describing elements of her own mother – with guidance**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**13 Personal characteristics: your mother]**

Not very \_\_\_\_\_ Affectionate

affectionate

Indulgent \_\_\_\_\_ Rejecting

Fearful \_\_\_\_\_ Confident

Available \_\_\_\_\_ Busy or  
preoccupied

Over protective \_\_\_\_\_ Casual

Impatient \_\_\_\_\_ Patient

Authoritarian \_\_\_\_\_ Permissive

Serious \_\_\_\_\_ Playful

Controlling \_\_\_\_\_ Laissez-faire

Not very giving \_\_\_\_\_ Giving

Carefree \_\_\_\_\_ Worried

Happy in the _____	Unhappy in the
mother role	mother role
Role of mother _____	Role of mother
difficult	easy

**14 Episodical description/semantical of her own mother: specific examples for 2 adjectives**

**15 Changes in the relationship with your mother**

Far less contact _____	the same _____	far more contact
Thinks less _____	the same _____	thinks more
about her mother		about her mother
Far more distant _____	the same _____	much closer
Far more negative _____	the same _____	far more positive
Far less involved in _____	the same _____	far more involved
your role as a daughter		in your role as a
		daughter
Understanding _____	the same _____	far better
not as good		understanding

**16 Resemblance with the family – spontaneous**

Person to whom the child resembles: for which trait

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4.

5.

**17 List of the child's describing elements Q1 and Q2**

Person to whom the child resembles: for which trait

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**18 Personal characteristics – yourself**

Inactive	_____	Active
Quiet	_____	Excited/restless
Aggressive	_____	Peaceful
Introvert	_____	Sociable
Forward	_____	Shy
Cheerful	_____	Sad
Difficult	_____	Easy
Beautiful	_____	Ugly
Not clever	_____	Clever
Open	_____	Not very open
Aloof	_____	Warm-hearted
Independent	_____	Dependent
Fearful	_____	Confident

Vivacious	_____	Dull
Carefree	_____	Worried
Affectionate	_____	Not very affectionate

**19 Personal characteristics – child’s father**

Inactive	_____	Active
Quiet	_____	Excited/restless
Aggressive	_____	Peaceful
Introvert	_____	Sociable
Forward	_____	Shy
Cheerful	_____	Sad
Difficult	_____	Easy
Beautiful	_____	Ugly
Not clever	_____	Clever
Open	_____	Not very open
Aloof	_____	Warm-hearted
Independent	_____	Dependent
Fearful	_____	Confident
Vivacious	_____	Dull
Carefree	_____	Worried
Affectionate	_____	Not very affectionate

**20 Influence of the mother’s past and present circumstances**

**Event nr 1**

No influence	_____	Very big influence
--------------	-------	--------------------

**Event nr 2**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 3**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 4**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**Event nr 5**

No influence \_\_\_\_\_ Very big influence

**21 The three strongest emotions**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**22 Emotions**

**Joy**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Sadness**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Anxiety/fear**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Curiosity**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Anger**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Guilt**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Pride**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Shame**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Distaste**

Not at all \_\_\_\_\_ very much

**Balance between emotions**

Positive emotions \_\_\_\_\_ negative emotions