Through their Daughters' Eyes: Jewish Mothers and Daughters: A Legacy from the Holocaust

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of the six million Jews and millions of non-Jews who were murdered by the Nazis and their numerous assistants.

To my Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles and Cousins whom I never knew,

and to the courageous survivors who taught me to live by their example

I dedicate this thesis in loving memory of my Father

Yaakov Yehuda ben Mordechai Dovid Scherer zl

and to my

Mother

Esther Jonas Scherer

who continues to teach me of the ways of her wisdom, strength,

courage and determination and may she continue to do so for many more years to come.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the narratives and stories of 13 daughters of Jewish women Holocaust survivors. A qualitative multi-methodological integrative approach that incorporated feminist standpoint epistemologies and elements of grounded theory was used. Mechanisms such as the use of an auditor and judges were utilized to address the researcher's reflexive stance and subjective frame. Participants' data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Interviews were subjected to extensive qualitative analyses and were compared to find recursive themes and sub-themes. The results of this study indicated that Holocaust survivor mothers were conceptualized by their daughters as being either strong, challenged or both. Participants described the lessons they learned from their mothers' survivor narratives and stories in terms of strength, resilience, transcendency and Jewish identity. Participants considered these lessons to be vital aspects of their lives and strategies for living.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude examine les récits et histoires de 13 femmes, dont les mères sont toutes des femmes juives ayant survécu à l'Holocauste. Elle repose sur une approche qualitative multi-méthodologique et intégrative qui incorpore à la fois un point de vue féministe en matière épistémologique et des éléments de théorie fondée. Des mécanismes tel que l'utilisation d'un auditeur et de juges ont été employés afin d'adresser la position du chercheur et son cadre subjectif. Les données des participantes ont été recueillies à la suite d'entrevues semi-structurées. Les entrevues ont fait l'objet d'analyses qualitatives approfondies, et ont été comparées dans le but de trouver des thèmes et sous-thèmes récursifs. Les résultats de cette étude démontrent que les mères ayant survécu à l'Holocauste étaient perçues par leurs filles comme étant fortes, et/ou prêtes à relever des défis. Les participantes ont décrit les leçons apprises à partir des récits et histoires de survies de leurs mères, en termes de force, de résistance, de transcendance et d'identité juive. Les participantes ont estimé que ces leçons étaient des aspects fondamentaux de leur vie et de leur stratégies de vies.

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CLAIM OF ORIGINALITY

This study constitutes an original contribution to knowledge in the area of multicultural psychology in general, and the psychology of Jewish women in particular. This study examines the phenomenological experiences of Jewish daughters of Holocaust survivor mothers and the impact of those experiences on the daughters. Few published works appear in the psychological literature on Jewish mother-daughter relationships and further, previous Holocaust researchers treated survivors and their offspring as a homogeneous group and therefore important factors such as gender and religious affiliation were often obscured.

Weinrach (2002) argues that "as a culturally distinct group, Jews deserve interventions that meet their unique needs" (p. 310). The results of this study illustrate the ways in which growing up with a Jewish Holocaust survivor mother effected the daughters. Previous research discussed the transmission of trauma, the results of this study illustrate the transmission of strength through the stories of Holocaust survivor mothers and their underlying messages in terms of lessons, philosophies and beliefs. Participants of this study consistently described the messages of strength, determination and resilience that they received from their mothers and the lessons that they had or would pass down to children of their own.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The history of the Jewish people has been, and continues to be fraught with tragedy, trauma and persecution from the time before the Crusades to the Spanish Inquisition to the Russian Pogroms to the Holocaust and continuing into the present. The Holocaust has been one of the most devastating, heinous acts of atrocity of our time, killing millions of people and leaving an indelible mark on countless others.

Women of the Holocaust suffered twofold; first because of their religion and secondly because of their gender (Rittner & Roth, 1993). The voices of female Holocaust survivors were silent for many years. They were unable to speak for fear of transmitting an unbearable burden to others, and were silenced by those either unwilling or unable to hear their stories (Weitzman & Ofer, 1998).

Feminist theoreticians highlight the role of the mother-daughter connectedness as a critical element in a woman's identity and personality development (Keller, 1990). "The mother in recalling and sharing with her daughter her own narratives...gives the daughter strategies of resistance and hence, an alternative script for coming into womanhood" (O'Reilly, 1998, p. 86). As such, both the articulated and unarticulated messages that Holocaust survivor mothers imparted to their daughters, ostensibly made an impact on the lives of their daughters and, the life choices that they have made.

My goal in this dissertation is to voice some reflections on the long-term effects of the Holocaust on Jewish mothers and their daughters. In the chapters ahead, I briefly describe Judaism and the values, ethics, morals and traditions that are passed down from one generation to

the next. Rather than address the question of who is a Jew? other than to state the Rabbinical perspective that a Jew is anyone born of a Jewish mother or, one who has chosen to convert to Judaism, I question what is Judaism and what makes Jewish women Jewish? A brief history of the Holocaust will be included in order to familiarize the reader with the context of European Jewry during the years of 1935-1945 and the impact of "unprecedented evil and suffering" (Wiesel, 1979, p.1) on subsequent generations. In the process I discuss some of the themes that revolve around Jewish mothers and daughters as a result of the Holocaust.

I use the concept of voice as a metaphor (Weingarten, 1994) "through which people, especially women, express their sense of who they are, what they think, feel, know, believe, and care about" (p. 9), and as representing the perspective of the individual and their unique understanding of reality (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). Weingarten (1994) suggests that "mothers are so sensitive to the way their feelings and experiences may not be acceptable to the culture that their ability to place their lives in story form is profoundly affected" (p. 3).

Upon the Holocaust survivors arrival to North America and other countries, the message that was conveyed to them either explicitly or implicitly was: to keep silent about the horrors of the Holocaust or its after effects (Fogelman & Savran, 1980; Peck, 1997). The world which had been silent during the destruction of European Jewry did not want to hear about the survivors' experiences, perhaps because they were afraid of what they would hear or because they did not have the conceptual framework with which to understand what was being said (Ringelheim, 1998). Regardless of the reasons, the survivors understood this to mean that those who did not make the effort to stop genocide did not care about them (Fogelman & Savran, 1980).

The voices of many women survivors were silent as well. Researchers and Holocaust historians have suggested this may be due to: (1) the "struggle to remember versus the struggle to forget" (Siegel, 1980) and the difficulty of maintaining a balance between the two (p. 20); (2) women's experiences, and women's way of relating these experiences in particular, may have silenced mothers for fear of placing too large a burden on their daughters (Adelman, 1995); and (3) trying to shield their children from the unhappiness and loss in their own lives (Weiss, 1988).

Lately, survivors' voices are being heard (Peck, 1997) and, the legacy that is being bequeathed to the second generation is "not to let the world forget" (p. 57). Peck (1997) discusses the question that survivors ask of themselves, that being: what are the goals of the *She'erit Hapletah* (the Saved Remnant)? The answer is indicative of the Jewish values of *chesed* (acts of kindness) and *tikkun olam* (healing the world), and that is, that this group: "must strive to reach a better future, a future that will be crowned with brotherhood [sisterhood] rather than hate, with understanding rather than antagonism, with tolerance rather than intolerance" (p. 59).

The mother-daughter bond can be a safe place in which a mother's voice may be heard. The connection between mother and daughter may invite the voice of mothers to be heard, rather than repressed as in the past, due to professional theories, ideologies of motherhood (Ruddick, 1989), censure and marginalization (O'Reilly, 1998).

Moreover, because of the mother-daughter bond, a daughter's sense of identity may be more vulnerable to intergenerational transmissions due to the sometimes paradoxical relationships girls have with their mother, which is or may be different from the relationship that boys have with either parent (Keller, 1990). This very sense of a connectedness plays a crucial role in the intergenerational transmission of lived experiences. According to Lerner (1998),

daughters may have a sensitivity to the quality of their mother's life and try to "fix" it. Indeed, Peck (1997) states that the "children of the survivors have been the driving force behind the survivors' finally allowing their voices to be heard" (p. 59).

Psychology is one of many disciplines that emphasize a multi-cultural approach to understanding the human experience. Yet, all too often, human is equated with the male experience (Riger, 1992) and multicultural texts either ignore Judaism and Jews as an ethnic minority completely (Langman, 1995); or give little space to Jewish experiences. For example in one widely cited text, Sue and Sue's Counselling the Culturally Different , Beck (1995) points out that the author's definition of difference includes only the four groups of "people of color" within the United States. These are: "American Indians, Asian Americans, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans" (p. 14). Thus, Judaism and Jewish women's experiences have been marginalised. Perhaps, this marginalization is another type of anticipatory response to anti-Semitism in that according to Beck (1995) Jews walk around with a "subliminal fear of anti-Semitism the way women walk around with a subliminal fear of being raped" (p. 19). Therefore, "Jews often feel safer when Jewish material is not brought up, because to do so often evokes anti-Semitism" (Beck, 1995, p. 15). Thus, being marginalised and not being noticed is a way to protect oneself against further persecution.

Jewish women have encountered persecution because of their gender and religion. Persecution was not only a function of the Holocaust. Anti-Semitism has been, and continues to be a factor in the lives of the Jewish people, a factor that is all too often taken into consideration before making choices in life. Choices which include: allowing oneself to be noticed as and/ or considered to be Jewish (Beck, 1995); and deciding upon the manner in which to raise children –

for example whether they ought to be taught about their Jewishness or not, (Siegel, Cole, & Steinberg-Oren, 2000).

While this study is not an enterprise that examines persecutory practices, nor the depth of suffering that persecution engenders, these aspects cannot be ignored. Instead, in order to explicate and examine the capacity for strength and dignity in Jewish mothers and daughters, the positive rather than the negative images must be addressed. "Ignoring the positive is an extremely narrow view that does not take into account historical, cultural and social considerations" (Epstein, 1979, p. 203).

Perseverance, determination and faithfulness are attributes of the Jewish people, and of Jewish women in particular as builders of the Jewish home. The study of Holocaust survivors brings into focus the strength of Jewish women. Research that elucidates these qualities will be of benefit in assisting those who have been persecuted and, in creating a theory to assist those who have or will experience persecution, oppression, and racism in the future. As such, this study focused upon the daughters of women Holocaust survivors living in Montreal, Quebec, in order to gain insight into the survivors themselves as the witnesses and victims of persecution, to learn from their experiences and stories, and to develop alternative strategies for coping with the vicissitudes of life.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Jewishness

Jews as a People

> The Jewish people have been in exile for 2,000 years; they have lived in hundreds of countries, spoken hundreds of languages and still they kept their old language, Hebrew. They kept their Aramaic, later their Yiddish; they kept their books; they kept their faith (Singer, 1978).

Judaism and Jews in general have been categorized in a variety of ways by historians and sociologists. Among the variety of descriptors used are - a religion, a culture, a nation, and a tradition, as the most popular. Jews have never been quite able to fit into the convenient categories used to define nations, races, religions and other social groupings because "Jews are *not just* a religious faith" (Donin, 1991, p. 9), as one is not a Jew by virtue of one's faith since no one is born with a faith (Fackenheim, 1987). "Jews are *not just* a nation" (Donin, 1991, p. 9), as one is not a Jew by virtue of belonging to a national, tribal or an ethnic group, because converts become Jewish in every sense of the word (Fackenheim, 1987). Moreover, although, the Jewish religion is the most important component of Jewish civilization, significant numbers of Jews do not identify with a spiritual being, but by ethnic and secular belonging (Fackenheim, 1987).

Even if religion would be the criterion, which model of Judaism would be the standard? In cultural terms one can consider two groups: *Ashkenazi** (literally meaning "German") refers to Jews who trace their roots back to Eastern Europe and *Sephardic* (literally meaning "Spanish"),

Note. All italicized Hebrew, Yiddish, and non-English terms are defined in the glossary (See Appendix A).

refers to Jews who trace their roots back to Spain, Portugal, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Italy (Brown, 1990; Garber, 1994). In geographical terms, one can consider other options such as Israeli, North American, Oriental or European (Fackenheim, 1987). In terms of religious expression within Judaism, the four major movements one can consider are Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, or Reconstructionist Judaism.

Orthodoxy espouses the binding authority of *Halakha* (Jewish law and ritual), and applies its principles to the conditions and stages of the life cycle (Eckstein, 1984). Orthodox Jews are traditionally religious, have an abiding commitment to the Bible, the *Talmud* and other forms of Rabbinic literature and believe in a masterful G-d (Eckstein, 1984).

The focus of Reform Judaism began in the early 19th Century. This was the first group to reassess Judaism and adapt it to a changing world as ethical monotheism (Eckstein, 1984; Fackenheim, 1987). Reform Judaism broke with tradition on a variety of matters which included: changes in Synagogue worship (men and women sit together during services; an organ is used on the Sabbath; Hebrew was replaced by the vernacular; the number of prayers recited was reduced). *Halakha* was no longer considered binding, kosher dietary regulations were abandoned and other distinctive rituals were discarded (Eckstein, 1984).

On the other hand, Conservative Judaism, stresses the concept of Jewish peoplehood. According to Eckstein (1984) Conservative Judaism can be described as a critique of both Reform and Orthodox Judaism. Conservative Judaism is less absolute in its observance of the law, but less liberal and more rooted in Jewish norms than is Reform Judaism (Brown, 1990). Conservative Jews maintain that Jewish law and tradition remain binding and authoritative. However, the most important component of Judaism is the people. As such, the Conservative

movement champions political Zionism because it is partial to the movement's prevailing commitment to the Jewish people (Eckstein, 1984).

The fourth denomination in Judaism, Reconstructionism, was rooted in the belief that Judaism was in need of a restoration and revitalization (Eckstein, 1984). Reconstructionism views Judaism "not so much as a faith, but as an all-inclusive evolving civilization of the Jewish people bringing together various historical expressions of the Jewish community and molding them into an organic unity of faith, culture and peoplehood" (Eckstein, 1984, p. 242). Various religious customs, rituals and laws are not understood by Reconstructionism as revealed truths but as religious folklore that aid in Jewish self-expression (Eckstein, 1984).

While the four movements differ radically, the world views, concern for G-d, the *Torah* and Jewish peoplehood are from the same biblical and rabbinic traditions (Eckstein, 1984). I do not however, intend to explore the different relationship between the four ways that people express their Jewishness, rather to simply identify the four movements that exist in Judaism. For the purposes of this review, my focus will predominantly be on *Ashkenazi* traditions within the four expressions of Judaism. According to Donin (1991) the Jews are "a religion, a faith, a nation, and more" (p. 9). The question of classification or categorization is usually resolved by using the term "people" instead of either "religion," "faith" or "nation" (Donin, 1991; Garber, 1994).

The term Jewish people is conveyed in the expression "*Am Yisrael* ("people of Israel"), an age-old identification rooted in biblical religious tradition. At the beginning of the Ten Commandments G-d spoke these words saying: "I am the L-rd your G-d who brought you (the people) out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 20: 1, 2 ; Deut 5: 6, 7) (Garber, 1994). The Hebrew

Bible continues to use the term "people" as a descriptor of the Jews, another example being, "a people that dwells alone, not reckoned among the nations" (Numbers, 23: 9).

"*Amcha*" (your people) was a designation used during the Holocaust as a way for one Jew to recognize and/or identify another, as opposed to a nazi collaborator. The word "*amcha*" conveyed a wealth of meaning in a world gone mad. It conveyed connection and a level of safety, in that the person in front of them would neither kill them nor report them to the enemy. The term "*amcha*" also imparted feelings of hope that the Jewish people had not been obliterated from the face of the earth (Personal Communication E. Scherer, 1998). Emil Fackenheim (1987), noted scholar and Holocaust historian, uses the word "*amcha*" (p. 15) to describe the Jewish everyman/woman, and thus the people. I follow the example set forth by the Hebrew Bible and the people themselves, and talk about the Jews as a people. A group of people who share memories, values, ideals and experiences (Eckstein, 1984). The challenge in categorizing the Jewish people may be part of their uniqueness. To begin to understand the uniqueness of this multifaceted group of people, one must start with a fundamental grasp of the underlying etiology of Judaism.

The Oral Tradition

> The Baal Shem Tov, may the memory of a Zaddik be blessed...when he saw the lines of communication with heaven were broken and it was impossible to mend them with prayer, he used to mend them and restore them by telling a tale (Eliach, 1982, pp. xix-xx).

In Jewish tradition, the concept of narratives, metaphors and stories, demonstrating the wisdom, morals and ethics of the Elders, Scholars and Sages are consistent threads that teach by example (Eckstein, 1984, p. 36). In fact, oral history plays a fundamental role in the Jewish

religion and culture. When Moses descended from Sinai, he brought with him both the written and oral laws which became essential to the Jewish religion (Exodus, 18:20, 20:19; Deut. 5:28, 12:21) (Donin, 1991, p. 24). The words were contained in the Bible, but their meanings and practices were to be transmitted from father to son, from teacher to student, from generation to generation, until finally recorded in the second century and became the foundation upon which the *Talmud* was built (Donin, 1987; Eckstein, 1984). The oral tradition is the core of Jewish existence because it contains the essence of the Bible, and as such is the epitome of Jewish life (Scherman & Zlotowitz, 1980). Indeed, the concept of transmitting stories from parents to children is not considered to be an option in Jewish law, but rather part of a Jewish parent's obligation toward their children (Exodus, 13:8; Deut. 4:40). The transmission of stories is a way of life in the Jewish religion and culture. Rosenman and Handelsman (1990) suggest that the way in which Jews tell themselves stories is indicative of how they will proceed to live their lives.

Remembering

> Memory creates the chain of tradition which passes a happening on from generation to generation...It starts the web which all stories together form in the end (Benjamin, 1969, p. 98).

Remembering is a crucial part of the Jewish identity and a religious imperative (Exodus 13:8; Deuteronomy 6:20-23). The act of remembering in and of itself, is essential to Judaism and in keeping with the oral tradition (Deuteronomy 25:17). According to Rabbi Kamenetzky (1986), "the Jew is history's child...forgetting, is tantamount to denying his [her] identity. The acts of the past, contribute to the formation of Jewish identity and as such, define the future" (pp.15-18).

Ensuring that the stories survive past a lifetime is seen as an obligation to the Jewish people. Barbara Myerhoff (1978) illustrates this point clearly in her ethnography about elderly

Jews. An elderly Jewish man talks of the importance of remembering and transmitting his memories. He states: "If my life goes now, it means nothing. But if my life goes, with my memories, and all that is lost, that is something else to bear" (p. 78).

The tradition of transmitting stories of past oppression, as well as of redemption, form the basis of several holidays in the Jewish religion. On Sabbath and Holidays, not only must a certain portion of the Bible be read, but stories of past generations are told and retold to new generations of listeners. Some of the episodes in history that a Jew must remember include: the destruction of the Temple and the Diaspora, the Exodus from Egypt every Passover, the genocidal plots of Haman every Purim, and the miracle of Chanukah (Bergmann & Jucovy, 1982; Hass, 1995).

Even during times of great joy, Jewish people must remember the past. The custom of the groom breaking a glass at a Jewish wedding is to remind all present of the destruction of the Temple. Jews are urged to remember their history: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, then let my right hand forget its skill, let my tongue adhere to my palate, if I fail to remember you" (Psalms, 137: 5-6) (Eckstein, 1984, p. 77).

Selengut (1999) argues that memory is a critical part of Jewish identity that does not adhere to any particular form of Jewish affiliation. He maintains that for those who do not continue to practice traditional Judaism in the ways of their parents, an alternative that involves "ritualized loyalty to the memories and artifacts of the Jewish past" (p. 3) is a conduit to Jewish identity . Hence, the Holocaust is a way in which to remember Judaism which does not demand religious practice and raises their own Jewish social consciousness (Selengut, 1999). Thus, remembering the past is essential to Jewishness regardless of how that Jewishness is expressed.

Jewish Law

> For you have affirmed this day that the L-rd is your G-d, that you will walk in His ways, that you will observe His statutes, commandments, and judgments, and that you will obey Him (Deut. 26: 17).

In keeping with Jewish tradition, the embodiment and the essence of Judaism can be found in the following anecdote. Hillel the Sage (ca. 30 B.C.E. - 10 C.E.) was asked by a young man to be taught the Holy Torah in the time he was able to stand on one foot. Hillel patiently responded by saying; "That which is hateful to you, don't do unto others. That is the *Torah*, the rest is commentary, now go out and study it" (Sabbath 31a) (Donin, 1991; Fackenheim, 1987). Hillel's reply is the cornerstone of Jewish life, thought and behaviour. The fundamental basis of being Jewish is to follow G-d's *Torah* (the five books of Moses, to be referred to here as the Hebrew Bible), to follow the laws and teachings, to be a good person and live a life of good deeds (Donin, 1991). The *Torah* is the lens through which the Jew perceives life and reality. The *Torah* refers to all Jewish religious writings, including the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud, responsa literature, and rabbinic commentaries (Eckstein, 1984).

Ideals from Torah and Jewish Law

> The world stands on three things – on the Torah, on the service [of G-d], and upon acts of loving-kindness (Ethics of the Fathers, 1:2)

The Jewish religion is very encompassing. As such, there are no areas of human behaviour with which *Halakha* (Jewish Law, the code of Jewish religious life) does not deal or offer guidance (Donin, 1991; Eckstein, 1984). A person's eating habits, sex life, business ethics, and social activities are all under the rubric of Jewish law, of religious values, and the spiritual

guidelines of Judaism (Donin, 1991, p. 30). Some may understand this as a form of rigidity, others will perceive *Halakha*, as a structure that provides guidance and direction for a fulfilling way of life. Some of the ideals that are imperative to the Jewish way of life are: *chesed* (acts of kindness), *tikkun 'olam* (healing the world), and Jewish family life.

Chesed

"Saving a single life, is like saving the entire world" (Sanhedrin 4:5).

Chesed, one of the pillars of Jewish life, can be understood as: "loving acts of kindness" (Greenberg, 2001, p. 111). The importance of *chesed* to the Jewish way of life is emphasized by the numerous detailed interpretations of this principle. For example, a truly pious person is one who is merciful, modest and charitable (Donin, 1991). Additional study with regard to the concept of *chesed* suggests that merely doing good deeds is not enough to fulfill the requirements of *chesed.* As Donin (1991) stated: "to hate evil is as much of a virtue as to love justice; to hate cruelty is as much of a virtue as to love mercy. But it is not enough to refrain from evil or to disdain cruelty. One must also actively pursue justice and mercy" (p. 60). *Chesed*, is important to the Jewish way of life because the goal is to promote harmony between people (Leff, 1993, p. 39), to create a better society (Donin,1991, p. 41), and to be accountable for others (Jungreis, 1998, p. 40). As such, *chesed* and *tikkun 'olam* are ideals/values that are interconnected because one of the principles of Judaism is to bring improvement into the world.

Tikkun Olam

Tikkun 'olam, which means literally "to mend or to heal the world," is a phrase that is associated with the 16th century kabbalist Isaac Luria (Brown, 1997; Fackenheim, 1994; Garber, 1994). In the most general sense, *tikkun 'olam* is associated with the assertion that Jews bear

responsibility not only for their own moral, spiritual, and material welfare, but for the moral, spiritual, and material welfare of society at large (Shatz, Waxman, & Diament, 1997).

Thus, genuine Jewishness is expressed by "living Jewishly" (Fackenheim, 1987), i.e., "testifying against the idols" (p. 121), and "proclaiming the transnatural G-d whose operative commandment is to mend the world" (*tikkun 'olam*) (Garber, 1994, p. 42).

The family is the essence of Jewish society and the heart of religious life (Donin, 1991). The family, even more than the synagogue, has been the primary vehicle for the transmission of Jewish values, from generation to generation (Eckstein, 1984) and as such has been central to the survival of the Jewish people throughout centuries of persecution (Weiss, 1988). Before one can take responsibility for the world, one must learn to take responsibility and to care for oneself and, to respect others. These lessons and values are a way of life in the Jewish family.

Jewish Family Life

"The family is the nucleus of civilization" (Durant, 1968).

The Jewish home is the true center of Jewish life. If the home is secure and strong in Jewish values, then all of Jewish life and its institutions - religious, educational, and social- will thrive (Donin, 1991). The values of the Jewish family are contingent upon the following factors:

- Respect for the integrity, individuality, and feeling of each member of the family as a human being.
- The development of a peaceful and harmonious relationship among all the members of a household.
- Recognition and acceptance of the different roles played by each member of the family (Donin, 1991, p. 121).

Judaism places great emphasis upon education (*Chinuch*). *Chinuch* does not only refer to formal education, indeed the literal meaning of the word means "consecration" and refers to

training a child for living and not only for a "livelihood." The primary aims in the education of Jewish children are: 1) to instill the moral and ethical values of the Jewish heritage; 2) to encourage active observance of the *Torah* commandments (*Mitzvoth*); 3) to transmit knowledge of the *Torah*, the *Talmud*, and the major Jewish sources; and 4) to create a strong sense of identification with and for all people (Donin, 1991). The Jewish family is where children learn about acts of *chesed* (kindness), social responsibility (*tikkun 'olam*), and where the intergenerational transmission of values, ethics and morals occur.

Jewish Women

"It is the wisdom of women that establishes her home" (Proverbs 14:1).

The role of Jewish women is defined by an ancient and historical standard set forth to preserve the functioning of the family (Greenberg, 1998). According to the Hebrew Bible, men and women are each endowed with their own specific form of intellect. As partners in building a Jewish home, both of these attributes are expressed for the good of the family (Leff, 1993). Women are often referred to as *Bais Yaakov* (the House of Jacob) (Exodus 19:3) in the Bible. The term *Bais Yaakov* refers to the special type of intellect called *binah* (understanding) that was given to women (Niddah 45b). "*Binah* (Leff. 1993) is an emotional sensitivity to information and, an ability to take abstract ideals and put them to concrete, practical use" (p. 185). As such, according to Jewish thought, a woman is a *boneh* (builder) by virtue of her *binah* (understanding) and in so doing builds the Jewish home.

Rabbi Aaron Soleveitchik maintains that "women are spiritually equipped for the primary task of transmitting the experience of revelation" (Bitton-Jackson, 1999; p. 89). Bitton-

Jackson (1999) states that it is because of women's ways of being that they did not participate in any of the sins of the Israelites which prevented them from entering the land of Israel. Rather, she contends that "the Biblical precedent established a pattern for women to have a historically defined role as keepers of Jewish existential concepts" (p. 88). Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman (cited in Leff, 1993) stated that in the final analysis, it is the wisdom of the heart (*binah*) that determines whether a person follows the right path or not.

Thus the function of women in Jewish families is to instill the moral and ethical values of Judaism in their children and, be a partner to her spouse. The Hebrew Bible clearly emphasizes the role of women stating that: "G-d said: I will make him (man) a helper, corresponding to him" (Gen. 2:18). If a man is worthy, then his wife will be his helpmate, if he is unworthy, she will be against him and then their union will deteriorate (Greenberg, 1998; Scherman, 1979).

As a result of her obligations to her husband and family, women were exempt from many religious obligations as they might interfere with her role of caring for her family. The *Talmud* delineates the ways in which "women are to comport themselves and extols the qualities that befit a woman who knows her place" (Greenberg, 1998, p. 63). The Rabbis often refer to a psalm that states: "All glorious is the king's daughter within the palace" (Psalms 45:14), which is interpreted as, "the honor of a woman is in her home" as the basis for many *Halachic* (Jewish law) decisions (Shevuot 30a) (Greenberg, 1998).

Every Friday night at many Sabbath tables, a song extolling the virtues of the woman who is the mainstay of her home, is sung (Scherman, 1979). This song called *Aishes Chayil* (an accomplished woman, or a woman of valour) consists of 22 verses of *Proverbs* (31: 10-31). The

underlying message is the praise of the Jewish woman whose "goal in life is to foster the growth in Torah knowledge and good deeds of her husband and children- the ultimate accomplishment" (Scherman, 1979, p. 50).

However womens' most important function is that of transmitting Jewish identity. A Jew, is defined as: "one born to a Jewish mother, regardless of the father's religion" (Greenberg, 1998, p. 60). In Judaism, the oral traditions are passed down from father-to-son, however, Jewish identity is passed down from mother-to-daughter. The notion of the matrilineal transmission of religion is addressed later in the Jewish mother-daughter section of this dissertation (see p. 38 for a more comprehensive discussion).

The Holocaust

> In every generation, there are those who rise up against us, to destroy and annihilate us (Passover Haggadah).

Many Holocaust historians, researchers and survivors have suggested that the Holocaust defies understanding (Mor, 1990). They posit that attempts at explaining this catastrophic episode in the history of humanity is an act of "reductio ad absurdum," an oversimplification and a trivialization of a complex process (Dawidowicz, 1986; Wiesel, 1969, 1970). To begin to explicate an event that is unimaginable and incomprehensible is an arduous task. However, in order to allow the reader some insight and background into the Holocaust, I describe the events that Lucy Dawidowicz has called: "the war against the Jews" (Dawidowicz, 1986). The Jewish people are the focus of this dissertation because, although other people were victimized during the Holocaust, to quote Elie Wiesel (1979): "while not all victims were Jews, all Jews were victims, destined for annihilation solely because they were born Jewish" (p. 2). Jews throughout the world, whether they were directly, or indirectly affected by the Holocaust, suffered the loss

of family, friends and loved ones. No Jewish person was left unscathed.

The term "Holocaust" itself, is derived from the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *olah* (a whole burnt offering that is offered to the L-rd) which is found in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (Eckstein, 1984; Berenbaum, 1993). Researchers and Holocaust historians have argued that the use of a word with religious/sacrificial connotations is problematic in that it may elevate the nazis to a status in which their behaviours are interpreted as a spiritual or religious action rather than the genocide of European Jewry during World War II (Berenbaum,1993; Garber, 1994). Instead, the Hebrew term *Shoah*, a word that denotes "the catastrophe to Jewry during World War II" (Blumenthal, 1999, p.13) is preferable. As such the two terms Holocaust and *Shoah* will be used together to signify the systematic state-sponsored slaughter of six million Jews by the nazis and their collaborators during World War II (Bauer, 1991).

Bauer (1978) argues that the Jews were in a unique position in the nazi world because they had been singled out for their total destruction. LaCapra (1992) considers the Holocaust (*Shoah*) to have been unique because: "never before had a state, under the responsible authority of its leader, decided and announced that a specific group of human beings, including the old, the women, the children, and the infants, would be killed to the very last one, and implemented this decision with all the means at its disposal" (p. 112). In other words, "for the first time in history, a death sentence had been placed on anyone guilty of having been born" (Bauer, 1978, p. 32).

"The nazi persecution of the Jews was pure anti-Semitic ideology in the context of biological racism, and it became a central factor in Hitler's war against the world" (Bauer, 2001,

p. 28). As a result of this stance, men, women and children, old and young alike, were forcibly removed from their homes, cruelly separated from their families, stripped of their identities, dehumanized and then brutally murdered through a variety of methods. Parents watched their children being murdered. Children watched their parents being tortured, demeaned and ultimately killed. Experimentation, mutilation and murder were constant occurrences. When it ended and the cataclysmic events were brought to the light of day, millions of people had been murdered, countless others displaced, stateless, homeless, terrorized and terrified. Six million Jews, two thirds of European Jewry had been brutally murdered.

History of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*

Soon after assuming his role as chancellor on January 30, 1933, Adolph Hitler began his organized reign of terror against the Jews, which continued until 1945 (Berenbaum, 1993). Four hundred separate acts of legislation were designed to segregate, isolate, demoralize and impoverish the German Jews (Berenbaum, 1993; Friedlander, 2000). The first piece of legislation enacted was the Civil Service Law in which Jews and other non-Aryans were dismissed from civil service positions which included notaries and teachers in state schools (Berenbaum, 1993; Kaplan, 1993).

Nuremberg Laws of 1935.

In 1935, the Nuremberg Race Laws were enacted and provided legal justification for the nazi persecution of the Jews. These laws stripped German Jews of their citizenship and deprived them of all of their political rights (Berenbaum, 1993). Marriage between Jews and non-Jews was forbidden. Jews were defined by ancestry regardless of religious beliefs and practices. Therefore, the tensions that existed between the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform

movements were irrelevant in Hitler's Germany, as the Holocaust *(Shoah)* did not differentiate nor discriminate between these groups in its quest for annihilation. "Degree of Jewishness" was based on one's number of Jewish grandparents, rather than level of religious observance or affiliation. The distinction between "full Jew" and "half-breed Jew" (*Mischlinge*) was critical, designating not only legal status, but also determining economic survival, and ultimately life or death (Berenbaum, 1993; Weber, 2000).

The Nuremberg Laws publicly banished, isolated and vilified the Jewish people. By 1938 the Jewish people were deprived of any means of livelihood. For example, all Jewish property had to be registered and eighty percent of Jewish businesses were either seized or sold at outrageously low prices. Jewish workers were dismissed; Jewish stockholders were disenfranchised; Jewish lawyers were barred from practising; and Jewish doctors could only treat Jewish patients (Berenbaum, 1993; Kaplan, 1993).

Kristallnacht.

> It is not only for what we do that we are held responsible, but also for what we do not do (Moliere).

On November 9, 1938, a series of nazi pogroms (organized massacres), called Kristallnacht ("crystal night" or "night of broken glass") took place throughout Germany and Austria. Within 48 hours, 96 Jews were murdered, thousands of synagogues all over Germany had been burned along with their *Torah* scrolls, Bibles and prayer books. Seven thousand Jewish stores had been smashed and looted, numerous Jewish cemeteries, hospitals and homes were destroyed and 30,000 Jews were arrested (Berenbaum, 1993; Weber, 2000). The concentration camps at Dachau, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen were expanded to accommodate the newly arrested (Weber, 2000). Kristallnacht, came to represent "the final shattering of Jewish existence

in Germany" (Berenbaum, 1993, p. 54). Jews wanting to leave Germany were often denied access to other countries. For example: Jewish emigration to Palestine was limited by the British, Switzerland was afraid of being overrun by Jews, and the United States was reluctant to become a refuge for the Jews (Berenbaum 1993; Weisel, 1979). The underlying message put forth by Thompson (cited in Berenbaum, 1993) best summarized the situation stating that: " it is a fantastic commentary on the inhumanity of our times that for thousands and thousands of people a piece of paper with a stamp on it is the difference between life and death" (p. 57).

Nazi invasion of Poland.

On September 1, 1939, the nazis invaded Poland and within days destroyed the Polish army (Weber, 2000). The pattern set in Germany soon became the model for the rest of Europe. First, the Jewish people were categorized, then their civil rights were restricted and their property was confiscated. Next, Jews were dismissed from their jobs and were barred from their professions. Jews were isolated, forced to wear the Jewish star and forbidden to use public facilities. The fate of the Jews in Western Europe differed from country to country. The factors determining their treatment depended upon: 1) the degree of control exercised by the nazis in the conquered land; 2) the history of the Jews in that region; and 3) the behaviour of the local population (Berenbaum, 1993).

"The Final Solution."

> Now the rough work has been done we begin the period of finer work. We need to work in harmony with the civil administration. We count on you gentlemen as far as the *final solution* is concerned (Goering, on the planned mass murder of eleven million European Jews, speech made in Wannsee January 20, 1942).

In September 1941, Jews over the age of six were required to wear a yellow Star of David badge in public. This act symbolically completed the identification and isolation of European Jewry. In January 1942, the nazis met in Berlin for the Wannsee Conference where the "Final Solution" was planned and discussed (Gerlach, 2000). The "Final Solution" was the plan to kill all Jews living in Europe and was implemented in stages. At the onset, Jews were assembled, first in large cities, and then in transit camps, and were killed either by starvation or by bullets. At the next stage gassing occurred in mobile killing vans. From 1942 on, the Jews were deported from these transit camps to the death camps in the east in which stationary gas chambers of greater capacity and efficiency were used (Berenbaum, 1993).

Liberation of the camps.

In 1945, the defeat of the nazi third reich ended World War II and the concentration camps were liberated. Americans entered nazi concentration camps and described the experience as "storming the gates and then encountering hell":

> We burst into the camp and saw in a row of wooden one story barracks. ...the windows were all sealed up. Outside... eight automobiles, all up on blocks. The wheels had been taken off. The exhausts were piped in through the wall of the building. We went inside the door. In the room...there was human excretion, vomit, urine, blood all over the room... there were shower heads and faucets, all over the wall... One of my men called out "There's no water." We entered the back room filled with benches and tables... on one of the tables there were thousands of gold wedding rings... piles of human teeth with gold fillings. Outside in the yard... I could see human hair. There were piles of boots, shoes, suitcases, eyeglasses. To my left was four-wheel hay wagons and two-wheel pushcarts. These wagons contained nude bodies...men, women, and children, even babies. All nude, all dead, all piled high as they basically could pile them (Whiteway cited in Berenbaum, 1993, p. 6).

The "Final Solution," the complete decimation and destruction of the Jewish people had left millions of martyrs and others barely alive. Survival (Rustin, 1980) was "a matter of chance,

sometimes of will, ... and sometimes an act of sacrifice by someone else" (p. 36). Clearly, an event of such magnitude would leave its mark on the survivors and their children.

Jewish Women in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*

> Most of us are born to live- to die, but first to live. You, dear darling, you are born only to die. How good of you to come before roll call though, so that your mother does not have to stand at attention while you are being born. Dropping out of the womb onto the ground with your mother's thighs shielding you like wings of an angel is an infinitely nicer way to die than being fed to the gas chamber (Leitner, 1978, p. 31).

In Ruth Bondy's (1998) account of her existence in the camps, she begins to relate her experiences by stating that "Zyklon B did not differentiate between men and women: the same death swept them all away" (p. 310). This position, that of delineating the sufferers of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* by gender, according to some, may obscure the fact that the goal of the nazi's was the obliteration of the Jewish race which included both women and men (Weitzman & Ofer, 1998). However, Weitzman and Ofer posit that the goal of looking at women's experiences is not to politicize the Holocaust *(Shoah)* according to gender, but rather to take into account the perspectives and experiences of the women in order that the conceptualizations of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* become "richer and more nuanced" (p. 1), and assist researchers in visualizing the different ways in which men and women functioned during the nazi invasion. Myrna Goldenberg (1998) considered women's experiences in the Holocaust *(Shoah)* as being "different horrors within the same hell" (p. 327).

During the Holocaust *(Shoah)* women lived in ghettos, hid, or were rounded up and sent to concentration camps, work camps and killing centers. Women were particularly vulnerable during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, as they were confronted by both anti-Semitism and sexism. Coping with pregnancy, childbirth and infant care made Jewish women vulnerable to mental

anguish and physical abuse. Examples of the anguish these women were put through included: forced abortions, giving birth to children that would be murdered, or killing babies because their cries endangered other people (Patterson, 1999; Ringelheim, 1993). Women would conspire to deliver babies in secrecy in the barracks and then, to save the mother's life they would kill the baby and tell the mother that the baby was stillborn (Goldenberg, 1998). Jewish women were killed to prevent a new generation of Jewish people from being brought into the world (Ringelheim, 1998). Just as the nazis tried to persuade German women that there was no more important endeavour than bearing sons for the third reich, they also insisted that Jewish motherhood be eradicated forever (Rittner & Roth, 1993).

Jewish women suffered because of their religion and their gender. Ringelheim (1993) posits:

> Jewish women suffered both as Jews and as women from anti-Semitism and sexism in their genocidal forms. More women were deported than men. More women were killed than men. Women's chances for survival were simply not equivalent to those of men... If anti-Semitism were all that mattered, men and women would have been similarly endangered and victimized (pp. 373-374).

Patterson (1999) characterizes the Holocaust *(Shoah)* as a time when motherhood was attacked and the survivors were all orphans.

Mother-daughter relationships in the Holocaust (*Shoah*) are difficult to describe due to the overwhelming numbers of young women and children that were killed upon arrival at the concentration camps (Weitzman & Ofer, 1998). According to *SS* guidelines, every Jewish child automatically condemned his/her mother to death, both in the selections and in the routine workdays. Any woman in the selection line holding a child, her own or someone else's was sent to the gas chambers (Goldenberg, 1998).

The importance of focusing on women's experiences is that their testimonies reveal different patterns and reflections than those of men (Horowitz, 1998). Women remember things differently from men or, as Horowitz also suggests, they may remember different things. These findings are supported by psychological researchers (Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1996) who theorize that "men and women exhibit qualitative and quantitative differences in their autobiographical memories" (p. 28). These researchers posit that when asked to recall memories from early childhood, women recall more memories and can date those memories back to an earlier time than can men. They (Reese et al., 1996) state that women's stories of the past may also be richer than men's stories. One crucial finding in the experiences of women in the Holocaust (*Shoah*) was that the elements of connectedness, nurturance and caregiving were important factors in women's struggle to survive (Goldenberg, 1998).

Holocaust *(Shoah)* Survivors

> Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky. (Wiesel, 1969; p. 43)

More than fifty years have passed since the systematic destruction of European Jewry known as the Holocaust (*Shoah*) took place (Berger, 1988) and the pain, traumatic effects and anguish live on in the survivors (Harel, 1995; Rakoff, 1966) and their children (Danieli, 1985; Epstein, 1979). A review of the literature concerning the effects of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) on the survivors and their children persists in reflecting a pathological emphasis that strongly suggests that both the survivors, and their children have been emotionally and psychologically impaired (Harel, 1995), struggling with: depression, sleep disturbances, anxiety, psychological numbness

or psychosomatic diseases (Klein-Parker, 1988; Krystal, 1995).

Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors have also been described as suffering from a cluster of symptoms referred to as "concentration camp syndrome" in which serious deficits in the areas of social and emotional well-being are manifested (Chodoff, 1963). This is part of a more general phenomenon known as the "survivors' syndrome" (Niederland, 1964) in which feelings of insecurity, suspicion, separation anxiety, guilt, emotional detachment are present. The memories of the past continue to dominate their lives. Survivors (Garber, 1994) report having "flashbacks, in which at one moment they are with the living and the next they are back in the nazi concentration camp, walking with the dead" (p. 15). The whistling of a kettle can remind them of the trains to the death camps (Mor, 1990).

Researchers have reported that many survivors are haunted by the guilt and pain of surviving, while their families and friends were selected for death (Chodoff, 1963; Garber, 1994). Some researchers have suggested that these feelings of guilt are related to the view that the Jewish people did not fight back, and instead were "led like sheep to the slaughter" (Krystal, 1995). Bartov (2000) posits that some consider this type of response to be typical of "diaspora mentality" (p. 22). The term diaspora has come to have several meanings. According to Stern (1972) "diaspora" comes from the Greek word meaning "dispersion" and has been historically seen as the voluntary move into the outside world. This is distinguished from the Hebrew word *galut* (exile) which refers to the forced dispersion of the Jewish people. The two words "diaspora" and "*galut*" (exile) have become muddled over the years. The word diaspora used in this context refers to the term *galut* (exile).

