

THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING A HIDDEN CHILD  
SURVIVOR OF THE HOLOCAUST

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## ABSTRACT

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Child survivors of the Holocaust have only recently been recognized as a distinguishable group of individuals who survived the war with a different experience to the older survivors. This thesis focuses on a specific group of child survivors, those who survived by going into hiding. In hiding, some remained “visible” by hiding within convents, orphanages or with Christian families. Others were physically hidden and had to disappear from sight. Most children often combined these two experiences in their hiding.

The intent of this study was to explore the experience of these hidden children using Giorgi’s empirical phenomenological methodology and to gain a richer understanding of the nature of this experience. Phenomenological analyses of the recorded and transcribed interviews of 11 child survivors were conducted and organized into meaning units which subsequently yielded situated structures from which the general structures evolved.

These analyses revealed that the defining moment of being hidden for these children was the suppression of their identities as Jews. By being hidden, they had to deny the essence of their core selves, including their names, family details and connections to others in an effort to conceal their Jewishness. Other structures to emerge as part of hiding were the pervading fear which enveloped their entire experience in hiding and the sense of suspended normality during this period, which sometimes extended over a period of years. A “cut-offness” and personality constriction seemed to be present throughout the descriptions of these children and appears to have developed as a method of coping with the trauma of their childhood. Overlaying all of this were general insecurities about the capriciousness of the war and the contextual specifics of their actual hiding places to which each child had to adjust. Connections/relationships to another person seemed to be highly significant in the dynamics of the everyday during the experience of hiding and often shaped some of the psychological and emotional experiences of hiddenness.



## DECLARATION

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This is to certify that  
the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD.

Due acknowledgement has been made in the text  
to all other material used.

This thesis does not exceed 100,000 words.



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

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### 1.0 OVERVIEW

At the start of World War II in 1939, there were approximately 1.7 million Jews under the age of 16. Of these, a little more than 10% survived the atrocities of the Nazi regime. The intended annihilation was near complete with this massive extermination of a particular group of people...the Jews. Children were not spared any of the suffering or tortures meted out to adults. On the contrary, because they were often deemed “not useful” - they could not work or obey orders - they were often dealt with more harshly (Valent, 1995).

Of those whose stories are known, the most famous is Anne Frank, who, together with her family, hid from the Nazis in a secret attic in Amsterdam until they were discovered and sent to concentration camps; she died of typhus in Bergen-Belsen. Very few children survived the concentration camps; more did so through hiding. Some hid physically, in confined spaces, such as the attic Anne Frank’s family was in; others hid psychologically by disguising their Jewish identities and trying to blend into the Gentile world. Dwork (1991) makes the distinction between “visible” and “invisible” hidden children: those who were visible, changed their exterior, and moved around more or less publicly and openly. In contrast, those who were “invisible” were often concealed in confined spaces, a room or a cupboard, holes in the ground or the thick of a forest. There was a difference between “open” and “closed” hiding, some children experiencing both in their quest for survival.

Child survivors of the Holocaust have only recently been recognized as a developmentally distinct group of individuals who survived the war as children and had an experience which differed psychologically from other older survivors (Krell, 1985). In defining child survivors, Krell writes:



We defined a child survivor as any Jewish child who survived in Nazi-occupied Europe by whatever means, whether in hiding, or as a fighter, or in the camps. To be considered a child, the survivor should have been no older than 16 at the end of the war. (p. 398)

All survivors of the Holocaust experienced persecution in the form of physical and emotional abuse, starvation and degradation. All were witnesses to cruelty. However, the resources and coping skills that may have been available to the adult survivors often were not present in the child counterpart. Defence mechanisms and survival strategies enacted by adults may not have been available to the children facing the same persecution. Indeed, as Magnus (1997) points out, adult or older adolescents were able to experience the horror against the backdrop of what they had previously experienced as their “normal” life. Children, on the other hand, had no way to distinguish between normal life and crimes against humanity. For many children of a certain age, their first memories of life were those of terror, hiding and escaping death. There was no contrasting normality in their minds.

Until the 1980s, the description “survivors of the Holocaust” usually referred to adult survivors who had focused, immediately after the war, on establishing themselves in new countries and trying to rebuild their shattered lives as best they could. Children were seen as “appendages” to the adult survivors: going along with the migration, having to learn a new language and forced to adjust to a totally new situation. There were many silences in the dialogue between parent and child about their war experiences, as in the 1950s many parents were falsely attempting to deny the impact of the persecution and the hiding on the children. Furthermore, they themselves as survivors were unable to reflect and dwell on the terrors of the previous years. Parents often told children that they were too young to remember the dangers they had undergone or the losses many had to bear; both parent and child seemed to be encouraged to believe in this false sense of security and didn’t face the trauma. In the words of one child survivor, “*repression is not always a bad thing*,” (Magnus, 1997, p 11) and both adults and children repressed the horrors in order to get on with post-war survival.