Diaspora mentality is a form of "anticipatory compliance" as a result of years of coping

with anti-Semitism (Hilberg, 2000, p. 40). In times of danger the Jewish people would initiate placating responses before being accosted by overt threats. Therefore, they would not run from anti-Semitism but learned ways in which to survive (Hilberg, 2000). In the past, this mode of responding was effective, in that the Jewish people found ways to comply with the enemy, this time it ended in tragedy (Hilberg, 2000).

While not seeking to deny or minimize the devastating effects of the Holocaust (*Shoah*), there is another body of literature that suggests that many martyrs and survivors reacted with unbelievable courage in the face of abhorrent conditions (Scherman, 1986), and were able to transcend the horrors of their experiences and reclaim their inner strengths (Harel, 1995; Hass, 1995). Authors of these studies contend that Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors faced the challenges of the post war years, adjusted to new lands and languages, (Halik, Rosenthal & Pattison, 1990), enjoyed a variety of leisure activities (Helmreich, 1992) and made remarkable recoveries (Gross, 1988). Bergmann and Jucovy (1982) have argued that pathology, in terms of depression, anxiety, anhedonia, and psychosomatic disease, does not occur in all survivors. Indeed, the results of Helmreich's (1992) study indicated that "survivors who sought professional help were a distinct minority... at best representing eighteen percent of the survivor population" (p. 221).

Bergmann and Jucovy (1982) posit that many survivors demonstrated an unusual degree of "psychic strength and resiliency and have adapted to the renewal of their lives with great vitality" (p. 11). There is also evidence to demonstrate that many survivors and their children enjoy emotional and social well-being (Harel, 1995; Helmreich, 1992; Kahana, Kahana, Harel & Rosner, 1988). According to Eckstein (1984) "survivors with concentration camp numbers tattooed on their forearms bear witness to the resilience of the human spirit" (p. 182).

Researchers (Aberbach, 1989; Weiss, 1988) have suggested that although the experiences of each survivor were unique, each was also part of the collective experience of pain and suffering of the Jewish community. As mentioned earlier, Jewish people have prided themselves on close family ties and the responsibility of caring for others in the face of adversity (*tikkun olam* and *chesed*). Jewish culture and traditions have enhanced these values and associations. As such, when the survivors emerged from the Holocaust (*Shoah*), there was a community waiting for them, prepared to offer shelter and assistance (Helmreich, 1992). Rebuilding, in terms of new families, joining a Jewish community, or reconstructing the remnants of their old cities, towns, and villages was probably one of the most therapeutic aspects of their readjustment to a new life (Weiss, 1988).

Children of survivors.

> I set out to find a group of people who, like me, were possessed
> by a history they had never lived. I wanted to ask them questions,
> so that I could reach the most elusive part of myself (Epstein, 1979, p. 5).

The worst trauma experienced by the survivors was the loss of their families (Mor, 1990). As such, building new families had special significance. Survivors married and had children as quickly as possible. These children, also known in the literature as the second generation survivors, do not appear to suffer from a specific "second-generation syndrome". Researchers (Gross, 1988; Weiss, 1988) have suggested that whereas the trauma inflicted upon the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor has not had an impact on their parenting capabilities per se, survivors have been less emotionally available to their children (van der Hal, Tauber & Gottesfeld, 1996) and the children of survivors may be influenced by the symptoms of their parents (Yehuda, Schmeidler, Elkin, Wilson, Siever, Binder-Brynes, Wainberg & Aferiot, 1998). Therefore, the

development of the second generation has been affected (van der Hal et al., 1996).

Parent-child relationships in survivor families have been characterized by patterns of pain, loss and restoration (Berger, 1997; Bergmann & Jucovy, 1982; Mor, 1990; Rustin, 1980). The loss of family, of friends and of culture. Thus, children of survivors or second generation witnesses were not treated as individuals but rather as an embodiment of the New World (Gross, 1988). Children were often named after dead relatives and represented the reincarnation of their former families (Niederland, 1964). Survivors' children were raised with the underlying messages: that they must provide meaning for their parents' lives (Weiss, 1988); that they must clear all the suffering that had been sustained and; that they must be a living memorial (Hass, 1990) to replace those who had been slaughtered in the Holocaust (*Shoah*) (Berger, 1997; Freyberg, 1980).

Much has been written about the replacement children – those who have been compared to the children of Job (Aberbach, 1989; Fackenheim, 1990), their purpose to comfort/assuage their families for lost lives. Berger (1997) suggests that there are two sets of Job's children, the first set that were taken away by sudden death during the Holocaust (*Shoah*), and the second set that were born after their parents' reconciliation with life. Survivors' memory of their first family often overshadowed their relationships with their new families (Hass, 1990). One of the most difficult situations children of survivors face is the struggle between realizing how much they mean to their parents and feeling that they do not mean as much as those that had perished (Mor, 1990).

Children of survivors report feeling emotionally attached to the experiences of their parents, describe feelings of guilt and hostility, and have a sense of being different and feeling

isolated (Mor, 1990). Epstein (1979) herself a child of survivors, posits that for children of survivors, there is an intense concern for parental happiness, protectiveness toward their parents, and a sense of responsibility for their welfare. Consequently, children of the survivors often take over the role of dealing with the outside world for their parents, and as a result of these deep-seated feelings, children of survivors often parent their parents and, take care of them and protect them because they have suffered enough (Winik, 1988).

An important component in the identity formation of children of survivors includes feelings of guilt for not having experienced the Holocaust (*Shoah*) (Berger, 1997) and a compulsive need to learn about the Holocaust (*Shoah*) (Berger, 1993). Thus, second-generation witnesses often provide a voice for their survivor parents (Berger, 1997). Listening to survivor tales provides the second generation with a way in which to connect with their parents and begin to understand their own identity.

Wardi (1992) suggests that children of survivors are viewed as *yahrzeit* (memorial) candles by their parents. She (1992) explains that in most of the survivors' families one of the children is designated as a "memorial candle" for all of the relatives who were murdered in the Holocaust (*Shoah*). This particular child is encumbered with participating in his parents' emotional world to a larger extent than any of the other siblings. Children of survivors are seen as the link which preserves the past and connects it to the future (Epstein, 1979; Wardi, 1992).

Klein-Parker (1988) suggests that the survivors' need for "continuity and compensatory attitudes" (p. 196) have inspired their children to be "diligent and committed to helping others". Seaman (1997, p. 128) contends that "the act of putting children into the caretaking role can have future implications for their career choices in the helping professions". Researchers (Berger,

1988; Rosenman & Handelsman, 1990) have demonstrated that children of survivors are involved in the helping profession in numbers out of proportion to their percentage in the population. Berger (1988) suggests that perhaps this phenomenon may be attributed to the individual and collective need to make the world a better place for fear that another Holocaust (*Shoah*) will occur. It is also possible that the high numbers of second generation children involved in the helping professions are not due to preventive concerns but to a heightened sensitivity to the suffering of others.

Whereas the goal of this dissertation is not to minimize the negative impact of the Holocaust (*Shoah*), it is critical to remember and document the living history of the survivors and their children, and to focus on the courage, resilience and, emotional fortitude of the survivors (Weiss, 1988). Not only would it be beneficial to begin to elucidate the inner resources they utilized with which they faced the cruelty of their persecutors, but also to recognize the strength necessary to begin their lives yet again in a new country, in a new language, and often with new families.

Mother-Daughter Relationships

> Probably there is nothing in human nature more resonant with charges than the flow of human energy between two biologically alike bodies, one of which has lain in amniotic bliss inside the other, one of which has laboured to give birth to the other. The materials are here for the deepest mutuality and the most powerful estrangement (Rich, 1986, pp. 225-226).

The composition of the family as we know it today is a result of the dramatic changes that took place during the Industrial revolution, chief among which is the separation of work from home life (Enns 1993, Lindsey, 1997). Men assumed an instrumental role in families and earned a living outside of the home. Women/mothers, assumed an expressive/emotional role and

functioned inside of the home (Lindsey, 1997; Parsons, 1964). For mothers, the sanctity of the home and hearth was of supreme importance to the exclusion of all else (Enns, 1993), most especially herself (Gilligan, 1982; Lindsey, 1997). Mothers were to demonstrate these ideals in the home, by their dedication and caring of their husbands, children, the elderly and family property (Enns, 1993). Many theories developed to support this particular view of the maternal self.

Embedded within psychoanalytic theories is the ideology that contends that individual pathology is a result of the abilities and caregiving qualities of the mother (Lerner, 1988). Theorists of this particular school of thought characterize mothers as "an ever-present vessel for the child's needs and desires, which when properly handled, will enable them to grow into a happy, well-adjusted adult" (Weingarten, 1994, p. 65). Erich Fromm (1962) talked about the unconditional nature of maternal love. He stated that:

> Mother's love ... need not be acquired, it need not be deserved... Motherly love ...is [an] unconditional affirmation of the child's life and his needs...Mothers love...makes the child feel it is good to have been born; it instills in the child the love of life...the happiness in being alive. [when this standard is not met] a bitter feeling that one is not loved for oneself, that one is loved only because one pleases, that one is, in the last analysis, not loved at all but used (pp. 33-42).

In the 1960's, attitudes toward mothers were influenced by object relations theorists (Klein, 1975a, 1975b; Mahler 1968; Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975; Winnicott, 1958, 1965, 1971, 1975). These theorists postulated that the mother-child relationship was the single most important factor in early attachment and in the child's development. Melanie Klein (1975a, 1975b) hypothesized that infants internalize good experiences at mother's breast and project bad experiences onto mother's breast. A predominance of bad internalized experiences or objects

would result in impaired interactions with others. Winnicott (1958, 1965, 1971, 1975), another object relations theorist, supported the concept of "good enough" mothering which he described as the mother's ability to gratify the physical and psychological needs of the infant. Winnicott argued that development could not occur without effective parenting/mothering. The mother, by virtue of her care, was the one who provided a gratifying environment that adapted to the infant's needs and fostered growth.

Whereas Klein and Winnicott concentrated on the infant stage of development, Mahler's (1968; Mahler et al., 1975) focus was on early childhood. She postulated that separation (distance) and individuation (intrapsychic autonomy) from mother was a critical component in the development of later interpersonal relationships. While these theorists all took strong positions vis-a-vis the role of women as mothers, few addressed the impact of fathers on the child's developmental process and, none took into account the different needs of daughters and sons.

Okun (1992) has suggested that the focus on mothers as the "primary determinant of the child's development represents the most blatantly restrictive account of women's roles on our culture and contributes to the cultural devaluation of women, [and to] mother-blaming..." (p. 38). Psychological theories and popular culture places mothers/ motherhood in a precarious position in society (Walters, 1996). Either they are idealized for their goodness, or condemned for any emotional ills that developed in their children (Caplan, 1989; Chodorow & Contratto, 1992; Rich, 1986; Walters, 1988). Mothers are either accused of doing too much or branded for not doing enough (Siegel et al., 2000). This concept of glorification and demonization has had an impact on the mother- daughter dyad. Okun (1992) noted that psychological theories postulate a

heightened sense of ambivalence, mutual dependency and, a lifelong struggle as hallmarks of the mother-daughter connection.

The mother-daughter dyad has been viewed through many theoretical lenses. The predominant perspective has been the psychodynamic one, which emphasizes that as a result of an unresolved Oedipal complex, the relationship between mothers and daughters is characterized by conflict (Freud, 1932; Roith, 1987). Researchers (Walters, 1996) maintain that the popular ideologies with regard to the mother-daughter dyad are: (1) not only is conflict between mothers and daughters inevitable but it is essential in the daughter's development into adulthood; (2) too much closeness between a mother and daughter is unhealthy beyond a certain age; and finally, (3) separation and individuation from mother are symbols of adult maturity. These ideologies were often based on theories that did not adequately address the experiences of women (Gilligan, 1982). Goldberg (1994) noted that more recent theories suggest that it is the connection with others that is the basis of healthy development for women.

Feminist theoreticians (Chodorow, 1989; Keller, 1990) highlight the role of the mother-daughter connectedness as a critical element in women's identity and personality development. A sense of sameness exists between mothers and daughters that distinguishes it from the mother-son relationship. According to Okun (1992) men and women experience relatedness and separateness differently. Boys are taught to separate from their mother, the opposite gender parent, whereas girls are taught to remain attached to mother, the same gender parent (Erikson, 1972). Thus, boys and girls experience different strengths and challenges in the process of their development. The sense of sameness that exists between mothers and daughters contributes to the development of a mutually satisfying relationship for both women (Chodorow, 1989;

Goldberg, 1994).

Chodorow (1978, 1989) suggests that the process of personality development is different for girls than for boys. Whereas models of male development focus on autonomy through separation and individuation from their parents at specific developmental stages (Erikson, 1972), female development is characterized by mutual empathy and nurturance in the mother-daughter bond (Lerner, 1988). More recent researchers (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Striver and Surrey, 1991) have proposed a theory called the Self-in Relation model in which they postulate that women do not separate and/ or individuate, instead they suggest that personality and a sense of self is developed through bonds of empathy, connectedness and identification with mother, the same gendered caregiver. The central premise of the self-in-relation theory (Jordan & Surrey, 1986) is that "women organize their sense of identity, find existential meaning, achieve a sense of coherence and continuity, and are motivated in the context of a relationship" (p. 102). Jordan and Surrey (1986) challenge the psychoanalytic propensity toward pathologizing mothers and daughters. Instead, they emphasize the values of nurturance and connectedness (Lerner, 1988).

The ability to mother is reproduced from mother to daughter (Chodorow, 1978) and is embodied in the relationship with mother (Hartsock, 1983). Lerner (1998) suggests that daughters watch their mothers to see what their own future may be like and what is possible (p. 177). Carter (cited in Lerner, 1998) talks about the many legacies that mothers bequeath to their daughters:

> She teaches her daughter about being a wife, a mistress, a mother, a daughter, a sister, and an aunt. She teaches her how to be or not to be a housekeeper, cook, hostess, and a working woman. She teaches her daughter about being sexual or asexual, or anti-sexual, about being young, middle-aged, and old, about being

> divorced or widowed, about being happy or unhappy. But most of all, a mother teaches a daughter, whether she plans to or not, about being a female person, and whether that is a possible thing to be or whether it is simply a contradiction in terms (p. 177).

Researchers have suggested that the special bond that exists between mothers and daughters has existed throughout all the stages of development (Fischer, 1991). Mothers identify with daughters and, are more likely to confide in them (Fischer, 1991). Daughters learn to mother their children, but they also learn to provide emotional and physical support to their mothers as they grow old (Fischer, 1991).

Chodorow (1978) suggests that the closeness of mothers and daughters is related to the social construction of gender that has been defined as the manner in which individuals learn about their sex, and the manner in which society regards that sexuality (Farganis, 1988). The underlying rationale is that the notion of gender is dependent upon the socially constructed norms of the time and is not necessarily as deterministic, or as mechanistic as was previously thought (Farganis, 1988). Thus, the mother-daughter bond comes from living shared experiences as a result of gender. The belief that a woman's ultimate goal will be her role as wife and mother is inculcated into girls at a very early age (Lindsey, 1997). Thus, daughters are brought up to believe that the epitome of feminine virtue is the altruistic caring of others (Weingarten, 1994).

Given the conceptualizations of mother-daughter relationships in the past, it appears that the time has come to reconsider and question the themes that we have taken to represent psychological truths about the mother-daughter dyad, deconstruct the existing formulations and, reveal the ideological agendas and myths that perpetuate our understanding of this relationship. Rather than the inevitable conflict laden mother-daughter relationship which has come to

epitomize the mother-daughter dyad, we may begin to reevaluate and emphasize the potential for a positive and mutually beneficial relationship.

Jewish Mother-Daughter Relationships

> "Heed...the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the guidance of your mother" (Proverbs 1:8).

Whereas psychology has much to say in regard to mother-daughter relationships in general, the examination of Jewish mother-daughter relationships, in particular has received little attention from the psychological community. With the exception of several studies that look at Jewish mothers and others that look at Jewish daughters, few published works appear in the psychological literature on this aspect of the Jewish population. In this section I will discuss Jewish mothers and daughters as discussed in the psychological literature and begin the process of interconnecting the two.

Motherhood is an idealized role in the Jewish religion (Siegel, et al., 2000). The mother is seen as the nurturer of the entire family. She demonstrates the ethic of caring for others and continually sacrifices for the sake of her family (Rosen & Weltman, 1996). The *Talmud* states that "blessings come to a home only through the wife and mother" (Bava Metzia, 59a), thus the sanctity of the Jewish home is linked to the woman, whose function is to establish a family and raise her children.

In the Jewish tradition, there is an unusually strong emphasis on the family (Patterson, 1999; Rosen & Weltman, 1996). Establishing a family and having children is seen as a religious obligation, a way in which to fulfill G-d's commandment to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis, 1: 28). The family is also a way in which to feel connected with previous generations and a place in which to preserve the Jewish heritage (Rosen & Weltman, 1996). For the Jewish

people, the family has also come to be seen as a safe haven, a sanctuary in times of persecution and discrimination when other institutions could not be trusted. Consequently, anti-Semitism has been a pervasive reality in the mothering decisions that are in regard to the family (Siegel, et al., 2000; Beck, 1990).

Siegel and colleagues (2000) argue that Jewish mothers do not fit into the mainstream culture and therefore are ambivalent about their role in society. This ambivalence may be communicated to their daughters (Rosen & Weltman, 1996). In order to come to terms with these feelings of inadequacy/ambivalence Jewish daughters feel the need to be "Super Moms" (Rosen & Weltman, 1996) in that "not only must they be well-educated, have a profession, and be helpful to their husbands, but they must also be active in the community and know everything about their children's schooling in order to meet their perceived demands from their mothers" (p. 625). For Jewish women, as for women in general, the goal is to nurture the development of others rather than oneself (Rosen & Weltman, 1996).

The most important role however, of Jewish women, is the transmission of Jewish identity (Greenberg, 1998). The ability to consider oneself Jewish is a function of matriarchal lineage (Deuteronomy, 7:3-4). Therefore, according to Orthodox Jewish law (*Halakha*) the answer to the question of Jewish identity is fundamental: if one is born of a Jewish mother, one is a Jew (Personal Communication Rabbi Y.C. Wenger, April 10, 1997).

Historical perspective on Jewish mother-daughter relationships.

Within the Shtetls of Eastern Europe, the roles of men and women were clearly defined. Jewish woman were known for their strength and competence (Weiner, 1990) and, in many cases Jewish men for their commitment to the study of *Torah* (Baum, Hyman & Michel, 1976). Based on this model of religious dedication, the husband's responsibility was to serve G-d

through prayer and the study of *Talmud,* while the wife raised the children, took care of the family business, and left the husband free to study *Torah* and bring honor to the family (Bienstock, 1979; Rich, 1986). Given that it was prestigious to have a husband who was a *Torah* scholar and, it was considered to be a *mitzvah* (good deed) for a woman, be she a wife, sister, mother or daughter to support a learned man, many women took care of the daily household tasks in order to make it easier for their husbands to study (Baum, et al., 1976). Women found ways to earn a living, and young girls were expected to supplement the family's income as well.

The religious distinction between the sexes began at birth. Girls and boys were educated separately for the different roles they would take on as adults. Mothers indulged their sons, but expected their daughters to participate in the housework and the care of the younger children. Girls followed their mothers around and learned about their future responsibilities by example (Baum, et al., 1976). Although women had fewer religious obligations than men and were excluded from the study of *Talmud*, it was expected that they demonstrate their piety in other ways and in so doing set an example for their children (Baum, et al., 1976). Women's piety would be demonstrated in her bringing food to her father and brothers who were studying *Talmud*, opening her home to those less fortunate, and feeding the poor. Her role, was different from that of men's and she accepted her place in Jewish society (Baum, et al., 1976).

Family patterns of Jewish people in the modern era varied as a function of social class, culture, and socio-economic status (Hyman, 1998). With the prospect of economic prosperity, the practice of traditional Judaism declined. Therefore, a parallel process occurred with Jewish families as with North American families and the roles of men and women as had been previously prescribed began to change. In America, when Jewish men were able to provide financial support, they began to restrict the work of the women and began to shower women

with material possessions as a way of demonstrating men's accomplishments (Baum et al., 1976). Jewish women found that the qualities of strength and competence with which her mother and grandmother had served their families in Eastern Europe were no longer respected, and so the self sacrificing "Yiddishe Mama" of the Old World had turned into a domineering guilt inducing monster referred to as the "Jewish mother" (Baum, et al., 1976; Prell, 1999).

Jewish mother and daughter stereotypes.

Stereotypes abound in the popular literature regarding mothers in general and Jewish mothers in particular (Baum, et al., 1976; Booker,1991). The Jewish mother has been described as "castrating, controlling, overbearing, domineering, smothering, suppressive, demanding, guilt-producing and nerve-wracking" (Booker, 1991, p. 15). Her children's achievements belong to her because she has lived her life for and through her children (Baum, et al., 1976). What often gets overlooked is the underlying, subtle anti-Semitism that is responsible for these clichés. The caricatured Jewish mother (Rich, 1986) is seen as "over-involved, martyred, possessive and a chronic worrier regarding her children" (p. 236), gossipy, plump, overprotective of her children and obsessed with the healing power of chicken soup (Bienstock, 1979). Stereotyping is racism that is masked in a cruel joke, one in which the focus of the comment is abused, and the commentators can hide behind their so called humorous remarks.

Whereas Jewish mothers are overly dedicated in the stereotype, the Jewish daughter, better known as the Jewish American Princess (J. A. P.) (Beck, 1990), is also a stereotyped area. The Jewish princess is depicted as spoiled, materialistic, self-centered and assertive, and cares for no one but herself (Baum, et al., 1976). Accustomed to being treated like royalty at home, she expects the same consideration from the world. Baum and colleagues contend that this stereotype is circular in that the Jewish mother desperately wants her daughter to marry well, and

the daughter expects the right man to fall at her feet. Thus both mother and daughter are depicted as being superficial and having materialistic values.

People from different cultural groups have unique ways of relating to each other, as such it is important to examine the mother-daughter relationship in terms of its socio-cultural context in order to explicate the way in which these women function and interact with one another. Given the paucity of research that examines Jewish mother-daughter relationships, it appears that the time has come to redress this gap in the literature.

Methodological Constraints and Rationale for the Present Study.

In general, various Holocaust (*Shoah*) studies have yielded inconsistent findings in terms of survivors and their children. Researchers have argued (Harel, 1995; Lee, 1988) that much of the early Holocaust (*Shoah*) literature suffers from serious theoretical and methodological limitations. Harel also maintains that most of the studies regarding Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors are drawn exclusively from the psychoanalytic literature, and therefore fail to take into account the behavioural and social science perspectives. That is to say that, the extreme and horrifying conditions that victims of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) had to endure on a daily basis, as well as the learned behaviours due to their experiences of the nazi regime, were not of primary interest to psychoanalytic researchers. As these were the researchers who were predominately writing about the Holocaust (*Shoah*), the focus of concern was on psychoanalytic concepts and formulations such as; narcissistic gratification or separation-individuation (Freyberg, 1980) rather than understanding the ways in which people functioned under extreme circumstances.

Another difficulty found (Halik, et al., 1990; Harel, 1995) with the previous research was that those studies were often based on observations of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors who were seeking help or those applying for financial restitution. This was a methodological

difficulty, in that researchers were relying on samples of convenience, rather than on random samples drawn from the population under study. Individuals who presented themselves for therapy, or financial compensation were just one type of survivor; the others, those who did not seek treatment, or those who had the inner strength to transcend their experiences, or those who refused restitution, were not seen, and therefore, were not included in the observations of these researchers. How can research that is not methodologically sound, be used to label an entire group of people? Can one be justified in suggesting that "survivors' syndrome" (Niederland, 1964), or "concentration camp syndrome" (Chodoff, 1963) are phenomena experienced by most Holocaust (*Shoah*) victims, when the research itself utilized to uncover this event is limited? Perhaps, these descriptors are best suited for those individuals who presented themselves to therapists at that time. Therefore, it appears that the generalizations and/or conclusions that are drawn from these studies are often greater than can be justified by the data.

Survivors have much to say on the Holocaust (*Shoah*), their stories reflect that there are as many Holocausts (*Shoah*s) as there are survivors (Garber, 1994). Yet, researchers treat Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as a homogeneous group, thus, much of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) literature attends to the problems encountered by the survivors in an inexplicit manner (Rustin, 1980). Researchers have suggested that experiences of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors may differ for a variety of reasons, gender being one (Vogel, 1994), and resources for survival, which includes a personal belief system, another (Gerwood, 1994).

Researchers have highlighted both the importance of providing a forum for women's experiences to be heard and the paucity of studies exploring those lived experiences in the psychological literature. Other researchers treat the Holocaust (*Shoah*) as if gender differences were of no concern, and as a result of this oversight crucial information has been ignored and,

women's experiences have been obscured (Rittner & Roth, 1993). In the Holocaust (*Shoah*) literature itself, the better known memoirs were written mainly by men, and until recently women's experiences have not been recounted. In the past few years, women have begun to document their experiences. A difference between the earlier accounts written by men, and the more recent accounts by women, is that "women write of their solidarity with other women in the camps, and men write of their individual struggles to survive" (Bartov, 2000, p. 9).

Bruner (1990) maintains that personal narratives are a way in which people deconstruct and make meaning of their lives. Womens's narratives provide an alternative perspective to the events prior to and following the Holocaust (*Shoah*), as women often experienced circumstances in ways radically different from men (Bridenthal, Grossman & Kaplan, 1984; Kaplan, 1998). "This more intimate relationship with atrocity included the care for children, elderly people, and a struggle to keep, or rebuild, a sense of home, and family" (Bartov, 2000, p. 9).

Psychology does not consider gender to be a factor in the vulnerability of intergenerational transmission of experiences. Indeed, although there is a vast body of literature examining the repercussions of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) on survivors, research examining the impact of gender on the survivors and their children is limited (Vogel, 1994). This is particularly disturbing, given Sokoloff's (1992) findings that gender differences are a factor in terms of childrens' reactions to their parents' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences. Given the different dynamics of men and women, it stands to reason that if experiences and perceptions differ as a function of gender, then it follows that the intergenerational transmission of experiences would be different as well. The impact of gender in conjunction with the effects of the Holocaust (*Shoah*), may lead to very different findings than those suggested in the past. Ringelheim (1993) argues that:

> The question is not whether being male or female mattered during the Holocaust. The real question is: How did it matter? Is it blind if not malicious, to subsume and hide women's experiences under those of men when there are significant difference (p. 373-374).

As such, the issue of gender in the Holocaust (*Shoah*) warrants further examination (Vogel, 1994).

Summary

Sokoloff (1992) suggests that much has been written about the pain and anguish that has personified the Holocaust (*Shoah*). In fact, most of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) literature focuses primarily on the psychological trauma resulting from this event. Few studies contemplate whether some second generation children were strengthened by the experience of growing up in the home of survivors. It is important to examine the strength, resilience, and courage that assisted the survivors in transcending the Holocaust (*Shoah*), emigrating to a new country, and starting a new life. The term survivor in and of itself denotes an individual who has strength in the face of adversity. It is the strength as well as the pain that teaches a lesson to the next generation.

Rosenman and Handelsman (1990) have suggested that narratives of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) help the Jewish community regain parts of their lives that were lost by witnessing massive death and destruction. By listening to their narratives, we may learn about the circumstances under which these individuals were able to survive. For example: we may be able to determine what factors assisted them in their daily struggles. What messages, or lessons of survival were they able to transmit to their children? How did they (or were they even able to) teach their children to triumph over the many obstacles which they faced on a daily basis? And finally, what can we learn from the courage of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors so that we may

help others face their own personal traumas?

Given the relevant literature previously discussed regarding the bond that links mothers and daughters, in general, it stands to reason that: when the mother "carries a trauma which she must deny in order to survive, the daughter is likely to absorb this trauma without being aware of it" (Vogel, 1994, p. 44). Although one cannot negate the horrifying impact that the Holocaust (*Shoah*) had on survivors and on their children, one must not ignore the strength in these survivors as well. The question then becomes: Is trauma the only thing that is transmitted? Perhaps, due to the sense of connectedness mentioned earlier, mothers exemplified constructive behaviours which daughters were then able to integrate into their own ways of being. It is essential to elucidate, and clarify what daughters learned from their mothers' experiences and "the mother in recalling and sharing with her daughter her own narratives...gives the daughter strategies of resistance and hence, an alternative script for coming into womanhood" (O'Reilly, 1998, p. 86). Therefore, a goal of this study is to elicit the stories of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) from the perspective of Jewish second generation survivors, in order to ascertain the messages that were transmitted from the survivors to their daughters, thereby, learning about the survivors' remarkable coping skills under horrendous conditions.

Delving into the literature concerning the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors has demonstrated that the issue of gender and religious affiliation have not been fully addressed. Therefore, another purpose of this study, is to examine and describe from a phenomenological perspective the experiences of Jewish second generation survivor's daughters, address the interrelationship between mothers and daughters, consider the intergenerational influences and factors that have contributed to their development via their lived experiences, and determine what resources have been passed down from generation to generation.

Research Question (s)

Given the impact that the Holocaust (*Shoah*) has had on several generations, and given the methodological difficulties previously discussed, it is my position that it is imperative to clarify several issues concerning Judaism, the Holocaust (*Shoah*), and mothers and daughters. The following questions emerge and are my focus for this inquiry:

1) How did daughters of Jewish women Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors experience their mothers?

2) How did the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors understand and perceive their mothers' survivor experiences?

3) In what way did the daughter's perception of their mothers' experiences in the Holocaust (*Shoah*) influence their own lives, with regard to the choices they have made?

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction to the Methodology

Given the paucity of literature on Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their second generation daughters, as well as a lack of theoretical basis for guidance, it appears that elements drawn from grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994) in conjunction with feminist epistemologies (Harding, 1987; Hartsock, 1983; Riger, 1992) are best suited to the purposes of my study. These approaches allow my research questions to be addressed, increase general knowledge, and highlight new phenomena.

The strength of this methodology, is that many of the difficulties that might confound other methodological approaches, are incorporated into this research strategy. For example: the notion of rater bias is not ignored but rather is incorporated into the process and is continuously examined throughout all phases of the study. The explicit acknowledgment of biases helps limit their influence on the data. Therefore, when these biases are written up in the report of the data, readers are then able to evaluate this stance more effectively (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

As one of the goals of this research is to develop a theory about Jewish mothers and daughters as a result of the Holocaust (*Shoah*), it appears that feminist epistemologies and components of grounded theory, which is a general methodology for developing theory, grounded in data that has been systematically gathered and analyzed are most suitable to elucidate the interpretations and perspectives of daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors by way of their lived experiences. Incorporating the complex, multiple realities of these women into a comprehensive, comprehendible theory appears to be a challenge, but one that is addressed from the perspective of feminist epistemologies, elements of grounded theory and a

phenomenological methodology.

Epistemology

The research methodology chosen by an investigator depends upon the types of questions asked, and the types of responses hoped to be evoked. Qualitative approaches place greater emphasis on detailed personal descriptions, and less emphasis on quantification. These approaches are sources of rich descriptions, and explanations of processes in identifiable contexts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, determine which events led to which consequences, and derive worthwhile explanations. Qualitative data are more likely to: 1) result in serendipitous findings and new integrations, and 2) help researchers get beyond initial conceptualizations in order to generate and/or revise conceptual frameworks (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In this study I utilize a qualitative integrative multi-methodological approach (Sinacore, in progress) that incorporates feminist epistemologies (Harding, 1987; Oleson, 1994; Reinharz, 1992) with a phenomenological methodology and elements of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994). Each of these methods offers a unique perspective, each with its own set of limitations. Together, these approaches help explicate and elucidate a theory of Jewish mothers and daughters as a result of the Holocaust (*Shoah*).

Harding (1987) posits that "scientific knowledge-seeking is supposed to be value-neutral, objective, dispassionate, disinterested, and so forth... In particular, science's "method" is supposed to protect the results of research from the social values of the researchers" (p. 182). Feminists challenge the concept of objectivity especially with respect to research on women and argue that neither science nor knowledge ascertained from science is value neutral but rather a social construction. Foucault (1980) carried this argument further and posited that social

constructions are created in order to justify or legitimize power. The connection between power and knowledge is not new and thus, knowledge is not "politically innocent" (Tanesini, 1999, p. 187). Rather, Tanesini in stating Harding's position maintains that endorsing the purported neutrality of the scientific method condones and obscures political issues.

One such issue and an important critique of empiricism noted by feminist scholars is that the examination of topics critical to women have been excluded from research in favor of those relevant to men. Moreover, not only have men's / human issues been the focus of attention, but as previously mentioned many studies have included only male participants in their sample and have generalized the results to both men and women (Riger, 1992). Thus, feminist scholars (Riger, 1992) have posited that "within the existing framework, women's experiences have not been fully articulated" (p. 733). Furthermore, women continue to be separated from their own experiences when that experience is understood from a male perspective (Riger, 1992). As a result of these concerns alternative research methods based on feminist values that sought to correct the male-centered tendencies in the existing scientific schemes were engendered (Harding, 1987; Riger, 1992 Sherif, 1987). Feminist standpoint epistemologies are but one of many feminist responses to the deficiencies previously highlighted (Oleson, 1994). It is vital to take note however of the fact that whereas feminist epistemologies (Harding, 1987) challenge the way in which "empiricism has been practiced," (p. 182) they do not take exception to the "norms of empiricism themselves" (p. 182).

Feminist standpoint researchers emphasize a particular view that builds upon women's perceptions of their experiences (Harding, 1987; Tanesini, 1999). They (Harding, 1991; Hartsock, 1983) suggest that when one considers social reality from the standpoint of women's lives, recognition of the biases inherent in the dominant understanding become apparent. As a

result of this new and more comprehensive stance, fresh perspectives emerge, knowledge of the world becomes more complete and, a more accurate representation of social reality, one that challenges the truth of official accounts is brought forth (Anderson, Armitage, Jack, & Wittner, 1990). Thus, the aim of feminist standpoint epistemologies is not to exchange a male-centered perspective for a female-centered one, but rather to provide a more authentic conceptualization of the world (Riger, 1992). Feminist scholars (Riger, 1992) contend that: "giving voice to women's perspective means identifying the ways in which women create meaning and, experience life from their particular position" (p. 734). These theorists (Maracek, 1989) posit that: "what we know, and how we know, depends on who we are, that is on the knower's historical locus and his or her position in the social hierarchy" (p. 372).

Feminist epistemologies combined with qualitative approaches assist in the process of implementing a variety of methods that allow researchers to gather specific pieces of information that would go unnoticed with quantitative strategies. One such method is the qualitative interview (Charmaz, 2002) which "provides an open-ended, in-depth exploration of an aspect of life about which the interviewee has substantial experience, often combined with considerable insight" (p. 676). In the past, individuals were not always seen as reliable referents of their own experiences (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). However, since the 1970's feminist researchers have used the interview method for collecting data (Reinharz & Chase, 2002) and have given voice to women's experiences. The interview (Reinharz, 1992), offers researchers

> access to people's own ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. This asset is particularly important for the study of women because this way of learning from women is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men speak for women (p. 19).

With a feminist qualitative approach, the researcher/ interviewer as a function of the interview

becomes a collaborator in the interview process and the interview, becomes a co-creation constructed by both the researcher and the participant (Kvale, 1996; Maguire, 1995). As women's ways of interviewing and being interviewed differ from that of mens', implementing a collaborative research strategy accentuates these distinctions and allows previously ignored aspects of women's lives, actions and emotions to surface (Anderson, et al., 1990).

Feminist researchers and clinicians have stressed the potential benefits of qualitative research methodologies that enable the *voices* of women to be heard (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986). Voice, as postulated by Weingarten (1994) is a "metaphor through which people, especially women, express their sense of who they are, what they think, feel, know, believe, and care about" (p. 9). Interviewing women may facilitate and enhance the process of discovering their voices (Reinharz & Chase, 2002). As such, to hear the unheard and the unimagined would assist in the creation of a theory that would be appropriate to women and, be based on women's experiences (Riger, 1992).

Elements of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) would be valuable in this endeavor as grounded theory is a "general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed" (p. 273). Straus and Corbin (1990) posit that "the purpose of grounded theory is ... to build theory that is faithful to and illuminates the area under study" (p. 24). This approach provides a systematic set of procedures for data collection, analysis and theory construction. The theory develops during the actual research and occurs as a result of the continuous interaction between analysis and data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). In this approach, investigators systematically categorize data and limit theorizing until patterns emerge from the categorizing operation (Rennie, Phillips & Quartaro, 1988).

When using grounded theory methodology, researchers typically avoid reading relevant

literature until the investigation is completed and the grounded theories are in place. Straus and Corbin (1990) posit that with the grounded theory approach "one does not begin with a theory and then prove it" (p. 23), rather "one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (p. 23). However, for the purposes of this study, given that this research will only incorporate elements of grounded theory, an a priori literature review has been conducted in order to increase theoretical sensitivity and assist in the derivation of questions for the semi- structured interview. This is consistent with the integrative model (Sinacore, in progress) and is supported by previous research (Ritchie, Fassinger, Prosser, Robinson, Linn, & Johnson, 1997; Straus & Corbin, 1994).

Thus, the integration (Sinacore, personal communication, January 8, 2002) of feminist standpoint epistemologies and the grounded theory approach results in a method that emphasizes the following main points: Guided by feminist standpoint epistemologies which assert that women and issues relevant to women have been at the margin of research, the integrative model gives women a more central position and, as such they are the focus of the present study.

With the integrative model (Sinacore, in progress) I use the process of reflexivity and posit that because of who I am, I will reflect upon what is being said, and that will inform me. Feminist methodologists advocate the importance of continuous systematic examinations of assumptions and values in order to strengthen objectivity. As such, feminist standpoint theorists endorse a more stringent approach in which the assumptions and position of the researcher are clearly articulated and become part of the research. In the integrative approach (Sinacore, personal communication, January, 2002) I clearly state my assumptions and values in the researcher's subjective frame (see p. 54) which are outlined below, they are not however, discussed with the interviewee. Rather, it is only the participants' perspective that is relevant

during the course of the interview. The impact of my stance on the research itself is continuously scrutinized/examined throughout all phases of the study. Therefore, after the interview and during the data analysis I compare my assumptions and values to the data in order to strengthen objectivity and, as with grounded theory, I am able to generate substantive theories.

Researcher's Subjective Frame: Role and Background of Researcher

Psychologists espouse the notion of neutrality as a crucial component in the therapeutic and investigative milieu. The very concept of being unbiased, impartial, or "fair" are threads that permeate perceptions of what is to be expected in all areas of psychology, be it research or therapy. For researchers, the concept of "neutrality" or being unbiased in one's research is, according to theoreticians especially important in order to be true to the data and, report "pure and untarnished" research. In her development of standpoint theory Harding (1987) critiques the notion of and thus the possibility of "objective reality".

Having addressed the concept of objectivity, I explicitly state from the outset that as an Orthodox Jewish woman, and the daughter of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, I am not, nor do I purport to be neutral to the nazis and their collaborators. I choose not to be neutral when much of my family was slaughtered. The bias is there, the lack of neutrality is evident. On the other hand, Heilbrun (1988) elaborates on the qualifications necessary to write about someone's life. She suggests that what is required is: "an inherent understanding of a culture that cannot be learned; and...is conversant with and sympathetic to... religious beliefs" (p. 50). Both of these prerequisites are present in this researcher and so, whereas my position is not one of neutrality, my background is congruent with the culture and research topic.

Historians have reported that for the first 20 years after the Holocaust (*Shoah*) – after witnessing much torture, death and, destruction, the survivors were silent, at a loss to describe

their experiences (Bergmann & Jucovy, 1982). Then in the 1970's, survivors began to speak out. Time is passing, the survivors are aging, and eventually the witnesses of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) will be gone. Documenting their history is crucial so that we may learn from them and from their experiences. As Marcia Cohn Spiegel (1997) eloquently stated:

> The silence has been broken. We trace our strength and courage to our mothers and grandmothers and celebrate our new awareness of their vitality. We no longer have to hide our contributions to Jewish life and survival...We are exploring where we came from and the influences that shaped our lives, so that we can understand who we are and where we are going. We will keep silent no more (p. xxiv).

The philosopher George Santayana (1905) stated: "those who cannot remember history are doomed to repeat it" (p. 284). We live in difficult times, terrorism, annihilation, and acts of genocide are being reported more frequently. Do we allow ourselves to become immune and therefore numb to the pain of others distancing ourselves and isolating the victims of inhuman acts? Or is our goal to create a future in which the evil acts of humans as personified by "the major traits of hitlerism - isolation, vilification, expulsion, slavery, and extermination, are stopped by those who demonstrate intelligence, wisdom, and moral rectitude" (Garber, 1994, p. 71). Thus, the message of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) for future generations is not survival alone, but rather the prevention of moral atrophy.

Given my stance, my epistemological assumptions are as follows:

1. Everyone has a story to tell and it will be to their benefit to tell it.

2. As a result of this endeavor, I will learn something about myself.

3. The fact that the principle researcher is herself a child of survivors will facilitate the interview process.

4. Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences and stories are an active component in the growth and development of children of survivors.

Participants

The participants were recruited through my network in the Jewish community, from Jewish organizations and Synagogues and by word-of-mouth. When appropriate I contacted individuals in my professional circle who knew of potential participants and asked them to provide these individuals with a brief description of my study and my phone number. Those participants interested in participating contacted me directly. No one was ever informed of an individual's decision to participate in my research.

I recruited 13 women of diverse Jewish expression, between the ages of 39-55, who were daughters of women Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors. This specific age range was selected to ensure that the participants were daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and not survivors themselves. I looked at *Ashkenazi* women in particular, as they were the predominant ethnic group in Eastern Europe during the time of the Holocaust (*Shoah*). The number of participants for the study was consistent with that suggested for qualitative research in counseling psychology (Hill, Thompson & Williams, 1997).

Instruments

Demographic Information Sheet.

In order to obtain demographic information with respect to the participants, I developed a demographic information sheet specifically for this project. Demographic information included: age, birthplace, religious affiliation and level of observance, marital status, education, employment etc. (see Appendix B).This information was used with the qualitative data to acquire greater insight into the lives of the participants.

Interview Protocol.

In order to conduct consistent in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the research participants, I developed a detailed interview protocol based upon the available literature in the areas of Judaism, Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, mother-daughter connections and, the interrelationship between these variables. I utilized the interview protocol as a guide to prompt participants in my study. Therefore, I did not go through the list of questions with each participant, instead I used the interview protocol as a prompt to ensure that all question areas were addressed (see Appendix C).

The semi-structured interview which utilizes open-ended questions developed from topic areas in the available literature, provides the opportunity for participants to elaborate on their experiences and in so doing, formulate their own conceptions of their lived world. Topic areas included in the semi-structured interview protocol are as follows: Jewishness, traditions, family life; the Holocaust (*Shoah*), survivors, children of survivors; mother's experiences and, daughter's learning.

Design and Procedure

I contacted each of the prospective participants by telephone in order to: (1) describe the purpose of the research, (2) address the way in which the data will be utilized, (3) confirm her willingness to participate, (4) discuss the availability of their support network in case of unanticipated reactions to material that may emerge as a result of the interview and, (5) schedule a two hour appointment: 15 minutes to fill out the informed consent and demographic sheet and, 60 -90 minutes for the audiotaped interview. Furthermore, I informed each participant about the consent to participate, the interview process, and confidentiality.

At the appointment, prior to beginning the interview, I reviewed the informed consent

form which explained the purposes and procedures of my study with the participant (see Appendix D). Participants were assured that any information learned about them during the course of the study or prior to it would be kept confidential and their identity would be protected. I also informed them that any identifying information about them would be replaced by an identification number for data analysis, and that I would keep the informed consent, the list of names of the participants and their corresponding numbers separately from the data in a locked cabinet. Participants were told that all audiotapes of the interviews and the transcripts will be secured in a locked environment and that audiotapes would be kept for one year after the completion of the study and would then be erased. I also informed the participants that this study was part of my dissertation and would be published, and that the results may be presented at professional conferences or written up and published in professional journals and books.

After I reviewed the informed consent with each participant, I asked them to sign the form, and then fill out the demographic information sheet. I was available to assist the participant in filling out the demographic sheet if necessary (see Appendix B).

Upon completion of the informed consent and demographic sheet, I explored the participant's experience of growing up with a survivor mother. I asked the participants to reflect back and relate in as much detail as possible the following information: (1) the impact of finding out that their mothers survived the Holocaust (*Shoah*), (2) two or three of the most salient stories of their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences (3) how did they, the daughters, experience these stories and, (4) what message (es) did these stories convey to them? (see Appendix B). Finally, at the end of the interview I debriefed the participants. During this stage I asked them to verbalize their thoughts and feelings about the interview and to articulate what if anything they had learned about themselves during the interview process.

All of the audiotaped interviews were transcribed. During the transcription process all identifying information was coded and removed. The interviews were transcribed by transcribers so that I could maintain a distance from my data, as well as to protect me from becoming overly familiar with each transcript prior to subsequent interviews. I did not begin the data analysis until all of the transcription was completed. This again, was to insure that I would have some distance from each transcript so that the data analysis procedure would be from a more objective stance. After the transcription process was complete, I checked each transcript against the recordings to insure accuracy.

Researcher's Data

I maintained a process log that contained my thoughts, feelings, and continually evolving assumptions before and after each of the interviews (see Chapter 4 for examples). In qualitative research, the researcher becomes a participant in his/her own research project (Dey, 1993). As such, information with regard to my thinking and behavior contained additional information about myself and the participants, that was of value during the data analysis (Dey, 1993) and helped me to keep track of my ever emerging subjective frame. My log served another purpose as well, and that was to keep track of thoughts, questions and concerns that arose either prior to, during, or after the interviews and were then discussed with the auditor. At the end of the study I analyzed these assumptions.

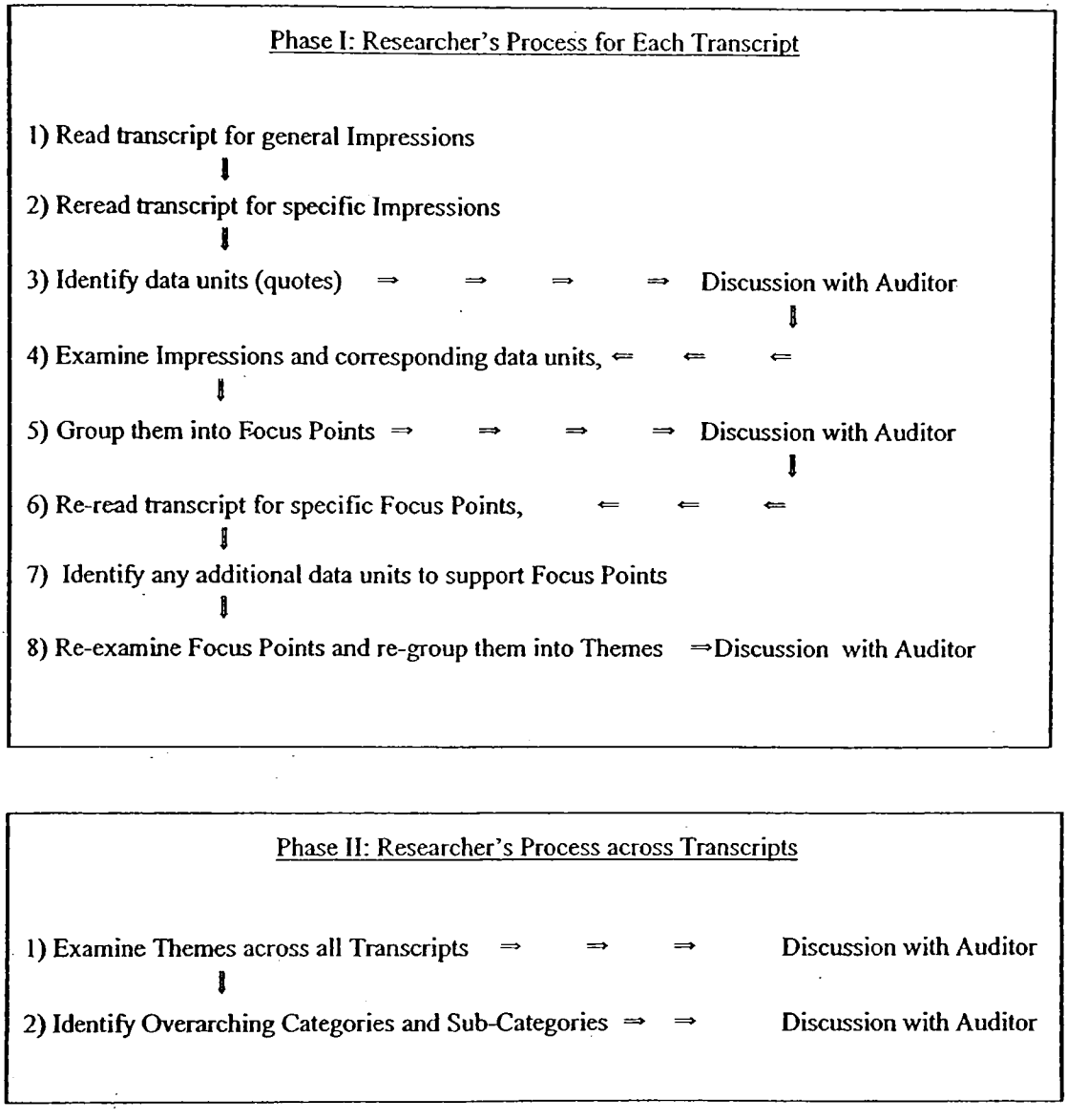
Data Analysis

Dey (1993) argues that whereas qualitative data analysis does not lend itself to "rules" (p. 109) following certain points as guidelines can be advantageous to the researcher. He further posits that these guidelines can be modified during the development of a category system. Therefore, using Dey's guide to conduct qualitative data analysis and to assist in the gargantuan

task of categorizing data without losing my focus, data was managed using the procedures consistent with those outlined in Dey (1993), and integrating ideas from grounded theory with feminist approaches (Sinacore, in progress). Dey (1993) suggests the use of a holistic approach with which to catagorize data . This process begins with one's general impressions of the data, from these general impressions, categories are created and finally the analysis proceeds to a more detailed level.

In Figure 1, a chart of the steps taken in the analysis of the data is presented. As indicated in the chart, the following procedures took place for every transcript. At the first level of data analysis, I reviewed each transcript for general impressions (A. L. Sinacore, personal communication, January 8, 2002; see Appendix A for the glossary of Hebrew, Yiddish and non-English terms used in the data analysis). From the general impressions, I re-read the transcript for more specific impressions. The transcript was then re-read to identify data units (quotes) to support each of the specific impressions. Each impression had a single set of data units, these impressions were then grouped into focus points. I then verified the focus points through discussions with the auditor and reanalyzed the focus points which resulted in themes. The development of a set of themes permitted the data to be organized through a variety of distinctions, allowed me to know what was being analyzed and, make meaningful comparison between bits of data (Dey, 1993). I continuously recategorized data units. During each step, the analysis was supported with data units.

When the transcripts had been analyzed, I compared the themes that had emerged from each transcript across all of the transcripts. This resulted in overarching categories and subcategories. Narrative vignettes, which are defined as step-by-step descriptions of an event with little elaboration (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), stories which are more emotionally laden and



(Figure continues)

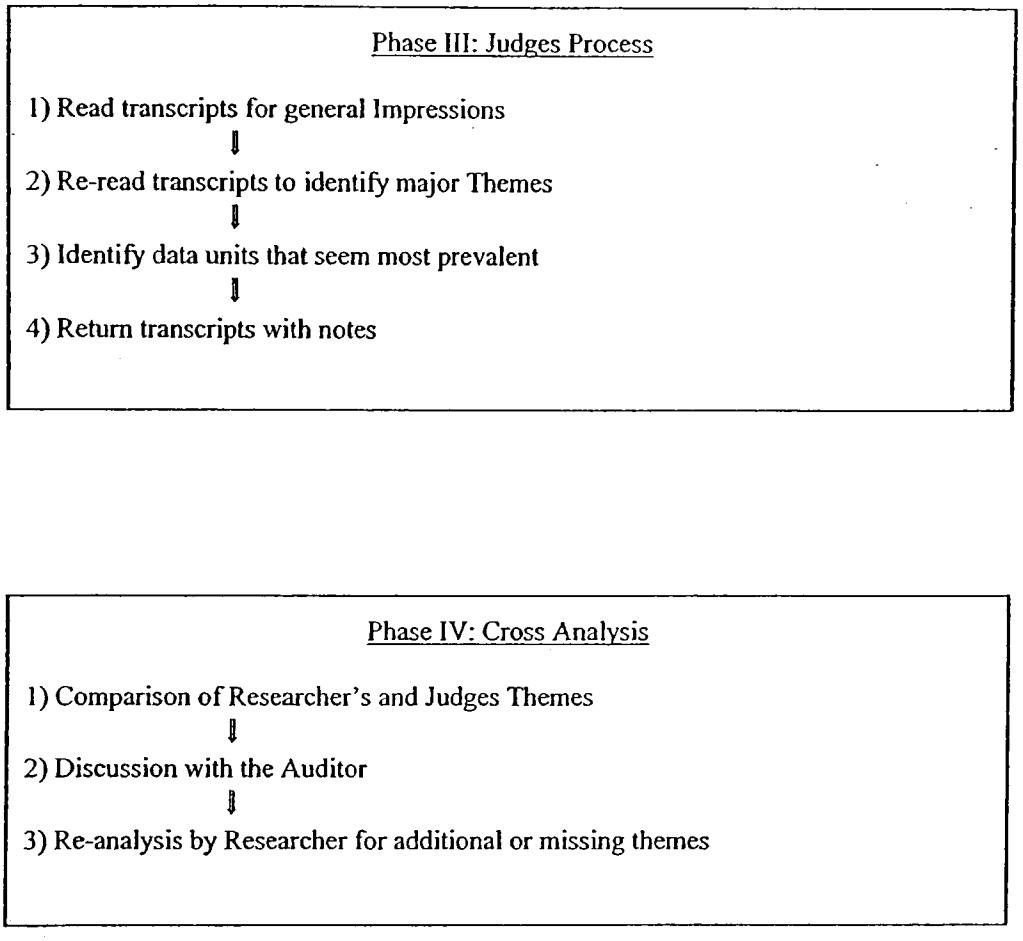


Figure 1. Chart of the data analysis process

convey "a moral, a broad message or a set of core beliefs" (p. 25), and /or quotes were drawn from the interviews to illustrate themes and categories.

Auditor.

Porter (1999) discusses some of the common pitfalls of qualitative research which include: the effects of researcher's beliefs, attitudes and values on the process of developing research questions, selecting the methodology and, interpreting the results. According to Porter, no matter how meticulous one is in the application of qualitative methods, one cannot escape from "the eye-of-the-beholder phenomenon" (p. 62). As such, throughout the data analysis process several strategies were put into place to ensure the internal consistency of the study and the integrity of the data. One of these strategies was the frequent discussions with the dissertation supervisor, who functioned as an "auditor"(Hill, Thompson, & Williams, 1997, p. 551) for this study. The auditor's role was that of "devil's advocate" and in this capacity she challenged my biases, questioned my assumptions, provided alternative perspectives and verified themes and categories throughout the analysis. Some of the focus points, themes and categories changed or were modified as a result of these discussions. The auditor was utilized at each step of the data analytic process. Following the identification of impressions, focus points and themes for each transcript, a meeting and discussion with the auditor took place.

Judges.

A second strategy used to verify the accuracy of the identified concepts and to reduce researcher bias in the identification process was through the use of two judges. Both judges were Jewish women in their 40's. They both held advanced degrees and had expertise in qualitative research . In order to garner feedback from the judge, I sent them the transcripts, together with a letter of instruction asking them to read the transcripts and take note of the overall impressions

and themes that came to their attention (See Appendix F). After the transcripts and notes were returned, I compared the impressions I had found in the data with those of the judges in order to determine whether any similarities or differences had been found. Different themes introduced by the judges resulted in a reanalysis of the data for the new impressions and /or themes. The use of judges assisted in ensuring that any entry points in the data analysis were not overlooked. Overall, the judges validated my impressions and the themes that I had identified.

Member Checking.

The final step of the analysis involved verifying the validity of the results, a process referred to as member checking by Lincoln and Guba (1985). I contacted the participants for the last time and gave them the opportunity to review a summary of the analysis and comment on the applicability of the results to their own experiences. As such, all 13 participants were mailed a summary of the results (see Appendix H). Participants were invited to comment or clarify on any points they had made. Of the 13, two of the participants responded. Both responded with positive feedback.

Analysis of Researcher's Data

Data Analysis of Researcher's Assumptions

Following the same procedures outline previously in the data analysis section, my assumptions were used as entry points for further analysis to determine whether these assumptions were supported by the data. The auditor was utilized in this process in much the same manner as was described in the analysis of the transcript data.

Researcher's Log.

Throughout the process of data analysis I reviewed my process log to determine which assumptions emerged from the log. I reanalyzed the data for those particular assumptions to

determine whether they were in fact supported by the data.

Summary of Methodology and Data Analysis

A qualitative, integrative approach (Sinacore, in progress) which combines grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1994) with feminist epistemologies (Harding, 1987; Oleson, 1994; Reinharz, 1992) was implemented in the present study in order to derive a substantive theory of Jewish mothers and daughters. The integration of these methodologies assisted the researcher in explicating the many nuances that would otherwise have been overlooked using quantitative methodologies (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

I interviewed thirteen Jewish women, daughters of women Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors using a semi-structured interview protocol and a demographic information sheet specifically designed for this study. I maintained a process log in which to record impressions and thoughts before and after each of the interviews.

Using data management procedures consistent with those outlined in Dey (1993), the individual interviews were subjected to extensive qualitative interpretations. I repeatedly reviewed transcripts for my general impressions, specific impressions, data units (quotes), focus points, themes, overarching categories and sub-categories. Both my data and the participants' data were analyzed in this manner.

I utilized a research team comprised of an auditor and two judges in the data analysis process of the present study to explore my subjective frame. A summary of the impressions from my log was included in the final version of the study. Upon completion of the data analysis, a conceptual understanding of the impact of growing up as the daughter of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors was presented.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Introduction

The results section is divided into two parts:1) participants' data and 2) researcher's data. The participants' data consists of 1) the description of the participants, 2) participants' themes and categories and 3) the data analysis of the researcher's process questions. The researcher's data consists of 1) the data analysis of the researcher's log and, 2) the data analysis of the researcher's underlying assumptions.

Participants' Data

Description of the Participants

The recruitment process resulted in the participation of 13 women who identified as Jewish, *Ashkenazi* daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers. The participants ages ranged from 39 - 55 with one person representing each age and two being 54. All of the 13 participants reported being raised by both of their parents. Other demographic information obtained from the participants is presented in Table 1.

Participants reported leaving home at various ages, one left at 18, six left at 19, three at 20, one at 21, one at 22 and one at 24. Eleven of the participants reported leaving home to get married, one to be on her own and one to join the Israeli Army.

As for the participants' affiliation with a particular branch of Judaism, eight considered themselves to be Orthodox, one Conservative, two Reform and, two of the participants described themselves as secular Jews. In describing their level of observance of Judaism seven described themselves as very observant, two described themselves as moderately observant, and three as somewhat observant. In addition, 11 of the 13 participants currently belonged to a synagogue and eight of the 13 participants reported that they did volunteer work for a number of Jewish and

Table 1.

Demographic Information of the Research Participants

Questions	n
Place of Birth	
Canada	3
United States	3
Germany	2
England	1
Romania	2
Israel	1
Hungary	1
Place(s) Raised	
London. England	1
New York	4
Chicago	1
Montreal	1
Israel	1
Austria/Montreal	1
Israel/Montreal	1
Romania/Israel/Montreal	1
Both Parents Survivors	
Yes	12
Only Mother Survivor	1

(table continues)

Table 1. (continued)

Questions	n
Language(s) Spoken at Home	
English	2
Yiddish	3
Hebrew	1
German/Hungarian	1
Yiddish/English	1
English/Hungarian	2
Yiddish/English/Polish	2
Romanian/Yiddish/Hebrew/English	1
Age at which Participants Learned about Holocaust *(Shoah)*	
Four	2
Four-to-Five	1
Five	2
Five-to-Six	1
Six-to-Seven	1
Seven	1
Before Eight	1
Ten	1
Twelve	1
Did Not Remember/Very Young	2

(table continues)

Table 1. (continued)

Questions	n
Learned about Holocaust *(Shoah)* from:	
Mother	3
Father	1
Both Parents	6
School	1
Books	1
Did Not Know	1
Relational Status[a]	
Married	8
Dating	1
Separated	2
Divorced	2
Widowed	1
Remarried	1
Married to a Child of Survivors	
Yes	7
No	6
Children[b]	
With	12
Without	1

[a] With the following as explanatory statements: one participant was married and widowed, and another was divorced and is currently dating.

[b] The total number of children is 50 (range = 2 to 7)

non-Jewish organizations which provide various social services to the Jewish community. Of the eight participants who talked about their membership in organizations, five reported volunteering for many organizations simultaneously.

Moreover, eight of the participants reported being raised in a Religious/*Orthodox* home, three in a *Conservative* home, one in a *Reconstructionist* home and one of the participants stated that for her family "Judaism was not a religion but an identity". Participants described the level of observance in their families of origin in the following way: seven described being raised in a very observant home, one in a moderately observant home and four in a somewhat observant home. One of the participants stated that as a young child her parents were somewhat observant but, as she got older both became more observant; she said: "my father laid *tefillin* and my mother had two sets of dishes". All of the participants reported attending synagogue at some point while growing up. Five reported attending synagogue every Sabbath, one almost every Sabbath, two at least once a month, two for most of the holidays and four only for the High Holidays.

In terms of educational background, four had a high school diploma, three had a bachelors degree, five had a masters degree, one had a teacher's certificate. In addition, four of the participants held full-time positions, eight held part-time positions and one was unemployed. As a group, the participants held a variety of positions such as: psychotherapist, mother, teacher, lecturer, camp director, social worker, librarian, business woman, wife, para-legal, secretary, translator, financial planner, insurance sales agent, working with Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors and gerontologist. All of the participants reported having their jobs for the minimum of at least two years. Regarding socio-economic status, four of the participants reported having a household income between $20,000- $44,999, four between $45,000- $59,999, one between $75,000- $100,000 and four over $100,000.

Description of the Participants' Mothers

The participants of the study stated that their mothers originated from the following countries. Three from Romania, three from Hungary, one from Czechoslovakia, four from Poland, one from Poland/Ukraine and one from Germany. In listing the ages of their mothers during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* some of the participants stated a specific age, whereas others gave an age range. The specific ages were as follows: one was 13, one was 14, two were 15 and three were 16. The age ranges for the participants mothers were: one was 10- 15, one was 13-15, one was 15-17, one was 16-20 and finally one of the participants described her mothers age during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* in these terms: "restrictions began at age 11, deported at age 19 and liberated at age 23".

As to their mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences, participants reported that their mothers were interned in various sites such as: four were interned in one place, whereas nine were moved from place to place. As many of the participants mothers' were interned in many places for the sake of clarity a list of their experiences is presented in Table 2. As to the period of time these women were confined during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, one was interned for 14 months, three for one year, one for two years, one for approximately two-to-three years, one for three and one half years, one for three-to-four years, one for three years, one said for the whole time, two for five years and one was never confined.

As to where their mothers went after the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, participants reported the locations, the duration of time their mothers stayed at that particular place and when they arrived at their present destination/location. One participant's mother was sent to Romania and stayed for one year; one went to Hungary and stayed for 11 years; one was sent to Norway and stayed for three years, one was sent to Romania and then went to Israel and stayed for 16 years, one was

Table 2.

Demographic Information of the Research Participants' Mothers

Question
Mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* Experiences
Hiding
Budapest, Hungary
Christian Home
Ghettos
Czestochowa, Poland
Lodz
Riga
Work/Labor Camps
Hasag - Pelcery Munitions Factory
Munsfeld, Breslow. Austria Munitions Factory
Bad Kuduba
Russia
Orphanage
With a Family
Concentration Camps
Auschwitz
Bergen-Belsen
Gabersdorf
Gross-Rozen
Matheusen
Death March[a]

[a] Near Kiel, Germany.

sent to Germany for one year, two were sent to Italy, one stayed there for two years. One stayed for two-to-three years; one went back to Poland for a short time and then was sent to a *Displaced Persons* (*DP*) camp in Germany for 1948/49; one was sent to a *DP* camp in Germany for three years; two were sent to Sweden; one stayed for six months and one stayed for four years; two went directly to the United states. Participant's mothers chose to make their homes in several different places, six went to Canada and arrived in the following years: 1946, 1949, 1951, 1953, 1960 and 1961. Five went to the United States and arrived in the following years: 1945, 1947, 1950, 1956 and 1961. One went to England in 1949 and one went to Israel in 1948.

In terms of the frequency with which the mothers discussed their own past/childhood with their daughters, seven of the participants reported that this occurred often; three sometimes; two rarely and one never. Moreover, when asked specifically with regard to the frequency with which the daughters asked about their mothers' about their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences, five of the participants reported that this occurred often, six said sometimes, one said rarely and one said they never talked about the Holocaust *(Shoah)*.

Most of the daughters described their mothers' education in North American terms as such: seven completed grade school, two had some high school, two had a high school diploma, one had a masters degree and one did not respond. One of the participants described her mother's educational status in European terms. One participant stated that her mother was in the midst of attaining her *Gymnasium* degree which was equivalent to High School. In addition, as a group, 12 of the participant's mothers held a variety of positions such as: housewife, manager in a knitting factory, English teacher, importer/exporter of sweaters, business woman, teacher and bed and breakfast owner.

In terms of their mothers' current level of religious observance, seven of the participants

stated that their mothers were very religious, two were moderately religious, two were somewhat religious and two were not religious. Participants described their mothers' level of observance while growing up as, nine were very religious, one was moderately religious, two were somewhat religious and one was not religious.

At the time of the interviews, seven of the participants' mothers were still living and six were not.

Cultural Differences between Participants

One of the participants of the study was a *sabra*, a woman born in the State of Israel. Her experiences differed from those of her North American counterparts. Her description of growing up in the State of Israel was more focused on the rebuilding and regrowth of a nation decimated by war and persecution rather than an awareness of difference. She talked about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* as a given in everyone's background and history, and described how every year a siren would go off in Israel and a moment of silence commemorating those who had died was observed. She described developing an awareness of difference between herself and others when she arrived in North America and met other people whose experiences and the experiences of their mothers' differed from her own. She described those feelings thus:

> Maybe in some ways, because I became more aware of it, of some of the uniqueness of being Jewish or being different when I moved to Canada... because growing up in Israel, it was kind of taken for granted. There was a very, very strong kind of sense of national identity but maybe even more being an Israeli than being Jewish, that was the first, the first kind of feeling of, you know of being proud for who you are. So I think all this thinking about what unites us as Jewish people, work kind of binds us together, I think I became more aware of it as an adult when I came to live in, in Canada.

She continued with:

> I think uh hmm is how to say, I think I'm more aware of it, actually I became more Jewish in some way, when I think about this now, leaving Israel... because in Israel,

> when I grew up it was a very young country and it was uh hmm, nobody wanted to be unhappy or to feel sad or to feel weak so all emphasis was really on being Israeli. So I think the whole thing was first of all the priority was on the present, and the connection in the present being kind of a new... vibrant country. I think many people in Israel, I don't think it exists anymore, but at that time probably there were people that wanted to cut this relationship to the history of being Jewish.

Her words were echoed by those who had grown up in North America and talked about not fitting in. They described the importance of the state of Israel as a place where Jews will be safe from further persecution and annihilation.

Several of the participants of the study were *Chasidic* Jews, one of many ultra-orthodox sect in Montreal. An important precept in *chasidism* is the notion of "serving G-d with joy". Indeed the theme of focusing on the positive was one that emerged when analyzing these particular transcripts. Although there were not enough participants to state conclusively that this was the case, it appears that a trend emerged highlighting the notion of focusing on the positive within this particular branch of Judaism.

Class issues were discussed by several of the participants. They described class differences between their mothers and other Jewish women from Eastern Europe. These participants would describe their mothers' pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* lifestyle in terms of growing up in an upper middle class home, having a secular upbringing and, going away for long holidays. One participant described her mother's childhood in these terms,

> My mother, I don't think they were religious, they were a kind of, up, I guess I would say upper middle class family. They had a business, they had a gift shop. My mother she didn't go to a Jewish school, she went to a regular school, an elementary school and I think she somehow had experiences being Jewish... They had, again... I guess you would consider, at that time very much upper middle class existence. My mother, she went skating, she went skiing, they, you know, went away for the weekends to the country so I think they were I don't know if I would say assimilated but definitely not what you would think of the typical you know Jewish existence in Eastern Europe.

Another participant talked about her mother's investment in being an *Oberlander* and thus part of a higher class than her counterparts. Her explanation of the class differences were as follows:

> On a traditional basis an *Oberlander* comes from a certain part of Hungary, close to Germany, as to *Unterlander* which came to *Marmorash.* The *Unterland* used to work for the *Oberland* ...the *Oberlanders* were a higher class, so never, ever, ever could a *Oberland* marry, marry an *Unterlander.*

Research Themes and Categories

The data analysis described in the methodology chapter resulted in the identification of themes and categories. This chapter will focus on the descriptions of those themes and categories. Verbatim quotes are used to serve as examples for each theme. A comparison between the findings and the existing literature is presented in Chapter 5.

In this study I explore: (1) the way in which daughters of Jewish women Holocaust survivors experienced their mothers; (2) how they understood and perceived their mothers' survivor experiences and, (3) the way in which the daughters' perceptions of their mothers' experiences in the Holocaust influenced their own lives, with regard to the choices they made. In order to begin to elucidate the findings of this dissertation it is necessary to first clarify the research questions. The first question refers to the concept of experiencing. For the purposes of this study experience is defined as the daughters observations of their mothers', seeing how their mothers lived their lives, what they valued and, in general their knowledge of growing up with a survivor mother.

The second research question refers to the daughters' understanding and perception of their mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences. Understanding and perception are defined as the way in which these women explained and clarified for themselves the whys and the wherefores of the relationship they shared with their mothers.

The third and final research question focuses upon the choices that the participants made with regard to their own lives and asks: in what way did the daughters' perception of their mothers' experiences in the Holocaust *(Shoah)* influence their own lives, with regard to the choices they made?

The first two research questions will be answered together as they are intertwined.

(1) How did daughters of Jewish women Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors experience their mothers?

(2) How did the daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors understand and perceive their mothers' survivor experiences?

The overarching theme that emerged from the data was that the daughters of Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers experienced their mothers as survivors. The term survivors was defined by the participants as anyone imprisoned in a concentration camp, work camp or *ghetto*; in hiding; in the underground resistance or masquerading as a non-Jew during the nazi Holocaust *(Shoah)* (1939- 1945).

Survivors were described by the participants in a variety of ways. For example in the following excerpt one participant shares her understanding of survivors as:

> A survivor is someone to me, who has the confidence that... I've gone through the most terrible thing in life, and I have shown myself that I can survive that. And that comes with a sense of ummm resiliency, perseverance, confidence... you know... that to me is a survivor.

Participants would often express their amazement and awe at the survivors strengths:

> They were amazing, how these people... just through, what...the worst adversity were able to... come, come through all of them and each story was more amazing than the one before... in my mind. And through great loss, I mean to be uprooted and to be... to lose all your loved ones it's, there's no real words to describe how super human I think it is... to be able to do it.

Another participant shared her thoughts about to Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors:

> They were standing upright. That they married. That they had children. There was no post-traumatic stress people after them. There was no... battery of psychologists and doctors surrounding them. There wasn't anyone standing at the border when they came off the boat, with social security, Medicaid, um, foods, there. There was... it amazed me. I mean these were people who came... on a boat, not on a plane, certainly wasn't a luxury liner and half of them were most probably in, in steerage. To a country, new language, a new culture, a new everything... and when they got off the boat, for a lot of them, at least for the people that I met, growing up, the feeling I got was, they practically kissed the ground, and thanked G-d that they had this opportunity. And if I think back, that's amazing. That is absolutely amazing! Cause by all rights they should have curled up in little balls and said don't ever talk to me again and, we met some that did.

The participants understood the term survivor in two specific ways, these were: (1) strengths and (2) challenges. The participants talked about the strengths of survivors in general and of their mothers' strengths, in particular. Strengths were defined as an attitude towards life, a way in which people stood up to adversity and continued to face and deal with whatever was in their paths. Strengths were also understood as the ability to move forward in life in terms of moving to a new country, learning a new language and, adjusting to new surroundings. Thus, strengths were comprised of values, survivor skills and, the ability to move forward. Challenges, on the other hand were defined as the struggles, limitations or hurdles that were difficult to surmount but not necessarily insurmountable, by the participants and their families. Thus, challenges included: the mothers/self and, the mother-daughter relationship. Strengths and challenges were part of the lived experiences of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors and their daughters.

Strengths

As previously stated strengths were defined as an attitude towards life, a way in which people stood up to adversity and continued to face and deal with whatever was in their paths. Strengths were also understood as the ability to move forward in life in terms of moving to a new

country, learning a new language and, adjusting to new surroundings. Thus, strengths were comprised of values, survivor skills and, the ability to move forward.

All of the participants talked about their lived experiences growing up with a mother who had survived the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Most of the reflections of the participants were full of sadness for the suffering of their mothers, not only during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* but also in terms of having to create a new life for themselves and the difficulties involved in that endeavor. One participant shared her thoughts about her mother saying:

She had a hard time here. She came here very young, and she was adopted into a family, a wealthy Jewish family, Canadian Jewish family, and she never overcame…they were very good to her, but she never stopped feeling like a formal orphan. It was, it was very difficult for her.

Despite the description of her mother as being like "a formal orphan" this participant described the ways in which her mother created a new life for herself,

> She was involved in everything, she won citizen of the year award. She was involved in everything like well, Jewish community involvement she was very involved in the Jewish community center, she was an activist, she was a lobbyist, she was a speaker, she was very well-loved.

Creating a new life as well as the ability to overcome obstacles was a perception shared by many of the participants. This participant shared her understanding of her mother which reflected the views of many of the other women of the study.

> I guess having a mother whose beginning life was not so easy, whose, whose adolescent and early twenties, until she married my father and settled um, were so difficult to really... it makes, always made me appreciate how easy I had it. Um, also to watch her determination in her, with her academic achievements, and, and, that was very impressive; even though I did it; but it was very impressive. Um, and she ...and just the way she always conducted herself with, with dignity and with kindness...and...even though she wasn't, you know this naturally warm person she was a very good kind decent person.

Participants talked about the strength and determination of their mothers in adapting to their new environment regardless of the many obstacles they faced.

Values

The participants experienced their mothers as people to whom the transmission of values were an essential part of their lives. Daughters described watching their mothers interact with others and learning about their mothers' values. The values that were especially important were: (1) Remembering the Past, (2) Jewishness and, (3) Jewish values.

Remembering the Past

An important value for mothers and subsequently their daughters was remembering the past and actively not forgetting what had happened to the Jewish people. Remembering the past, connecting to or recreating family histories was important to the daughters of survivor mothers. Often daughters would talk about the loss and sadness of their mothers. The sadness was alleviated for some and, reactivated for others through the telling of the stories of the past.

Regardless of the feelings elicited by the telling and the re-telling of the stories, remembering and not forgetting the past and, transmitting that information was crucial to the participants and their families. Most of the participants' families frequently talked about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and told stories of their experiences. One participant described her mother's conversations about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* as table talk. She stated,

> My parents spoke a lot about their home. My mother much more than my father, but my mother remembers much more than my father does, and um, Holocaust stories, it was table talk.

She continued with,

> It was traditional, ...we sat at the table, and they talked about home. It's something... growing up I remember hearing stories about my grandmother, and my mother's home a lot. ... I can almost picture them, yet I have no pictures of them.

Mothers' found various ways to share information about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* with their daughters. Whereas some talked about it during family time, others found different ways to remember and convey the past. One participant's family made sure that the survivors were remembered through a book,

> There was a book, a Yiddish book that my mother's, a woman that my mother knew put together, with photographs and everything, poems and stories of survivors, and my mother used to read me from these things... they were amazing, how these people... just through, what...the worst adversary were able to... come, come through all of them and each story was more amazing than the one before.

Another survivor mother kept the memories of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* alive in her family through a series of letters,

> I know very little now through a series of...we have 40 letters... that she wrote after she was liberated, from the Germans. She was liberated until she immigrated to the United States. It's very broad sketches... She says you wouldn't believe... that she can't even describe what happened. So my impression is from the letters, that they were deported from Germany to Riga, to the *Ghetto* there... in Latvia, and she was there for two and a half years, she worked outside the *Ghetto* for a period of time... for a period of time she worked in an army unit ... in an army clothing warehouse, where she said it was relatively good. She wrote to her brothers that they weren't lacking in food, because her father worked in a slaughter house so he was able to take home meat... and they would barter... and they would trade things with the...when they were out of the *Ghetto* they would try to do it, even though they knew there was death penalty. But she writes that if, you didn't barter, you would die of starvation... so you took the risk. I mean if they didn't like the way you looked you could get shot anyhow.

In general, remembering the past was valued by the survivors and referred to the directive on the part of the participants to keep in mind the things that had happened to the Jewish people.

Jewishness.

Jewishness was fundamental to the survival of many of the mothers of the participants. The participants described growing up and experiencing their mothers' commitment to Jewishness. This commitment was often demonstrated by continuing in the traditions that had

been passed down for generations.

Religious affiliation or level of observance was a focus for some participants, but overall maintaining the connection to Judaism and a Jewish identity was crucial for all. Judaism was considered to be a sacred tradition to be honored and valued, one participant described her experiences thus:

> My father used to get Jewish newspapers from America and they were like sacred. We were not allowed to throw them out. We had stacks of these newspapers, it was like a *chumash* or a *siddur*, because how could you throw something out that had a Jewish word on it?

One woman talked about her experiences of growing up and learning about the importance of a Jewish identity,

> My family's not particularly observant, they were never... Jewishness was never denied or hidden, they just... my parents were not particularly observant of...But it was very important to be Jewish, very important to be umm Zionist... that was a big...My mother wanted to go and live in Israel my father wasn't interested. But so Israel was a very important part of our lives. Um, and, identifying as a Jew and not necessarily just as observant, but certain things were observed like Friday night... lighting the candles and having a *Shabbos* meal. Um, but um, it's a very strong Jews identity.

Traditions.

Participants would often recount stories of the ways in which they were brought up that would emphasize aspects of their Jewishness. Some of the participants talked about their Jewishness in terms of following traditions such as celebrating the Jewish Holidays, others would describe preparing the same foods as had been prepared by their mothers or grandmothers as a way of maintaining their family traditions.

Thus, following traditions that were practiced by their mothers was important to the daughters. One participant discussed the importance of continuing the traditions that had been practiced in her family. She talked about the traditions that were recreated at her *Sabbath* and

Passover table,

> The traditions, *Shabbos*... the *Shabbos* meal no matter what... and we, we, even... though you've got many houses today... the *Shabbos* meals have changed a lot. At my house and... my husband... the way he likes it is... we have literally the traditional... the chicken soup, the fish exactly the way it was done... A lot of people make salads and all kinds of side dishes. My husband doesn't go for that... At my house...we don't see it... We never saw that by my parents... and I can continue that tradition of keeping it... the way my parents did... their parents did it... and generations after. We're really the traditional... the *challah*...the fish... the chicken soup... the chicken, and the *kugel*, with a little *nokedli*, but really sticking to the basic traditions, and its that with other holidays too... Whatever it... whether its *Pesach*... I mean years ago they didn't eat certain things on *Pesach* ...foods... and the *chasidim* that we are is *Viznitzers*... we wouldn't eat fish on *Pesach*. Now the reason they don't ... eat the fish on *Pesach*... obviously... fish is kosher. Its nothing with bread... was ...because the towns where they came from... there was no way to get the fish to the city by carrying it in a truck full of... with horse and buggy... with water and fish, it was too heavy. So what they used to do is... used to take a piece of bread... soak it in whiskey... and put it into the mouth of the fish... and that way the fish would survive the transport to the city where they were. Because the fish had the bread and the whiskey in the mouth... which are both *chometz* they didn't eat fish on *Pesach*. Now obviously it's not done that way today at all... There's no problem with *chometz* but the tradition stays... we don't eat fish on *Pesach*.

Another participant discussed the way in which Jewish traditions were maintained in her family. She shared a story of her mother's special culinary talents in creating a Jewish delicacy for the holidays and the excitement and mouth-watering sensations that evoked.

> All the holidays, all the things always revolved around certain foods that you ate and this time of year my mother used to make *Kreplach*. She spent all day making them. She made the dough from scratch, like her mother did, made the crescents stuffed with wonderful stuff and then laid all her dishtowels... They were clean like you wouldn't believe... we used to say we could eat off her floor. So she lays all the dish towels, she laid them all out on the counters and then they would sit there and rest. She lay the dishtowels on top of them, and then it would be a big event and everybody knew my mother was making the stuff... and as we got older more and more people, more friends would want to eat this. It's the kind of stuff you can't buy in the store. No way. And then she would boil up the water, you know not like me, my kitchen equipment I have these wonderful colanders and stuff, she had this like little square colander that she would pull them up. She would boil them in the water, you know they were awful for you and she put a lot of butter in and she melted in, but... and then you made a contest of how many you could eat. And I remember my brother's friends would come over and my friends and, even when I got married my father-in-law... when he tasted them he couldn't believe

> this is what someone had made. I mean it was like, you know... it was to die for. You literally died from it. But (laughing...)... So it was that kind of thing it was ah, so that was a tradition and I remember it was a big event... So this time of year reminds me of that.

A third participant reflected upon the traditions in her family. She described her mother as the personification of the Jewish holidays,

> I remember my mother really being busy with preparing for the Holidays... for uh hmm the cooking, and the cleaning, and when *Passover* came she would clean the house. She would put out the dishes and the cutlery you know this is something that I remember and I have memories of and I miss her, my mother is going to be dead it's 5 years in September and I miss that piece... because she was so much the Holidays.

The Jewish holidays and the ways in which they were celebrated in her own family of origin was important to this participant,

> I just remember that for like *Rosh Hashanah* and stuff like that, it's just all the preparation that would go into it. It would be months before, like it would start in August and would end in November. And the house would have to be cleaned, and this would have to be cleaned and, I remember every *Passover* we had to change all the dishes and take out all the cabinets... and do all the...and we would have to move everything and that would happen every, you know every year! So I still do it! Because that was what I was taught.

Thus, participants had various ways of celebrating their Jewishness and maintaining their family's special traditions. Maintaining traditions were the ways in which participants continued to stay connected both to the past and to their mothers.

Jewish Values

Traditions were maintained and the values that had been taught to their mothers as children continued to be practiced years later. Although the values discussed were not necessarily only Jewish values, all of the values commented upon by the participants were definitive of their ways of being Jewish. Several participants talked about the difficulty of distinguishing between human values and Jewish values. One participant described values as not necessarily being

Jewish values but rather human values. She remarked:

> I don't know if it's Jewish values or just human values. Okay I mean for me it's hard to really decide what is... Jewish and what is just good values. Honesty, caring for other people, trying not to lump everybody in as one.

As such, values were described in two ways: implicit Jewish values and explicit Jewish values. Implicit values are those values that are not particularly Jewish. However, as these values are difficult to disentangle from Jewish values per se they have been included in this section. Explicit values, on the other hand refer to the observance of religious practice and are intertwined in all of the sections of this study that describe religious traditions. Therefore they will not be discussed separately, other than to bring the readers' attention to the different ways in which values were described.

Implicit values.

Implicit values refer to values that are part of Jewishness but are not specifically only Jewish values. Implicit values include the importance of: being a good person, education and self improvement and, transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. The family was important to the survivors and their daughters given that so many lives were lost during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. The family was important for another reason as well, and that was that it was within the family that values were taught. One participant talked about the importance of family in the following statement:

> What's important is family, people... because that... what was taken away from her, was her family, a generation of aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, sisters, brothers, everybody is gone, so to her family and people... is very, very important.

Another participant echoed these sentiments:

> I guess, as children we didn't realize it... but that we were very precious to them. It was no...there was limited amounts of other family... right? She had a few cousins who survived... who were in Europe. We had cousins that we visited... and until... I translated,

> the letters, I mean I know they were my parent's cousins but I didn't realize the feelings... the sentiments that she had to them...

Importance of being a good person.

Participants also talked about being a good person and following a specific way of being. One participant described her values in this way,

> There is a certain ethical standard of how you behave. A very strong moral value... of the things that you do and the things you certainly don't do.

One of the participants experienced her mother as a good person and expressed her surprise that her mother's way of being was in accordance with religious law even though her mother did not have a religious upbringing.