## 1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW ON CHILD SURVIVORS

Until recently, the literature on survivors as a whole was extensive relative to those articles specifically relating to children. This was partly a result of the post-war emphasis on restitution, which required the psychiatric evaluation of survivors to enable them to be eligible for compensation monies. However, throughout the period up until the early 1980s, early attempts to rehabilitate the traumatized population emphasized material assistance while psychological issues were ignored (Jucovy, 1998). In legislation passed by the Federal Republic of Germany in the early 1950s, victims were initially indemnified for *physical* disabilities, with emotional or psychiatric conditions only recognized much later as a valid basis for claims.

Children were not eligible for compensation at all at that time. It had been decided that no compensation would be available for those who could not remember the early years of their persecution. It seemed that if they could not remember, this meant they were not damaged or affected. Childhood trauma was not developed or recognized as a concept in these early days. The focus was on the *adult* survivor. Indeed, this notion was often compounded by child survivors, who lacked any awareness of themselves as a separated group until the early 1980s; before that point, they merged their identities with their parents. They were merely the offspring, their *parents* were the survivors. It seems there was an active, albeit unconscious, attempt by the adult survivors to minimize the effects of the Holocaust on young children, and this was mirrored in the psychiatric literature until the early 1980s.

### 1.1.1 Early Literature:

There were only scant references to children in the early literature on the Holocaust (Krell, 1993). Friedman (1949), in his observations of children detained in Cyprus in 1946, remarked:

Many of the children had this in common: they all displayed fatigue beyond anything which could be satisfactorily explained by their physical condition. But a more striking characteristic was their emotional

behaviour. Indeed, one could be astonished by the shallowness of their emotions, and this was true of all those who had been exposed to continuous danger, whether or not they had been in concentration camps. This shallowness came particularly to the fore when they recounted horrible experiences with a lack of expression and marked detachment, as if they were speaking of something very unimportant to them or of an experience that had been undergone not by themselves but by some stranger. This behaviour pattern, whether it be called numbness or “affective anaesthesia,” as the French psychiatrist E. Minkowski (1946) termed it, was undoubtedly the result of a powerful repression of fears and anxieties, a repression which had made it possible for them to withstand the repeated trauma of their daily lives. (p. 84)

Interestingly, this astute observation seemed to be all but buried for the next two decades in the literature.

Winnik (1968) published the first analysis of a child survivor who suffered from psychosomatic symptoms, which included anxiety and depression. The analysis took place over three years, and while the patient, born in 1938 in France, at first denied any links to her traumatic childhood, the breakthrough came when she reported a dream involving her father - whom she had not seen since she was three years of age, when he was taken by the Nazis. Up until her analysis she had repressed any thoughts associated with her father's disappearance and found intimate relationships difficult.

Anna Freud contributed to the understanding of some young child survivors who grew up without their mothers, and who were shipped to England post-war after their liberation from Teresin. In a paper entitled “*An Experiment in Group Upbringing*” (1951), Freud and Dann had an opportunity to observe these six young children, who were approximately 3 years of age. They described them as ‘*hypersensitive, restless, aggressive and difficult to handle. They showed a heightened autoeroticism and some of them the beginning of neurotic symptoms. But they were neither deficient, delinquent, nor psychotic*’. (p. 163) Moskowitz (1983) followed up on 24 children who had survived the Holocaust, including those under the care of Freud and Dann, and

concluded that most of them had grown up into loving adults who founded families and raised children. Nevertheless, her interviews reveal that they still suffered continuing burdens of loss and feelings of being outsiders. It appeared that each change in environment for them brought back the pain of early separation experiences in their childhood traumas and persecutions.