> Even though she wasn't observant. She was very strongly Jewish, and she was very, you know had high, high standards of behavior and these common decency and humanity...I mean all the Jewish values it's just she wasn't particularly observant. She wasn't... that wasn't the kind of home she was raised in, but all the values of *Yiddishkeit* were her values innately.

She continued to talk about her mother's value system:

> I listen to what my kids are learning in school, the proper way to behave according to *Halakha*, and I realize it's all the things that my mother always did, naturally, not knowing that they were part of *Halakha* ...that there was no gossiping, there was no bad mouthing people, there was no value put on material things. There was a value in education, on kindness, on helping people...

Another participant talks about the values with which she was raised in regards to being a good person and being respectful of others,

> I remember one time in Israel we were playing outside with my friends and I said to one of them "you're crazy" or...I'll never forget that, and she called me back in and she said "how do you talk to your friends when they come to your house, it's not the way to talk to them". That stood out and that I remember.

Similarly, a third participant shares her perspective,

> To be fair, to be, to be kind to your fellow human being, to be um, (pause...) to

> understand that we don't know everything, and things don't always make sense. Umm, to, I don't know to, to just to, to live a clean life, that's the best way I could say, clean. That you go to bed at night, and what ever happened to me today that I didn't do something like to offend you or hurt you, and I can go to sleep tonight clean. That's the legacy, I think it's a good legacy.

Participants also described the ways in which their mothers were sensitive to the needs of others.

> My mother was always a person that was helping out people and she... to her... it was very important was... being values... and being good to other people... something that she put very much into us. My brother who's extremely... *Hasidic*... my mother use to tell him, "you know, because you don't talk to women, to walk by the lady who lives in the house next door... and is carrying heavy shopping bags... and ignore her because you know...G-d forbid to talk to a woman... that's not called being *Orthodox*... Being *Orthodox* is... you don't have to sit and have a conversation with her, take... take your time... and I'll take your bags... and take it to your house... Or, going out ...my mother used to go out to help people in the hospitals... and always encouraged us to do these types of things. By doing good deeds, helping others, and doing favors to people, something that was very important... even though my mother worked hard, she used to go collecting money for the poor... to send over to Israel... to certain families that she knew... that were struggling, and it wasn't easy on her, cause she was a hard working woman, but there was something that we always learned at home. Our house was always a very open house, I mean whenever a girl in my class needed a place to stay, at a last minutes notice ah just call *X____'s* house you know, you know they'll always be place in their house, no matter what. There was always place in the house, no matter what... there was always place for anybody to drop in, and we had... and lived in a quite small apartment, in an apartment building.

Finally, this participant shared an important lesson about being a good person that she learned from her mother:

> I think that, she was, very, very good to people, and especially to people who had it bad, and a, you know, and that probably comes into my profession also, is that she really, people who had less or were having difficulties she really, really respected that, like cause she would tell me, I had trouble sometimes with my friends. I had a fight with a friend, and she would say, I had a very good friend who had no parents, and she use to say you shouldn't be judging her, you don't know what it's like to have no parents.

Education and self-improvement.

Education and self-improvement were other values that were discussed as being important to the participants' Jewishness. One participant talked about the importance of

education in the Jewish family:

> There's a dynamic of a Jewish family that are wonderful um, in terms of um, the push for education, and to me that's part of the whole Jewish family experience and, the drive. But I have some, not controversial like, conflicting view points, and like I say, I also think, also inherent in the dynamics sometimes are kids that are pushed a little to hard and, it's, it's, it's, it's um, I can't really, I, I don't know that I can articulate it. It's, it's part of the Jewish family experience. It seems to be that especially survivors that like you go for it, and be all that you um, be. All that you can be, and that's, there's a lot of that stuff that I think is amazing, and I think that's part of the Jewish family experience, and I am sure um, if I would have a family that would be part of my experience.

Another participant expressed pride in her mother's academic achievements

> I mean for this little Hungarian immigrant girl to get several Master's degrees, and become an English teacher with a vocabulary that far surpassed most native English speakers. You know this was the kind... she was very driven, and she was very, whatever she did, she did well.

A third participant shared a story of learning the importance of self-sufficiency from her parents.

> Another thing my mother, and my father, they always told, taught me to think for myself. When I was a little kid... my father had wanted to be an actuary, but by the time he was finished high school he um..there was no opportunity in Germany for Jews to go into college... so we always did math together, which we hated to do .. because we had to do it in our heads, it was the days before calculators ... so I did it in my head. And I, remember one lesson which I tell my kids all the time, he would say sometimes 2x2, and it was very early on and I really didn't understand it at that age, and I would say 4 and he says, "why do you say 4"? "cause it's 4". Who told you it was 4... maybe it's 3, maybe it 7, maybe it's 6 why... (Laughing) it taught me a little bit...and I acted so... annoyed ... could we just finish this up. But it taught me to... think a little bit for myself.

Finally, another participant talked about her feelings of pride in her Jewishness and, in terms of the choices that she perceived to be part of the experiences of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors and their children:

> We are special, I mean it comes from our strength and our resiliency, and how we survived... and our, uh hmm the choices we made. And you know we didn't become bitter and we don't have suicide bombers. You know we invested in education, and improving our lives, in giving the best for your children.

Transmitting the legacy of Jewishness.

The importance of being Jewish and maintaining a Jewish identity was part of the mother-daughter relationship. It was within this relationship that the values of Jewishness were learned and transmitted. Continuing the legacy, transmitting the heritage of being Jewish, and, maintaining the traditions of previous generations for the future of the Jewish people was a part of this connection. Many of the participants talked about learning about Jewishness from watching, as well as from interacting with their mothers. Watching the actions of their mothers had an impact on the way in which these women chose to express their own Jewishness. One participant described her way of being Jewish as emanating from growing up in an *Orthodox* home:

> What makes me Jewish. Um ....first I think being born Jewish...um seeing at home, my parents observing *Shabbos*, and lighting the candles on Friday night. My father going to *Shul* and later on learning in school or learning about all the.....all the stories from the *Torah* and all these things that made me interested ... that's how.

Another described the importance of being Jewish that she learned from her mother,

> My mother was never what you would call a person to *daven* but she always had a tremendous amount of love of G-d and uh hmm religion to her was not so much the physical aspect which is *davening* or washing your hands, or this kind of thing but it was always living it you know, ah a *Shabbos* table where the family was together, an open house for *Yom Tov* and *Shabbosim* and anybody could come. *Purim*, the whole world used to come to my mother. Ummm, just the day-to-day life, being a Jew you know, being proud of your heritage, being ah you know there was no question of *kashrut* and of this kind of thing but it was never like a, like a you can't have a chocolate bar or, or that's *Treif*....You know let's look at it you know it was, you know we couldn't eat *treif* food, but it wasn't such a big thing as it was just being a Jew.

The importance of being Jewish and maintaining a Jewish identity was demonstrated by survivor mothers to their daughters not only through their words but also through their actions. Thus, the daughters learned about the importance of being Jewish by watching their mothers.

Survival Skills

Survival skills were another strength demonstrated by the survivor mothers. In this section, the two types of survival skills that are addressed are: determination and, the importance of a positive attitude. The other skills necessary for survival are described in greater detail in the emergent themes section of this document (see pp.133-148) in order to link the Holocaust *(Shoah)* story related with the survival skill/s manifested. This has been done for clarification purposes and to avoid redundancies.

Determination.

Daughters sought explanations to help them understand why their mothers survived or what their mothers did in order to survive, when so many others did not. Although for the most part mothers could not explain the reasons for their survival, daughters came up with their own conclusions often depicting the strength and determination as a crucial survival technique:

> What made her survive. What helped her survive. I really don't. Something maybe an inner strength. I think that all the people that came from the Holocaust, there must have been an inner strength to give them a hope to continue to live.

One participant described the strength and determination of the women in her family using the following metaphor:

> My grandmother was a cornerstone. My mother is more a backbone, the rod that keeps everything straight. My grandmother is like a foundation that we built on and my mother is that piece of iron that someone stuck into that stone and it just keeps everything going up.

Another participant's understanding of her mother's process was explained in this manner:

> My mother's an amazing person because I see, if I look at the present I think it helps me to understand probably how she survived. I think it's back to uh hmm Victor Frankl and the search for a meaning. Like my mother, has an amazing ability to, to be very concrete... and really to focus on just what she needs to focus on, and because I think that's kind of comforted her... and uh hmm because I see her suffering now, you know

> she falls a lot and she can't walk but she'll go. Like she gets up in the morning, she goes to the bathroom, she goes to sleep, she brushes her teeth, she always puts the cream on her face, she just focuses... on her routine and you know kind of, she tries to put everything aside and in some way focus on her attitude and what's in her control.

Further, a third participant explains how she understood her mother's determination,

> She always *b'li ayin ha'ra* looks good, even when she's really sick and feeling lousy. She will put her make-up on and get dressed, and a, I laugh cause my mother most probably is now shorter than me, and yet everybody thinks she's taller than me. She just has this presence that comes in. She always *b'li ayin ha'ra* looks good. Always looks good. You know, she will come out of the hospital after an operation, and when she's leaving, she's... she looks good. She just, she looks good, and she's very bright, a very, very bright woman. Very well read woman. Um....there's a strength there. There's just an enormous strength there.

Positive attitude.

Participants focused upon their mothers' creativity, and their ability to find a positive element within the mundane. Although the theme of focusing on the positive has been previously discussed (see pp. 73-75 cultural differences) and, described as an important precept in *chasidism*, a positive attitude was not limited to that sect of Judaism. Daughters described their survivor mothers' positive attitude in the face of adversity.

> She did everything with such happiness. Till this day everything is done and she looks at everything with a positive no matter what, you know, we had our problems and everything, everything is positive. Oh don't make a fuss of this, don't make a fuss of that. She keeps us very much strongly together. She's amazing.

Another participant described her understanding of the importance or benefits of a positive attitude thus,

> They could have been bitter....they could have been left each one of them to be left alone, or even if they got married, I mean, they could have been very mean and tough... and always grumpy, never smile, never do anything for anyone. And I never saw that... in my family.

A third participant also shared these views,

> Both my parents especially my mother is this need to ah try to make up for lost time... and really enjoy life, and that's why my mother had a magical way of just from very simple things to create magic and adventure. And this I am grateful for her because whether it dealt with ...everything... between being raised by depressed mother, or you know very kind of upbeat, maybe neglectful yet, very excited mother. I think I'm, you know I like the choice that I had. ..

Moving Forward

The third strength discussed by the participants was the ability to move forward in their lives. In other words the willingness to adapt to a new environment and the commitment to the continuation of life. For the participants of the study this was also defined as letting go of the survival skills that had been beneficial in the past and assuming or integrating new behaviors that were more efficacious to living in the present. Participants described their understanding of the benefits of letting go of the past and living in the present,

> I think the only... more older I am I can see, that ah she made a choice, that uh hmm she lost so much, and suffered so much but she just wanted... she really felt that life was for the living, and she wanted to have children. She wanted to have a partner, to have a lover, husband. She wanted to experience life, and to enjoy it and to travel and that's... I mean I think it was always, part... it was always in the background, but uh hmm she didn't want to dwell on it.

These sentiments were also conveyed by this participant in describing her mother's way of moving forward in her life,

> After the war I think what these people, what everyone did was they tried to re-create families, the best they possibly could, and so they hooked... up, they didn't get married because they necessarily loved... the passionate love okay, it was like, let's say my mother and father, my mother had a child. My father was looking for a family ... He was looking for a child... so when he met my mother, he fell in love with her son... and my mother saw that... as the most wonderful thing, so they got married.

Another participant described the way in which her mother was able to move on. She said,

> You know she never felt that because of the Holocaust she didn't have this or she didn't have that. She never said "Oh if I would have, you know if I didn't have the war I would have been rich or I would have been this". Never, no. It was done, it was there, it happened and now lets go on and build something...

In summary, these daughters experienced their mothers as survivors. One way that the participants conceptualized survivors was in terms of the strength of their mothers. This strength was manifested in terms of a system of values, survival skills and the ability to move forward in life.

Challenges

Challenges were the other conceptual lens through which the participants of the study viewed their mothers. Challenges were defined as the struggles, limitations or hurdles that were difficult to surmount but not necessarily insurmountable by both the participants and their mothers. As such, as previously stated challenges were comprised of: challenges to the mothers as a result of their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and, challenges to the mother-daughter relationship.

Challenges to the Mother

The participants talked about growing up with mothers who had suffered through the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and as a result were unable to teach them or guide them into womanhood having never had the opportunity to learn these crucial lessons themselves. The losses/challenges their mothers faced were described as missed opportunities or interruptions in their lives and were a function of growing up during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Missed opportunities or interruptions in life had an effect on the parenting skills of the survivor mothers.

Missed opportunities/ interruptions.

Participants described their mother's losses and the impact these losses had on their own lives in terms of their own growth and development. One participant shared her perspective of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors in general,

> There's something that I think a lot of Holocaust survivors I mean some have, some are missing it. You know I have friends who are Holocaust survivors, who I think are missing things, like, like pieces of them are missing. Like they do inappropriate things or say inappropriate things because... that's how it was at home.

Another participant concurred and described her mother's survivor experiences thus,

> I think my mother was quite damaged from her experiences, and her experiences were very, very bad. Um, There is no good Holocaust survivor stories. Um, and, but I think she was very affected...

Talking about the missed opportunities their mothers faced during adolescence was frequently discussed. This participant spoke for the others when she said,

> I think it interrupted her experiences... I think there was a lot of uh hmm, as I said she was young so I think she missed a lot of stuff from her mother, and not knowing certain things...

Finally, another participant shared her thoughts about the impact of the interruptions and missed opportunities on her mother. She wondered what her mother might have been like had her experiences been different,

> Would my mother have been a different person had she not gone through the Holocaust, definitely! Her youth was taken away from her, her carefreeness and that um... freedom of expression, a freedom of being... was definitely robbed from her. I think she aged in a mental way...

Parenting skills.

Participants also described the impact that the missed opportunities and interruption as a result of war and displacement had on their mothers and ostensibly on their parenting abilities. Participants discussed the ways in which the missed opportunities effected their own lives. The daughters talked about the ways in which mothers were challenged in their parenting skills. One participant shared an interaction that took place in her home which she used as a basis to

understand her mother and the difficulties she faced,

> I could hear my siblings saying, you know Ma, you don't understand, you know you went through the war at this time, you wouldn't understand. So I've heard my sister say that when I was younger, so I always knew that they went through this horrible thing that was quote unquote... called the Holocaust... and they survived... and people were killed, and everybody was killed and they were left with no family... I knew this horrible thing happened to them, and I knew that certain things, you know... were accepted because of what they went through.

Another participant described her mother's difficulties in teaching her what she never had the opportunity to learn herself,

> Being a teenager and growing up without a mother, when a teenager is changing... she's going through her changes in life... she's maturing... not having the stability of having a mother take care of you that you could really discuss everything with... I think... was very difficult. Maybe that's why she had a harder time, I don't know... how she was with my sisters discussing the facts of life... with... with me it was my sisters who did it ...with me. I think she never had anybody discussing it with her... because she was just taken away at that stage of the game. So I think that was... a part of a life... that she didn't know how to deal with, um it was difficult on her, you know... how do you talk to a child, like that age I could see, when we were younger... where she knew how to... you know, how to take care of the kids... that age where she was between twelve and eighteen, or twelve and seventeen, you know that age where she wasn't home and didn't have a mother nurturing her ...she didn't know... she wasn't sure of how to do because she had, she nev, she never saw it, never saw it, and that was when she had a hard time and that's where you feel it.

Yet another participant described her understanding of her mother's predicament in this way,

> How can you prepare for separation, if you were never able to separate or the way you separate, you never went through it... so you cannot, so I think all this fighting as a teenager really some of it... Now that I think she has quite a bizarre methods of trying to control me or talking about not letting...

This participant described the way in which her mother's adolescent experiences effected their relationship,

> She didn't let herself get close to me. I think she was afraid to love me too much, because what happens to people you love too much. They get taken away from you, and they get killed and I think that was in her subconscious. So there was wanting to love me,

and then just couldn't love me. So I think there was this push and pull within her.

Challenges to Mother- Daughter Relationship

Participants described the impact of growing up with mothers whose lives were fraught with interruptions at critical stages of their development and the impact these interruptions had on their own development. Participants talked about the challenges to the relationship in a variety of ways which included: issues of power and control and, unrealistic expectations.

Issues of power and control.

Participants often described their mothers as controlling and would talk about the difficulties in the relationship as being the result of power struggles. One participant described her relationship with her mother in these terms,

> I could always talk to my mom about almost anything. I don't know that she understood everything... but I could talk to her about... anything, and um, but she was forceful and you just wouldn't cross her... in anyway.

When asked what would have happened, she illustrated her point with this story,

> She would get angry, I mean I remember we use to live in an apartment building, and we lived on the top floor, the third floor, and she was pregnant with my brother, and I had just gotten a new bicycle... my dad had just gotten me a new bicycle, and I was told I couldn't cross this alley... and she had a neighbor that lived on the first floor that could see this alley. So her neighbor always watched when I went down, because she couldn't always go. I. I think my brother was born and she couldn't just leave him upstairs, and so she let me go down and I swear, I was not, you know, it's like there's the edge of, of your carpet. I took my bicycle to the edge of the carpet, never even got past it, my neighbor, the neighbor called my mother, said, your daughter just went over in the alley. My mother came down with a belt and chased me up three flights of stairs until she beat me, and she never believed that I... and she took the neighbors word... over my word, and I never went across the street.

She gave another example about the way in which control was manifested in her life. In this particular story she described a situation that occurred when her mother was once again in the

hospital and the stand she took to escape from her mother's controlling behavior.

> She was always having her problems, and I remember the doctor at one point said, "she's not going to live to be sixty," so I, we we're always afraid of, you know, doing something to upset her... or have something happen... and I don't know where this came from I can't tell you to this day, I, I. don't know, maybe it's survivors blood, I can't explain it. I said to my mother I am going... mother, she said, my mother said, "If you go... I am going to have a heart attack and die," and I said to my father, "Take me home" ... my father drove me, and said, "You know if something happens to your mother its on your head, and I said that it will have to be on my head..." and I flew to go visit this person. I had a miserable time.

Unrealistic expectations.

Unrealistic expectations of the other were shared both the participants and their survivor mothers. Daughters believed that their mothers had unrealistic expectations of them and the daughters, wanted their own mothers to be different, more similar to North American mothers, and as a result they were also disappointed. One participant described what she considered to be an unrealistic expectation from her mother,

> My mother was always sick, so I was the one that was, the one who took care of everybody, in the family, and I don't think I ever gave myself permission to let me... be me, and their expectations of what they wanted were so unrealistic...it was like I was never good enough...

Participants shared some of the disappointments they felt in terms of their mothers. The disappointments were often in terms of what they would have liked to get from their mothers but did not because their mothers were unable to meet their needs. Participants often talked about their sadness or regret that their mothers could not be more nurturing.

> I realized more and more what a strong influence she had in my life. In my... I think I would have liked more, the more, her to be strong in terms of my, ah like my, in terms of sexuality and communicating this... because she couldn't, and I didn't and that's, were not area, it took me very many years of the use of therapy or whatever to feel good about. Because I knew, I was always good at school, I was always very sociable but there always, there were certain areas that I knew and do well, but I think this was one area that I didn't feel, I got enough of or felt good enough about this... but I think for a daughter

> it's very important... Because no matter how ah capable and bright we need uh hmm, I think we need to feel... I guess mother's girl, definitely our father's little girl... you know we all need it.

Frequently the interactions between mother and daughter were fraught with anger and resentment. Mothers were ill-equipped to deal with their adolescent daughters and as a result interactions were often difficult. One participant described her insights as to her mother's behavior,

> I think... now ...I think about this, probably there was envy on her, on her part, you know when she tried to restrict me, and ah it was about... I had whatever, boyfriends, girlfriends, you know I was... we were always out. We were always having good times and I think this was very hard, very hard. So that was one area I kind of learned in terms, of the whole... you know... learning the negative way and I think now, I think about this problem I just have made an insight kind of... that probably... The most difficult emotion I have with is, is jealously, that I... kind of aware that... sometimes maybe people are envious of me and I'm very uncomfortable with it.

She conceptualized her mother's way of dealing with her adolescence as being based on jealousy and resentment.

> I knew she didn't like me to have fun and to go out and ... to do all this stuff and uh hmm, so that was kind of one thing that, maybe it's still an issue, it was an issue now I'm thinking about this. It was hard for her to be uh hmm, I guess the whole issue in terms of sexuality, and having a teenager because like we couldn't talk about in terms of... my period. You know it wasn't something I could discuss with my mother.

In summary, the participants often struggled with the question of how they experienced their mothers. The struggle was in part due to the multi-faceted nature of the mother-daughter relationship as well as the various explanations that pervaded their understandings and perceptions of their mothers. Participants discussed experiencing their mothers through the lens of persecution, and then understanding/or working through the impact that the persecution had on their lives. More simply stated, the daughters experienced their mothers as Holocaust *(Shoah)*

survivors with all the strengths necessary for their survival and the challenges which they continued to face in their daily lives.

The women described the impact of growing up as a daughter of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor and their understandings and perceptions of that experience. For all of the participants, the Holocaust *(Shoah)* was a central part of their lives. They discussed growing up with a mother whose life had been disrupted by war and displacement, struggled with gaps in her own development as a result of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, had been the victim of persecution and, made an active choice to create a new life for herself.

The women described their mothers as survivors and readily discussed experiencing the strength and accomplishments their mothers had demonstrated in terms of surviving the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, in learning a new language and building new lives. They also however, discussed growing up with mothers who had faced many hardships and numerous losses. As such the participants shared the experiences and perceptions of growing up with a mother who had survived the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and the ramifications/reverberations of their mothers' experiences on their own lives. Daughters described their mothers both from the perspective of strengths and challenges. Regardless of whether daughters experienced their mothers through a positive or negative lens, one participant illustrated the group's experiences when she shared her perceptions of her mother:

> I had a very special mother and, I think that... if you were ...if your next question would be did I lose things? I would also have said yes...Emphatically... I think its both.

The third research question addressed in the present study was: <u>In what way did the daughter's perception of their mothers' experiences in the Holocaust *(Shoah)* influence their own lives, with regard to the choices they have made?</u>

The participants described living their lives as daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers. The choices that they made in their lives reflected both their experiences and learning. Three themes emerged when the daughters talked about what they learned from their mothers and the choices that they made. The first theme was Jewishness. Jewishness was comprised of the importance of: (1) being Jewish and, (2) transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. The second theme was in terms of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. In discussing their experiences of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* the participants talked about their responsibilities as children of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers to: (1) remember and never forget the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, (2) work to protect the future. The third theme was with regard to the self. Participants talked about the self in terms of: (1) comparison to mother, (2) an awareness of difference, (3) their responses to the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, (4) their ability to move forward.

Jewishness

When talking about their way of being Jewish, many of the participants began to talk about the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. For the participants the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and their Jewishness were inextricably intertwined and contributed to their understanding of themselves, their identity and their responsibility as Jewish women. For the sake of clarity and to avoid redundancies a distinction will be made and Jewishness and the Holocaust *(Shoah)* will be discussed separately. As such, Jewishness will refer to the practices of Judaism and the discussion of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* will be in terms of what the daughters of survivor mothers chose to do with the lessons learned as a function of their mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences.

Being Jewish

Being Jewish was part of their mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experience. Participants reflected upon their mothers' commitment to being Jewish and the responsibility that entailed.

Participants discussed the messages that they received from their mothers in terms of Jewishness. Some of the messages included: the importance of being Jewish and, the importance of transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. As their mothers' commitment to Jewishness has been previously addressed in the first two research questions, it will not be addressed at the present time. However, daughters learned about the importance of Jewishness and this was something they chose to repeat in their own lives.

For many of the participants the fact that their mothers maintained the strength of their convictions in the face of adversity was inspirational. One participant described her mother's struggles and the choices that she made in order to maintain her faith. She said,

> There are so many times it would have been so easy to give up... and go the wrong way, but... I guess the, the feelings that she had from at home... those ties to... at home... were so strong, and if she fought that hard... when today... we don't have to fight that hard. Why shouldn't I do what she did. It's so much easier for us today...

Transmitting Jewishness

Jewishness, be it religious, traditional or cultural was important to all of the participants, as was the responsibility of passing on the traditions and practices of Judaism to the next generation. One participant described her responsibility in the transmission of Jewishness to the next generation in these terms,

> Obligation. I definitely think you owe it to a Jewish way of life in terms of being in our families. The pride I think in our children because I think those of us who don't follow religion...instill sense of pride, sense of identity for our children...

Another participant talked about passing down the values of Jewishness she learned from her own mother onto her children,

> I think I am, trying to in many respects bring them up the same way that she brought us up, which was to behave properly, and decently, and be considerate and kind. Um, to, um,

> like what she wants to do, as I say her academic achievements left a very impressive legacy. To be proud of being Jewish of which was I think she always was. Being a survivor wasn't something that was easy or, yes I think... if you want to call it the legacy.

The importance of being Jewish as passing this onto her own children was reiterated by this participant,

> It's okay to like people who are different, and that there shouldn't be barriers put up because that's part of the problem that we have in the world right now... because of all the differences that there are. I think... I've tried to pass onto my children... that the first thing, that they need to know is that they are Jewish, they will always be Jewish, even if they tried not to be Jewish, they'd still be Jewish.

When prompted she added:

> It was pounded into my head from my parents that... you know, that, that was part of the selection, that was part, part of what Hitler did, it was why he did, what he did... And you know I just remember stories... from my mother, you know that they would just frighten people that never even knew that they were Jewish growing up and they still found out that they were Jewish. And um I think what I've expressed to my children to be accepting....of other people and other religions, but that, when it came to their home and, their personal life, that it was important to be with someone that was of the same faith... same religion.

Other participants reflected upon what they learned from their mothers when making decisions regarding their own children,

> I think about how it was done to me and I remember my mother how she said things, how she did things and I try very hard to emulate it, very, very hard.

This participant described her feelings of satisfaction with regard to the lessons her own children learned,

> I watch my children and all. I look at them and see a lot of my words coming out of their mouths, and they're living their life with that true belief, and I'm watching it.

For others passing down a sense of pride in being Jewish to the next generation was seen as a way to prevent assimilation from occurring in the future. One participant explained her position

thus,

> It's ... somewhere this feeling that I'm ...there is something bigger than just myself, and my family, and the sense of connection and, I think even this sense of responsibility to do my best, to continue it... to... In terms of my children. And I educated them and they continue, and if I think about it, who my kids may marry, people who are not Jewish, and I think I would think about this... and part of me says... I would love my kids to marry whoever they just... suitable, that loved them... and they share the same values and I definitely would like them... in terms of who I am, and my mother and I... I always tell my son... we joke... I tell him I want you to marry, somebody just like me. You know the kind of woman, a wife who is interested in life and, just an interesting person, that is confident and things like this... But I'm concerned about this, that goes back only with my Jewishness and connection... because I say how can you really share yourself... to me it's just a strong sense of identity and culture, there is a reason I am with my husband, both also Holocaust survivors. But also it's almost like... and that's one thing I feel and this is a thing... I sometimes wonder if I did a good job enough, or maybe I don't have... to tolerate it a little bit. I feel bad because I say the only victory we had is...over what happened is that... if we continue our Jewish way of life. Because that is continued from one generation, the more mixed marriages and it's diluted, it's not going to be. You know in a way that's really what would badly destroy us... is not the Holocaust... but assimilation, really.

The Holocaust *(Shoah)*

In general the participants all chose to remember what their mothers had gone through in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Remembering and never forgetting the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, working to protect the future were choices that the participants of this study made.

Remember and Never Forget

Remembering and never forgetting referred to the way in which the participants lived their lives and what they chose to transmit to future generations. The acts of remembering and not forgetting emphasized the importance of keeping events of the past in mind.

Remembering was important to all of the participants in the study. All of the women talked about the need to remember the past however, the way in which these women did so varied. Thus, remembering included: (1) being actively engaged in connecting with the past, (2) dedicating a part of their lives to learning about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and educating others.

Never forgetting, on the other hand, referred to a negative action in the past and, the importance of keeping them in mind. Thus, never forgetting included these reminders: *Do not forget that people died, do not forget the Holocaust (Shoah), do not forget the acts of anti-semitism, do not forget that the world is an unsafe place*. In general do not forget referred to a directive on the part of the participants not to forget what was lost in terms of the people, the traditions and, the way of life.

Remembering: Connecting with the past.

The participants of this study talked about the experience of growing-up with a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother, as well as their more recent past. A topic that was discussed by the participants, daughters of survivors, was that of feeling connected to the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. One participant described her association to the Holocaust (*Shoah*), to a grey cloud that continues to hover,

> Told my mother once, that we've always had a grey cloud. Now I, grew up in a, in a fairly happy, very loving home. I mean, my parents really cared about each other. You laughed, but you didn't laugh too much. You had a good time, but you stopped at some point. Every simcha was always tempered with the loss, we could be happy but…

She continued to talk about her connection to the Holocaust *(Shoah)*,

> I live it, breathe it, drink it, it is much a part of my life...I shouldn't say this, it's almost as much a part of my life, as if I had lived it, because it's there. It's the grey cloud as one that I had inherited, that I now understand better, but I inherited.

Another described the ramifications of being a child of survivors and her connection to the past,

> Because I'm a child of a Holocaust survivor, and I have this emotion in me that I feel part of me is still with me, like I think a lot of my grandparents who they were and what they could have been to us and everything.

The participants were often curious about the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. One participant described away

in which she kept the memory of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* alive during a bus ride to Montreal.

> I once took the *Heyman* bus coming back and we had to stop at the border, ... ungodly hour, and there was this elderly gentleman on the bus with his *rensel* in his hand, and his wife looked, and I looked at his face, and I thought to myself... I could be wrong, but you're not standing at this border... The look on his face, was sheer terror, sheer, it was just white as a ghost, and, and, and shaking like a leaf, and I thought to myself, there's got to be a better way. These people should have passes, don't stop at borders don't, do not pass go, just collect your two hundred dollars and don't do this again... just don't do this again. It drives me... drives me nuts.

Remembering involved not only bringing the past into the present but also dealing with the impact of growing up as a child of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother. One participant shared a story about growing up as a child of a survivor mother and her way of connecting to her mother's experiences and her concerns:

> My father is a *Rabbi*. In the Bronx we lived in a house that was connected to the *Shul*, and the *Shul* was once a Cathedral, it was big. The house where we lived was the Nunnery. I don't remember this, but originally they were just individual rooms, but I remember it as one apartment that we lived in. My mother said that they had to break through cause what they must have had was each Nun had their little room to go in, and then to go out into the hall. So literally my parent's said when they first moved in order to go to the bathroom you had to go out into the hall and walk into another area, so they broke through and made another apartment. There were nooks and crannies in that house, and, and closets under stairs. None of my friends wanted to go to this house cause it was straight out of the Nancy Drew covers, it was really terrifying, and there were places to hide. When we moved to Queens I was nine years old. We moved to a brand... relatively brand new apartment house. Straight walls, one closet in each room, and the first thing I said when moved into the house, and I went from room to room, was there will be no place to hide when they come.

Repeatedly, the importance of connecting to the past and bringing it into the present was reiterated by the participants. The remembering that occurred in this section was related to honoring the memory of the past and was manifested in the daughter's quest to connect with: their mother's experiences and family members who had been murdered in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. In the families' of the participants connecting to the past, remembering and, honoring the dead took many forms. One form that was present in all of the families was that of

naming their children after those who had perished. Each birth was a connection or a connector to the past and/or, to those who had been killed in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. The relevance of naming after those who had died was explained:

> Children had to be given a name of somebody who was killed in the war... and that way their identity is perpetuated... so that was done with my children, on my, we did for my... my mother's family that hadn't had people named after them.

The daughters spoke of the ways in which they connected with their mothers' experiences. This participant shared a story of how she made a link from the past to the future as a gift to her children, as a result of unexpectedly discovering some old pictures that had been hidden away for many years after the Holocaust *(Shoah)*.

> We used to go to their house for *Shabbat* every Friday night. I come there for *Shabbat* and she has this brown envelope of pictures, and she takes out these pictures and she says to me "this is my family" and they had been pictures that she had buried in the X____ *Ghetto* and they were partially decomposed. When she went back after the war, she wanted to retrieve the pictures and she had buried them under the earth and they had partially decomposed as a result of that, and she was almost killed. They thought she wanted the house back, all she wanted was her pictures. And these pictures lay in a brown envelope... in a dresser and I never saw them. She brought them out and she began to tell me... this is my father, this is my brother, mother, these are my grandparents... they used to go to a house in X___ to the countryside in the summertime, that was another story. The family get-togethers... you know they were a very close family, with the grandparents. You know going to the countryside in X___ you know... and uh hmm it, it just opened up and I saw my mother in a very different way, as part of a family. And what then began to happen was that I took these pictures, and I took them to a photographer and I wanted them restored... but I didn't want them restored to perfection because of the history of these pictures... and so then I mounted them on the family wall and made a family tree that included... the, my mother's family and my father's family and my present family. So to me I felt, I was making a link, I was linking the past, to the present, to the future which is my own children, and that was very significant to me. Because I felt there had been a gap in our family history. That, making that link created a continuity of everyone who came before.

Finally, another participant described her way of remembering and connecting with the past. It was through prayer, she stated that:

> There is a *tefillah* in there... it has memory, that you should say if one has lost a parent. Only if one has lost a parent one says these *tefillahs*, it stays in the *Shul.*

When asked why she said this specific prayer for her grandparents after explaining at length that this specific prayer is said only for parents she responded:

> Because, even though I never knew them, I feel such a closeness to them. I feel like I've loved them always... and I feel like they are there looking at us and I feel that they would want to be proud of us that we are continuing our Jewish heritage... our way of life and I often do. It's interesting my mother did have pictures of her parents, my father didn't... so I related to my father as the name, when I picture them I could see the picture of my mother's parents but my father's parents I just see the name... you know what I mean? And I want them to be proud of us and when I say that *tefillah* I say to them that... I want you to be proud of us, and please have in mind my children, and my children's children that they should also go in a Jewish way and you should always be proud of us.

Learning about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and educating others.

Learning about the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, remembering the pain and suffering of their mothers and, transmitting that legacy to the next generation was important to many of the participants. For example,

> Besides reading about it... and translating these letters now... which has preoccupied me, not enough that I do it every day, but there are days where I spend two three hours translating... stuff. I ...I think I have a....good knowledge now... of the Holocaust, historically and anecdotally. I read a lot... I'll read quite regularly... I'll pick up biographies of people or stories that people have written about their Holocaust experiences. Some historical books... though I think... I've had my fill of history... of the Holocaust. So it's definitely there. I've talked to my kids about it .

Another participant talked about the way in which she chose to keep the Holocaust *(Shoah)* in her memory and, the way in which she gives the message of remembering to her daughter.

> I have a big book of Holocaust victims with all kinds of pictures, I never was able to go through the book at one time, like I looked... I always,... so often I'll take it out and look at two, three pages of pictures, it's too mind boggling to go through. I've been in *Eretz Yisrael* and I had, I went through the tour at *Yad Vashem*, especially the one there with the children... Those lights, I don't know if you were ever there... but it was... I feel it's important for us to go... to know... so we can tell our kids because I think this has to be... make sure that this is never forgotten... And with the books in the house... the kids

> reading.... My daughter still has a hard time, she can't read them yet. Fine... I don't push her to read them; I'll never do that. If she feels she's ready the books are there... she'll pick it up, but if she has a hard time... then don't... but she knows that it happened.

A third participant talked about the way in which she brought an awareness of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* not only to her own children but to others as well,

> I was teaching the eleventh grade then, the eleventh grade, and one of the topics for the Final, I said would be the Holocaust. First I had to remind myself that when I was told about the Holocaust. I was talking about these kid's grandparents, not their parents... and half of them had no idea what I was talking about. I mean they knew the word Holocaust, they... but when I say they didn't know the stories... and I was dumbfounded, and I was thinking these are our *frum* kids, and they don't know what is so vital. Go home and talk about it... What if they don't want to talk about it? You never push someone to talk. I said, but you might be very surprised that what your grandmother wouldn't want to discuss with her child- - your mother or your father - - because I don't want to hurt my child. Why should I make my child live through what I lived through? Now that you're a generation away they may need to talk about it, because they want you to know what they went through. So give them the opening and see what happens with it. I got such unbelievable feedback that one girl said to me; I have to whisper something to you. She said, there was some discussion at the local library and my mother said I could go, and so she went to the library to hear, she said, and I was the youngest person there, there were a bunch of old people there, but I never knew these stories. If I never taught them anything at least I accomplished that.

One participant agreed with the others regarding the importance of Holocaust *(Shoah)* education. In addition, she commented on the time constraints of speaking to the survivors themselves, and the need to do so before too much more time elapsed.

> I have never had family, ...and that's... just trying to find out part of where we came from and what we did... and I am watching my parents deteriorate which is very difficult. And it's like once there gone. The little bit that I know... is all I have, so we're trying to... my kids and I, are trying to a get as much information as we can, but it's hard.

A second participant concurred with this perspective and said,

> A lot of the people are starting to die and if they're not going to talk about it, nobody is going to know what happened.

Never forgetting.

As previously stated, never forgetting referred to the importance of keeping a negative action of the past in mind. The directive of never forgetting for the participants, was with regard to not forgetting what was lost in terms of: the people, the traditions and the way of life and, was also an important component of working to protect the future. The importance of remembering and never forgetting was continually reiterated by the participants. One stated emphatically that,

> The Holocaust first of all can, never be forgotten, and that everything that we've struggled for as a people can never be forgotten.

The question of why we must never forget was answered by this participant when she said,

> But uh... mustn't forget... mustn't forget... what our parents went through... what our grandparents went through... all the 6 million people... *nebech* babies, etc. etc... and... I was hearing a radio show and somebody called up and said that they're fed up about hearing about the Holocaust... so I went and I called up... That's why I said we always have to defend ourselves... I called up and said... that person should have just one uncle, one sibling... he would not say let's forget... he would say let's remember...

Working to protect the future.

Several participants talked about the importance of transmitting the message of never forgetting to their own children as a method of protecting themselves in the future,

> I think that....you should never forget and that's one way. You don't make yourself too comfortable in Canada or anywhere else because... you never know what's going to happen. You never know where you're going to be...or end up.

Working to protect the future took many forms. Participants talked about remembering as a form of prevention. Others discussed working against discrimination in order to protect the next generation from racism. One participant shared her viewpoint,

> The facts are there was a Holocaust... the facts are the people were murdered and killed... families were taken away... atrocities happened... you can not change that now... you

> could maybe help it for the future, to try to keep it back... but you can't change what happened.

Another participant described her way of protecting the future,

> I see that as my role, educating... non-Jews... you know about who we are as a people and demystifying stereotypes, you know the prejudices that exist... by just being honest.

She offered an alternative perspective:

> I prefer the one of building coalitions with different ethnic collectivities like Canadian Jewish Congress. They built a coalition with the Greek community, the Italian community, uh hmm, getting support from non-Jews you know that, that way we are not so isolated. I like that approach and the educational approach, just sitting down on a one-on-one and talking heart-to-heart... about what makes me a person, what's makes you a person without the fact that you're Jewish. That I'm Jewish and you are not Jewish. Let's look for common ground, ways that we're similar rather than focus on our differences. And that's what's in our hearts. I really believe that, I'm very spiritual but not from a religious point of view. You know and I like to believe in the goodness of people. It's like Anne Frank, I really do believe in the goodness of people... until they show me otherwise.

The Self

In this section the participants described what they learned about the self and how they chose to live their lives as a result of their self-perceptions. The self in this context was defined as the capacity to render a coherent account of oneself over time (Weingarten, 1994). Thus, the self is context dependent. It is within this perspective that the self becomes the continuing story that "we tell about ourselves, to ourselves and to others" (p. 74).

Thus, the daughters talked about themselves as a function of: what they learned about themselves and in relation to their mothers. Consequently, participants talked about learning survival skills based on their interactions with their mothers. Survival, in this case was defined as a philosophy, or an attitude that many of the participants developed. These were specifically the participant's beliefs that she learned from her mother and were not necessarily those of her mother. Participants described some of the lessons that they learned as a function of their

mothers' Holocaust experiences, and they also talked about their own experiences of having been raised by a survivor mother. Some of the women described themselves as survivors as well. For example, one participant said,

> Who am I? I'm a person who is a survivor, that's what I am. I am a survivor there is no question about it. And people see me that way.

Upon delving further into her statement she goes on to describe her feelings,

> I have survived my parents... upbringing (laughing)... which is quite true, because as I said you know I've been there and I thought about it a lot so I survived that. I survived my marriage. I made a bad choice, ummm...and made inappropriate choices for all the wrong reasons, anyway and so I survived that and I was married a long time. I was married 28 years. Ummm...I survived, I don't know I survived... a surviving life and you know. You know I look at all the positive things that I can, and move on.

The accounts that the participants gave with regard to the self were comprised of: (1) comparison to mother, (2) an awareness of difference, (3) their responses to the Holocaust and, (4) their ability to move forward.

Comparison to Mother

Participants often compared themselves to their mothers and, often understood themselves in relation to their mothers. One participant described her feelings about mothers' influence in general and, her mother's influence in particular.

> I think that she influenced me because she was so um...so confident and so... I don't know ...assertive but, you know, like outspoken...Um...and she always had....but with a lot humor in there also. Uh...that she, I guess that you learn...you either...you either...I guess model yourself on your mother, you know, in the same way... or you consciously go... and become the opposite.

Another participant used her mother's experiences as a level of comparison and impetus for further growth,

> She was 18 when the war... 15 when the war started and 20 when the war stopped. So at a very young age developmentally... she was able to go through... it was always my

> yardstick, if she was able to go through that, there isn't anything that I can't do. The sky's the limit.

Another described the parallels in her life to those in her mother's life.

> She didn't work out of the house. I think that was a decision that she and my father arrived at. My father was the bread winner, and she was you know ... gonna be the inside person. Um....she never traveled with my father on business trips until we were all virtually grown up..um...and she had... you know, she was very much involved within the closer community, as we were children... and it broadened as we got older. And I don't think I'm consciously emulating it... but obviously there are parallels. Um...I had much more opportunity to go out... um..but every time...I don't know... a lot of things that kept me um, that kept me back... and also I think something that I saw was the way that my mother and my father cared for their... for my father's parents um... and that very obviously got translated for a good chunk of years to my own life.

A third participant described her mother's strength and quiet calm as similar to her own.

> I saw how strong she was... the fact that she was dying, and never cried... never being bitter about it, and never...I mean, even the nurse, when she used to come home to give her the injections, she was amazed at how she's so calm and not, you know, because she said she must have been in so much pain, and she just kept inside quietly. I think that is surviving...I'm the same way, even if I'm in pain, nobody knows.

Some of the participants described the differences between themselves and their mothers as goals to work towards, others to overcome. One participant described the differences between herself and her mother in this manner,

> She's extremely patient, she is an extremely good listener. I'm not such a good listener. I have very little patience and I'm and I am much more judgmental than she is. I am what you would call... I would call myself intolerant almost. I work on myself but I haven't got tolerance for things that I should have. You know I call them stupidities, but you know they're not. It's just to me they are. So therefore my tolerance level is low. I learnt from her to try to be more tolerant and I think I am because of it. Maybe not enough but a little bit more than I would be if I wouldn't go according to her teachings... or according to her. Because I, ummm I look up to her. I try to emulate a lot of these things.

Another participant distinguished between herself and her parents and family in this way,

> I'm totally different than my family. I had the ah... strength of character I must say...to look at my parents, love them for what they were... and not love them for what they

> weren't... and I swore that I wouldn't do that, and even though I have impulsive things to do or talk the way they... would have. I didn't like it in them, and I didn't like it in me... so I changed myself.

Regardless of the whether the comparisons were in terms of the similarities or differences, the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers were connected to their mothers on many levels.

Awareness of Difference

Feeling responsible for their mothers and growing up as daughters of immigrants -- women who had strong European accents and were different from other Canadian or non-Holocaust mothers-- had an impact on the development, growth, and comfort level of the participants. Participants described their awareness of difference in terms of: (1) being children of survivors and others, (2) loss of family and, (3) their parents/family and others. Several of the participants shared the experience of growing up with a Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor immigrant mother. One participant described her feelings of this experience:

> I felt that for me there wasn't this, this uhh... playfulness or ah just being a child. There was a lot of responsibility and I would imagine that it was being an immigrant, you know there was a dependency on me, my parents didn't speak the language so I spoke the language for them, you know... in the early years... so there was this dependency.

Comparing one's self to other people, other families and, even to their own siblings, also resulted in feelings of being different for the participants of this study. Some of the participants attributed the differences as being a function of having integrated some of the experiences of their survivor mothers. Others talked about differences in terms of their own lived experiences in comparison to that of others, be it in their own families or, in society in general. They also described the way in which those differences were manifested. In terms of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*

one of the participants summed up the common thread woven by the women of this study when she stated: "I knew that our family was different because of what my parents had always had gone through".

Children of survivors and others.

Another participant described the impact that her mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences had on her feelings of being different:

> A lot of the kids that I went to school with were not... who I became friendly were not children of survivors. Children of survivors like myself thought of life a certain way and the other ones didn't have the same views.

She continued to talk about the differences between herself as a child of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother and other children,

> I grew up faster ... I think that one of the things...old before my time. You have a certain sense of... that... when you are walking on the world, on the ground it's not so solid, and I think you knew that as a child intuitively. Nobody necessarily said: "Hey, you know the world...the ground is not so solid...the ground will swallow you"...mind you, they did say that in different ways. And I think you absorb it by osmosis as a child... and gather all this up and, also as a child there was a lot more depression I found in Holocaust homes. People were sad more... so there was that kind of thing. I'm sure there was that in families of North American born families, but it wasn't the same.

Differences were discussed regarding the self in relation to children of Jewish Canadian parents -- children of Jewish parents who were not part of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, and/or children who were not raised by European parents. One participant described the Canadian-European distinction in this way:

> Growing up I always... felt that even though, as I said my parents never made me feel like that. That there was this... this possibility always... that, not necessarily that there would be another Holocaust, I never thought of it in those terms. But, that um, that there always was an underlying... maybe hatred is too strong a word in most cases, but prejudice against Jews...Yeah... Which, maybe my Canadian Jews friends never felt so strongly.

Loss.

Loss was another facet of the awareness of difference for the daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors. For the daughters, that meant not having grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins and, was a familiar comment made by many of the participants of this study. One participant reflected upon her experiences of growing up as a daughter of survivors and her sense of feeling different in this way,

> You know I had my family, but we weren't a part of a family. Everybody else had families, they went to visit their grandparents, they went to, they had twenty million adopted parents, grandparents ...I had aunts and uncles. I didn't have any of these relatives, and I think that's...that a difference about being, like the Holocaust...in that way.

Another participant shared her perception of the differences between herself - - a child of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors and others,

> We were missing something. I always thought that the kids that I used to play with were children of survivors and we went to the country together and did all that stuff and there were lots of us. It was like we were always missing something, we were looking for something. We always had like these dead people in the background. Okay... they were like these ghosts, all these dead people... who were part of our lives but we never met any of them. And none of my other, you know the "*Greener*" the people, who were born here they didn't have any of this. You know they had the uncles, they had the aunts, they had the cousins, they had the grandparents. These were live people. We had dead people... and it was a very different, I think it made for a different way of perceiving the world.

A third participant concurred and shared her feelings,

> Very sad, very, very sad. We couldn't even put it into words as children and we were just sitting there just listening to my mother and we felt very ...we felt something was missing in us because we never had any grandparents, we hardly had any, we didn't have any cousins, and they were all taken ...taken to the gas chambers and we had one aunt and two uncles and my mother always used to so love when we'd talk about her brothers and her sister. They were very close and unfortunately her two brothers passed away.. and her ...she has a sister.

Finally, another participant talked about her feelings of loss in this way,

> We missed family... I mean we had no family, it was just us. Everybody was strangers, we made a family out of them...but... maybe 15 or how many other families there in the same camp we lived in and we were very close to everyone but it was still sad that we had no sisters, no brothers, no uncles, no aunts and I grew up with that.

Loss of family members as a result of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* left not only the survivors bereft, but this feeling of loss was transmitted to the daughters. One participant summarizes the feelings of many participants when she said:

> My thoughts are sad. Its very upsetting that we were deprived of a life that could have been so nice. I often think to myself that we read stories about how they lived at home and I get like a homesick feeling towards them. I'm dying to go back to see the way my mother lived, or my father lived.

An awareness of difference and of loss was brought to this participant's attention at a young age. She described her experience in the following story,

> I think when I started school... I started meeting people outside my circle, and discovered, different kinds of families... and realized, that wow, we were really very different than... what I ...saw around, and as I said there were grandparents, there were extended families, real uncles, real aunts, real uh hmm and I did have I had a few uncles and aunts you know we did have some brothers and sisters who survived but... there were more ghosts... than anything else, and uh hmm so I would come back and ask questions. How come Judy has this... how come I don't have a grandmother? Where is my grandmother? Where is this person, where is that?

Many of the participants described their feelings of being different in relation to the friends they had while growing up. One participant expressed her perspective,

> They all felt like part of a family and it, it, I think probably the only... one thing that I felt growing up, is that I never felt that I was part of anything.

Another participant described her experiences of going to school and feeling different,

> I didn't have, until I was in grade 5 when I met, when I met another girl whose parent's were also survivors. Um, she wasn't in my class, but we became friends, and I use to see her a lot. And, So, there we had similar bonds, but there was a difference just because

> they came from these Canadian homes, and I didn't, and, and, I was Jewish and they weren't.

Parents/family and others.

Participants were not only aware of how they differed from their peers, but they also described the ways in which their parents were different from other parents, for example, language was a barrier for the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors. Given that these differences were also manifested in the lives of children of immigrants, for the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers, these were compounded by the fact that they also struggled with the burden of dealing with the repercussion of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, in addition to finding or creating a place for themselves at school. One participant shared her experiences,

> I remember when going to school, my parents didn't speak a perfect English. Um, I would have to write letters for my dad. Um, they always made me do the writing, the typing, whatever it was, I was the one, you know. So aside from me having to do my homework, I was doing, you know, and it's still happening to this day...

Another participant described the differences between her parents and those of her friends this way:

> You know my mom and dad would come to school and they looked different a little bit than the other people.

When asked what was different, she replied:

> I don't know either a hairstyle or, or just something, and when they started talking, my friends would all say, Oh! They sound funny, they sound funny. Well I don't hear my parent's accent, but they do. They do have a major accent, and I didn't, but you know they went to everything, and I made them come to everything, and they've come to all my kid's things. So... but I always knew...

Another participant shared a story that described her first encounter with learning that her family

was different.

> I grew up for the first nine years of my life, thinking that everybody's frum, religious. Non-religious like Americans that I had met, people who were American, America. But religious people the only ones I met were *Greener*. Their parents were parents who survived the Holocaust. First time I ever went to a friend's house, we had moved to Queens, and I was going to *Bais Yaakov*, in Williamsburg. I went to my friend's house, she introduced me to her mother, and her mother says to me, "would you like a glass of milk," and I said, that's not you're mother. She said, "What are you talking about?" Mother's don't say, "would you like a glass of milk," mothers go, "you vanna a gless of milk," So I thought she was kidding with me, that, that was like a sister or something. No that's my mother; my mother was born here in the States. I had never before met anybody whose mother was born in the States that I was close to.

Responses to the Holocaust *(Shoah)*

Growing up with a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers evoked very specific responses on the part of the participants. The types of responses fell into the following categories: 1)sensitivity to discrimination, 2) fear, 3) fighting injustice, 4) protecting parents/survivors and, 5) pride in and admiration of survivors.

Sensitivity to discrimination.

A heightened sensitivity to racism in general and anti-Semitism in particular was discussed by most of the participants. One participant shared her views about racism and discrimination and, her feelings of responsibility to find a way to sensitize others,

> I think there is a general awareness in my life, of not just for Jewish people but of any kind of racism or discrimination of any kind, to be, it always feels in some ways like it became very purposeful in my life to make sure that I do my part, to make sure that's not happening, and I think that, I don't know if that's protect, I don't really know, really the right words for some of these things. It's so strong in me that if I detect racism or any kind of discrimination, be it from someone Jewish, or not someone Jewish. It is so extremely disturbing to me, and I really will do what ever I can in my power to gently educate.

As a function of growing up with mothers who had lived through the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, many of the participants talked about a heightened sensitivity or an awareness of anti-Semitism and

discrimination. Several participants reflected upon their thoughts that the world is not a safe place for Jewish people.

> I always feel that there is... shifting sands, that things are not necessarily what they appear to be and you have to be very consciously careful because what people say... are not necessarily what it appears... and what the reality is... and you are going to have to flee at any moment, so you have to be light. Material things are not that important. Those are ... I think things from...that I learnt from my mother in a way.

Another participant echoed this view.

> I am very cynical, and that to me anti-Jewish feeling and hatred of Jews is, is a fact of life, and now that I've become more observant I look at it from a more *Torah* perspective. Which, I guess is always here, and it will always be here, and it's something that we don't know why, but it's just part of our heritage...

She continued to share her thoughts.

> When I read all these articles by these Jews that who are so thunder struck by the resurgence of anti-Semitism and don't understand what is going on. I feel that being a child of survivors has always made aware that being a Jew is a precarious existence. It's not sur.. nothing surprises me in that in a sense...I'm... and there I see the difference cause my husband's parents were Canadian born, and he doesn't have the same innate cynicism that I do.

For many of the participants, anti-Semitism and discrimination were a way of life. For them a general awareness of its existence, and learning to live with it were a necessity of life. However, the backlash of this awareness for many of the participants was fear.

Fear.

For the participants fear took several forms. For some, fear was connected to being Jewish in the world, for others the fear was related to nationalism in the general population as a re-creation of what had happened to the Jewish people during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. One participant described her fear and the responses she implemented to protect herself and her family,

> When I was young, I, I was afraid to go to school. I was afraid to say I was Jewish. We all had non-Jewish names. My name was definitely very non-Jewish, I didn't even, I never used my Jewish name, even to this day. I gave my children non-Jewish names when they were young, my husband the same. My husband, when we were first married didn't wear a *kippah* to work or if we went to a theater or anywhere he just took it off. It was just a normal feeling that you have to protect... that no one should know. There was a fear.

Another participant talked about her feelings with regard to being Jewish,

> Being Jewish is, is also something that's risky (Laughing). Which Jewish history unfortunately bears witness to over and over and over again, but ...that there is this precariousness of existence.

Mothers reminded their daughters that nationalism was how the Holocaust *(Shoah)* started in the first place. This particular participant shared a story of how her mother reminded her of the activities and actions of the past in order to have her daughter proceed cautiously in her own life.

> I lived in Spain so I was very enchanted with the Spanish people. Where I lived they didn't consider themselves Spanish, they were believed... I believed they were Catalans, and they were very nationalistic. So, I found this very cute, and I was very caught up in it.... It was... I remember my parents came and met me. I lived in Europe for two years, and they came, it was their chance to go to Israel. They had never seen Israel, and I remember saying, "Oh it's so wonderful they sing songs about how beautiful Catalans is', and my mother, she was like... the Germans sang songs about how beautiful... They were ... both of them, nationalism is always dangerous, always, always dangerous, it starts like how beautiful Germany is, and it ends with people dying. So, it was like that, it made a very big impression on me. Because certainly if I heard somebody being nationalistic then I wouldn't have to accept so much.

Another participant talked about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and connected it to nationalistic tendencies as well.

> I don't think that it's well taught in school... because I think it's....because it's to an extent... anti-Semitism in the extreme. You know it starts very subtly... and... slowly... I guess that I feel that we have to be vigilant about... your freedoms and your... and about tolerance... and things you know are important. It started... well it didn't start subtly but... but this theory of how Hitler got into power... I tell my kids all the time... nationalism... isn't good for the Jews.

Fighting injustice.

As a result of growing up with mothers who had survived the Holocaust *(Shoah)* some of the daughters felt strongly that their responses would be different from that of their mothers in future instances of discrimination. One participant described a conversation with her mother and her feelings with regard to standing up to injustice.

> I believe that everybody should fight for the cause. So I said, "Mummy, I didn't say they were stubborn. I said you have to see past their nose". Cause my question is always, how did all these Jews go like lambs. Can't understand, they just can't understand that question. They knew what was happening, especially the Hungarians, they only had one year, they heard all the atrocities, how do you not do anything about it.

Another participant described her responses to injustice,

> I think that's, that pride, that I think is has...been a big thing for me, and fight! I think that, fight! No, no, no passiveness. I... that's the main thing I think that's relevant is that, it's, it's made a big impression on me, that people came and told her family before the Germans came, that the Germans were coming, and that they were in danger, and no one believed it, they didn't believe it...so they could have left...

She continued to describe her way of fighting injustice,

> I'll usually call someone on something. Anything that seems to not make sense to me, and I, now that I think about I, I remember knowing someone else who told me that their, that his parent's taught him that the Holocaust never happened. My way of dealing with it was to talk, and to explain to him that he's been handed something that's not true.

A third participant related a story of how she and her family responded to an act of anti-Semitism literally on her doorstep,

> Had an incident here of somebody who was throwing um, dung...by the door... on my front... and it's been happening on this block... before I moved here... for many, many years, and nobody did anything... and it was only happening to Jewish houses... and when it started happening to me, I made a police complaint... Once... twice... then I finally got a police officer who wasn't Jewish, and her name was officer X___ and she said this is not a nuisance crime... this is a hate crime... and it's only happening to Jews on the block... and... plus the two synagogues on the opposite corners... She said "I'm changing this to a

> hate... crime, which is something that we take, to a... hate crime... which I am taking more seriously"... I said "fine"... and you know they're trying to investigate. We knew... the person was doing it sometime between two o'clock at night and... five in the morning... six in the morning... and yea... But, it wasn't something important enough... for the police officers to put um, surveillance and watching... I mean... they kept an eye. They use to drive by, and see if they would catch somebody hanging around. Eventually... what happened was um... they said you know... if you would get a surveillance camera... then we could do something about it.. .They weren't going to fund it... so we invested... We rented a surveillance camera for quite a few weeks and... they caught the guy doing it. It was an old Polish... war, well... war criminal. He ran away from there... and he's living here, of course, and... he was a Polish guy and he worked... actually for Jewish people, but always hated them... and he was doing it to the Jewish people.

She talked about bringing the case to the Human Rights Commission where it was eventually settled and concluded her story with the following statement:

> The nicest part of the story is that it stopped.... The X____'s weren't getting it anymore... nobody on the block... that was getting it for years... are getting it anymore. So we stood up for what we felt for... was right. We knew we were being harassed cause we're Jews.

Standing up for what's right, and educating others about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* were some of the ways in which these daughters protected their mothers from further suffering and pain.

Protecting parents/survivors.

This particular response took a variety of forms. As previously described fighting injustice was one type of response, but that was an indirect form of caring for parents and was directed towards the outside world. The women interviewed talked about taking care of their parents in a more direct manner with the goal being to protect them from further pain as they had suffered enough. In general one participant voiced the overall feelings of the group when she said: "A lot of things... if they were happening to me ...I wouldn't let them know. I was afraid to let them know". Another participant described her interactions with her mother as a result of growing up with the Holocaust *(Shoah)* in the background and not wanting to cause her mother

any further pain.

> There were things we would never say or do to our parents because somewhere in the back of your mind was... they paid. I won't add to their suffering, so a lot of decisions you made... were made based on, I don't want to cause my parents pain. Whether it's very conscious, or very unconscious, hard for me to say now...

She continued to describe her thoughts and actions towards her mother,

> My mother's a bright, intelligent, extremely intuitive woman, and I most probably could tell her anything, I don't, only because she is, takes everything to heart, and I know she won't sleep at night. If I tell her I am struggling with an issue, she won't sleep at night.

Another participant described how she protected her parents,

> I knew that our family was different because of what my parents had always had gone through. So I was always very protective... of my parents. I always tried to shield them from... whatever might be happening. I was always trying to take care of them, and I always tried to make my friends and everybody else understand... that they'd gone through something so horrific that... and people were always in awe of... of what they had been through, and that they could come out... and start a life... and have a family, and, and continue on.

A third participant concurred and talked about the way she would excuse the actions of her mother based on her mother's past.

> I understand them... and sometimes when they do things that I don't understand... the excuse in my mind is always...you know... okay they went through the war, I'll look away. Certain things that they'll do that will bother me... I say, how can a person do something like that?... but then I say, they went through the Holocaust, they went through all of that.

Beside protecting and taking care of their parents in thought. Daughters of survivors talked about the way they would protect their parents from further pain. One participant shared a story that happened to her while in Switzerland with her parents many years after the Holocaust *(Shoah)*,

> The photographer was trying to get our attention. I want you to picture this: "*Achtung*" (fingers snapping) "*Achtung*"(fingers snapping) and I went over to him and, as I watched my father's knuckles turn white. I said, I don't know if you're aware of this but my parents went through the war and a lot of people... and this, this blows my mind... in Switzerland, the war happened but it's a very different attitude then the average Jewish European person. I said, say "you hoo, say cuckoo, say birdie, say anything you want but don't say "*Achtung*" cause you're not going to get a smile. And he apologized, and he went on to say something else, and that was that.

Some of the women described how they felt different from others in their own families. These participants were often chosen by their mothers to listen to and carry the stories of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* to the next generation. One participant shared the memories of being the one chosen to hear the stories and narratives of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* while she was growing up,

> I remember as a child, they cried... they had nightmares, and I remember them, I remember it clearly and the stories they used to tell me, and they didn't tell my brother and sister but the stories they used to tell me and how they laid on me... was a lot of the... rather than hearing of Cinderella... I heard stories of how people climbed over bodies to escape.

Listening to the narratives and stories of their mothers was one way in which some of the participants tried to ease the pain inflicted on their parents,

> I was a really good girl as many young women are and did very much to please my parents and not to hurt them and not to upset them and in my subconscious, like now I understand, there was a part of me that knew they had been so pained and so hurt and had referred to myself sometimes as a *pflaster*. Somebody who takes the pain away.

Another participant described her feelings in regards to the stories,

> I received a lot of this stuff they should have never done. Maybe I wanted to hear it because they were very sad, particularly my father, very sad ....and very depressed. And I understand a lot more now than I did then... okay about all that but it ... it weighed on me as a child.

As a result of listening to the stories she described her sense of herself thus,

> When I was younger, I felt the same sadness they felt. Whatever they were feeling I think I felt. As I said, I really felt that I was the receptacle, that I was the one who got a lot of the stuff, and my younger brother and sister didn't get the same way.

Another participant described the differences between herself and her younger brother,

> My younger brother is nine years younger than me, so he was this young baby, and I would say he grew up with a different set of parents cause by that time my parents had mellowed, my father had mellowed a little, life was a little easier for them. And so, he, he had a very different life.

Many of the participants also discussed the choices that they made in their lives and the awareness or understanding of the underlying rationale of those choices. Several of the participants talked about doing things for the wrong reasons often to their own detriment, often to protect their parents as their perception of their parents was that they had suffered enough. For some of the participants this took the form of getting married, for others this meant choosing a particular profession that would meet with their mother's approval rather than their own. One participant shared her views about herself in regards to her parents, saying:

> I got married because there was an expectation that I have to get married and that I have to have children... to replenish the Jewish people... who were killed in the war. That was something that was hammered into me. I wanted to have an education. I was at McGill at that time... and I wanted to finish my education, and I was told "No you can't because you'll become too smart. You won't find a husband".

Another participant concurred and stated:

> It was 1970, 69, 70 and I didn't want to... get married, I just wanted to live with this guy... and I don't know, experiment, I guess or whatever, and both my parents threw a pretty heavy number on me, and told me they didn't survive the Holocaust or the shame, because they couldn't understand how a girl could live with a guy out of wedlock, my G-d. So the shame, so that was a pretty heavy number to throw my way... so I got married to please, this controlling situation.

A third participant echoed the feelings of the others when she said:

> I married my first husband, and I am not faulting my parents for this, you know it's not, I didn't want to, but I did this because, but I think my perception, my vision, and my... where I thought I was going, very much presented itself in the fact that I thought, this was the exact kind of guy that my parents would want me to marry, and therefore in my mind he became the exact kind of guy that I wanted to marry, and then reality hit.

Others followed their mothers' advice and thus, did not choose specific career paths that their mothers considered inappropriate.

> Professionally, I never did what I wanted to do. I had wanted to go into social work or nursing, and my mother said nice Jewish girls don't do that.

Another participant described finding a compromise between what she wanted to do professionally and what her mother found to be acceptable in terms of a career,

> When I entered university I wanted to go into architecture and, um...my mother was appalled at that choice... Because there were no women in architecture and she thought... women don't go into architecture, you should go into a field where there are other women, you're going to be the only girl in your class and da da... It would never occur, you know... it was just... it was an issue. Now, I started in school of engineering and architecture, and when I went there... all the science requirements and started them, I said... no way...this is not for me. I still have a fascination and a love for architecture but I'm not an architect. But there weren't any more women in the math classes and economics classes, but to her that didn't sound so bad. That's not why I went into it, it was a...synthesis of two fields that I really liked. The math and, the political science, and that kind of thing... and it seemed like a good synthesis.

Yet another participant's mother gave her similar advice in terms of relationships and education,

> She would say you know what... when you are in a relationship you have to learn... always say yes and, make him believe that you do what he wants you to do. But always do what you want to do. Find a way, the best way to get what you want is... to say yes first with a man. Even when I was a young adult and, I told her I would probably like to go to do my Masters, to continue my education. She would say I'm not sure....Women too educated, may have a hard time to find a husband.

The participants talked about the impact that the Holocaust *(Shoah)* had not only on their mothers but on themselves as well, in terms of the choices they made for their own futures.

One participant spoke for many of the participants when she said,

> I had been conditioned to be a good girl, in my family of origin, not to make waves, you know my parents had suffered, so I am going to be this good girl. I listened and I did what everybody wanted me to do. At one point I described myself as being an appendage of everyone else. An appendage of my husband, an appendage of my parents, an appendage of my children. At one point I didn't exist, I didn't know who I was. I didn't know what I wanted.

Pride in and admiration of survivors.

Despite often feeling the burden of protecting their survivor mothers, the participants also described the feelings of pride and admiration that they felt towards survivors in general, and for their mothers in particular. The fact that their mothers survived the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and that they were their daughters, was a source of pride for the participants. One participant shared her views stating that for her there was:

> A sense of pride in being Jewish because of what my parents went through. There was a sense of pride because they were survivors. That they had maintained their identity, meaning that they had chosen to remain Jewish when other survivors chose not to remain Jewish. Some of them and people I've worked with have gone into hiding and changed their Jewish identities and they're in hiding as Christians and retained their Christian identity. So for me it was a simple pride that my parents chose to remain Jewish, to be Jewish.

Pride was not only expressed in terms of surviving as a people but also in terms of the legacy that has been passed down from generation to generation. This participant shared her feelings about the legacy given to her by her mother:

> Pride, that you're, you're grandchildren or great grandchildren, of people who died! Died, for being Jews, what a legacy. My mother said once that there was a movie that came out, and my mom was a huge movie buff, about, they did a comparison of...between kids of Holocaust survivors, and kids of Nazi's, and the kids, the Nazi's were saying, "We envy you, because you have a pride in your legacy, imagine for us, we're children of war criminals". That pride, that you...this is a serious role, this is serious, when you're the daughter of a Holocaust survivor or the granddaughter, this is a serious, serious, serious job, you're not off the hook. You're not off the hook, and like I live my life very freely. I

have a very, very free life, but I'm not off the hook.

Participants talked about the pride they felt in their mothers' maintaining their Jewishness in the face of cruel and horrific conditions. One woman described her feelings in this way,

> Jewish is something we did with pride. Being that my parents are Holocaust survivors... they risked their lives for being Jewish. It was very easy for them at the time of the war to give up being Jewish... or pretend they're not being Jewish. Especially in a mother... who had blonde hair and blue eyes. She could have mixed in ...very easily, which... that fact... that she had blonde hair and the blue eyes did save her many times. And even though, there was even a point where she was hiding... hidden in a Christian place with children... to help survive the war and they wanted to try... to slowly convert them to Christianity and my mother saw that it was affecting her sister that was with her... cause she was of a weaker nature and she said: "let's get out of here... I'd rather die between my people in the *Ghetto* "...

Admiration as well as pride were feelings often described by the participants towards survivors in general,

> What they've been through I don't think any human... has been through, and there was no reason for it... and I, they don't even know... what made them be able to survive. We talked about...but, there's, there's a strength, there's a will, they were in the right place at the right time, they took the right turn, they took the wrong turn... whatever it was, and is... this desire to live. They have a very strong desire to live...

They continued to express their awe of the survivors saying,

> It's hard to believe these horrors that these people went through. Sometimes... you really ... if it wasn't my mother telling me these stories and knowing... myself that she actually lived through it ...with all this proof... would be hard to believe... in a sense... but the way she tells the stories, you could see her visualizing it, you could see it was just a part of her... that you knew obviously that this thing is something that somebody visualized... But I couldn't get over the courage, I kept on saying to myself, I wonder if ...us today ...would have the courage, and the strength, to do what they did then, and you know what? I don't think we would have...I really don't think we are strong today to go through what they went through... physically, emotionally, in any way... I don't think we could do it... G-d shouldn't try us.

Daughters talked about feeling connected to both the Holocaust *(Shoah)* itself and to the "family"

of survivors. One participant talked about the strengths that she learned from survivors in general.

> My parents had taken me to, there was a twenty-fifth anniversary or a fiftieth... in Florida, and I remember flying in for this... cause they always said I never went to these things, and I remember sitting in this room, and basically it, was phenomenal, people who were half dead were so alive, and had so much energy, and who just really wanted to live. And I'm watching my parents now, with their friends, all of them are falling apart in one way or the other, and their main thing is... if they want to go out... living, they... they just put their best foot forward and go... and they just have the strength that's... unbelievable and I know I've inherited... I know that, no matter what I'm going to make it.

Another participant talked about her mother's strength and about the strength that she felt that she had inherited from her mother. For her it was,

> An enormous strength, really an enormous strength, and, and just a reality that we are survivors, as a people, as a family. We are survivors. My mother is, thank G-d a breast cancer survivor. I have my own couple of scares, but recently I had a pretty big scare. Somewhere in the back of my head, I never once thought I am not going to survive this. It just didn't dawn on me, that if G-d forbid that if the news came back positive, that I wasn't going to survive it.

Moving Forward

Many of the participants described the process of personal growth, self-acceptance and healing that they sought in order to alleviate some of their own sadness and pain. These women talked about becoming aware of their own strengths, insights into their own ways of functioning and courses of action they took in order to heal themselves and move out from under the cloud of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. For some of the participants this took the form of joining a support group. One participant described the process that led to her joining a such a group,

> My mother was sad... for a lot... of my growing up years and sometimes depressed. So it was making her feel better, you know helping to ease the pain and I never... I didn't do it consciously and uh hmm so in, in, in the 1979 I began my own personal awareness of the daughter of Holocaust survivors and what are the implications of that... and what does that mean for me. And I realized... you know... and I said that I had been a band-aid, to make them feel better, to make them happier, to help them to forget... you know the pain

that they had gone through.

She continued to explain the impact the support group had on her life.

> There were these experiences and these feelings that I had, that I had never been aware of. They were all buried in my subconscious. So there was all this stuff coming out and there was a lot of pain in the beginning. I remember crying and crying. I was reading all the books and literature and just crying for a few years. I went to a conference in 1979 in New York, it was the first ever conference of Jewish Holocaust survivors second generation. All I did was cry, you know coming with all these people, you know...there was a great bond that was created between us, but there was so much sadness that been buried inside of me, that didn't even have a voice. I began to give it a voice in the group, what this sadness is about. You know so ah yeah. And then there was the sense of pride that came in, that kicked in. You know after the sadness, the sense of pride in who I was, and my parents and what they had done and the legacy, that I began to look at the legacy, that had been passed onto me so ah it began to come together for me.

Another participant also joined a support group and described the sense of connectedness she achieved.

> At one point I joined a group of Holocaust survivor children, of Holocaust survivors so that we would sit and we would have a facilitator, we'd see different films or have different people come and talk, and then we would talk after and we'd see how, we...easily how we all saw the world pretty similarly. It's a pretty amazing kind of event.

Other participants talked about learning to stop protecting their parents from the world and, learning how to care for themselves. One participant described the process of her introspection and the resulting self-awareness that reflected that of many of the other participants when she stated that,

> My mother was always sick, so I was the one that was, the one who took care of everybody, in the family, and I don't think I ever gave myself permission to let me... be me, and their expectations of what they, wanted were so unrealistic, it was like I was never good enough... but yet I was... what was the most important thing in their lives, and I think it took until I was about fifty years old to figure it out.

She continued with,

> It's like a light bulb went off, and I said, now I understand... why this was going on. Now I understand why... I chose the husband that I chose. Um, and I also, learned that I won't do that anymore. Um, that you know this strength that I had... obviously came from my mother, maybe it came from my mother's mother. I don't know, but somewhere inside of me, there is a strength. I can't tell you where it's from. I can't tell you how it gets there, but it... I really gave myself permission... to be me.

She described her awareness of the effects of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* on her own life.

> I understood the impact, and it made me stronger, and it made me, be able to go forward and do what I needed to do. It made me set boundaries. I could never set a boundary, I could never say no, and now I can say no, I can set boundaries.

And ultimately what she understood from the process,

> What I understand is that you need to be your own person... that I love my parents. I would do anything for them... but I am entitled to have a life... I am entitled to be a person... I am entitled to be happy... I never felt as a child... I really had... I was able to be happy, you know... cause if I was happy... something bad would happen.

Finally, the women of this study talked about themselves in terms of self-acceptance, self-perception and the aspects of themselves that they value the most. One participant described herself in this way,

> I think I'm still the same person I always was, I think I'm just maneuvering differently, I'm allowing myself to be... me, which is someone that is basically, not domestic. Um, someone that likes to work hard, someone that likes to play hard... and to live life to its fullest.

Another participant shared this perception of herself,

> I am now, in a place where I am very comfortable saying, I have needs, and I'd love some of them met. About thirty years ago, I could never had said that.

The ability to change and value those changes was brought forth by several participants. Another participant described herself in this manner:

> A person who likes to evolve, and keeps going, and a, I, I like who I am. I, I, think I, a, I, I don't take the easy road; I think I take the hard road, and a, I think that I be all that I think I can be, and I keep, well my, very active in that.

Personal growth and self-awareness were eventually accomplished by many of the participants of the study. The awareness however, was not only in terms of themselves but often included others, most especially their mothers. Several participants talked about reconnection, reconciliation and personal growth as an important part of the mother-daughter relationship. One of the participants described her relationship with her mother as reciprocal and evolving,

> It was very different in later years. In later years, we became friends and uh hmm there was more of an intimacy between us which hadn't been... for many years.

She continued to describe her relationship with her mother in this way,

> She came up for a number of years and spent vacations with me, we used to garden together, we used to talk together. She used to talk about some of her difficulties that she was having in her marriage, you know. I would talk about some of the ones I was having..so there were certain things that you often don't do with survivor families. You know I began to talk to my mother about my problems, which is something that I hadn't done as I was growing up because I wanted to spare them the pain. So everything was always fine, everything was always good. The *pflaster* you know everything was always good. In later years I...everything wasn't good and I. I, I was able to verbalize that to her.

Another participant shared a poignant story of her own personal growth in terms of her relationship with her mother,

> When I got married... and moved up to Montreal... and we had to make *Sheva Brachas*... here... right... and we had all these cartons of stuff that was shipped up...and my mother helped me. My mother wanted to help me unpack. So she did my linen closet... and my mother was meticulous. My kitchen would never look like this, if my mother was alive. Or here, let's put it like this. Everything had its place. Um..she did my linen closet... but I, newly married, had to do it my way. So, as soon as she left... I had to redo the linen closet...my way. Okay, I was twenty, I was young, I was on my own... gonna be on my own, and I was going to have everything... my way. I was so stupid, like why, you know, like today... if somebody wants to do my linen closet, please be my guest... you know... organize it. The night, that my mother died... we came back from the hospital, and my

> uncle was there and I had to make up the bed for him... and I stood in front of that... linen closet and every set... had a ribbon around it... and I just stood in front of the linen closet... and I cried. Like it was just such a, you know... thing twenty years later, you know how your life is, you know. Um...I know it's such a stupid story... and yet that's the one that I...I don't know I tell it because... it just shows that I've grown up over the years. And at a certain point you have to prove yourself independent... and at a certain time... you would love it if your parents came back...

For those who had faced the challenges of growing up with a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother, this participant voiced the feelings of many when she said,

> You know it took awhile to let go of my anger and I've come to the decision that she did the best that she was able to, you know from, whatever it was that she had gone through.

This participant reflected upon herself, her mother and, the changes that they both made in their lives. She began by describing what she valued most about herself,

> My ability to continue to grow. Not to fear change. Uh hmm to face life head on and and that's where I feel she was heading and uh hmm it makes me sad that she died living life in all her beauty and all her glory. And after she died I went to her house and collected her clothes, and I never remembered that my mother used to wear bright clothes...she loved... and when I look at her clothes, such vibrant colors and that's who she had become. Living her life in full technicolor and that's what I'm doing... living my life in full technicolor. And seeing her clothes reminded me of that. No more living in the darkness but just living everything with such a passion and I'm a very passionate person.

She continued to describe how her relationship with her mother ultimately had an effect on her choices on a professional level,

> Professionally. I'm still trying to heal survivors (laughing)...but also I know it's possible you see. That's part of the motivation because my work with my mother, knowing what happens after she was able to grieve, and you see this new person emerging, it gives me the motivation that it's possible to help people transform, their victim mentality, their victim consciousness and become a survivor and to be all that their meant to be... So that's a very large motivation in my work, teaching people coping skills, believing in them, not letting them give up. You know... "Oh I'm too old, you expect that I can still learn this". And yeah I can until the day that you die you have the capacity to learn, to grow, to change, if you can face it. It's very much translated in my work, the language that I use, the way I am with people. Oh yeah I don't let them give up.

Emergent Themes

As a result of the analysis, several themes emerged from the data.The first emergent theme was the lessons that the participants of the study, daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors learned from their mothers. In order to convey the essence of the lessons learned, several of the stories told to the participants by their mothers will be included as illustrations of particular themes. Lessons learned as a function of the pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* and Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories included: remembering the past and honoring the martyrs, the value of courage and determination, acts of kindness and, reclaiming the past. The participants also described the lessons they learned as a function of the post-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories. These events occurred both prior to and during the participants' lives. These lessons were comprised of: strength and determination.

The second emergent theme addressed were the messages, stories, or lessons from their mothers transmitted/conveyed to their daughters and was the way in which the participants actually learned these lessons. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors described learning lessons from their mothers in a variety of ways. The two ways of learning were either through: verbal messages or, non-verbal messages. The verbal messages were transmitted through the family histories or stories of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* that were told to the participants by their mothers and/or, through direct interaction with their mothers. The second type of message-- that of the non-verbal variety was a function of observing and experiencing their mothers' post-Holocaust *(Shoah)* lives.

The third emergent theme addressed what the daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers did with the lessons that they learned. The response is that these daughters used the lessons as exemplars for their own lives and then continued in the cycle of passing down those

lessons to children of their own. As this has already been addressed in the transmission sub-theme response to the third research question to do so at this juncture would be redundant. However, the goal of restating this question is to bring the reader's attention to the importance of the transmission component to the participants of this study.

Lessons

The stories that we choose to remember, or those which are given particular import are revealing in and of themselves. In this segment participants described in rich detail, the salient stories told to them by their Holocaust (*Shoah*)survivor mothers. These stories revealed the lessons learned from their mothers, as well as from their ancestors. The stories in this section emphasize ways of life, values, pride in culture, religion and traditions and, highlight once again the importance of remembering and not forgetting the past. What is clear across all of the transcripts is that the act of remembering/not forgetting is evident throughout. Remembering/not forgetting occurred in three ways, with: 1) Pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories, 2) Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories and, 3) Post-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories. For the most part the Post-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories have been addressed in other sections of this dissertation thus, the focus will be on the Pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories and Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories, and the lessons that these daughters learned from them.

Pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories.

In this section, the stories that were told described the family history before the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. These included the life that the family lived, traditions or religious practices that were followed, values that were important to them and, descriptions of family members that perished in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*.

Growing up and hearing family histories and the stories of the past were a part of the

lived experiences of all the participants. Remembering the past, connecting to it and, honoring those who had perished was fundamental to all. For many of the participants the pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories were about creating a legacy from bits and pieces that they were told by their mothers. The stories depicted childhoods that often seemed idyllic. The stories were about a way of life that no longer existed and for the survivors a way of sharing their past with their daughters. One participant described her mother's family history thus,

> She talked about it a lot, yeah! She was young, you know she was a child, it was this idyllic childhood; she, she, she would always talk about what a wonderful school she went to, they had a maid, and they went to the park, and like they spent summers at an aunt's farm in Northern Yugoslavia, and it was this idyllic childhood

Another participant shared a family story told to her by her mother,

> The family, they had a coal business and she describes a very close family. At night her father used to come home and read the newspaper to the children that was a favorite family activity and they used to discuss it. It's sounds like more of an intellectual type of a family. On the weekends they would go and visit the grandparents. She loved to skate, my mother taught me how to skate. She belonged to ...*Shomer Ha'Zair*, a *Zionist* organization. The family worked together as a unit in my grandparent's coal business... the children used to help out to sell the coals. So there was very much... a cohesiveness and very much a family. And the mother was involved, it was interesting the mother was involved in decision making powers with ... because they worked together. The mother... her mother and father worked together in the family business, so her mother was involved in decision making powers which was interesting because she didn't... take that for herself. The summers were spend in the countryside of X___, they had a country house and they were spent with the grandparents... so she describes a very rich... a very poor life, excuse me, a very hard life, a very poor life but very rich in family essence and traditions, in family togetherness. That's what she describes and I think she missed that.

Remembering the past and honoring the martyrs.

Remembering the past and honoring those who had died was an endeavor that occurred in the homes of all of the participants. The stories perpetuate the memories of those who died and thus their acts of kindness and good deeds live on in the stories. One participant honored her grandfather's memory by remembering his charitable actions. These were values that were

important to her family and were passed down to her in this particular story told to her by her mother,

> She remembers every Saturday night ...*Motzei Shabbos*... they used to take down the pots, they used to keep it in the big pots like large pots. And they used to count every *Motzei Shabbos*, they used to sit at the table and count and how much money they did for the week and my grandfather gave a lot to charity he was a big *ba'al tzedakah* and he gave a lot, lots to charity and he used to help quietly, he never wanted his name to be known, he used to quietly give *tzedakah* for boys in *Yeshiva* that were... many children who did not come from wealthy backgrounds, and he used to travel a distance to the *Yeshivas* and hide the money in the *Gemara* for this boy or used to give the money and say your father sent you this money you should be able to go home for *Yom tov*.

Another participant shared memories of her own mother, of what she had been and, of what she had looked like,

> She came from a very poor family... Her father died when he was 42 so she was quite young... She was very beautiful my mother. She told me stories about... I don't know different funny little stories about her friends. Her friends told me also she was very beautiful... My mother was kind of vivacious, she had a sister who was very brilliant... according to her and, she didn't look Jewish my... my mother was very blond... and very high cheekbones, and she looked German. And she spoke a lot... my mother spoke a lot of languages so she...she told me once a story about, how her mother tried to do the best in her home, and everything was so clean. Again, the same kind of stuff that I am talking, she told me about her mother. And about her friends and, the school that they went to, the *Gymnasium*.

Another participant described the actions of her grandmother that helped her family maintain their religious values, in the following story.

> She used to mention that her mother used to get up very early in the morning to bake *challahs*, 5 o'clock in the morning and, my grandfather was already sitting and learning. He was learning from the *Gemara*... and how her brothers used to get up so early in the morning and join their father and it was music to her ears she used to hear mother baking *challahs* and her father learning and he was working, he had a business.

Holocaust *(Shoah)* Stories

The second type of act of remembering was accomplished through the stories and narratives of actual events that occurred during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and immediately following the liberation. In this segment participants talked about the courage and strength of their mothers, the values that were imparted and, the lessons learned.

Courage and determination.

Stories that participants described as standing out in their memories often were comprised of acts of courage and determination. One participant talked about not being able to equate the courage and strength of her mother during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, with the person her mother had become in later life.

> When she came into *Auschwitz*, there was this roll call and they had just been shaven and they were all standing in the nude and she said she doesn't know what happened. They were looking to have a woman who would be a leader... of this group of women and nobody wanted to volunteer because they weren't sure what that would mean... and she said there was this red kerchief lying on the floor and she says I don't know what possessed me to pick it up and put it on my head. And she pick up this red kerchief and she says I wore it and I guess I stood out. I just did it unconsciously, she said... I was just so ashamed of my bald head and she put it on and they picked her to be the leader, I guess she stood up. And to me that was such an act of courage, I didn't see her that way. And so she became the leader of this... group of women.