Wijzenbeek (1977) seems to have been the one of the first commentators to differentiate between concentration camp survivors and those who survived through hiding. Although his focus was on hidden survivors in general and not children specifically, his contribution raises the question for the first time whether there is a ‘hiding syndrome’, paralleling the “concentration camp syndrome” which had already been documented. He noted:

To go into hiding was not easy. You had to separate yourself from the group, find an address and start another life. You had to leave your parents, wife or children and plunge into a dark pit.... When someone found a place to hide, he had to stay there for some months, or years; from a normal room to a hiding place somewhere; sometimes the same place or different places in many towns or villages. Sometimes the hosts were doing the utmost to please the guests, sometimes guest-host relations were tense till unbearable. Not every host or guest could cope with ambivalent relationships. Host and guest lived in constant danger. The guest lost his name, his background, and his family. (p. 69)

Wijzenbeek described the status of the adult Jews as being “*a no-man in no-man’s land*” (op. cit. p. 69) and claims that the basic trauma of hiding was the separation of these Jews from their group; that is, from their family and culture. A basic rupture to the identity of these hidden children occurred and Wijzenbeek saw the subsequent establishment of the State of Israel as a logical consequence of this rupture of identity and insecure feelings of not belonging.

Robinson (1976) looked at the later effects of persecution in survivors who were children at the time of the Nazi terror. Looking at the case histories and symptomology

of 106 patients in a psychiatric hospital in Israel, Robinson found that the younger the child at the time of the persecution, the more serious was his/her psychological damage. However, based on a comparison of their clinical diagnoses, Robinson found no difference between concentration camp survivors and those who went into hiding. He challenges Wijzenbeek's distinction between these two groups.

A description of child victims of the Holocaust and their responses to death in the context of massive destruction was first put forward by Klein (1978). He said:

Whereas in traumatic neurosis there is typically a sudden single traumatic experience which destroys the defences against excitation, the oppression suffered during the Holocaust consisted of a long series of traumatic experiences aimed against the life and physical integrity of the individual, and directed in such a way that most essential and fundamental psychological, biological and social functions would be impaired. Thus, the cumulative traumatization sustained would be likely to shake the emotional basis of the individuals' existence. (p.39)

### **1.1.2 Beginnings of Research into Child Survivors:**

Keilson (1979) was the first researcher to collect early data and follow it up in his systematic analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) of the massive and cumulative traumatization of Jewish war orphans in the Netherlands. In his interviews of 240 adults, some of whom were hidden and others deported during the Nazi occupation of Holland, he drew attention to the sequential trauma that befell these children. Keilson noted how the specific age of the child at the time of traumatization was a predictor of later symptomology, with character neuroses more common in children persecuted at an early age and depression occurring more among those older children. He also coined the term "*sequential traumatization*": that is, noting, as did Klein (1978), that the trauma experienced by children (and indeed adults) of this period arose not from a single traumatic event (such as an earthquake or a single death) but rather followed the path of a sequence of several similar negative psychological experiences. Further, Keilson differentiated between three phases of trauma for the child survivor: the first

sequence, or prelude, being during the prewar and early war years when the child is still with his family, but beginning to experience anti-Semitism and restrictions to their lives; the second sequence beginning after the break-up of the family, with transfers to either camps or hiding and with the child dependent on adults other than his own family while being exposed to the same horrors of persecution as the adult victims; and the third sequence referring to the post-war period, which involved reunification with surviving family members, re-adaptation to life post-war, and the confrontation with massive losses and chaotic post-war conditions. This differentiation has become an important tool when considering survivors of the Holocaust.

Lempp (1979) in Germany almost simultaneously published results, based on his examination of 45 reports and protocols from the files of the compensation officers, for Jewish children and young adults up until the age of 20 who suffered during the Nazi persecution, both in camps and in hiding. (Note: this age category is slightly broader than the usual definition of a child survivor, which has as its upper limit 16 years of age by the end of the war.) Lempp confirmed previous reports that the older the child at the time of persecution, the more likely he/she was to suffer from depressive moods in later life. He also pointed out that the persecution of children did not simply end with their liberation at the end of the war, a concept that was later to develop under the term “*post-traumatic embrace*”. (Tauber and van der Hal, 1995) He highlighted the complications that could occur on reunification (if any) with parents after the war. In later research (1992), Lempp followed up his original study and noted that psychic suffering emerged for these child survivors in their later years (that is, when they reached the ages of 50-70) without these symptoms having been present in their younger years.

Hogman (1983), herself a hidden child survivor, conducted interviews with eleven child survivors, and found - in contrast to Lempp - that all her subjects grew up into well-functioning adults. She concluded that those coping adaptive mechanisms that helped the children to survive during the years of persecution also helped them to readapt to life, post-liberation. She also pointed out, in a later paper, the importance of integrating often lost memories for child survivors, in order to allow them to mourn their losses and develop their identities. This notion of the curative aspect of integrating memories was

echoed by Kestenberg (1987), who encouraged the use of “imagery” in the therapeutic relationship to facilitate memory recall and to reestablish links to the first years of life.

Vegh (1979) interviewed 28 men and women, 30 years after liberation in France, most of whom were hidden as children and some of whom were orphans or half-orphans. She noted of the interviews: *“They spoke in a monotone, in a robot-like voice, their faces expressionless, as if they were talking about somebody else... A friend, notorious for his booming voice, expressed himself in a whisper, without even realizing he was doing so...”* (p. 31) Vegh commented on the unresolved grief in many of these children and the divided loyalties many of them felt between their biological parents and those who were their educators. Bettelheim (1979), in an afterword to this work, elaborated how these children were denied the opportunity to mourn appropriately for their losses in the quest for survival and how denial of this grief process hampered their subsequent relationships.

In 1985, a special edition of the *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry* was devoted to the issues of child survivors, 40 years after the war. Edited by Krell, himself a child survivor and a psychiatrist, this journal was seemingly the first time child survivors had been brought into the academic arena as a distinct body. Differentiating between adult and child survivors, Krell pointed out that many child survivors had no memory of what had been a traumatized childhood. Child survivors had no roots or personal histories with which to mourn their losses, yet they were able to engage adaptive and coping mechanisms which allowed them to integrate their profoundly shattered lives. Krell also points out that, more than anything, *“child survivors are desperately preoccupied with normality, with belonging, with coping, with not being identified as different”*. (p. 379)

Kestenberg made an enormous contribution to the understanding of child survivors, collecting many interviews and noting the therapeutic effects for the children of restoring and recovering these memories, while encouraging the professional to be “open and aware” of the experiences of the child (1983, 1985, 1988). She noted that where children had been separated from their parents, there was a disruption in the ego and superego development for many young children (1986 & 1987). Furthermore, there

was a premature aging in many of the child survivors, both physically and emotionally (1996). The demands of the war often challenged young children to display maturity beyond their years. Further research differentiated between children who underwent persecution at an early age and latency children (1996). Consistent with previous research, it seemed that the younger the children, the less they understood their situation and the less their behaviour was inhibited on a day-to-day basis, whereas older children were more aware of their situation and acted with more caution as they understood the implications of their movements. For some children, post-liberation, there were mixed loyalties between their biological parents and those who hid them during the war, between their Jewish identities and the Christian façade many had had to adopt (1996).

With the focus eventually shifting towards child survivors in the 1980s, psychiatric literature began to look at the differential experiences of children versus adults during this period. Auerhahn and Laub (1983) noted that the lack of childhood play in children who survived the camps mirrored their later inability to “play” as adults. Based on case vignettes from an analysis, they believed that *‘the survivor’s ability - or lack of it - to recover playfulness is an index both of the severity of his or her traumatic experience and of the potential for healing’*. (p. 56) Only by allowing play to occur in the analytic relationship could the survivor begin his/her healing process. Gampel (1988) too draws attention to the psychological impact on children of confronting issues of death and murder in latency years. Based on her interviews of adult child survivors in a non-clinical setting, Gampel noted that in spite of the children’s survival, the environment they had previously known had ceased to exist. Unable to grasp the full meaning of death and destruction in the face of such enormous brutalities, many children complained of a *“lack of aliveness”* and have been left with unresolved feelings of grief. Many of these survivors exhibited *“somatic complaints, difficulties with the expression of aggression, and pronounced anxieties about themselves and their children”*. (p. 509)

Again, looking at adults who were child survivors in a non-clinical setting, Mazor et.al. (1990) considered the particular coping strategies of these children. Based on questionnaires put to 15 child survivors, it seemed that the memories of their childhood persecution were becoming more vivid as they became older and were beginning to reflect on their early war years. The documentation of their experiences provided, for



some, an acknowledgement of their losses and allowed them as adults to comprehend their traumatic past.

### **1.1.3 First Conference for Hidden Child Survivors:**

1991 saw the First International Gathering of Children Hidden During World War II, with as many as 1,600 people with such experiences, from 28 countries, coming “out of hiding” for the first time. Valent (1991), in presenting to this conference, reminisces that *“not only was I still in hiding, but I did not even know I was in hiding. I was hidden from myself!”* (p. 3) After almost a decade of mutual discovery for child survivors to come into their own, it seems that the various experiences of surviving were also beginning to be recognized with this landmark conference.

Evers-Emden (1997) interviewed 73 former hidden children who attended the Hidden Child conference and reviewed a large number of questionnaires returned by those attending. Many of these hidden children reported feelings of estrangement and alienation upon returning to their biological parents post-war, after having felt abandoned by them during their time in hiding. Many former hidden children also revealed a split in their lives between outward achievement and inner fragmentation (as if still a child in hiding), struggling with identity issues and suffering.