Another participant shared a story that depicted the courage and determination of her mother,

> You couldn't be a Jew in Russia. So she had to leave... and she found through the underground... a way of getting out and that's how she came into Poland and then to Germany. And she said just as, she was living in an orphanage, with her son, and I don't think she even divorced this man. I think he could still be alive... I didn't find out about this till years later so she, this husband of hers didn't want to go where she's going. Unfortunately... my brother got burnt by a boiling cauldron of water, the night just before she was leaving and, the people told her you can't travel and do this... with a child whose just been scalded, he's going cry, he's going to give us away... He's going to give us away so you have to leave him here in the orphanage... and my mother... said no way, I can't leave my son.

Not giving in to the dehumanization process inflicted by the nazis, remembering who they were and the values held by their own families, helped these women maintain their strength and dignity. One participant describes such an act accomplished by her mother.

> She was with another girl one day, and they were in *Auschwitz*, and a the guards were eating crunchy, it's in my mother's book, crunchy red apples in front of them, and they were salivating, they were just dying of starvation, and the guards were laughing at them, and they threw the cores to the floor for the Jews to go... well, my mother and friend go scavenge, and her friend said no, or her mother. I am not sure if I am getting mixed up in terms of her mother or her friend, but said no, never, we're not reduced to that, and for her it was a very important lesson.

Another participant related a story about the determination of her mother in this manner,

> She said she was lucky she wasn't in a death camp, cause she doesn't know if she would have survived a death camp. She was very, very skinny... stubborn, she said she had a dress, that she wore with a detachable white collar, and that collar was going to be white, come hell or high water, and since it got dirty, at night she would find a puddle, and wash it . And then with her hands, flatten it out, and the next morning, she said there was a German, I guess overseer... that it drove nuts, that my mother's collar always looked just so.

Remembering the past and preserving the values of their ancestors were crucial. Some of the other stories told portrayed the caring and collaborative efforts of others. In the following story a participant described the actions of her aunt and the effect it had on her own mother.

> My mother said that when they were walking for these three months, they were walking because the *SS* was trying to run away from the Americans and from the Russians. When they were doing all this walking, my mother told my aunt, her sister that she can't take it any more she wants to just... they didn't get food, they didn't have shoes, it was cold, it was... they were hungry they were sad and she ....she can't take it anymore she wants to stay here, because whenever they stopped walking the *SS* used to shoot whoever stopped and just fell down. They used to shoot dead. And she just said to her sister that's it she can't take it anymore. She said R___ that's it I can't take it any more. So my aunt had a very good voice and she loved to sing as a child, she was the youngest girl and she started singing and dancing. Can you imagine? Without food... freezing cold... worn and torn and she started singing to my mother and dancing...and my mother got up and continued walking with her.

Acts of kindness.

Acts of kindness were an integral part of the stories told to the participants by their mothers. Maintaining the value of human dignity and kindness towards others was frequently conveyed to the daughters. One participant talked about the acts of kindness and selflessness of her own mother towards other victims of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*.

> The only thing her mother did and it was very, very smart she took a bag of *kotzka zukor*...sugar cubes and she made each girl take a bag of sugar cubes. She said this is the only thing that is going to give you energy. You can't take food. There was nowhere to put anything... but this you could take. And they told them don't take, you don't have to bring we'll feed you. And she said they took a little valise with some underwear, they really didn't know... and she says when they saw the paddock and they saw the people in it she said they knew. She says they didn't even take their luggage they just left. She says they're not taking... but the sugar cubes they took and my grandmother took some gold coins with her, I don't think she managed to save any of it, or not, but I think that's what I remember. And my mother said that she was skinny, she said like a toothpick I was so skinny. She says I went around the whole night putting the sugar cubes on people's tongues. And she says I didn't eat anything but I felt I was going to faint. She says, it was one of the last cubes but, I allowed myself one... But she kept putting them in their mouths.

This same participant talked about the kindness of her grandmother not only towards the Jewish victims of Hitler's cruelty but also to the German people.

> She tells the story of how when they were coming out and they saw the German peasants who were starving, they really had nothing either, Hitler didn't only discriminate against us, he was really a *rasha*... And his own people he starved. And she says, we saw these hungry people and at first our hearts were hard, we didn't want to give them anything, we didn't have anything to give, we didn't even want to look at them. And she says: as we picked up stuff because they were thrown out of their homes, at that point we managed to gather a little bit something... we started giving them. And I remember some of my friends, some of the people coming said no, no and I said we can't be like that, we can't allow ourselves to be the animals that they were. If we do that we become like them and we don't want to be like them. This was the kind of thing she would do and she would say.

Participants described acts of kindness and consideration that occurred during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Several participants remember the stories told by their mothers about the

actions of their own mothers and grandmothers towards others. One participant describes what this meant to her and the lessons she learned as a result of this story.

> There's a story, I guess it was in the small *ghetto*. They were still in their apartment, so I truly don't... remember if it's the small *ghetto* or the large *ghetto*. I would have to ask my mother, but people who didn't have where to stay, came and lived at my grandparents' apartment... And my mother said, there was a man who came in, obviously he was quite sick, and his beard was frozen from mucous, and, dirt and he was shaking, and my grandmother was a very, very *frum* woman, but this guy... he needed cleaning up, and she said, she watched her mother wash him, his face and his hands with such... finesse, as to not have him lose his dignity, and yet, and she couldn't understand it. My mother could ... my mother was almost like she said revolted. How could my grandmother touch him? And yet she washed him, with delicacy. She brought this man his dignity back. So no matter what the circumstances were, you treated everybody... with dignity... with respect.

Another participant describes the lessons that she learned as a result of her mother's activities during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*.

> I learned to be a very giving person... cause my mother was, even in the Holocaust... if she had that one little piece of potato that she found, sometimes... she would see somebody else who needed it she... it wouldn't have mattered... she would have broken it in half... and if she saw that person... needed it more than her... she would give the whole thing away... So I guess I learnt a lot... to be uhh... very giving nature... from my mother... always trying to help other people, sometimes putting too many people ahead of myself... but it's something that... I definitely picked up from her.

Reclaiming the past.

Survivors attempting to reclaim the belongings of their families were met with lies and denial of ownership. As such, treasuring the few remaining items from a previous generation was critical to the Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors and their daughters. One participant recounted a story that happened to her mother after liberation when she went back to the house of her parents and wanted to retrieve the belongings of her family.

> Just after the war, she went back to her camp, and... she went to her house... and there was a family living there... Just... She tells me there were my mother's curtains in the window, it was my house and I wanted the stuff inside, I had nothing. I wanted the stuff before I left, before, I went to the camps in Germany, and there was nothing left for me

> and, I wanted the stuff inside the house. And I went and I got a policeman, she tells me and I asked the policeman to come to the house and said this is my house, and these are strange people living in my house, my mother's house. And the policeman, they went and the people said "This is my house this is not her house" and then policeman says "Well how can you prove that this is your house?" And my mother says "Everything in here is all my mother's stuff". "Well how can you prove it" And she says "Well I can't". You know... She says there is one thing I know there's a soup ladle, a silver soup ladle with a dent inside the ladle. When my mother's mother, my grandmother hit something it dented it, and it has like an indentation, and it has her initials on it. So the policeman goes in, and they find this... and they literally find this spoon... this silver, not very fancy ladle with an indentation in it and he says "Well, you're right this is yours. It's amazing how you know this". And she takes that, and that the only thing she takes from the house... and she takes that with her, leaves everything else, she said it was devastating to her that when she walked in there and it was all my mother dishes, everything that belonged to my mother this family was living there. Can you imagine, how awful that must have been for her. But she said... she got the ladle, and I have the ladle today... with a little note. I never use it I keep it... and it's got my grandmother's initials, and that's it.

Another participant talked about her own reaction after hearing her mother's story and feeling angry and disappointed that her mother left with few belongings.

> Somebody comes to you and says you're free. After five, what do you do? What's the first thing you did? And she went back to her house, cause she was in her hometown. And she said, she stood in front of the house, stood in front of the house... and was terrified to walk in, and then when she went in, she knocked on the door. The people who were living in her house, she thinks was the son-in-law of... I don't know if it was the nanny or the, the cleaning helper, somebody. Very, very nervous to let my parents in, my mother, and my mother went in and she said she walked from place to place and all she could do was cry, and I remember once being angry with her. Why didn't you take pictures, why didn't you just grab all the pictures? I wanted... to physically feel... and see what my grandparents looked like, what my aunts and uncles looked like. What my uncle who did survive, was married and had a child. The sisters that were older than him all married and had children. I wanted those pictures, and she didn't have anything. She said, she wasn't thinking then pictures; she just needed to get out of there as fast as she could.

Post-Holocaust *(Shoah)* Stories

Some of the lessons the daughters previously talked about learning from their mothers as a function of their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences were reiterated by the mothers' post-Holocaust *(Shoah)* actions. Thus these lessons were comprised of: strength and determination, as well.

Strength and determination.

The participants described the strength and determination of their mothers both in the past as well as in the present. One participant described the sheer force of her mother's determination in later years,

> I was miscarrying... in the hospital and, I was, I had a hundred and five fever. I was very sick with fever, and the doctor was getting ready to do... a D & C and a phone call comes into the operating room, and it's my mother... and she wants to talk to me, and the doctor actually let her talk to me. When my mother wanted to do something, she would do it!

Determination was evident in the lessons that the daughters gleaned from their mothers. When asked to describe some of the lessons of survival that these participants learned from their mothers they replied:

> Not to give up easily. Even now, my mother... a year ago she had, not even... it's not a year yet. A little over a half year ago, she had a mild stroke... I think her character... that she has from the war, helped her overcome her obstacles. She doesn't like getting help, she likes getting things done on her own. Its made her... you know... is depressing and puts you down, but the... she's gone through, even the nurses in the hospital couldn't get over, you know... your tough..., you know, your, your really like... you want to get there... and you know... you want to get there now... take it easy, you know, she's like pushing herself... pushing herself... pushing herself... and I think that came from her being a survivor. You know, you got to fight for what, where you wanna get... you've got to work hard at getting where you want to get. *Baruch Hashem*, I mean she still has a walker when she walks, but she does everything in the house on her own... does all the cooking... and everything... when she possibly can... and she pushes herself to the limit.

Not giving up was another lesson reiterated repeatedly by the survivor mothers to their daughters. This participant shared the wisdom of her mother and that was,

> To go on...no matter...if you could pick yourself up..if you have to survive whatever you have to, you survive, you make the best out of it. You go on.

Another participant described her attitude towards life,

> Oh! Definitely. Don't give up. When things are tough and you think your not going to survive... you know... Think that people went through harder times and they survived.... Break it down into smaller obstacles, and get... get... you know.

A third participant shared a lesson that she learned from her mother as a result of listening to the stories of her mother's experiences,

> That no matter what, you can make it. No matter, what it is... there's a way to get through it... no matter what you have to do.

Participants described the underlying messages that they understood from these stories. Stories that contained acts of courage, bravery, and determination.One participant talked about the underlying message of one of the stories told to her by her mother (see p.137, lines 12-21).

> The underlying messages of the story. To have courage and to face my fear and it's something that I live my life with. I take chances, when she told me that story of the red bandana and I thought of the chance that she could have been shot, right there on the spot, for standing out and she wasn't shot so. To me I face my fear, it takes me a while sometimes, but I face it... right on. I'm not afraid of confrontation.

She continued to describe the underlying messages that she received as a function of living with her mother and hearing the stories and narratives of the past:

> Nothing stays the same. We all have the capacity to grow, and to learn, uh hmm, to deal with whatever comes our way... no matter how horrific that is. There is a resiliency that knows I will make this, I will do this, I will survive this no matter what the challenge is ...and to have a faith that I will.

She reiterated that,

> I learned that you don't give up, that you make the best of any situation. I learned that uh hmm I learned about resiliency and, coping and, courage. I learned about that.

Whereas the words spoken by the participants differed, the messages were the same, the point being that although life is fraught with difficulties, the goal is not to be demoralized by experiences, but rather to rise to the occasion and to learn accept, resolve and to move forward in life.

> Because she went through such bitter times and she never gave up in life, she went on in life, and was always positive, It just taught me. I mean I've had my own experiences as I

> told you about, the accident, and uh sitting next to my child in intensive care you see such awful things and this child is attached to all kinds of machines and everything and it has taught me to be very strong and emotionally not to break down and give up.

Another participant shared the words of her mother and her understanding of them,

> I always worked to improve myself, and that's part ...of my mother and her red kerchief. Instilling that, you know that there isn't anything that you can't do. Anything that you put your mind to, and my mother always would say "Whatever the situation is, no matter how bad, you can always get used to it. You'll always get used to it". You know you can always get used to even the worse of situations and make the best of a worse situation and that's certainly true.

Participants described a variety of lessons learned from their mothers. One type of lesson was in relation to the legacy of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. This included: remembering, fighting injustice, and survival. Another type of lesson was in relation to others and, a third was in terms of the self.

> She certainly taught me. I don't know which questions this refers to... probably one of the questions... that to not.. not be passive, and let things go by. Not to avoid confrontation or like um, um, or like just not have an opinion about something, especially in, in... related to anti-Semitism. She definitely taught me that.

Similarly, another participant offered this comment in regards to herself and her mother,

> I think that if I'd have to say one thing, that my mother taught me, is to stand up for myself. I think she was a very... um... you know, she would stand up for...you know, what she saw...and if she saw an injustice, if she saw something stupid..or if she saw something good, she would stand up and...she wasn't afraid..she had a lot of confidence, you know, um..she was a very confident woman um..but she wasn't....she wasn't overbearing and she wasn't somebody that uh....you know...that people couldn't....that you couldn't talk to. I mean, okay, this is like from one strong person, fairly strong person to another. Like I don't know what some, you know, wimp, would feel intimidated by my mother...I don't think so... I don't think so... because she just... even though my father, you know made a very good living, she was a very toned down person. Umm...She never ....you know she didn't flaunt anything. And I think I'm a lot in that ways.

The voices of the participants reflected the strengths, perseverance and determination that they learned from their mothers. One participant spoke for the participants when she said,

> There's something in... us... all of us, you don't have to be Jewish you don't have to be whatever... that the will to live... the will to continue on... supercedes everything else. Most people, I really believe that to be the *Emes,* the truth... and that's the great strength we all have. You know not to think about it, but when push comes to shove, when you're up against the wall, whatever it is... comes to the forefront, and you move forward and survive...

She continued to share what she had learned from her mother,

> There are ways of overcoming... that you can.. you know if you... if you have a ...route to follow, you follow it, and you will come to the end. I mean it will lead you out... there are ways of doing things... that are just... you can't say no to... you can't just lie down... That's what I learnt...

Non-Verbal Communication

As previously stated the lessons that these women learned from their mothers took a variety of forms. Some lessons were learned as a function of the stories and narratives that were told by their mothers in regards to the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and have been discussed. The other lessons were non-verbal and were learned as a result of the daughters watching, interacting and generally experiencing the actions/behaviors of their mothers. When the participants were asked to describe how they learned certain things, for example: how they learned to survive or how they learned Jewish traditions and values, often they would use the word "osmosis" as a response. One participant shared her understanding of how some of the lessons were conveyed by her mother.

> She passed them to me, I absorbed them osmosisly... I mean by osmosis and I think that's quite true. Even though there are times where you know I mean I'm very aware and I try not to but there are sometimes where I step back and say "Whoa... that's what my mother would have said".

Watching mothers was an often repeated comment of the participants of this study. One participant commented on how she learned about being a Jewish woman,

> It comes from watching my mother who lost her family... before she even had time to

> grow up... but yet she knew, exactly... what she needed to do. Friday night candles were lit every Friday for, um there were just so many traditions... that she had picked up, and she passed them on...and I am hoping that I am passing them on to my daughter.

This participant talked about continuing to follow the same traditions and values as her ancestors. She described her understanding with regard to maintaining certain traditions and said,

> There are things that you learn to do that become second nature just by... someone said why do you do that? and I don't know, that's just the way its been done for year after... year after... year. I had a friend who before *Pesach* who would take apart her pots and rub them like crazy, and then put them back. Now we didn't do that cause every time I wash a pot and put it away its clean, so we lock the pots away. And one day I asked her, why are you doing that? She said, I don't know, her mother did it and her mother's, mother did it.

Another participant described the lessons she learned from watching her mother. She stated,

> She tried to have a family with dignity... and, and, and the strength... and somewhere she passed this on to me.

When asked to elaborate, she said:

> I honestly, I, I don't know! I think it was born into me. I think it was brought into me. I think... maybe from observing it. Growing up, I know... I did a lot of watching.

Daughters described learning from their mothers actions, not necessarily always from their words. One participant described her understanding of this process,

> I don't think we ever had any discussions. I think modelling is... probably the most important thing. Um...she was very capable and uh she just got everything done, you know, so uh it's not that I hold myself up to her standards, you know, because uh... she sewed and she knitted and she crocheted and she did... everything else and I never had any interest in that, so, I didn't feel the need to compete, and I had the opportunity to get an education which she didn't, I mean... education in school, um.. she got an education in life... um...but I think the modelling aspect is very crucial, and then you observe, I think my mother-in-law was a very big influence on my life... and I've been just... seeing how people...how people live and how people manage and, you know, not listening so much to what they say... but seeing what they actually do.

Interactions With Mother

Daughters also learned as a function of direct interactions with their mothers. One participant talked about the way in which her mother taught her not to be bitter,

> We just spent a lot... talking about it, cause it doesn't serve any purpose... it doesn't make you a better person... it doesn't... it doesn't do anything, it stops you from being...a good person or whatever it is, and, and you need to move on and feel love, and that's something you know she very, it's been inbred.

Summary

The lessons that Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers conveyed to their daughters were achieved through stories, family history, narratives, modeling specific types of behaviors and also as a function of direct interactions with their daughters. The daughters described the various lessons that they learned from their mothers in terms of living life, survival and, moving on. The participants shared a wealth of knowledge and information that they gleaned from their mothers. Values, ways of living life, the importance of being Jewish and continuing on in the traditions that were passed down through the generation were some of the topics discussed.

The participants described the stories of their mothers' experiences and the importance of transmitting the stories of the past to the next generation. The experience of growing up with mothers who demonstrated courage in the face of adversity was a lesson many of the daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors learned. Stories, bits and pieces of history were put together and cherished by the daughters of survivors in lieu of lost family members. Valuing family, pride in survival and courage were reiterated by the participants of this study.

Daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers grew up hearing stories of the past replete with acts of courage and bravery during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, as well as stories that were filled with pain, sadness and loss. These stories were rich with family history that honored

both the living and the dead. Thus, the participants learned about a way of life prior to the Holocaust *(Shoah)* that included a set of values that has been part of Jewish history, religion and tradition and has been handed down from generation to generation. Daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers also learned about courage, strength, bravery and the ability to adapt to new environments and move forward in their lives.

Overall Summary of the Chapter

This study looked at the experiences of growing up as the daughter of a Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother and the impact of that experience on their daughters. The qualitative methodology allowed for the different voices of the participants to resonate. Thus, the results indicated that strength, courage, resilience and Jewish identity were transmitted to the participants by their mothers via the stories, narratives and family histories, were vital aspects of their daily lives and, became strategies for living.

The results illustrated the ways in which growing up with a survivor mother effected the daughters. The term survivor was defined as anyone imprisoned in a concentration camp, work camp or ghetto; in hiding; in the underground resistance or masquerading as a non-Jew during the nazi Holocaust *(Shoah)* (1939- 1945). Daughters of Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers experienced their mothers as survivors, with all of the positive and negative ramifications that the word "survivor" evoked. For the participants of this study, survivors were conceptualized in two different ways: one which reflected the strengths and, the other which reflected the challenges.

Survivor strength was divided into three components. They were: values, survival skills and, the ability to moving forward in their lives. The strengths discussed, reflected aspects of the survivor mothers that helped them through a horrific period in their lives. Values were

crucial to the survivors in that they helped them maintain; their dignity, their connection to a previous way of life, their family history and, gave them hope for the future. In other words, maintaining their values was helpful in providing a form of stability in a world that was beyond comprehension or logic. The values that were fundamental to the survivors and their daughters were: 1) remembering the past, 2) Jewishness and, 3) Jewish values.

Remembering the past and actively not forgetting what happened to the Jewish people, in terms of: remembering the people, the customs, and the traditions and, transmitting stories of the past to their daughters was crucial to the survivors. Jewishness was important to the survivors. Daughters grew up watching and experiencing their mothers' commitment to Jewishness. For all of the participants, remaining Jewish, maintaining a Jewish identity and passing down the mantle/heritage of being Jewish to their daughters was crucial. Whereas the affiliation of Jewish expression and observance differed among the participants, the importance of being Jewish and remaining Jewish did not. Jewish values were both explicit and implicit and included: the importance of being a good person, education and self-improvement and, transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. For many of the survivors, being Jewish, heeding the traditions of Jewishness, remembering as a way to honor the dead and maintaining links to the past, were a source of strength during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* years.

Another type of strength discussed was that of survival skills. These skills were comprised of determination, courage, a positive attitude and included any actions that Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors had to undertake in order to survive. The survivors' demonstrations of the importance of human dignity, kindness and courage were inspirational to their daughters. Finally, a third aspect to strength as understood by the participants was the ability of the survivors to move forward in their lives. For the participants this was defined as letting go of

the survival skills that had been beneficial in the past and assuming or integrating new behaviors that were more efficacious to living in the present. The results of this study illustrated that the ability to persevere in life, stop living in survival mode and acquiring the skills necessary for living were imperative.

Challenges, on the other hand were defined as the struggles, limitations or hurdles that were difficult to surmount but not necessarily insurmountable by the participants and their mothers. Thus, challenges were comprised of: challenges to the mothers as a result of their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and, challenges to the mother-daughter relationship. Challenges to the mothers were in terms of the losses they faced, were described as missed opportunities or interruptions in their lives and, were a function of growing up during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Challenges to the mothers were also manifested in terms of their parenting skills. Ultimately the impact of the challenges to the mother reverberated onto their daughters.

The mother-daughter relationship was fraught with challenges to both mothers and daughters as result of the mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences. The participants described the impact of growing up with mothers whose lives were fraught with interruptions at critical stages of their lives and the impact these interruptions had on their own growth and development. Ultimately, these interruptions had an effect on the parenting skills, expectations and interpersonal relationships that mothers had with their daughters.

The participants described living their lives as the daughters of Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers. As such, the choices that they made in their lives reflected both their experiences and learning. The daughters described what they had learned from their mothers and the choices that they made in terms of: their Jewishness, the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, the self. In discussing their Jewishness two sub-themes emerged. These were the importance of: (1)

being Jewish and, (2) transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. In discussing their experiences of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* the participants talked about their responsibilities as children of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers: to remember and never forget the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, to work to protect the future. The remembering was related to honoring the memory of the past and was manifested in the daughter's quest to connect with their mothers' experiences and with family members who had been murdered in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Working to protect the future took many forms. Some of the participants talked about remembering as a form of prevention, whereas others discussed working against discrimination as a way of protecting the next generation from racism.

The participants shared what they learned about themselves and how they chose to live their lives as a result of their self-perceptions. The daughters talked about learning survival skills based on their interactions with their mothers. Survival, for the participants was defined as a philosophy, or an attitude that many of the participants developed. These were specifically the participants' beliefs that they had learned from their mothers and, were not necessarily the beliefs of their mothers. Participants described some of the lessons that they learned as a function of their mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences, and as a function of their experiences of having grown up with a survivor mother.

Feeling responsible for their mothers and growing up as daughters of immigrants -- women who had strong European accents and were different from other Canadian or non-Holocaust *(Shoah)* mothers-- had an impact on the development, growth, and comfort level of the participants. Many of the participants described an awareness of difference of themselves, their families and their responsibilities in relation to their peers.

As a function of growing up with Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers, very specific

responses were evoked by the participants. The women described feeling a heightened sensitivity to racism in general and anti-Semitism in particular. Several participants discussed their fears with regard to being Jewish, and stated that: " being a Jew is a precarious existence". Others felt strongly that their own responses to anti-Semitism would be different from that of their mothers. These participants talked about standing up to and fighting injustice.

Another fundamental response to the Holocaust *(Shoah)* by the daughters of the survivors was that of taking care of or protecting their mothers from the outside world. The participants stated that their mothers had already suffered enough as a result of their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences. Thus, participants described the way in which they assumed a care-giving role for their mothers. This caring was manifested in several ways. One way was by assuming the burden of being the one to listen to their mothers' stories of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and transmitting them to the next generation. Another way was by being obedient and doing what was expected of them rather than what might have been in their own best interests. For some of the participants this took the form of getting married, for others this meant choosing a particular profession that would meet with their mother's approval rather than their own.

Participants also described their own ability to move forward in their lives. This was described as the process of personal growth, self-acceptance and healing that the daughters of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers sought in order to alleviate some of their own sadness and pain. These women talked about learning to let go of feeling guilty for their mothers' pain. The participants also described becoming aware of their own strengths, insights into their own ways of functioning and, actions they implemented in order to allow themselves to heal. Often as a result of these efforts at moving forward in their lives the relationship between mother and daughter became more positive and mutually satisfying.

Data Analysis for the Interview Process

At the conclusion of the interview the participants were asked questions with regards to their experience of the interview process. The general area of questioning included: 1) participants experience of the interview, 2) what the participants learned about themselves and, 3) what they would have liked to add to the interview.

Participants Experience of the Interview

Many of the participants reported that they welcomed the opportunity to talk about their mothers. They also stated that although the interview brought forth matters that they had either not frequently thought about or, had not put into such formal a manner, the interviews were interesting and thought provoking. One of the participants described her experience of the interview as:

> A place to vent stuff that you feel, but you don't always say cause it's not table talk anymore. Um, interesting... a reflection, and you, you dance back at things that are inside, and you put out there, and you go hmm, I didn't know that or, I knew that. Interesting to see it again, or to hear myself say.

With regard to the researcher, participants reported that they found the researcher to be calm, soothing, and easy to talk to. They described feeling that what they said had been understood. Participants stated that they found the questions helpful, and the interview process therapeutic. Several of the participants described the interview as a chance to talk about "the wonders" of their mothers and, considered their participation in this project to be both a responsibility and a gift. One participant shared her feelings about the interview and stated:

> I very much enjoyed talking about my mother because she's not alive and that's part of the legacy. Also it is very important to tell her story. To me it's very important. That's also... I should have said that as part of legacy; that's the responsibility. I am very bad about meeting with people. I have no time in my life, if you ask any of my friends, they can't get a two-hour slot with me (laughter) it's impossible. But you see the topic of

> what you wanted to talk to me about, you see, and that would show you that I wouldn't be so kind if it was a different topic, but this topic that's the responsibility again, this and to be, and it's not only the responsibility to be able to talk about my mother, and tell the story, to me is, is a gift. I enjoyed it very much.

Whereas many of the participants talked about the privilege of discussing the past with a stranger, an individual who had never heard their stories, they also described: feeling sad, feeling the need to hold their emotions intact and, feeling emotionally upset.

> I guess again that it's still... in terms of the sadness... It's not only about resiliency... strength... but a lot of pain.

Regardless of these feelings the participants reported that they put themselves through this painful process willingly, because of their belief in the importance of documenting this aspect of their history. Another participant described her experience of the interview process:

> Well a little trying at times. Emotionally upsetting because we talked about things that I find... I mean, I spoke about...to mind things that I find emotionally upsetting. But otherwise it's ...you know...again it's important, I feel it's important to talk about this, as it's likely to be documented. Not necessarily my personal experience but the whole...

Guilt was another emotion that was reported by the participants. More specifically, this emotion was described by those participants whose mothers were no longer living. Guilt was discussed in relation to not being able to answer specific questions regarding their mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and also in terms of speaking ill of the dead. One participant shared her thoughts and feelings saying:

> My mother's not alive. So, When somebody's not alive, you know, there is this speaking ill of the dead concept, is that if anything that made me angry about my mother, or upset about my mother, and you would ask those kind of questions. It's a little uncomfortable to, not a lot uncomfortable, but a little bit uncomfortable to, you know, re-live sort of the teenage, the stupid, like coolness. The stupidity of that, like I hear myself saying it, and I am like, whatever. It's so stupid! I am not proud of that... stage of my life.

Similarly, another participant whose mother had also passed away stated:

> It's just difficult. I don't want to sound to negative about my Mom. I mean sometimes I can sound pretty harsh you know...so, you know, I felt badly about that...

Conversely, another participant used the opportunity to evaluate her level of distress and/or sadness when talking about her mother and found that she had none. She attributed these feelings to her personal growth. The following comment illustrates her understanding of this phenomena,

> You know what, I didn't have any, and that makes me feel really good, because I am able to monitor myself... of how much work I've done around this area. There was emotions that came up but I felt I am able to deal with them. I have dealt with them, because I've done a lot of work in this area. So yeah, it helped me to gauge my process developmentally in how far I've come.

What the Participants Learned About Themselves

For some of the participants this interview was part of an on-going self-introspective endeavor that had been taking place over a period of many years and as such, what they had learned had emphasized what they had already known about themselves, about their mothers, and about their relationship to her. Other participants described what they had gleaned about themselves, and what they had discovered about their mothers in the process. One participant described the realization of connecting her mother's resiliency with that of her own,

> You know what I had never really connected my mother's resiliency and courage with my own particular journey and that's now crystallized because I see we are on similar paths... coincided. I didn't quite see it that way...

Another participant described the multi-faceted relationship she and her mother shared,

> I have a, a, what's the right word? Two sides... of my relationship with my mother, not necessarily opposed, but two very different things. One is the enormous admiration for her. If I take a step back and say... wow! And the other is that mothering role where I'd

> like to protect her, cause she's paid her dues. No, no one should suffer, but that generation... certainly shouldn't, and then if it's my mother, and, a that goes without saying. She paid her dues.

Yet another participant talked about discovering that she was indeed similar to her own mother:

> I'm like my mother (laughing) It's a little scary. ...because we're never going to be the same as our mother... we can do everything differently...

Another type of learning or awareness that the participants reported was in terms of the lack of information they had. This deficit was either in terms of their mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and/or general information in regards to Jewishness.

> I thought about it during the interview, like how come I don't know the answer to this. How long was she in the concentration camp I remember that... I should know that. Think, she wrote a book on it. I could find the information. I have a father who's alive. Why don't I know? That kind of stuff, and a....yes, stuff like that. How come I don't know the answers to some of these questions?

Others described the realizations that they had in terms of their mothers/parents,

> I have major respect for both parents, and yet I know there where things, they couldn't help... They didn't know any different, but it doesn't really have an impact on the way I chose to live my life, and I let myself live my life...

<u>What They Would Have Liked to Add to the Interview</u>

This was the third area of questioning for the participants. They talked about other areas they would have liked to share with the researcher but did not. Several participants stated that they would have liked to discuss the impact of their fathers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences on their lives. Other participants described wanting to talk about themselves as mother and the impact their experiences had on their own children and their mothering abilities. Another participant stated that she would enjoy a group interview with the other participants of this

study. Although these topics were beyond the scope of this project suggestions made by the participant would be helpful in terms of further research.

Researcher's Data

Researcher's Log

As previously described in the methodology section, over the course of the data collection and analysis, I kept a log in order to record my continually changing subjective frame. After a careful analysis of this log I took note of several insights unique to my process as a researcher.

First, my comfort level in my own proficiency as an interviewer increased as I became more experienced in the interview process. Before my first interview I noted in my log that "I was nervous and struggling with anticipatory stress". I was concerned about the interview and worried whether it would be successful or not. That is to say, whether I would be at ease in the process or stilted and awkward and as a result attain a poor interview. As I progressed in the interview process I no longer remarked on my nervous state but rather made comments such as: "better flow in this interview" and "I was pleased with how the interview went". Overall, I felt that I became more comfortable and skilled in the interview process over time.

Another challenge that I experienced during the interview process was that of remaining firmly within the boundaries of researcher and not slipping into my role as therapist. A role which I have been actively pursuing and honing for the past eight years. For me, the challenge during the interview was to be actively conscious of gathering information for this study rather than the interviews being a therapeutic endeavor, although for some participants being interviewed and having the space to discuss topics not frequently discussed with others was in and of itself therapeutic. As such, another challenge in this project was to maintain an

interviewer stance rather than a therapeutic one.

Third of all, as a researcher and a child of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother, I had experiences similar to those of the participants of this study. I discovered that the participants' descriptions of their experiences with their mothers often resonated with that of my own. For example when several of the women described the ways in which they had been the ones chosen to be the recipients of the stories and family histories rather than their siblings, I remembered my experiences with my own mother. I felt challenged during the interviews not to emphasize or value these aspects of their conversation over others. These struggles were recorded in my log and the resulting awareness helped me keep my own potential responses to the questions from guiding the interviews. Thus, through the use of the log I was able to be aware of my assumptions and subjective frame. The log was helpful in keeping me from imposing my views on the participants.

Another issue that emerged from the analysis of my researcher's log was the question of what impact did my own religious affiliation and expression have on the participants. The answer to this question might be in the concept of discourses or tensions that exist between different affiliations of Judaism. Discourses are manifested in a variety of ways, some of which are: traditions and language.

For the participants who were *Chasidic* and *Orthodox*, the fact that I understood their world view being an *Orthodox* woman myself was helpful. Being able to comprehend the language used and not needing an explanation with regard to the Holidays, foods eaten and expressions used, was a factor that created a connection. I found that with this particular segment of participants when I began to speak the same language as they did, the connection grew. However for the participants that identified as Reform, Conservative or Reconstructionist,

it appeared that they were able to discern my religious expression and that seemed at the onset of the interview to create a distance, that may have been attributed to the cultural divide between the sects of Judaism. In these interviews the connection was established, however it was not as instantaneous. After several minutes the participants became more focused on themselves and their process and the connection occurred. I noted in my log that these participants connected with me through the daughter of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor discourse. As such the tensions between us given the *Orthodox* versus non-*Orthodox* discourse was minimized.

A final insight that emerged from the researcher's log was my increased sensitivity to the stories that were similar to those of my own family. Often while recounting the stories and narratives of their mothers' experiences, participants would have some difficulty in keeping their emotions in check. I found myself similarly affected and, for me the struggle was between being a researcher gathering data and, a Jewish daughter of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors. My log was helpful in this endeavor as well, whereas these struggles persisted throughout the interview process, mechanisms were put into place so that my process would not interfere with the interviews and the data analysis. This struggle between interviewer and clinician and researcher and daughter of survivor was addressed and then the interviews and subsequent data analysis could proceed unhindered/unhampered.

The use of this log was helpful because it gave me a place to keep track of my ever changing subjective frame. I learned that the goal is not to keep myself and who I am out of the interview process, but rather to learn more about who I am and, to be aware of the similar struggles that I had also faced in the process of understanding my relationship with my own Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother. Through the process of increasing my self-awareness I was

able to prevent imposing my perspective onto the participants.

Analysis of Researcher's Assumptions

As previously stated, I entered this project with four underlying assumptions. After completing the general data analysis, I analyzed the data once again to determine whether these assumptions were viable.

Assumption 1. Everyone has a story to tell and it will be to their benefit to tell it.

Since stating the first assumption, time has passed and in the process of interviewing the participants and analyzing the data, what previously may have been clear to me, at this point in time is not. As such, before addressing this assumption to ascertain whether it is indeed tenable, it is necessary for me to clarify what was meant. Several questions come to mind. The first question to be addressed is: when talking about this assumption who is "everyone"? Does "everyone" refer to the participants or their mothers? The second question focuses on the meaning of the word benefit. What does benefit mean in this context and thus, who will benefit from the telling of the stories? Will discussing the stories improve the well-being or assist in the healing process of the teller? Thus, is the teller, the survivor mother or the participant/daughter?

If we are addressing the mothers of the participants, then we can safely respond that they all had a story to tell. All of the participants of this study but one, talked about the stories that their mothers shared with them. The mother who did not tell a story directly left a series of letters for her daughter to discover and her story was related in this way,

> She wasn't adverse to us finding out about it, it's only because, my mother was a very neat, meticulous person...Umm...she translated the letters and she left it in the desk drawer of the room that we always used ...when we came, so it wasn't unusual for us to... you know, it wasn't snooping... to open the top desk drawer... and to find this pile of letters... and one was translated in English so ...it may have been...it might have been a subliminal message, but it was...I don't think she was upset about our finding out about the Holocaust but she was not able or willing to talk to us about it.

Several participants explained that the survivors ability to share their stories with their daughters was a function of the "Holocaust *(Shoah)* hierarchy". What emerged from the interviews and was discussed by many of the participants, was that regardless of the level of suffering of their parents, there were others who had suffered even more. For example those who had been enslaved in work camps were grateful that they had not been in Concentration camps. Those who had been in Hungary talked about how much worse it was in Poland and, those in Concentration camps described the fact that they were cared for by others so their experiences could have been worse as well. Therefore, according to the participants of the study telling or not telling the stories was a function of the survivors location on the hierarchical scale. Participants talked about the Holocaust *(Shoah)* hierarchy in these terms,

> When you go to the, these survivors meetings there's a hierarchy that it sets itself up among the survivors themselves. There's the Polish survivors versus the Hungarians. The Poles are much higher on the scale because they suffered for a lot longer than the Hungarians did.

Another participant shared her understanding of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* hierarchy and described her mother's place within its framework,

> The ones who were in death camps are the highest on the scale, they suffered the most. And then you had the ones who were in hiding with kids, in farms or in attics or ground or whatever, and then there was the ones who escaped from Russia, are their own group and then the ones who went to North America. So you had, it depends, some went to Switzerland I don't know wherever they went but however they hid, the ones with false papers so each one, so it's less and less so they have their own guilt.

Participants described their parents willingness to talk about their experiences depending on where they found themselves on the hierarchical scale. One participant reflected upon the survivors willingness to share their experiences with the next generation,

> I was able to see from my friends, the ones whose mothers were let's say higher up there, how ridiculous, but that what it is, it's reality. It's... The ones who were in the

> camps were more... often seemed less, willing to talk. That's I think is the biggest difference... that I could tell.

When asked how she thought the location of the survivors during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* had something to do with their level of openness, she replied,

> I think the ones that experienced the camps had much more difficulty, not all I'm not saying all, but the ones that I know seem to be that way. That they had, they were more reticent about talking about it. It's much more difficult to talk about, like my father told me stories about how they buried the ... they buried the dead, how he survived the camp and the reasons why he survived the camp...

In terms of benefitting the teller, participants described the importance of telling the stories of their past to their daughters, regardless of how painful the endeavor. One participant talked about preparing herself to hear her mother's story and the impact of the telling on both her mother and herself in these terms,

> I realized that there was a part of my history that I knew nothing about. I knew my parents... my father's side, I knew where I came from, I knew my grandmother, I knew it. I'd heard stories, I knew what happened to them... but my mother's side I knew nothing... and my mother never talked about it... so I uhhh...guess I was afraid to ask her because when I would she would just get this look on her face, like she would go to the, she would just get this glazed look, like blank ... no affect, blank look and I knew that she was back in the past. So uh hmm once I was ready to face that and uhhh grew strong enough you know in the group you know... Hey I want to know. There's a legacy that I feel I'm missing out on. So I felt that I needed that information and I remember exactly where it happened. I took her out for lunch and it was a X____ Restaurant, that still existed on X_____, and I asked her uhhh about my grandmother, ummm who I was named after. Her father, her brothers, her sister, there were 5 siblings and she began to tell me the story and then she, I ask her about the war and what happened. You know what happened to them. I didn't even know what had happened to them.

She continued to describe the immediate impact that the telling had on her mother,

> And then what began to happen after that is that my mother began to actively grieve because I don't think she had done that. I think she had repressed her mourning, and she began to actively grieve...and that took about a year, where she became very sad and would really cry a lot, and I felt in some way, my G-d I had done something. I felt responsible that I had caused her so much pain with that, but now in retrospect it was

> healing because she came the person who she was in her story in *Auschwitz*, she became a leader. She became the President of the X___ Society which she had never had the courage. She became a public speaker. She became involved in Israel bonds. This flower emerged and I saw my mother in a totally different way and then I mentored her.

She then described the long term effects of the telling on her mother,

> She metamorphosed into a beautiful, competent, capable woman who was a leader, who was loving. You know she had been closed with her feelings, like as a baby, I was touched some of the time but I wasn't touched a lot by her. There was a part of her that wasn't able to engage herself emotionally... with me and... so she would go hot and cold. When she was engaged with me she fully engaged. When she was detached she was totally detached. So was that hot and the cold. So, she became loving and just uh hm a different person and that has helped me in my work, you know, to realize the importance of that.

Most of the participants described that their mothers would often become sad and they would either ask about the sadness or work to alleviate that sadness. But the participants described in sharing the stories of their past mothers would heal themselves.

What if however, the "everyone" in the assumption refers to the participants? All of the participants had stories to tell regardless of whether they heard the stories of their mothers' past either directly from their mothers or in an indirect manner. They also talked about the benefits they attained as a result of telling their stories. One participant stated that "it was just good talking about it". Others were more specific in describing some of the benefits to telling their stories. For some it was about continuing the legacy of their mother and a way for them to remain connected. One participant described her process in this way,

> I very much enjoyed talking about my mother because she's not alive and that's part of the legacy also, is... it is very important to talk her story, to me it's very important, that also, I should have said that as part of legacy; that's the responsibility. I am very bad about meeting with people. I have no time in my life, if you ask any of my friends, they can't get a two-hour slot with me (laughter) it's impossible, but you see the topic of what you wanted to talk to me about, you see, and that would show you that I wouldn't be so kind if it was a different topic, but this topic that's the responsibility again, this and to be, and it's not only the responsibility to be able to talk about my mother, and tell

> the story, to me is, is a gift. I enjoyed it very much.

Another participant talked about the way in which telling her stories not only benefitted her, but she felt as though sharing her story with others was also beneficial to her parents,

> That I was able to tell you the wonders of my parents'... to be able to stick up for my parents... to be able to do something for them... that they had gone through so much and I hope that... I've done even a small percentage of how... what they went through I'm sure there's loads more to tell you. I'm happy to be able to tell you, I wish I could keep on talking about it.

Therefore, it appears that my first assumption about everyone having a story to tell and it will be to their benefit to tell it was validated.

Assumption 2. As a result of this endeavor, I will learn something about myself.