Haber (1988) presented an analysis of a 43-year-old, female, latency-age hidden survivor of the Holocaust. The presenting problems in the analysis were *“impaired family relationships manifested by bouts of rage, jealousy, and affect lability”*. (p.642) The analysis revealed a childhood struggle for survival and Haber made the point that:

The adaptive mechanism for survival enhanced a signal anxiety that mobilized a hyperalertness (mistrust, suspicion etc.) in the child. These developing character traits were adaptive to her Holocaust environment. However, the resultant character structure of the adult produced symptoms and suffering with a nonthreatening environment. (p. 650)

#### 1.1.4 The Relationship Between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Child Survivors:

The relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder profiles and the symptomatology exhibited by those children who survived the Holocaust have not been without controversy. *"It seems that early descriptions of the 'survivor syndrome' arose as clinicians began to realize that classical psychoanalytic views of depression, mourning and response to trauma did not provide an adequate framework for understanding and treating Holocaust survivors."* (Yehudah, 1994) In part, this is of course consistent with the variation in the discussion of the effects of the Holocaust on its victims and the level of impairment thereafter. The literature reflects the full spectrum of opinions ranging from those who talk of the clinical symptoms and pathology of this group (e.g., Eitinger, 1963; Keilson, 1979; Robinson, 1979; Bower, 1994), to those who comment on the resilience and adaptability of survivors (e.g. Danieli, 1980; Valent, 1998). *"(Yet) what appear to be conspicuously absent from the Holocaust literature are references to PTSD."* (Yehuda, 1994) Furthermore, in seeking to correct earlier biases wherein Holocaust suffering was equated with psychopathology, there has been an overcorrection which discourages understanding of the Holocaust as a core existential and relational experience for both generations (Auerhahn and Laub, 1998). It has been argued that it is not appropriate to use conventional psychiatric diagnoses for Holocaust survivors or their children as the magnitude of the trauma was unlike any other trauma (Breiner, 1999), and the diagnostic system neglects the role of the perpetrator while disempowering the survivor (Ornstein, 1981). This is consistent with Herman's (1992) research on trauma, where she argues that *"the diagnostic categories of the existing psychiatric categories are simply not designed for survivors of extreme situations and do not fit them well"*. (p. 119) Valent (1995) argues that PTSD only goes a part of the way to describe the extreme and chronic traumatization of childhood trauma sequelae. In his documentation of childhood trauma and comparisons of child victims of sexual abuse and child survivors of the Holocaust, Valent suggests that *"more complex and varied diagnoses than PTSD must be considered to cater for the manifestations of post-traumatic responses in severely traumatized children"*. (p 81) Kellerman (1999) argues the case for all therapists to adopt a formal diagnostic system when working with Holocaust survivors, claiming that comparable research can only be carried out if all use the

appropriate PTSD descriptors. Although acknowledging that there are both clinical and non-clinical groups within the survivor population and there are differences even amongst these groups, Kellerman believes the multi-axial diagnostic system of the DSM will provide for a more universal understanding among researchers.

Terr (1991), in her work on childhood abuse, makes the distinction between the effects of a single traumatic blow (which she labels “Type I” trauma) and the effects of prolonged, repeated trauma (which she calls “Type II”). Children surviving the Holocaust would be classified under this “Type II” trauma; they experienced aspects of denial, psychic numbing and dissociation in their quest to survive in an environment of continual abuse and deprivations.

More recently, a study by Cohen, Brom and Dasberg (2001) indicated a slightly higher level of psychosocial symptoms in the non-clinical child survivor group and a higher level of post-traumatic symptomatology (they were compared with a norm control group). Paradoxically, while the child survivor group revealed more symptoms of distress and was heavily preoccupied with members’ memories of the Holocaust, their general symptoms fell in the normal range and were below that of clinical populations. These results reveal the complexity of classifying the distress in a dichotomous manner in our diagnostic thinking and once again support Valent’s notion of a more complex diagnostic classification.

#### **1.1.5 More Recent Research:**

There is an implicit hierarchy among survivors of the Holocaust about the type of persecution undergone, with the concentration camp symbolizing the epitome of that experience. It has been noted that survivors who were not in camps in World War II often feel reluctant to identify themselves as Holocaust survivors and often do not view their experiences as comparable to concentration camp survivors. Many such survivors consider themselves “lucky” or “spared” compared to concentration camp survivors and feel almost apologetic in their presentation of their stories. Many interviews in fact began with the child survivor saying to the researcher, *“it wasn’t really that bad compared to the others,”* or *“we weren’t really hidden”*. Perhaps, for this reason,

hidden children of the Holocaust remained a somewhat neglected area of study, and literature on hidden child survivors is somewhat sparse relative to other literature in this field.