There were several things I learned about myself in the process of this dissertation. First during the interview stage and secondly during the data analytic stage of this endeavor. During the interview stage I became aware of the many struggles I faced in terms of finding my place during the interviews. I struggled between being a therapist and researcher and I also struggled between being the interviewer and the daughter of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor myself. I worked to maintain the specific stance necessary at each phase of the interviews. I learned however that in so doing I was fragmenting myself. Firstly, all of these facets comprise who I am as a person. I am a clinician, a researcher, an interviewer and the daughter of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor parents. Secondly, I learned that it is these different facets of myself that work together so that I may be an empathic and sensitive individual. Given that I previously spoke about the impossibility of neutrality, I learned that I attempted to impose the position of neutrality upon myself. As such, what I learned in fact and in deed, was that neutrality is not a possibility. That I am not nor do I choose to be neutral. However, I also learned that I can and

will put mechanisms in place to ensure the quality and ethics of my work.

As the daughter of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors I learned the meaning of determination and perseverance during the data analysis stage of this study. I felt overwhelmed by the plethora of Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories and feelings that the participants shared with me. Most especially because many of their stories and feelings mirrored my own. I felt overwhelmed and bogged down, unsure of how to proceed. As a result of this endeavor, I learned the value of sitting with the information or data and letting it rest within myself. I learned that I can listen, respond, integrate and then move on in my own process. Furthermore, my own process in this dissertation was similar to that of the participants and their mothers. I did what I needed to do in order to survive the painful stories told to me by the participants of this study and then I too, learned to move forward. As such the second assumption that of: as a result of this endeavor, I will learn something about myself was validated as well.

Assumption 3. The fact that the principle researcher is herself a child of survivors will facilitate the interview process.

As previously stated there are many discourses that exist in the world. One of the discourses is that of children of survivors versus others. Children of survivors grew up under the shadow of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and described feelings of being different. During the process of the interviews, the participants talked about the way in which these differences were manifested, their difficulties in explaining themselves, as well as not being understood by those who had not lived similar experiences. Participants reflected upon their awareness of difference and as this was discussed more comprehensively in the research categories and themes section of this document, I will not go into a great elaboration at this point. Rather, simply to say that participants talked about feeling like an insider/outsider in their own world. They described

fitting in but not fitting in. Many of the participants reflected upon the tension that existed within themselves with regard to their being children of survivors. One participant described her feelings on the matter in this way: "children of survivors like myself thought of life in a certain way and the others didn't have the same views".

As such, it appeared to be important to several of the participants to discern whether I too was the daughter of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor so that I would understand, have the ability to endure their stories, and appreciate their experiences. One participant was interviewed during a particularly cold and rainy evening. She walked into the interview room and stated that she had wanted to cancel our meeting, but decided that she would meet me before making that decision. She went on to inquire before she even took off her coat whether I too was a child of survivors. She stated that had I not been a child of survivors she would have left, as it would have been too difficult for her to explain everything that she assumed were givens in the language spoken between children of Holocaust (Shoah) survivors. It was only after ensuring her that I myself was the daughter of survivor parents that she appeared to settle into the interview process.

Other participants would ask me about my parents' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences during the interviews in terms of: where they had been incarcerated during the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, to which society or *Landsmanshaft* they belonged. Clearly it was important to these participants to have some insight into my experiences. Some might argue that this was idle curiosity that may have occurred as a function of the interview process. However, these participants were not interested in any other aspect with regard to myself, other than finding and establishing the daughter of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors link. After this connection was established, even those who at the onset of the interviews were somewhat more reticent to speak

of their experiences opened up. In fact at the end of one particular interview, a participant who appeared to be somewhat reticent at the beginning stated that she found this interview to be very interesting and would be willing to participate in other studies that might be connected to or related to this one. Therefore, my assumption about the child of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors facilitating the interview process with other children of survivors was also validated.

Assumption 4. Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and stories are an active component in the growth and development of children of survivors.

Remembering is a critical component in Judaism. As previously stated it is incumbent upon Jewish people to remember both the good and the bad parts of their history. As such, remembering the past, remembering ancestors who had been murdered and, remembering a past way of life were part of the experiences of the participants of the study. Given that the survivors had little if any family, they did not have living people to share with their children and as such they shared as one participant stated "ghosts" with their daughters. Therefore in the stories and experiences mothers shared with their daughters, they gave to them pieces of their own history.

Participants talked about the way in which their mothers discussed their Jewishness and the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, traditions of the past and the Holocaust *(Shoah)* and, the interruptions of a way of life with which they were familiar as a function of the Holocaust *(Shoah)*. Daughters also described feeling different than others in that they had conflicting feelings of needing to protect their mothers from further pain and being responsible for them on many levels, while attempting to find their own place in the world. One participant described her feelings of responsibility in this way,

> I think I felt a lot of responsibility. I better, I better do right, I better not cause more problems. She, look, what she went through.

Another concurred with this perspective and stated,

> I was the responsible one, I was the... at one point I even ran, at the age 11, I ran the family household...

As such, their mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and stories permeated every level of their growth and development. One participant described her feelings, thus:

> Because most of the women we grew up with are children of Holocaust survivors, there's a lot of guilt. You know we do certain things because we have to do, not because we want to do.

Another participant described her experiences of growing up with a survivor mother and said,

> My mother again in a very kind of typical Holocaust survivor fashion over protected her children to an incredible extreme um...I was like completely sheltered from the world. I then end up, I, you know I mentioned I became a _____; this to me is not coincidence at all. I needed to see how other people lived I had no idea. I was, I mean when I grew up I thought that there was one radio station. I was shocked when I turned the dial; I was like in complete shock. That's how overprotected I was... I, I didn't know there was other shows on TV. I didn't think that other kids did things other than go to the opera or the theater, so, you know, it changed everything it changed my entire life.

Another described the way in which her mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences effected her own growth and development,

> There was a lot of things that a... normal mother would tell a child, like about growing up, about maturity, about becoming a big girl. It's when my sisters took over that role than my mother, but then, as I got older... when my sister... like the one that was older than me... moved out of the house. The relationship suddenly changed... suddenly my mother... you know we were always good friends, and things like that... but suddenly, she would start discussing these things with me like... she went from not discussing things with me, and letting my sisters do it... but then when my sisters left the house... suddenly she was the one discussing everything with me.

All of the participants of the study but one stated that they grew up hearing about their mother's Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences. The one participant who did not hear the specific stories with regard to the Holocaust *(Shoah)* did hear about her mother's family and the life that she lived. Participants described the impact they thought experiencing the Holocaust *(Shoah)*

through the stories of their mothers had on their growth and development. Typically, they described feeling different than others and as one participant stated feeling "old before my time".

Thus, the Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences and stories were an active component in the growth and development of the children of survivors. However, there is another aspect that was brought forth by one participant and important to keep in mind and that is:

> I realize that your perception on something is how you play it up. My parents never walked around feeling, "woe is me". They weren't victims, they were victimized, but they weren't victims. They came out with a strength... that... and that strength is what I learned. That strength is what I lived with.

Daughters described their mothers from the perspectives of strengths and challenges. The previous quote demonstrated the perspective of most of the participants and their understanding of the need to continue and persevere in order to move forward in their own lives. As such the stories were indeed an active component in the lives of the participants.

CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

In this section I will compare the understandings of this study and the existing literature. First, I will present a brief summary of the results. Then I will compare the findings of this research to the existing literature in the areas of: Jewishness, Holocaust (Shoah) survivors, children of survivors, remembering and, mother-daughter relationships and then I will discuss the findings unique to this research. Finally, I will discuss my conclusions, the implications and the limitations of this research.

Delving into the literature with regard to Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors has demonstrated that issues of religious affiliation and gender have not been fully addressed. Researchers have suggested that the experiences of Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors may differ as a function of a personal belief system (Gerwood, 1994) and gender (Vogel, 1994). Furthermore, others (Reese, Haden & Fivush, 1996) maintained that autobiographical memories are different for women than for men. Therefore, a goal of this inquiry, was to examine and describe the phenomenological experiences of daughters of Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, address the interrelationship between mothers and daughters, consider the intergenerational influences and factors that contributed to their development via their lived experiences and, determine which resources were passed down from generation to generation. Thus, my research addressed several omissions of the past and focused on women -- daughters of Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, in order to increase our insight and understanding into the survivor experiences of their mothers and the impact of those experiences on the daughters. Previous research with regard to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) focused on what was lost by the Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivors, a further goal of this inquiry was to examine and demonstrate what these survivors and their

daughters were able to transcend.

Jewishness

The theoretical literature (Donin, 1991; Fackenheim, 1987; Garber, 1994) describes Judaism as multi-faceted and therefore difficult to define or describe with a single definition or descriptor. The results of my study are consistent with this body of theoretical literature and indicate that the definition of Jewishness varied depending upon the ways in which the participants chose to practice their Jewishness. For example: for some of the women being Jewish was connected to their religious observance, for others Jewishness was a link to the past, and for others still, it was a tradition that was to be followed and transmitted to the next generation. Thus, a single unified definition that would address the question of: What is Judaism?, that was agreed upon by all of the participants in my study was not forthcoming. However, what was determined by the results of my study was the importance of being Jewish, both to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters.

In the Jewish tradition, it is the responsibility of the woman to "build" the home (Proverbs 14:1) and to pass down her Jewish identity through her daughters to subsequent generations (Bitton-Jackson, 1999). The findings of my study are consistent with the literature in that the participants of my study - - daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers- - continually reiterated the importance of being Jewish.

Furthermore, what was also determined was that regardless of the ways in which Jewishness was expressed, the importance of being Jewish; following Jewish traditions; living a life of Jewish values and, transmitting Jewishness to the next generation was emphasized by the participants, both for themselves and when they discussed the lessons learned from their survivor mothers.

Historically, Jewish women have been described in the literature as being strong and competent (Weiner, 1990). The embodiment of that strength and competence was demonstrated by the actions of Jewish women in the *shtetls* and in pre-war Germany. For example: many Jewish women in the Polish and Russian *shtetls* took care of their families, ran the businesses, and interacted with the outside world so that their husbands could sit and focus on their Torah studies (Bienstock, 1979; Rich, 1986).

A second example was after the Nuremberg laws were enacted in Germany in 1935. At that time, most Jewish men were prohibited from working in their professions. Consequently, it was their wives -- Jewish women -- who shouldered the responsibility of supporting the family outside the home, while simultaneously maintaining their roles of wife and mother inside the home (Kaplan, 1993). These Jewish women negotiated their way through anti-Semitic laws and legislation much in the same way as had their ancestors and demonstrated their strength and resilience.

Whereas the findings of my study are consistent with the theoretical and descriptive literature that talks about the strength and competence of Jewish women, my results go further and posit that strength and Jewishness are linked, and moreover, that Judaism is seen as a positive framework for life and a way through which to deal with adversity. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers described the ways in which strength, resilience and survival were part of their Jewishness. Further, they discussed the messages and lessons with regard to these traits or positive values that were transmitted from their Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers as part of their Jewish identity, through the stories and narratives of their pre-Holocaust (*Shoah*), Holocaust (*Shoah*) and post-Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences.

In my study, the messages that were passed down from mother to daughter were lessons

of strength, survival and resilience. Strength in the face of adversity, strength in the face of continuous anti-Semitism, and strength in the face of racism and intolerance. The daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors talked about the strengths of their mothers, about their own strengths and abilities in transcending their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences, and the impact of those experiences both on their lives and on the lives of their survivor mothers. Thus, the results of my study go beyond previous literature, both theoretical and research based, that posits that the daughters learned about survival from their Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and further argues that these daughters also learned to move from surviving to transcending their past experiences and actively allowing themselves to heal.

The strength of the survivors, their daughters and Jewish women in general is in their ability to adapt. The ability to accomplish and achieve, to adapt to their current situation, to their current needs, to their current environment, and progress from surviving to transcending the past in ways specific to their abilities and experiences.

Summary

Traditionally, Jewish women have been responsible for maintaining the Jewish home. It was within that environment that Jewish traditions, values and Jewish identity, in other words - the importance of being Jewish was transmitted to the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers. This study is consistent with previous literature and reiterates the importance of that identity.

Although Jewishness can be and was expressed in a variety of ways by the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers, remaining Jewish, maintaining Jewish traditions, values and a Jewish identity was fundamental. In other words, throughout the Holocaust (*Shoah*) and beyond, regardless of the pain, suffering and torment, the one thing that could not be taken away

from Jewish women was the importance of being Jewish.

Jewishness was conceptualized as a positive framework for living and a way through which to deal with continuous adversity. Thus, for the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers, Jewishness, survival, strength and resilience are linked. The participants discussed the lessons and messages that were passed down to them by their mothers with regard to those strengths. They also described their own strengths in terms of survival and in their ability to move beyond surviving to transcending their past experiences, and actively choosing to heal and continue in the process of positive growth.

Implications for Psychology

Although the psychological literature has focused attention on "cultural diversity and cultural understanding" (Jackson & Meadows, 1991, p. 72) there continues to be a paucity of studies that focus on Judaism (Beck, 1995; Langman, 1995; Weinrach, 2002) and Jewish women. It is important for psychologists to learn more about Judaism and to be aware of the fact that diversity exists within Judaism itself, and within each of the movements of Judaism. Psychologists need to be aware that for some Jewish people, oftentimes Jewish identity-- the commitment to being Jewish - - runs deeper than their level of religious observance. Psychologists need to learn more about Jewish people in order to be able to be more effective in their therapeutic interventions.

Psychologists need to be aware of the importance to Jewish women of maintaining a Jewish identity, and the sense of responsibility that Jewish women carry to transmit that identity to their children. Psychologists need to begin the process of building theories that have clinical relevance and are applicable to Jewish women- Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, their daughters and others. Researchers (Mwaba & Pederson, 1990) have demonstrated that when cultural

sensitivity exists in therapy, treatment is more efficacious. Therefore building a model that is culturally sensitive to Jewish women will be more effective in problem treatment and remediation.

Psychologists need to be aware that strength and resilience are an integral part of Jewishness, have assisted in the survival of the Jewish people for centuries, and are points to consider when working with Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters. Psychologist need to acknowledge these strengths and help survivors and their daughters move from surviving to the process of transcending experiences of the past. Psychologist also need to be aware that relinquishing tactics for survival can and will only be accomplished during times of peace and safety. Both of which have been sporadic in the history of the Jewish people.

Holocaust (*Shoah*) Survivors

Some of the literature on the Holocaust (*Shoah*) persists in portraying a pathological picture of survivors (Chodoff, 1963; Niederland, 1964) and their children (Mor, 1990; Rustin, 1980). Whereas we cannot ignore the impact of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) on the survivors, there is another body of literature that focuses on the incredible strengths and resilience of the survivors (Hass, 1995). These researchers, some in the field of sociology (Helmreich, 1992), theoreticians in the field of social work (Harel, 1995) and psychology (Hass, 1995) have posited that psychopathology was not found in all of the survivors. Rather, that it was limited to a small percentage of the population, and that the rest of the survivors were able to function in a way that was adaptive to their new environments (Helmreich, 1992). The results of my study are consistent with the body of literature that focuses upon and supports the concept of survivor strength. Daughters described the actions and behaviors of their mothers both during the Holocaust (*Shoah*), and in the post-Holocaust (*Shoah*) eras. They described the strength and

perseverance of their mothers in setting and attaining their goals. Moreover, daughters of survivor mothers' describe experiencing their mothers strength and their determination to triumph over their Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences.

Furthermore, whereas Helmreich looked at the functioning of the survivors in the post war years, he did not consider the impact of gender or a personal belief system, thus obscuring this important information. The results of my study emphasize the importance of Jewishness to Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and focuses upon the impact of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) on women, as well as on the mother-daughter relationship.

The daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors discussed the strengths of their mothers, and spoke about some of the challenges their survivor mothers faced. One such challenge was in terms of their parenting abilities. Whereas researchers (Gross, 1988; Weiss, 1988) have suggested that the trauma inflicted upon the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors has not had an impact on their parenting capabilities per se, the results of my study are inconsistent with these findings. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors described the impact of growing up with mothers whose early life was fraught with interruptions and missed opportunities for learning as a function of the Holocaust (*Shoah*), and the reverberations of those experiences on their own lives in terms of their mothers' parenting skills and subsequently the mother-daughter relationship. For example, daughters discussed the ways in which their survivor mothers attempted to control their behaviors and actions, had unrealistic expectations of them, and were overprotective, as well as their mothers' inability to teach them what they themselves never had the opportunity to learn. Thus, according to the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors the traumatic experiences of the Holocaust did indeed impact on the parenting skills and abilities of their survivor mothers.

In Judaism the home and family are of paramount importance (Donin, 1991; Patterson, 1999; Rosen & Weltman, 1996). One reason suggested in the literature, is that both were usually envisioned as a safe haven against anti-Semitism (Rosen & Weltman, 1996). This finding is inconsistent with the results of my study. Although the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers agreed with the importance of family, they did not view the family or the home as a refuge against anti-Semitism. Rather, they conceptualized the world as being "unsafe for Jews" and "only a matter of time until another Holocaust (*Shoah*) will occur". For the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers a safe place against anti-Semitism did not exist.

A second reason discussed in the literature for the importance of family in Judaism is related to the loss of life as a result of the Holocaust (*Shoah*). Given the huge numbers of people that were murdered, those who remained took on added significance (Mor, 1990). The results of my study were consistent with this finding. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers talked about the importance of family, the value of each individual and, for the most part often described their families as being comprised of "ghosts". Thus, the value of human life and most especially each child, was stressed.

Summary

Whereas some of the previous research focuses on the psychopathology of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers due to their traumatic experiences, there is another body of research that focuses upon the strengths that survivors called upon in order to rebuild their lives, adapt to a new country, learn new languages and achieve financial stability and/ or success. The results of my study are consistent with those that talk about the strengths of survivors. Furthermore, my study posits that strength and resilience are not the only facets of surviving. Transcending the

past and triumphing over the Holocaust (*Shoah*) were goals that survivors strived towards after they had survived the Holocaust (*Shoah*). Furthermore this study goes beyond that of previous research and addresses the impact of Judaism on the experiences of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) and also focuses on the mother-daughter relationship.

Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors discussed their mothers' strengths, however, they also discussed their mothers challenges. One challenge that the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers faced, was the impact of their traumatic experiences on their parenting skills. Whereas previous researchers state that parenting abilities were not effected by survivors' experiences per se, the results of my study are inconsistent with these findings and posit that parenting skills were indeed effected. Daughters described their survivor mothers' inability to teach them what they neither had the opportunity to learn nor experience due to the interruptions and missed opportunities in their lives as a function of Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences.

Family and children are important, both in Judaism and for Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers. Some have attributed this importance to the notion of the family as a safe haven against anti-Semitism. Whereas the daughters talked about the importance of family they did not view their family as a safe haven. Rather the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) mothers generally viewed "the world as not being a safe place for Jews" and thus reported not feeling safe anywhere. Another reason for the importance of family was that given the huge loss of life due to the Holocaust (*Shoah*), those who were left took on added significance.

Implications for Psychology

All too often psychologists view survivors and their children as being damaged by their experiences. Portraying these women as damaged ignores the strengths and abilities that they have utilized for generations. The objective for psychology is to help survivors and their

daughters to be aware of the strengths that they have and help them build upon what exists within themselves. Psychologists need to remember that in Jewish women resilience exists alongside the pain.

Whereas ignoring the positive can be detrimental, it is also important to acknowledge the challenges faced by Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters. One challenge is in terms of the survivors' parenting skills, and the impact that this has had on their daughters. Psychologists need to be aware that these challenges exist and help Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters address these limitations.

Psychologists need to be aware of the historical importance of family to Jewish people in general, and to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors (Patterson 1999; Rosen & Weltman,1996) in particular. A group of people who lost a majority of their family as a result of the traumatic events of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) and therefore, the fear of losing any others is often overwhelming. Ascribing to theories that deal with enmeshment and/or focus on the importance of separation and individuation as goals may not be suitable for working with Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor families. All too often what occurs in therapy is that it is not the theory that fits the cultural group, but rather the cultural group that is made to fit into the theory. This can be detrimental to the population seeking help. Psychologists need to be aware of the differences that exist in Jewish mother and daughter relationships and educate themselves with regard to these differences in order to maintain the level of competence demanded in the code of ethics of psychologists (APA, 2002) which states:

> Psychologists provide services ... in areas only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, consultation, study or professional experience.

It is studies such as this one that will contribute to the understandings of Jewish Holocaust

(*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters and can impact on educating psychologists with regard to the processes of these women.

In terms of feeling safe against anti-Semitism, psychologists need to be aware that anti-Semitism does not exist merely in the minds of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters. Whether blatant or subtle, it is a part of the Jewish experience. It is reality, and it exists. Daughters of survivors have encountered anti-Semitism in many forms and have learned that they can not entrust their safety to others but rather, must protect themselves. The question that exists is: how can psychology learn about Judaism, when even the act of noticing Jewishness creates a fear in Jewish people as perhaps being indicative of subtle anti-Semitism (Beck, 1995)? Again, it is through studies such as this one, that psychology can learn about Jewishness - - a religious/cultural/ethnic group that has prevailed and achieved for centuries.

Thus, the question and ostensibly the challenge for psychologists is this: How do the lessons necessary for survival and existence interact with goals for therapy? Psychologist must be aware of the feelings of powerlessness and lack of safety before they dangerously ascribe to the stereotypical labeling of Jewish women as controlling. What appears to be controlling behavior, may in fact be an awareness of, or protection against episodes of racism, hatred and anti-Semitism. Psychologists need to understand Jewish women's experiences of racism and anti-Semitism, and the skills they use in order to protect themselves against it. Psychologists need to examine their own biases and understandings when working with daughters of Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and insure that these biases are properly addressed.

Children of Survivors

The Holocaust (*Shoah*) played a huge role in the lives of daughters of survivor mothers. Indeed, Epstein (1979) and Mor (1990) posit that children of survivors have experienced a

trauma that they did not live yet feel all the same. This finding is consistent with the results of my study in that the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers described their connection to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) as a function of listening to the narratives and stories of their mothers' experiences. They also connected to Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences in general, by bringing their thoughts and feelings with regard to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) into their present lives. For example "a battered *rensel* (suitcase) and an elderly gentleman being questioned at the border", becomes a re-enactment of events that occurred during the Holocaust (*Shoah*) for one of the participants. As such, daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors report having "flashbacks" to events they did not experience nor witnessed.

Researchers have described children of survivors in a variety of ways, which include conceptualizing them as: a living memorial (Hass, 1990; 1995), a replacement for those who had been slaughtered in the Holocaust *(Shoah)* (Berger, 1997; Freyberg, 1980), and an embodiment of the new world (Gross, 1988). Children of survivors were named after dead relatives, and often represented the reincarnation of former families and relatives (Niederland, 1964). These findings were consistent with the results of my study in that daughters of survivors talked about the significance of their names. Some of the women reported being curious and wanting to know more information with regard to the person after whom they were named, and others reported feeling unable to live up to their mothers' expectations of the "idealized relative" after whom they had been named and therefore represented.

A discrepancy between my findings and that of previous literature exists in that whereas feeling like a replacement for those who had been killed did exist in Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor families. The potential for feeling like a unique individual was attainable for the daughters, if and when they learned to transcend their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences, and if and

when the mothers learned to shift from being Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, to being people-in-the-world. Previous researchers focus on the ways in which children of survivors were conceptualized for a period of time after the Holocaust (*Shoah*). My research however goes beyond the ways in which these daughters were conceptualized at the onset and points to the healing potential in both the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters.

Berger (1995; 1997) maintains that an important part of the identity formation of children of survivors includes feelings of guilt for not having experienced the Holocaust (*Shoah*). This is inconsistent with the findings of my study in that the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers did not feel guilty that they did not experience the Holocaust (*Shoah*) rather, they felt guilty that their mothers had suffered and that they were unable to protect them from further pain.

Participants of my study talked about their guilt with regard to the suffering of their mothers, and the actions that they took in order to care for them and protect them from additional pain and suffering as "they had suffered enough". Furthermore, daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers described feeling responsible not only for their mothers' well-being and level of pain, but also for making choices that would allow their mothers to vicariously fulfill their unattainable dreams through them. As such, daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers often reported choosing partners and/or professions that were to their mothers liking and to their own detriment.

Another aspect with regard to the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors reported in the literature is that of an awareness of difference and feeling isolated from others as a function of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* (Mor, 1990). This is consistent with the results of my study. Participants described their experiences of being the daughter of a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor

and having a mother who did not speak the language, did not have much family as most were murdered in the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, had European rather than North American values, and who generally looked and acted differently as a function of their experiences. For these daughters, their mothers' inabilities in terms of language resulted in their dealing with the outside world.

Although this is similar to the experiences shared by most immigrant children, the differences were compounded as a function of the mothers' Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences. Daughters reported that not only did they protect their survivor mothers from the outside world by becoming their interpreters and spokespersons, they also took care of and protected their mothers inside the home as well. This caring and protection was manifested by the daughters of survivors in a variety of ways, which include: assuming the parental role and parenting their parents (Winik, 1988), or by listening to some of the more gruesome stories of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) that were age-inappropriate as a way of helping their mothers heal. These circumstances often differentiated the daughters of survivors from the children of immigrant families.

Summary

Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers discussed feeling connected to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) and traumatized by an event they did not experience. They reported feeling different than their peers and isolated from others who had not lived through their experiences.

Guilt has been described as an important part of the identity formation of children of survivors. Whereas the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors reported feeling guilty that their mothers experienced the Holocaust (*Shoah*), and actively sought out ways to care for and protect their mothers from further pain, the results of this study are inconsistent with previous researchers that suggest that children of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors feel guilty that they too

had not experienced the Holocaust (*Shoah*).

Implications for Psychology

Psychologists need to be aware of the overwhelming sense of guilt and the need to care and protect others that has been part of the experiences of daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers. These feelings have been nurtured in the daughters of survivors from almost the beginning of their lives. Helping these women begin the process of meeting their own needs and looking after themselves is a worthwhile endeavor and can lead to self-acceptance, personal growth and healing.

Remembering

In describing the resilience of the Jewish people both Elie Wiesel (1988) and Isaac Bashevis Singer (1978) focus on the importance of remembering, and on what has been maintained in Judaism as a function of those memories. Furthermore, as previously stated, many Jewish Holidays and traditional practices of Judaism itself are based on events of the past and are specific to actively recalling those episodes in Jewish history (see pp.10-11 for more detailed information). The results of my study are consistent with Wiesel's and Singer's observations and with Jewish thought and posits, that remembering was crucial to both the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters. The daughters talked about the various ways in which remembering occurred in their families. An important part of remembering for the daughters was that of remembering the Holocaust (*Shoah*) and honoring those murdered. Thus, remembering events of the past and family members whom they had never met was crucial to the daughters of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers, as it helped them put together the lost pieces of their family history and was a way in which the daughters were able to actively engage with their mothers' past.

Stories and narratives were the way in which the past was remembered by the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters. Stories and narratives also have an historical and religious significance in Judaism (Bergmann & Jucovy, 1982). Bruner (1990) argues that personal narratives are a way in which people deconstruct and make meaning of their lives. Furthermore, Rosenman and Handelsman (1990) have suggested that narratives of the Holocaust (*Shoah*), help members of the Jewish community regain parts of their lives that were lost by witnessing massive death and destruction. The results of my study are consistent with the previous literature. Daughters would listen to the Holocaust (*Shoah*) stories and narratives of their mothers, and describe being both drawn toward and repelled by these Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories. They wanted to understand the incomprehensible and would often questions their mothers in order to make sense of, or deconstruct their mothers' experiences, while at the same time feeling horrified by their mothers' history. For the daughters, the stories and narratives of the past provided them with information that helped them put together bits and pieces of their family history and then, use this information to guide their future. One participant described feeling like "a link in a chain" with her family history as the past and her children as the future.

Thus, the stories and narratives of the past that were shared with the daughters of the survivors were often in lieu of the family members that were murdered and became the witnesses of ways of life and of people who were destroyed by the Holocaust (*Shoah*). Listening to the stories and narratives assisted the daughters in understanding a way of life they had not experienced and furthermore, provided them choices for how to live their own lives.

Summary

Remembering is considered to be a part of the resilience and the strength of Jewish

people. Remembering events of the past is fundamental to Judaism and to Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters. Remembering was a way to honor the past and often a means of connecting with their Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers.

Stories and narratives were the forum through which Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters remembered the past and connected with each other. Their telling helped daughters understand a way of life they did not experience and gave them choices for their own lives. Thus, the stories and narratives were witnesses to ways of life and to people who no longer existed.

Implications for Psychology

Psychologists need to be aware that remembering the past, and honoring the dead are part of the richness of Judaism. They are not the morbid preoccupations of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters. It is inappropriate to say that the Holocaust (*Shoah*) ended over fifty years ago and it is time to let go of the past, when the reverberations of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) are still being felt and are being re-activated as the survivors are aging.

Judaism is a religion, tradition and culture steeped in its rich history. Forgetting is not part of Judaism, remembering is. Psychologists need to be aware of the importance of remembering in Judaism and help Jewish women/daughters of survivors remember their rich history and help them honor the memory of the dead. Throughout the centuries there has been too much senseless murder and racism that is still on-going. How can we ask people to forget the evil that happened in the past, if it still continues today in a variety of guises.

Remembering the past is one way that daughters of survivors consciously protect themselves against anti-Semitism. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors are vigilant with regard to anti-Semitism as it is and has always been part of their lives. The assumption is not *if*

another episode of devastating racism will occur, but rather *when*. And so the need to be vigilant, protect themselves and anticipate anti-Semitism is part of the experience of the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors.

Ultimately, Psychologists need to be aware that the research on trauma agues that: "remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for healing of individual victims" (Herman,1997, p. 1). Thus, encouraging Holocaust survivors and their daughters to talk about, and remember their traumatic memories are an integral part of the healing process.

Mother-Daughter Relationships

Researchers have suggested that women tell stories differently than do men. The differences are manifested in the attention to autobiographical detail (Reese, Haden & Fivush, 1996) and to the content (Rittner & Roth, 1993). As this study did not look at the stories of men and women, the findings of this study can neither support nor refute this notion. However, a case is made within which to stress the importance of providing a forum for women's experiences to be heard (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986) and, the paucity of studies exploring those lived experiences in the psychological literature.

Mothers and daughters share a special bond (Keller, 1990). According to Lerner (1998) because of this connection, daughters may have a sensitivity to the quality of their mother's life and try to fix it. The results of my study are consistent with this theoretical position. As previously stated, the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers would care and protect their mothers from further pain. They did this in a variety of ways, which included: withholding information from their mothers that they thought might be hurtful, making choices to please and satisfy their mothers' expectations and, listening to some of the more difficult stories and

narratives of their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences. One participant described actively working at helping her mother heal from her Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences. She shared her feelings of happiness at her mother's "metamorphosis", her contribution to this change, and the new relationship that evolved from her mother's healing.

Whereas sharing stories of the past was beneficial to the survivor mothers, they were also of benefit to the daughters. Feminist theoreticians (Keller, 1990; O'Reilly, 1998) have argued that when mothers share their life stories with their daughters they give them alternative strategies for the ways in which to live their lives. This finding was consistent with the results of my study. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors talked about learning not only from the present actions of their mothers, but also through the stories of the past. Often the daughters reported that the stories of their mother' actions in the past were incongruent with the person their mother had become after the Holocaust (*Shoah*). The daughters juxtaposed both of these perspectives and came up with choices/options or strategies to use as guidelines for their future.

Thus, daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers reported learning a variety of lessons as a function of their mothers' narratives and stories. They described learning about: the importance of having a positive attitude, the importance of persevering and surviving, and most importantly of having the ability to actively choose to transcend experiences of the past, often as a function of their interactions with their mothers. Survivor mothers demonstrated alternative approaches to life and options with which to perceive those events. For example: one daughter described her "mother as being victimized, but not necessarily a victim". She talked about actively choosing a more positive strategy through which to guide her life based on her perceptions and understandings of her mother's experiences.

Summary

The importance of women's lived experiences and different ways of being have been discussed in the literature, however a paucity of studies still exist in this area. The special and reciprocal nature of the mother-daughter relationship has been found to be a place in which the daughter's sensitivity to her mother's experiences can help her mother heal, and the mother by sharing her life stories can offer her daughter alternative strategies for life. These findings are consistent with the results of my study. Daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers actively sought out ways to protect, care for, and help their mothers in the healing process. Holocaust (*Shoah*) mothers, in sharing the stories of their experiences taught their daughters a variety of lessons and gave them guidelines and strategies for living their lives.

Implication for Psychology

Both the research (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Reese, Haden & Fivush, 1996) and Jewish theological(Bitton-Jackson, 1999; Leff, 1993) thought describe differences in women's ways of knowing, being and sharing that knowledge. Psychologists must remember that general theories, although utilized for both men and women are not necessarily beneficial to women – as such, it is incumbent upon psychology to bring the experiences of women to the forefront and allows women's different ways of being to be addressed. To do so will have implications for efficacious and viable treatment approaches.

Findings Unique To This Research

Transmission, resilience, transcendence and Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as-people-in-the-world were four categories that emerged from the data and were unique and important findings in this study.

Transmission

One category that emerged from the data analysis was transmission. Transmission is defined as the way in which the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers educated their daughters with regard to; traditions, values, religion and family history; the way in which messages or lessons from the past were imparted from one generation to the next and; addressed what the daughters of survivor mothers received from their mothers, as well as what they did not receive. In this study transmission occurred verbally and/or non-verbally. The verbal component of transmission was achieved through the narratives and stories of the mothers' pre-Holocaust (*Shoah*), Holocaust (*Shoah*), and post-Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences. The non-verbal component of transmission, was a function of watching the behaviors and actions modeled by their Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers.

Resilience

Another category to emerge from the data analysis was resilience. Resilience is understood as the ability to persevere in the face of adversity, not only on a daily basis – but continuously for years. In other words, continued strength. Thus, strength and resilience are interconnected and are differentiated in the following way: strength is the ability to persevere in the face of adversity, and resilience is the ability to demonstrate that strength continuously.

Resilience refers to both the resilience of the individual – in this case the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mother -- and to the resilience of the Jewish people. Resilience of the survivor mothers is manifested in their abilities to continue to persevere in the face of adversity. For example, resilience is demonstrated in the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers' ability: to survive the camps; to move to a new country; to learn a new language and, in general to rebuild their lives.

Resilience of the Jewish people on the other hand, is demonstrated by the way in which they have dealt with adversity throughout history. Thus, resilience is manifested in the existence of the Jewish people regardless of the incessant efforts employed to annihilate and obliterate Judaism off the face of the earth.

Transcendence

A third category to emerge from the data analysis was transcendence. Transcendence is defined as the process of personal growth, self-acceptance and healing in which daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors actively engaged to alleviate their sadness and pain as a function of their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences. Participants of the study described their mothers as survivors -- women who were able to surmount the horrors of their Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences and rebuild their lives according to Jewish values and traditions that had been handed down from generation-to-generation. Daughters of Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors learned many lessons from their mothers. Some of the lessons were about strength and resilience and included underlying messages which were: to be strong, to persevere in the face of adversity and, to be determined in setting and accomplishing goals in life. However, the daughters also learned about the challenges their mothers faced and the pain that their mothers carried with them as a result of witnessing family and friends being murdered, suffering inconsolable loss and deprivation and, surviving the Holocaust (*Shoah*). The results of my study indicate that the act of surviving was part of the mothers' strengths and part of their challenges.

The strengths and challenges of the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers is in their ability to transcend the impact of their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences. Moreover, the strengths of the daughters of survivors is in their ability to take the messages and

lessons of their mothers' experiences and move from surviving to transcending the difficulties in their own lives.

For the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers, the process of transcending their experiences took many forms. These included: joining second generation survivor support groups, learning to stop protecting their mothers from the outside world and learning how to care for themselves.

Holocaust (*Shoah*) Survivors as- People-in-the-World

A fourth category to emerge from the data was Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as-people-in-the-world. The term Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as-people-in-the-world is defined as the process through which Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers engaged in, and the active choices that they made, in order to create new lives for themselves. Being strong, courageous and determined were some of the attributes that assisted the Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers in their survival. However, whereas other studies looked at survival as the end goal, my study demonstrates that there is more to these women than simply being a Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor. While not seeking to deny their Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences, the daughters described their survivor mothers as women who wanted to be perceived and understood as more than survivors-- they wanted to be seen as people-in-the world. The results of my study indicate that while surviving is necessary for continued existence, it is essential to adapt to new environments, and to allow and encourage the processes of healing and personal growth to occur. In other words, to move from being a Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor to being a person-in-the-world.

The ways in which the survivors accomplished this task varied. For example: some of the survivors actively chose to focus on the positive aspects of their lives rather than continue to

focus on their pain, others chose to become active in the Jewish community and were involved in helping others and speaking out against injustice and, still others chose to focus on their education and other methods of self-improvement.

Summary

In summary, the data analysis resulted in the emergence of four important and unique categories. They were: transmission, resilience, transcendence and Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as-people-in-the-world. Transmission is understood as the way in which messages and lessons were conveyed by Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers to their daughters through the pre-Holocaust (*Shoah*), Holocaust (*Shoah*) and, post-Holocaust (*Shoah*) stories and narratives. Resilience, was the second category that emerged from the data and is defined as continued strength in the face of adversity. Resilience describes both the Jewish people in general and Jewish women Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, in particular. The third unique category to emerge from the data analysis was transcendence. Transcendence refers to the healing and growth processes of the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers, and was exemplified in the way in which they dealt with their mothers' Holocaust (*Shoah*) experiences and the choices that they made with regard to their own lives. Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as-people-in-the-world, was the fourth category to emerge from the data and refers to the active choices that Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers made in order to create new lives for themselves and shift away from understanding themselves, and being perceived by others as survivors, and moving towards becoming people-in-the-world.

Implications for Psychology

It is imperative that psychologists be aware of the strength and resilience that is inherent in Jewish women - - both Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters, and in their abilities

to transcend their difficult experiences. All too often psychologists adhere to labels and consequently focus on the problems or symptoms that are depicted by the label, rather than on the potential that exists within the individual. Psychologists need to remember that by labeling these women with the designation of survivor and children of survivors they are putting at the forefront previous research that focuses on damage and psychopathology. In so doing, they run the risk of being detrimental to their clients, are assisting in the continued marginalization of Jewish women, and are not upholding the ethical code of psychologists (APA, 2002) which states in the general principle of beneficence and nonmalficence that:

> psychologists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm...Because psychologists' scientific and professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to and guard against...political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence (APA, 2002).

Placing Jewish women in the margin and not attending fully to their potential, as well as continuing to adhere to practices that ignore important information, can be harmful to clients. By taking into account the inner strength, resilience, and the capacity for transcendence in these Jewish women, we may begin to help ourselves and others in building theories that will be beneficial to those who have suffered from traumatic experiences.

Overall Summary and Conclusions

While the findings of previous Holocaust *(Shoah)* literature focused upon what the Jewish people lost during the Holocaust *(Shoah)*, my study goes beyond the literature in the following ways: Instead of looking for pathology, my inquiry focused upon the survivors and their strengths in transcending their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences. Instead of generalizing the experiences of both men and women, my study focuses on the stories and narratives of the Jewish women survivors so that their experiences would be voiced and that we may learn from

them. Whereas others do not address the impact that a personal belief system may have on the experiences of the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, my study specifically focuses on the impact of being Jewish for the survivors and their daughters.

Thus, the results of this study demonstrate the importance of Judaism, the need to transmit Judaism to the next generation and, the importance of remembering the past. Regardless of what the Holocaust *(Shoah)* took away from the survivors, the Holocaust *(Shoah)* did not take away their strength, resiliency, their ability to transcend their experiences, and their Jewish identity. Being Jewish remained primary to the survivor mothers and subsequently to their daughters.

Sharing family histories and the stories of the past were ways in which values were transmitted. Remembering the past and honoring those who had perished was fundamental to all of the participants. For many of the participants the pre-Holocaust *(Shoah)* stories were about creating a legacy from bits and pieces of information that they received from their mothers. Remembering the past and honoring those who had died was an enterprise that occurred in the homes of all of the participants. The stories perpetuated the memories of those who died and thus their acts of kindness and good deeds lived on in the stories. "Continuity of everyone who came before", "links in a chain" whatever the metaphor used, these women talked about the importance of finding out about their family history, filling in the gaps and then transmitting this legacy to the next generation. Listening to the survivors' stories provided the daughters with a way in which to connect with their mothers and begin to understand their own Jewish identity and history.

The results of this study indicate that strength, resilience and courage assisted the survivors in transcending their Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences, emigrating to a new country, and

starting a new life. It was these strengths and resiliencies that the Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers transmitted to their daughters. Although second generation daughters faced challenges as well, the strengths that were conveyed by their mothers were helpful in addressing their difficulties. Strengths that were focused upon by the participants of this study were comprised of: their Jewishness, their ability to persevere during times of duress, and their ability to transcend the impact of their mothers Holocaust *(Shoah)* experiences on their own lives.

The goal of this inquiry was not to negate the findings of previous research, but rather to add to the existing body of knowledge. However, as previously stated: "Ignoring the positive is an extremely narrow view that does not take into account historical, cultural and social considerations" (Epstein, 1979, p. 203). Thus, I took a post-modern look at Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers and their daughters and in so doing, took "into account the historical, cultural and social" implications with regards to this group of women. As a result of this endeavor instead of finding psychopathology, I discovered wellness. The healthy part of people and the part that gets transmitted from generation to generation. The wellness in these Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers and their daughters is their strength. The strength that makes them dedicated to their religion, their culture, their values and their traditions.

The results of this study demonstrate the strength, courage and resilience of Jewish women. Being persecuted has been a way of life for Jewish people throughout the ages, the Holocaust *(Shoah)* is but one of many horrific attempts to obliterate Judaism, albeit in our time, and yet the miracle is that Judaism still prevails. The results of this study demonstrate that in Judaism, strength in its many manifestations is transmitted from mother to daughter, and has been from generation-to-generation.

Implications and Limitations for Future Research

The findings of this study have several implications. First of all, one of the goals of research is to increase our understanding. This can be done by either generating new theories or building upon the foundations of existing models. The goal of this inquiry was to do both: to build upon the existing theories of women in general, and to derive or generate substantive theories of Jewish women, more specifically, daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors. Given that the findings of this research focus upon both the strengths and challenges of these women - - Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters- - the benefits of this research would be to use the results of this inquiry to develop more efficacious treatment approaches with which to help intervene with this specific population.

In elucidating the variables that helped these Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters transcend the horrors of their experiences, we may learn from them and develop treatment approaches that have clinical utility for helping others who suffer from the effects of trauma, oppression, and persecution. It is one thing to say that the survivors of the Holocaust *(Shoah)* were traumatized by their experiences. It is quite another to simply focus on the traumatization and ignore the strength of the people. Jewish people have been persecuted for centuries and still Judaism prevails despite many attempts at eradication. It is the strength of these women that warrants examination.

Questions of cost effectiveness and clinical utility are becoming increasingly important as policy makers are looking to research for cost-effective and clinically useful interventions. New models of therapy that broaden the existing frameworks and take into account diverse populations and those who have not been considered in the past, increase the potential for viable, efficacious and useful treatment modalities. The results of this inquiry can assist in the

creation of those types of treatment approaches.

As with all research there are several limitations of this study that need to be addressed. Specifically, these limitations are in terms of the research sample and the methodology utilized. One limitation of the research is that this study utilized a sample of convenience that was generated by word of mouth and was small in size. Given the implementation of a qualitative methodology the small sample size has been supported in the research, however, larger sample sizes may have yielded more richer findings. Another limitation is that within the different affiliations of Judaism there were populations that emerged such as *chasidic* women or those that described themselves as secular Jews as well as, daughters of survivors from countries such as Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Germany. It would have been interesting to see if a larger sample size that took into account these differences would have led to different or more specified findings. However, given the qualitative nature of this inquiry, the time, and financial constraints, this was not possible.

Another limitation in terms of the sample is that the focus of this study was on the Jewish mother-daughter relationship. More specifically Jewish mothers who have survived the Holocaust (*Shoah*). Given the specificity of the population under investigation a limitation of this research is the generalizability of the theories derived thereof to other diverse populations. Findings associated with a study of Jewish women and their daughters may not necessarily be applicable to other groups who survived the Holocaust (*Shoah*), nor to those who have survived other traumatic events. Thus, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to any other possible familial dyad: mother-son, father-daughter, or father-son regardless of Holocaust (*Shoah*) experience of the parents, or to any other group of people that has suffered persecution or trauma.

Further complicating the process of understanding the Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors, is that they were also immigrants to a new country and victims of anti-Semitism. It is therefore, difficult to tease out the threads that might allow theories developed by this research to be generalized to others suffering from persecution and seeking refuge in a new culture.

Given that researchers have posited the unique relationship of mothers and daughters, the present study examined that particular dyad and other dyads were not focused upon. As previous researchers treated Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors as a homogeneous group, the present study has limited its scope to mothers and daughters, in order to redress the error of assumed homogeneity previously stated. Although this exclusion limits generalizability, the findings will have the backing of methodological accuracy.

As this is an exploratory study there is much more to be learned in relation to mothers and daughters in general and more specifically to Jewish Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mothers and their daughters. Furthermore in order to assess the applicability of these findings to other diverse populations of women additional work is necessary.

The findings of this study were the result of a single interview with the daughters of Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and that one-on-one interaction. Research using a group process format in which all of the participants of this study would meet and have a spontaneous dialogue with regard to their experiences of growing up with a Holocaust *(Shoah)* survivor mother rather than that elicited through the use of a semi-structured script may reduce the potential of researcher's bias and reveal fascinating and useful findings.

Future researchers may consider investigating the relationship of other dyads such as fathers and sons, mothers and sons or, fathers and daughters in order to further increase our understanding of the complex relationships that comprise the family, as we understand it.

Given that the findings of this study support the importance of Jewishness to the participants and their mothers it would be helpful to discern whether strengths are something that is passed down from mother to daughter, or are a fundamental part of Jewishness. Studies that examine other dyads would be helpful in the process of understanding this complex mechanism.

How this Research Can Be Misused

Any research that focuses attention on a group of people who have been marginalized as a function of gender, race and religious beliefs and/or practices runs the risk of putting information out in the public domain which can then be misused in ways that are a continuation of sexism, racism, and further anti-Semitic practices. Therefore, it is imperative for me – a new researcher– to bring these issues to the forefront, before they are utilized in ways that are in direct contradiction to the goals and purposes of my study.

First, as this is a study that examines Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivor mothers and their daughters, and does not emphasize the psychpathological component highlighted by others, but rather focuses on the strength, resilience and transcendent abilities of Jewish women, there may be those who choose to misinterpret the findings of my study to indicate that it is the persecutory practices that are the strengthening factor in these women and Jewish people in general. Please be aware that this inquiry demonstrated the strength and resilience that is inherent in Jewish Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters, and not the benefits of persecution. The goal was to investigate the strength and not seek out ways with which to absolve the persecutors.

Second, although there is a paucity of literature on Jewish women in general, and Jewish mother-daughter relationships in particular, the literature that does exist, often focuses primarily

on the stereotypes of the controlling, overbearing Jewish mother and her Jewish American Princess (J.A.P.) daughter. Researchers have suggested reasons for this deficit. One reason is that noticing Jewish people's actions and behaviors in the past have led to anti-Semitics acts and comments. Thus, maintaining a low profile, avoiding attention to Judaism and Jewish women has been a method of anticipating the prevention of further acts of anti-Semitism. However, this is a double edged sword because although attention and perhaps some anti-Semitism may have been avoided on one level, the theories with regard to the relevance and applicability to Jewish women –both Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters have been compromised and frequently psychologist will work under the misconceptions that they have about Jewish women.

Finally, a word of caution to the readers of this dissertation– the goal of which has been to add to the existing body of knowledge and assist in the creation of substantive theories of Jewish women – both Holocaust (*Shoah*) survivors and their daughters. Thus, the hope is that the information in this dissertation will benefit the population under study and not be used in any way to their detriment, stereotypical, anti-Semitic and/or otherwise.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Glossary of Hebrew, Yiddish and non-English terms

Hebrew terms are indicated by an h; Yiddish terms by a y. All other languages are spelled out.

Achtung- (German) attention.

Aishes Chayil- Hebrew for A woman of valor, or an Accomplished Woman. This song comprised of 22 verses of Proverbs. The underlying message is the praise of Jewish woman whose goal in life is to foster the growth in Torah knowledge and good deeds of her husband and children.

Amcha - (h) Literally means your people. A designation used during the Holocaust as a way for one Jew to recognize and/or identify another, as opposed to a nazi collaborator. The word "amcha" has been used to describe the Jewish everyman/woman.

Am Yisrael- Literally the people of Israel

Ashkenazi - Literally "German", an adjective referring to Jews from Eastern Europe.

Auschwitz- (German) concentration camp in Poland.

Bais Yaakov- (h) Literally mean the House of Jacob and is used in the Bible to refer to women and their special form of intellect (see Binah). In later day usage Bais Yaakov has come to refer to the Orthodox Jewish day school for girls which can be found around the world.

Baruch Hashem- (h) G-d is blessed, used as an expression of relief.

Binah - (h) Understanding. Specifically refers to "an emotional sensitivity to information and an ability to take abstract ideals and put them to concrete practical use (Leff, 1993, p. 185).

B'li ayin ha'ra- (h) Literally means without the evil eye. It is a phrase used to prevent bad luck. This is the Hebrew variation of keinanahora. See also kinahora.

Boneh- (h) Builder.

Challah-(h) Braided egg bread served on Shabbat and Holidays.

Chametz- (h) Leavened bread. Refers to foods prohibited during Passover.

Chasidim- (y) Refers to members of an ultra-orthodox Jewish group who are followers of the sect founded in the 1700's by Israel ben Eliezer Baal Shem Tov.

Chasidishe- (y) Refers to one who practices chasidism.

Chesed - (h) Can be understood as: "loving acts of kindness

Child (ren) of Holocaust survivor (second generation survivor)- Anyone who has at least one survivor parent, and was either born after the Holocaust or was not directly persecuted by the nazis.

Chinuch- (h) Refers to the educational process.

Chometz- (h) Variation of the spelling for the word chametz. Leavened bread. Refers to foods prohibited during Passover.

Chumash- (h) The Pentateuch (the Five Books of Moses) or the Torah.

Daven- (y) See davening.

Davening- (y) The act of praying.

D.P. Camp- Displaced persons camp. Used to gather groups of Jewish and non-Jewish Holocaust survivors at the end of WWII.

Emes- (h) Truth.

Eretz Yisrael- (h) The land of Israel.

Frum- (y) Observant, religious.

Galut- (h) Exile.

Gemara- (Aramaic) Refers to the ancient basic code of Jewish law, edited by the Rabbis over a period of time from the 5rd - 7th centuries. It is the primary record of rabbinic discussion and decision. Also known as the Talmud (Kertzer, 1996).

Ghetto- (Italian) A part of a city in which a certain population lives segregated from the general population. Coined in 15th century Venice.

Greener- (English) From the term greenhorn, which means an inexperienced newcomer. Slang for Jewish immigrant.

Gymnasium - Eastern European equivalent to High School

Halacha- (h) Jewish law. Spelling variation of the word Halakha.

Halakha - (Jewish Law, the code of Jewish religious life) A term which refers to the rules and norms of Jewish law. A person's eating habits, sex life, business ethics, and social activities are all under the rubric of Jewish law (Brown, 1990).

Hasidic- (English) See chasidishe.

Heymann's bus- (English) Refers to a bus traveling back and forth from Montreal to N.Y. and stopping specifically in Jewish communities.

Jewish expression/affiliation- Refers to the four major movements in Judaism: Orthodox, Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist.

Kaddish- (h) A memorial prayer for the dead. Said for a year after the death of an immediate relative and then on the anniversary of that person's death (Kertzer, 1996).

Kashrut- (h) Jewish dietary laws.

Kippah- (h) Ritual head covering. Also called a yarmulka or a skullcap.

Kinahora- (y) Contraction of the words keinanahora meaning literally "no evil eyes". A phrase used to prevent bad luck.

Kotzka Zukor - (y) A sugar cube, often used to sip tea.

Kreplach- (y) Food eaten on Shavous. Refers to Jewish ravioli often filled with sweet cheese.

Kugel- (y) Baked pudding. A mixture of either grated potatoes or noodles, and eggs and, is kept warm on the blech on Shabbos. A blech is a piece of tin that covers the heating elements of a stove and is used on the Sabbath and Holidays as a way of warming food.

Landsmanshaft- (y) A society of people from the same cultural background and geographic region.

Marmorash - (Czechoslovakian): Refers to the poorer part of Slovakia and is often used as a derogatory term to denote uncultured or uneducated people.

Nebech- (y) Unfortunately.

Nekama- (h) Revenge.

Nokedli- (Hungarian) Egg drops.

Oberlander - (y) One who comes from the upper part of Hungary and Slovakia. Is also used to denote an individual of the upper class.

Olah- (h) A type of sacrifice. Literally means a whole burnt offering that is offered to the L-rd.

Passover- (English) Refers to the commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt. An eight day holiday in which orthodox Jews refrain from eating chametz (leavened bread).

Pesach- (h) See Passover.

Pflaster- (German) Band-aid.

Pilpul- The process of a dialectical struggle and debate engaged in by Jewish scholars attempting to clarify points of the Law (Brown, 1990).

Pogrom- "An organized massacre, especially of Jews" (Barnhart & Barnhart, 1984, p.1609).

Proverbs - refers to the Book of Proverbs written by King Solomon and is a part of the *Ketuvim* (writings) that make up the third part of the Bible. Other books included in the Ketuvim are: "Psalms, Job, Ezra, Nehemiah, the two books of Chronicles, and the five Megillot or scrolls (Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther)" (Kertzer, 1993, p. 44).

Purim- (h) A festival which commemorates the victory of the Jews over their would-be murderer Haman, as described in the biblical book of Esther (Kertzer, 1996). It is customary for children to dress up in costumes, deliver gifts of food and give charity.

Rabbi- (English) A charismatic leader, one who is knowledgeable in the Torah and is considered to be an authority figure.

Rasha- (h) An evil person.

Rensel- (y) Suitcase.

Rosh Hashanah- (h) The Jewish New Year.

Sabbath- (English) The day of rest starting before sundown on Friday and ending shortly after sundown on Saturday evening.

Sabra- (h) The fruit of the cactus plant. Slang for one born in the State of Israel.

Sephardic- Literally "Spanish", an adjective referring to Jews from Spain, Portugal, the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

Shabbos- (h) See Sabbath.

She'erith Hapletah - (h) Literally means the saved remnant (Peck, 1997), and is a term used to

refer to the Holocaust survivors.

Sheva Brachos - (h) Literally means seven blessings and refers to the seven blessings bestowed upon the bride and groom as part of the Jewish wedding ceremony. Also refers to the seven days of celebration after a Jewish wedding in which the same seven blessings are repeated nightly at the evening meal.

Shoah- (h) Term used to denote the catastrophe to Jewry during World War II (Blumenthal, 2001).

Shul- (y) Synagogue.

Siddur- (h) Prayer book.

Survivor - anyone imprisoned in a concentration camp, work camp or ghetto; in hiding; in the underground resistance; or masquerading as a non-Jew during the nazi Holocaust (1939-1945).

S.S.- Schutz Staffel- (German) nazi military unit.

Talmud- " The voluminous interpretations of the laws of the Torah. Originally oral traditions, the Talmud was codified over several centuries by collective sages who met and argued together about the correct meaning of the Torah. Contains rules for the application of the Law. The authoritative document of Jewish life" (Brown,1990 p.55) A compilation of rabbinic commentary on the oral laws.

Tefillah- (h) Prayer. morning prayers.

Tikkun 'olam - Literally means "to mend or to heal the world", is a phrase that is associated with the 16th century kabbalist Isaac Luria.

Torah- Refers to all Jewish religious writings, including the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud, responsa literature, and rabbinic commentaries, and will be referred to in this paper as the Hebrew Bible. Orthodox Jews believe that the Torah was given directly to the Jews by G-d (Brown, 1990).

Treif- (h) Not kosher, ritually inedible according to the Jewish dietary laws (Kertzer, 1996).

Unterland - (y): A certain part of Slovakia and is referred to by those from the Oberland as being of the lower class.

Vidui - The last confession

Viznitzer- From the town of Viznitz (border area between the Ukraine and Romania). Members of a chasidic ultra religious sect.

Yad Vashem- (h) Israel's Holocaust commemorative museum.

Yiddishkeit- (y) Everything pertaining to Judaism.

Yom Tov- (h) Holiday.

APPENDIX B

Demographic Information Sheet

Please answer all of the following questions. The information obtained will be kept confidential and will only be used to describe the participants of this study. Circle only one response for each item. Please fill in the appropriate information where necessary.

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER_____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF:

1) Date of Birth: _____ 2) Age: _____

3) Country of Birth: _____

4) Where did you grow up? _____

5) Were you raised by both of your parents? Yes_____ No _____

6) If not who raised you? _____

7) Are both of your parents Holocaust survivors? Yes_____ No _____

8) From whom did you first learn about the Holocaust? _____

9) How old were you? _____

10) What language was spoken in the home? _____

11) If you no longer live in your parent's home, how old were you when you left? _____

12) What was the reason for leaving?

a) School b) Marriage c) To be on my own d) Other _____

13) Highest educational degree obtained:

a) High School b) Bachelor's c) Master's d) Doctorate e) Other_____

14) Occupation: _____

15) Employment status:

a) Full-time (35 hours or more per week)

b) Part-time (less than 35 hours per week)

c) Unemployed d) Other _____

16) How long have you held this job? _____

17) If less than one year, what was your previous job? _____

18) How would you describe your household income?

a) Less than $20,000 b) $20,000-$44,999 c) $45,000-$59,999

d) $60,000-$74,999 e) $75,000-$100,000 f) Over $100,000

19) Relationship Status:

a) Single/ Never Married b) Married c) Partnered d) Separated e) Divorced

f) Widowed g) Remarried

20) If married or in a relationship is your partner also a child of survivor's?

Yes _____ No _____

21) If married or in a relationship, what is your partner's occupation? _____

highest degree? _____

22) Do you have children? Yes_____ No _____

23) If "yes" please indicate how many girls and how many boys? _____

24) What is your religious affiliation to Judaism?

a) Orthodox b) Conservative c) Reform d) Reconstructionist

e)Other f) None

25) Within your religious affiliation, how observant are you?

a) Very b) Moderately Observant c) Somewhat Observant

d) Not Observant

26) Growing up, what was your family's religious affiliation to Judaism?

a) Orthodox b) Conservative c) Reform d) Reconstructionist

e)Other f) None

27) Within your family of origin's religious affiliation to Judaism, what was their level of observance?

a) Very b) Moderately Observant c) Somewhat Observant

d) Not Observant

28) While you were growing up did you ever attend synagogue?

Yes _____ No_____

28b) If you answered "yes", indicate the frequency:

Every day_____ Every Sabbath _____ At least once a month _____

Most Holidays _____ Only High Holidays _____

29) At the present time, are you a member of any synagogues or organizations?

Yes _____ No _____

30) If "yes", please list: _____

31) With what activities are you involved? _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MOTHER:

1) Mother's country of origin:_____

2) How old was your mother during the Holocaust? _____

3) What was your Mother's relationship to the Holocaust:

Work Camp Survivor _____ Concentration Camp Survivor _____

Stayed in Hiding _____ Partisan Member _____

Escaped during War _____ Ghetto _____

Don't know _____ Other _____

4) If known, please list the names of each specific internment site:_____

_____

5) For what period of time was she confined during the Holocaust? _____

6) How often did your mother talk to you about her childhood?

Often _____ Sometimes _____ Rarely _____ Never _____

7) How frequently did your mother discuss the Holocaust?

Often _____ Sometimes _____ Rarely _____ Never _____

8) To what country did your Mother arrive after the Holocaust? _____

9) For what duration of time did she stay in that location? _____

10) When did she arrive at her present locale? _____

11) What is your Mother's current level of religious observance?

a) Very Religious b) Moderately Religious c) Somewhat Religious

d) Not Religious

12) What was your Mother's level of observance while she was growing up?

a) Very Religious b) Moderately Religious c) Somewhat Religious

d) Not Religious

13) Highest educational degree obtained by Mother:

a) Grade School b) High School c) Bachelor's d) Master's e) Doctorate

f) Other_____

14) Occupation: _____

15) Is your mother still alive? Yes_____ No _____

APPENDIX C

Semi-Structured Interview Questions:

The questions in this protocol will be utilized as a guide to prompt participants in the present study. Therefore, the interviewer will not go through the list of questions with each participant, instead the interview protocol will be used as a prompt to ensure that all question areas will be addressed.

Jewishness

1) Describe what makes you Jewish?

2) How is this Jewishness expressed?

3) What did it mean to be Jewish in your family of origin? What are some similarities or differences from your FOB to your personal expression of Jewishness?

4) Have their been any changes in your Jewish expression over the years? If so, what have they been like? To what do you attribute these changes?

Jewish Traditions

1) What were some of the most important Jewish traditions followed in your family?

2) Was naming a tradition? If so after whom are you named?

3) Do you know the story of how your parents came to choose your name?

Jewish Family Life

1) Describe what makes a family Jewish for you?

2) Describe what it meant to be part of a Jewish family, growing up? Describe how if any, are some of the changes that you have experienced in Jewish family life over the years?

3) Describe what you consider to be some values of the Jewish family? And in your FOB? What are some of the similarities and differences? What about in your present family? Any

similarities or differences?

4) What was your job or role in your family growing up? Was it similar or different to the jobs of your friends or peers?

Jewish Women

1) Describe your understanding of the role of the Jewish woman

2) Describe how you understand the obligations of Jewish women in the Jewish home

3) Where did your understanding/learning come from?

4) How do you understand yourself as a Jewish woman, where did that learning come from?

5) What did you learn about being a Jewish woman from your mother?

6) How do you understand the expression: Aishes Chayil? How does that fit with your role as a Jewish woman? How did fit with your understanding of your mother?

Judaism Mother and daughter

1) Describe your understanding of the role of motherhood in Judaism

2) Describe your understanding of your mother's role in your upbringing?

3) Describe how your mother taught you to be a Jewish woman?

How did daughters of Jewish women Holocaust survivors experience their mothers?

Holocaust

1) Tell me about how you came to learn about the Holocaust

2) Describe your feelings/reactions when you first heard about the Holocaust and your mother's experiences

3) What did you know of your mother's activities before the Holocaust?

4) Growing up, what were some of the most salient stories that you heard about the Holocaust from your mother? Describe them in as much detail as possible

5) Describe how these stories evolved with each telling and retelling? Or as you matured?

6) How did you understand these stories/ What did you understand to be the underlying messages?

7) What do you think you learned from your mother as a result of her Holocaust experiences?

8) What did you learn from her about being Jewish as a result of her Holocaust experiences?

9) Describe the legacy (about life, the Holocaust, relationships, women in your family) that your mother handed down to you.

10) What was the effect of the Holocaust on mother's experience of Judaism

11) What was the effect of mother's surviving the Holocaust on her religiosity?

12) How did the daughter's perception of mother's experience influence her choices?

13) What was your reaction to hearing or thinking about your mother's Holocaust experiences?

14) What kinds of things did you learn from your mother based on what she did not talk about or avoided talking about?

15) How has your mother's Holocaust experience influenced your learning (about yourself, life, being Jewish)?

Anti-semitism

1) Describe your understanding of Anti-semitism

2) Describe your understanding of Jewish responses to Anti-semitism

3) How did your family respond to Anti-semitism?

4) Describe your way of responding to Anti-semitism in your present life situation.

How did the daughters of Holocaust survivors understand and perceive their mothers' survivor experiences?

Survivors

1) How do you understand the term "survivor"

2) What does the expression Holocaust survivor bring to mind?

3) Describe your experience(s) of Holocaust survivors.

4) Describe how you learned about your mother's survivor experiences.

5) Describe the circumstances or the story of your mother's survival.

6) Describe some of the factors that assisted her in her daily life/struggles.

7) What were some of the most important lessons about survival that you learned from your mother?

8) Have your experiences of your mother been similar or different to your understanding and experience of Holocaust survivors in general? In what way?

9) Drawing from your understanding of her experiences, what lessons would you want someday to pass down to daughters of your own?

10) How has your mother's survivor experience influenced your learning (about yourself, life, being Jewish)?

Mother

1) How would you describe your mother?

2) Describe your relationship with her?

3) Describe how you are with your mother? What were some of the similarities and differences as you were growing up?

4) Can you describe what it was like to grow up as a child of a survivor mother?

5) Was she similar or different than other mother's in your community? How so?

6) In what way do you think that being a woman/girl effected your mother's Holocaust experiences?

7) How do you think your mother's experiences influenced her? How about you ? Can you describe the ways in which you think her experiences influence(d) you?

Children of survivors

1) When if at all did you first experience, or notice that you were a daughter of survivors? (If so)

2) What was it like? What did you think then? How did you understand that experience?

3) How would you describe the person you were then?

4) Tell me about your thoughts and feelings when you learned about your mother's experiences in the Holocaust?

5)What happened next?

In what way did the daughter 's perception of their mothers' experiences in the Holocaust influence their own lives, with regard to the choices they have made?

Self

1) We talked before about the relationship you had with your mother, describe her relationship with the others in your family?

2) I'd like to think about and describe the ways in which you think that your mother's experiences growing up might have impinged upon your relationship with her?

3) Describe how did your relationship with your mother effected the choices you made in your life? professionally? personally?

4) In what way do you think has the Holocaust influenced you?

5) What influence do you think your mother's Holocaust experience had on your parenting skills?

6) Would you raise your children the same or differently from the way you were raised by your mother?

7) Do you think you have gained anything as a result of being the daughter of a survivor mother?

8) How, if at all, have your thoughts and feelings about your mother changed since you matured or perhaps had children of your own?

9) Tell me how you would describe the person you are now. What most contributed to this change or continuity?

Daughter's Learning

1) As you look back on your relationship with your mother, are there any other events that stand out in your mind? Could you describe it (each one)

2) How did this event affect your understanding of her?

3) How did you respond to that event and to the resulting situation?

4) Could you describe the most important lessons you learned about life through experiencing your mother and her past?

5)What do you most value about yourself now?

6) What do others most value in you?

7) What do you value most in your mother?

8) After having these experiences, what advice would you give to someone who has just discovered that their mother suffered from traumatic experiences?

Interview Process

1) What was this interview like for you?

2) What was helpful to you in this interview? What was less helpful?

3) What were some of the difficulties you had during the interview?

4) Is there anything that you might not have thought about before that occurred to you during this interview?

5) Is there anything that you think would be important to add to this interview that I did not ask about or that we haven't discussed?

6) I have no further questions. Is there anything you would like to ask before we finish the interview?

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Investigator: Miriam Scherer Berkovic, M. Ed

Doctoral Candidate in Counseling Psychology

The study in which you are being asked to participate is part of a doctoral dissertation conducted at McGill University, under the supervision of Dr. Ada L. Sinacore. This study is designed to explore the effects of growing up in the home of a female Holocaust survivor. As such, your participation will contribute to a growing body of research and literature about the Holocaust and its effects.

I have been invited to participate in a study entitled "Through their daughter's eyes: Jewish mothers and daughters: A legacy of the Holocaust". By taking part in this study I will have the opportunity to talk about my experiences, which may increase my understanding about myself and help me achieve a better understanding of the connection between Jewish women in general and, daughters of Holocaust survivors in particular.

As part of this study I will be asked to fill out a demographic information sheet, be interviewed by the investigator and, provide feedback on a summary of the interview. I am aware that this appointment will last for two hours:15 minutes to fill out the informed consent and demographic sheet and 60 -90 minutes for the interview. The interview will be audiotaped and transcribed. I understand that I will be given the option to read a summary of the data analysis, and will have the opportunity to share my impressions of the data analysis at that time.

I understand that any information learned about me in the course of the study or prior to it will be kept confidential and, my identity will be protected. Any identifying information about me will be replaced by an identification number for data analysis, and the list of names of the participants and their corresponding numbers will be kept separately by the investigator in a locked file. All audiotapes of the interviews and the transcripts will be secured in a locked environment. All identifying information will be removed from the audiotapes during the transcription process. A research team consisting of two judges and an auditor will assist in the data analysis and will only have access to transcribed data Upon completion of the analysis, all

transcripts will be returned to the investigator and will be kept in a locked file in the investigator's office. Audiotapes of the interviews will be kept for one year after the completion

Upon completion of the data analysis the results of this study will be used for scientific purposes such as presentations at professional conferences and publications in professional journals and books.

I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any questions, participate, or withdraw at any point in time for whatever reason without prejudice and penalty.

I understand that while there are no anticipated risks with regard to participation in this study, for some individuals discussing private matters can cause some discomfort. I understand that I will be asked to identify a source of personal support to use in case I need to talk at some length about this discomfort. I have been informed that if I need additional support, the investigator will provide me with a referral to a mental health professional.

I have reviewed this form and understand its contents. I have had the opportunity to ask the investigator any questions I have about the study. I understand the purpose of this study and know about the risks, benefits, and inconveniences that this research project entails. I recognize that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I will not be remunerated for my participation. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or prejudice. I understand how confidentiality will be maintained during this research project. I understand the anticipated uses of data, especially with respect to publication, communication, and dissemination of results. I understand that no harm is intended to come to me as a result of my participation.

I have carefully studied the above and understand my participation in this agreement. I freely consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

APPENDIX E

(McGill University Certificate of Ethical Practice)

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241

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY FOR FUNDED AND NON FUNDED RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMANS

The Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee consists of 6 members appointed by the Faculty of Education Nominating Committee, an appointed member from the community and the Associate Dean (Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research) who is the Chair of this Ethics Review Board .

The undersigned considered the application for certification of the ethical acceptability of the project entitled:

THROUGH THEIR DAUGHTERS' EYES: JEWISH MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS: A LEGACY FROM THE HOLOCAUST

as proposed by:

Applicant's Name MIRIAM SCHERER BERKOVIC

Supervisor's Name ADA L. SINACORE

Applicant's Signature M Berkovic

Supervisor's Signature

Degree / Program / Course PH.D

Granting Agency

The application is considered to be:

A Full Review

An Expedited Review ✓

A Renewal for an Approved Project

A Departmental Level Review

Signature of Chair / Designate

The review committee considers the research procedures and practices as explained by the applicant in this application, to be acceptable on ethical grounds.

1. Prof. Ron Stringer
Dept of Educational and Counselling Psychology
Psychology
Feb. 21, 2002
Signature / date

2. Prof. Ron Morris
Department of Culture & Values
March 4, 2002
Signature / date

3. Prof. RenÈ Turcotte
Department of Physical Education
Education
March 7, 2002

4. Prof. Ada Sinacore
Department of Educational and Counselling
Signature / date

5. Prof. Brian Alters
Department of Educational Studies
Signature / date

6. Prof. Kevin McDonough
Department of Culture and Values in

Signature / date

Signature / date

7. Member of the Community

Signature / date

Mary H. Maguire Ph. D.
Chair of the Faculty of Education Ethics Review Committee
Associate Dean (Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research)
Faculty of Education, Room 230
Tels: (514) 398-7039/398-2183 Fax: (514) 398-1527

Mary H. Maguire March 11, 2002

Signature / date

(Updated June 2001)

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

STATEMENT OF ETHICS OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

It is assumed that the responses to the questions below reflect the author's (or authors') familiarity with the ethical guidelines for funded and non funded research with human subjects that have been adopted by the Faculty of Education and that responses conform to and respect the Tri-council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (1998).

1. Informed Consent of Subjects

Explain how you propose to seek informed consent from each of your subjects (or should they be minors, from their parents or guardian). Informed consent includes comprehension of the nature, procedures, purposes, risks, and benefits of the research in which subjects are participating. Please append to this statement a copy of the consent form that you intend to use.

Each of the prospective participants will be contacted by telephone in order to: 1) describe the purpose of the research, 2) address the way in which the data will be utilized, 3) confirm her willingness to participate 4) discuss the availability of their support network in case of unanticipated reactions to material that may emerge as a result of the interview and, 4) schedule a two hour appointment :15 minutes to fill out the informed consent and demographic sheet and 60 -90 minutes for the audiotaped interview. Furthermore, the researcher will inform the participants about the consent to participate, the interview process, and confidentiality. At the appointment, prior to beginning the interview, the informed consent form which will explain the purposes and procedures of the study will be reviewed with the participants, and then each participant will be asked to sign the consent form (see Appendix B).

2. Subject Recruitment

2.1 Are the subjects a "captive population" (e.g., residents of a rehabilitation centre, students in a class, inmates in a penal establishment)?

No the participants are not a "captive population". The participants will be volunteers

recruited through the researcher's network in the Jewish community and from Jewish organizations and Synagogues.

2.2 Explain how institutional or social pressures will not be applied to encourage participation. (See attached guidelines)

N/A

2.3 What is the nature of any inducement you intend to present to prospective subjects to persuade them to participate in your study?

There will be no formal inducement offered to the participants.

2.4 How will you help prospective participants understand that they may freely withdraw from the study at their own discretion and for any reason?

Participants will be informed during the initial phone contact that they may withdraw from the study at anytime. Moreover, a statement will be included in the consent form indicating that participants have the right to abstain from, or withdraw from the study at any point in time, for whatever reason without prejudice or penalty.

3. Subject Risk and Well-being

What assurance can you provide this committee (as well as the subjects) that the risks, physical and/or psychological, that are inherent to this study are either minimal or fully justifiable given the benefits that these same subjects can reasonably expect to receive?

The risks of participating in this research project are minimal to none, as the participants will have the right to refuse to answer any questions as well as have control over whatever information they choose to impart. Additionally, the interviews will take place at a mutually agreed upon locale, either at participants' own environments, or at the researcher's office. In order to consider a particular participants' environment, the researcher will inquire whether privacy and tranquillity can be assured for an effective interview that will last between 60 to 90 minutes. As previously addressed (question 1), the researcher will discuss with each participant the availability of their own support network in case of unanticipated reactions to the

interview. In case of any unforseen psychological disturbances, the researcher will refer the participants to appropriate mental health professionals.

4. Deception of Subjects

4.1 Will the research design necessitate any deception to the subjects?
No.

4.2 If so, what assurance can you provide this committee that no alternative methodology is adequate?

4.3 If deception is used, how do you intend to nullify any negative consequences of the deception?

5. Privacy of Subjects

How will this study respect the subjects' right to privacy, that is, their right to refuse you access to any information which falls within the private domain?

Participants have the right to refuse to answer questions and, have control over what they choose to share with the researcher, both in the demographic information sheet and in the interview. No other information be required, and as such participants rights to privacy will not be violated.

6. Confidentiality/Anonymity

6.1 How will this study ensure that (a) the identity of the subjects will be concealed and (b) the confidentiality of the information, which they will furnish to the researchers or their surrogates will be safeguarded?

Participants will be given an informed consent form which will assure them that any information learned about them during the course of the study or prior to it will be kept confidential and their identity will be protected. Participants identity will be protected in the following ways: any identifying information about the participants will be replaced by an identification number for data analysis, and the informed consent, the list of names of the participants and their corresponding numbers will be kept separately from the data by the investigator in a locked cabinet. All audiotapes of the interviews and the transcripts will be secured in a locked

environment. Audiotapes will be kept for one year after the completion of the study and will then be erased.

6.2 If applicable, explain how data will be aggregated in such a way that even should the identity of the participants become known, no reasonable inference could be made about the performance, competence, or character of any one of these participants. If data will not be aggregated, provide a detailed explanation.

Care will be taken to ensure that the identity of the participants will not be known. The data will be collected, categorized and analyzed so that any inference regarding an individual participant's contribution to the research project will not be discernable. Names will not be attached to the data and, if quotes are used all identifying information will be removed. In the event that the names of the participants became public, as previously mentioned, quotes would be stated in such a way that participants could not be identified.

Signature of
researcher:

If this project has been submitted to another ethics committee, please note the particulars:

Submit this statement to:
Office of the Associate Dean
(Academic Programs, Graduate Studies and Research)
Faculty of Education, Room 230
Tel: (514) 398-7039/2183
Fax: (514) 398-1527

APPENDIX F

Letter to Judges

June 18, 2002

Dear Judge,

Thank you for volunteering to act as a judge in my dissertation study. Your input is a valuable component of the data analysis. The goal of your involvement in this process is to validate the themes that have been identified via the formal data analysis, and to check the researcher's underlying assumptions with regard to the themes. Therefore, please be cautious not to provide a data analysis, per se. Instead, I ask you to simply be attentive to the recursive themes that seem to be coming up in each transcript. To complete this process, please follow these steps while working with each transcript:

1. Read the transcript to familiarize yourself with it. Do not take detailed notes as you read, rather jot down your first impressions either as you read or when you are done.

2. Read each transcript for the second time more thoroughly and identify the major themes that seem to be catching your attention. Please take note of these themes. If possible, please note the page/line numbers where these themes seem most prevalent.

3. Please return the transcripts along with all of your notes.

Let me know in advance how long you think it will take to complete this process. Thank you again for your assistance. Your feedback will make this study richer and more interesting.

Sincerely,

Miriam Scherer Berkovic, M. Ed
Doctoral Candidate
Counseling Psychology
McGill University

APPENDIX G

Letter to Participants

4115 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal Quebec, H3Z 1K9
April 8, 2003

Dear Participant,

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for participating in my study. Your generosity in sharing your time and experiences of growing up with a Holocaust survivor mother were an invaluable component to my research. As promised, I am sending to you a summary of the results of my study. Please take a few moments to read the summary and let me know if these results accurately reflect your experiences. Your feedback is an important part of the process. Therefore, I ask you to send me your comments, impressions and feedback in the enclosed envelope.

Once again I thank you for participating in my research and for taking the time to review and comment on this summary. Your feedback is certain to make this study richer and more interesting. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Miriam Scherer Berkovic, M. Ed
Doctoral Candidate
Counselling Psychology
McGill University

APPENDIX H

Data Analysis Summary For Participants

This study looked at the experiences of growing up as the daughter of a Jewish Holocaust survivor mother and the impact of that experience on their daughters. As such, the results of this study indicated that strength, courage, resilience and Jewish identity were transmitted to the participants by their mothers via the stories, narratives and family histories, were vital aspects of their daily lives and, subsequently became strategies for living.

The results of this study illustrated the ways in which growing up with a survivor mother effected the daughters. The term survivor was defined as anyone imprisoned in a concentration camp, work camp or ghetto; in hiding; in the underground resistance or masquerading as a non-Jew during the nazi Holocaust (1939- 1945). Daughters of Jewish Holocaust survivor mothers experienced their mothers as survivors, with all of the positive and negative ramifications that the word "survivor" evoked. For the participants of this study, survivors were conceptualized in two different ways: one which reflected the strengths and, the other which reflected the challenges.

Survivor strength was divided into three components which were: 1) values, 2) survival skills and, 3) the ability to move forward in their lives. The strengths discussed, reflected aspects of the survivor mothers that helped them through a horrific period in their lives. Values were crucial to the survivors in that they helped them maintain; their dignity, their connection to a previous way of life, their family history and, gave them hope for the future. In other words, maintaining their values was helpful in providing a form of stability in a world that was beyond comprehension or logic. The values that were fundamental to the survivors

and their daughters were: 1) the importance of being Jewish and, 2) maintaining Jewish values.

For all of the participants, remaining Jewish, maintaining a Jewish identity and passing down the mantle/heritage of being Jewish to their daughters was crucial. Whereas the affiliation of Jewish expression and observance differed among the participants, the importance of being Jewish and remaining Jewish did not. Jewish values were both explicit and implicit and included: the importance of being a good person, education and self-improvement and, transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. For many of the survivors, being Jewish and maintaining the traditions of Jewishness, and remembering as a way to: honor the dead and maintain links to the past, were a source of strength during the Holocaust years.

Another type of strength discussed in this study was that of survival skills. These skills were comprised of determination, courage, a positive attitude and included any actions that Holocaust survivors had to undertake in order to survive. The survivors' demonstrations of the importance of human dignity, kindness and courage were inspirational to their daughters. Finally, a third aspect to strength as understood by the participants was that of the ability for the survivors to move forward in their lives. For the participants of the study this was defined as letting go of the survival skills that had been beneficial in the past and assume or integrate new behaviors that were more efficacious to living in the present. The results of this study illustrated that the ability to persevere in life, stop living in survival mode and acquiring the skills necessary for living were imperative.

Challenges, on the other hand were defined as the struggles, limitations or hurdles that were difficult to surmount but not necessarily insurmountable by the participants and their

mothers. Thus, challenges were comprised of: (1) challenges to the mothers as a result of their Holocaust experiences and, (2) challenges to the mother-daughter relationship. Challenges to the mothers were in terms of the losses they faced, were described as missed opportunities or interruptions in their lives and, were a function of growing up during the Holocaust (Shoah). Challenges to the mothers were also manifested in terms of their parenting skills. Ultimately the impact of the challenges to the mother reverberated onto their daughters.

The mother-daughter relationship was fraught with challenges to both mothers and daughters as result of the mother's Holocaust (Shoah) experiences. The participants described the impact of growing up with mothers whose lives were fraught with interruptions at critical stages of their lives and the impact these interruptions had on their own growth and development. Ultimately, these interruptions had an effect on the parenting skills, expectations and interpersonal relationships that mothers had with their daughters.

The participants of the study described living their lives as the daughters of Jewish Holocaust survivor mothers. As such, the choices that they made in their lives reflected both their experiences and learning. The daughters described what they had learned from their mothers and the choices that they made in terms of: (1) their Jewishness, (2) the Holocaust and,

(3) the self. In discussing their Jewishness two sub-themes emerged. These were the importance of: (1) being Jewish and, (2) transmitting the legacy of Jewishness to the next generation. In discussing their experiences of the Holocaust (Shoah) the participants talked about their responsibilities as children of Holocaust survivor mothers to:(1) remember and never forget the Holocaust and, (2) work to protect the future. The remembering was related to honoring the memory of the past and was manifested in the daughter's quest to connect

with their mothers' experiences and with family members who had been murdered in the Holocaust (shoah). Working to protect the future took many forms. Some of the participants talked about remembering as a form of prevention, whereas others discussed working against discrimination as a way of protecting the next generation from racism.

The participants of this study shared what they learned about themselves and how they chose to live their lives as a result of their self-perceptions. The daughters talked about learning survival skills based on their interactions with their mothers. Survival, for the participants of this study, was defined as a philosophy, or an attitude that many of the participants developed. These were specifically the participants' beliefs that they had learned from their mothers and, were not necessarily the beliefs of their mothers. Participants described some of the lessons that they learned as a function of their mothers' Holocaust experiences, and as a function of their experiences of having grown up with a survivor mother.

Feeling responsible for their mothers and growing up as daughters of immigrants -- women who had strong European accents and were different from other Canadian or non-Holocaust mothers-- had an impact on the development, growth, and comfort level of the participants. Many of the participants described an awareness of difference of themselves, their families and their responsibilities in relation to their peers.

As a function of growing up with a Holocaust survivor mothers, very specific responses were evoked by the participants. The women of this study described feeling a heightened sensitivity to racism in general and anti-semitism in particular. Several participants discussed their fears with regard to being Jewish, and stated that: " the world is not a safe place for Jewish people". Others felt strongly that their own responses to anti-semitism would be

different from that of their mothers. These participants talked about standing up to and fighting injustice.

Another fundamental response to the Holocaust by the daughters of the survivors was that of taking care or protecting their mothers from the outside world. The participants stated that their mothers had already suffered enough as a result of their Holocaust experiences. As such, participants described the way in which they assumed a care-giving role for their mothers. This caring was manifested in several ways. One way was by assuming the burden of being the one to listen to their mothers' stories of the Holocaust and transmit them to the next generation. Another way was by being obedient and doing what was expected of them rather than what might have been in their own best interests. For some of the participants this took the form of getting married, for others this meant choosing a particular profession that would meet with their mother's approval rather than their own.

Participants also described their own ability to move forward in their lives. This was described as the process of personal growth, self-acceptance and healing that the daughters of Holocaust survivor mothers sought in order to alleviate some of their own sadness and pain. These women talked about learning to let go of feeling guilty for their mothers' pain. The participants also described becoming aware of their own strengths, insights into their own ways of functioning and, actions they implemented in order to allow themselves to heal. Often as a result of these efforts at moving forward in their lives the relationship between mother and daughter moved to a more positive position.

The results of this study demonstrate the importance that the daughters attributed to the stories of their mothers and the underlying messages that were transmitted in terms of their mothers' lessons, philosophies and beliefs. The participants talked about the lessons learned

from their mothers as a function of the stories, narratives and family histories as well as by watching their mothers' interactions in the world. Daughters integrated the lessons that they gleaned from their mothers and reacted or responded to life in their own way.

Transmission and resiliency were two of the themes that emerged from the data and important findings in this study. Transmission was the way in which the family educated the daughter, the way in which things from the past were imparted from generation to generation and, also addressed what the daughters of survivor mothers got from their mothers as well as what they did not get. Previous research discussed the trauma that is transmitted from mother to daughter however this study emphasized that strength, is also transmitted from mother to daughter. The participants of this study consistently described the messages of strength, determination and resilience that they received from their mothers and the messages and lessons that they had or would, pass on to their own children.