Dasberg (1992) highlights that those children who spent the war in hiding “*were exposed to a traumatic sequence of early separation from home, fear, hiding in isolation, enforced changes in identity, and chaotic re-entry into a post-war society*”. (p. 71) In spite of their apparent resilience and adaptability, lingering echoes of their forgotten past began to emerge as this group reached middle age.

Of the three books written in the early 1990s specifically on hidden children, one had the subtitle “*The Secret Survivors of the Holocaust*” (Marks, 1993) and the other, “*Forgotten Survivors of the Holocaust*” (Stein, 1993). These books primarily presented interviews with hidden children and highlighted in their descriptions the various experiences of those who were hidden. Fogelman (1993), in an afterword to Marks’ book, discusses the psychology behind being a hidden child and notes:

In order to ensure their survival, visible hidden children were forced to lead double lives. To be visible meant to be constantly reminded of one’s new identity. Children had to rehearse their stories... Hiding one’s true identity enhanced the chance of security. Yet slip-ups would happen and role-playing was not always so simple... Hidden children lost their childhood. They had to grow up overnight and assume the adult responsibilities of caring for themselves... Feelings of abandonment are pervasive among child survivors who were abandoned by their own parents... Most important was not to express any feelings and to remain silent. One always had to be a “good child”... (p. 294-295)

Tec (1993) points out that unlike the experience of most children in the war, hidden children were special in that they were selected to be rescued. For most children, the decision to be hidden was an adult one, children were simply told what to do. Tec claims that “*whereas the decision to become a hidden child held out the promise of life, it also involved many hardships*”. (p. 285) It seems that many hidden children were left

with a legacy of conflictual feelings about their religion and about their parents and seemed to remain in a state of suspension about these issues.

Academic research in the area has tended to look at child survivors as a homogenous group. However, several studies did consider the various experiences of survival and hiding. Robinson et. al. (1994) considered the present state of people who survived the Holocaust as children through the use of a questionnaire given to 103 child survivors. While most survivors in the non-clinical sample seemed to exhibit some form of survivor syndrome symptomatology (mostly symptoms of depression and anhedonia), the survey results indicated that those in the camps were less well adjusted than those child survivors who survived through hiding. Yehuda et. al. (1997) looked at individual differences in post traumatic stress disorder profiles of Holocaust survivors in concentration camps and in hiding. They found that while the type of experience sustained, whether it was hiding or concentration camp, was not associated with different patterns of PTSD, the age at the time of the trauma and the cumulative number of stressful events were more likely to be associated with different patterns of PTSD symptoms. Another study by Magids (1998) looked at the offspring of hidden child survivors compared with the offspring of American Jewish parents to see if there were differences on the personality measurements. She found no difference between personality characteristics of the two groups. A third study by Lev-Wiesel and Amir (2000) looked at various symptoms of PTSD among four different groups of hidden children and compared their ratings on a PTSD scale and Quality of Life scale. They found that survivors who had been with foster families scored significantly higher on several of the measures of distress, while those who had been in the woods or with the partisans scored higher on several of the positive measures such as potency and self-identity.

The formulation of an Adult Child Survivor Syndrome by Dasberg (2001) is proposed to take into account the full range of the psychosocial consequences of the Holocaust in those who grew up under Nazi regimes. Consistent with the emergence only in recent years of some of the consequences of childhood deprivation, Dasberg argues that this newer definition will take into account *'the biographies, anamneses and personalities of these clients who survived the Holocaust as children and may add to the increased*

*depth of understanding and to the better management of their various geronto-psychiatric, psychosomatic and delayed post-traumatic problems and mourning". (p. 25)*

#### **1.1.6 Qualitative Studies:**

Qualitative studies on the Holocaust have been few, with much of the research tending to favour quantitative methods, or alternately present descriptive data without any analysis or interpretation. There have been several life stories published of children who were hidden during the Holocaust (e.g. Stein, 1993; Marks, 1993; Greenfeld, 1993; Vegh, 1981) and there is a huge literature of personal accounts of survivors in the form of diaries or memoirs (e.g., Frankl, 1992, Tec, 1982). Arons (2001, Presentation at International Human Science Conference) spoke of the role that the diary and the memoir – being two different genres - had for the Holocaust victim, both becoming a kind of time capsule and serving a purpose across different temporal dimensions. Therapists, too, have provided descriptions of their clinical work in analyzing child survivors (e.g. Haber, 1988; Kestenberg and Brenner, 1996). Valent's publication (1994) on child survivors is slightly different to other work, in that as well as presenting a number of stories of child survivors he also offers an analytic commentary to each of the interviewees' descriptions of their experience.

Qualitative research studies have been conducted in the area of the Holocaust in general, although not on the phenomenon of hiding as such. In Philadelphia, the Transcending Trauma Project (Hollander-Goldfein and Klinger, 1999) explores from a psychosocial stance the impact of the Holocaust on survivors and their subsequent offspring. A massive 300 intensive interviews have been collected and are being analyzed according to ethnographic research protocols, to try and develop an understanding of an integrated model of coping with extreme trauma. A secondary goal of the project was to gain an understanding of the way Jewish identity is passed on through the generations, particularly in survivor families. This large-scale project, based on multidimensional perspectives, found that the self-revealing nature of the interviews provided a rich source of material for the researchers "*which tell us more about the coping process after extreme trauma than we could ever speculate or theorize*". (Retrieved from Internet

site: <<http://www.pcfrr.org/trans.htm>>.) This research, still ongoing, has been broadened to focus on: coping and adaptation post-war; the contextualization of traumatic responses within the life-history of the survivor; consideration of multiple factors on post-trauma response patterns; individual differences among survivors; and the exploration of three generations of survivor families.

Erös, Vajda and Kovács (1998) in Hungary have looked at the transformation of Jewish identity in that country, with particular reference to the surviving Jewish population who remained there after the war. Using principles and methods of the analytic interview technique, the researchers explored with children of survivors their detailed life histories, with particular focus on identity formation, socialization and personality development in this population. They reported:

We found the signs of identity crisis and the search for identity both in what the respondents told us and what they did not talk about; the speech and the silence, the urge to talk as well as the fears and anxieties associated with raising these issues, all of this reminding us of our own ambivalent feelings. For many of us, the interview situation was the first step in a communicative experience; the interviews convinced both interviewer and interviewee that they were not quite alone in their ambivalences, in their dubious, vague feelings and knowledge about being Jewish. (Erös, Vajda & Kovács (1998), In Y. Danieli, [ed.], *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma*, p. 316)

In a reflection of the changing social and political climate of Hungary in the late '80s and '90s, there is a newly stated Jewish ethnic renaissance there with Jewish identity acquiring new aspects. However, the authors claim: *"This euphoria seems to have disappeared, as if Jewish identity and related discussions are not so important any longer. To reveal the causes of this phenomenon is a task of further research"*. (p. 323)

The work of Bar-On (1989, 1993, 1995, 1998) has focused on bringing together groups of children of survivors in Israel and descendants of perpetrators of the Holocaust, and

researched these encounters primarily using biographical interviewing and analysis. In creating a dialogue between these two groups by means of a series of seminars and encounters, Bar-On attempted to explore issues of identity formation in both populations within a group context, by working both within the two disparate groups and between them. The dialogue represented both a commitment to the past and an acknowledgment of the present. In his more recent work (1998) Bar-On conducted two one-week seminars, with both German and Israeli, third generation students. These seminars were spaced three months apart, the first in Israel, the second taking place in Germany. Based on the premise that identity-formation can occur through group processes, it was thought that *within the more secure group context, members of the group on both sides, can test, construct, and reconstruct various undiscussed aspects of their identity and memory in relation to themselves and their relevant others (Bion)*. (Bar-On, Ostrovsky and Fromer (1998), In Y. Danieli [ed]). While in earlier studies, the authors found that German and Israeli students tended to minimize their pasts in relation to their present perspective, the current study seemed to highlight each culture's separate identities and their recognition of their differences. There seemed to be a greater openness amongst participants in this study, and what had been an explosive crisis, in the earlier study within the groups, (as a young uninterested German laughed at Orthodox Jews shortly after walking out of a Holocaust memorial site), turned into a focal point of discussion in this seminar. It seemed that the dialogue between the groups, as well as the work each group did on their own in preparation for that dialogue, helped formulate their different identities and acknowledged their separate needs. This inter-group dialogue conducted through these seminars, is ongoing and continuing.

Rosenthal and Völter (1998) have also looked at three generations of two Jewish and non-Jewish German families after the unification of Germany, exploring the process by which the family history is passed down through the generations. Through a series of narrative biographical interviews, in which there is an assumption that the *"narration of an interview comes closest to the experience itself"* (cited in Danieli, p. 298), Rosenthal and Völter used hermeneutical case reconstructions to analyze these life-stories. They found similarities in the Jewish and non-Jewish German families in dealing with traumatic pasts, with a degree of silence cloaking both groups. The families' stories



would segregate unpleasant and threatening parts of their histories between 1939 and 1945: the mourning for murdered members of the Jewish family was simply excluded, as were the actions of members of the non-Jewish family during that period. Both families had in common their identification with communism, and their focus on this allowed their divergent family pasts to achieve an element of harmony. Once again, in this context, both sides were eager to identify themselves as new Germans, with antifascist sentiments meeting individual needs of denial and harmony. The study concludes that:

Social transformations require reorientation of biographies, so hitherto unquestioned family and individual pasts have to be looked at anew. This process of looking back into the past may bring up more difficulties than one is equipped to deal with, and this, in turn, may lead to renewed blocking or excuses for certain sections of one's past. (Rosenthal & Völter, (1998) In Y. Danieli, [ed]. p. 312)

The qualitative study of Rowland-Klein and Dunlop (1997) in Australia also looked at the transmission of trauma across generations, exploring the identification of parental trauma in children of Holocaust survivors. This study did a qualitative analysis of six women's narratives using a method grounded in textual analysis of semi-structured interviews. Their method was derived from the Grounded Theory research of Glaser and Strauss (1967). They found the women in their study were relatively strong and leading productive lives, despite the lingering shadows of the Holocaust on their life experiences. The researchers conclude that to further substantiate and elucidate these findings, *"research using a similar methodology, but with clinical subjects and a comparison group...would be required"*. (p. 368)

A thorough search of phenomenological literature and human science research (Simon Silverman Phenomenological Centre abstracts and human science research studies) failed to illuminate any qualitative studies specifically looking at child survivors (this was further confirmed by Professor Brooke and Professor Giorgi in personal communication, 2001). A recent study by Cohen, Brom and Dasberg (2001) looking at

child survivors' symptoms and coping after fifty years, through a quantitative questionnaire, made the point that:

Our study was based on questionnaires, which gives a statistically valid measure at best. The clinical literature, however, shows us the importance to get behind the "wall" or beyond the "trauma membrane" in order to understand the subjective world of the traumatized. Questionnaires cannot do that. (p. 11)

Thus, in spite of the recognition in the literature on child survivors of the importance of qualitative work to gain an understanding of the subjective experience of these children, to date there has been no published qualitative research on hidden children. An exception to this will be Schreiber (2001, personal correspondence), who is currently looking at hidden Jewish children in Germany as part of her Ph.D. dissertation. Using qualitative methodology combining the narrative structural analysis and a psychoanalytic approach, Schreiber interviewed 16 Jewish men and women currently still living in Germany. The experiences of Schreiber, herself a non-Jew, were quite different to the experiences of the researcher in this study, as she talks of the communicative crisis experienced by survivors of the Holocaust, still living in the land of the perpetrators in talking with non-Jewish Germans. Eitinger (1980), in his studies of survivors of the Nazi concentration camps, makes the observation that there exist conflicting interests between the victim and bystander in this situation. He says:

War and victims are something the community wants to forget; a veil of oblivion is drawn over everything painful and unpleasant. We find the two lie face to face; on one side, the victims who perhaps wish to forget but cannot, and on the other all those with strong, often unconscious motives who very intensely both wish to forget and succeed in doing so. The contrast....is frequently painful for both sides. (p. 141)

In her thesis, Schreiber scrutinizes the interviewer-interviewee relationship through the transference process and looks at the interpretations of this process. Schreiber acknowledges the lack of empathic and informed listeners which is a core factor

contributing to the communicative crisis separating the worlds of Jews and non-Jews in Germany even today. However, she emphasizes in her work that the hidden child, who often survived the war *because of* courageous Gentiles, is an experienced traveller between the polarized worlds and can contribute to bridging the rift between Jews and non-Jews in Germany. Schreiber found in her analyses that the experience of being singled out and differentiated was a resonating theme in the experiences of the German hidden children and this dominated their experience of hiding, even more so than the impact of separation or confrontation with death.

## **1.2 AIMS OF THIS STUDY**

This research aimed to explore the lived experience of being a hidden child survivor of the Holocaust, as described by adult child survivors in Australia today. Specifically, this research aimed to gain a phenomenological understanding of the experience of hiddenness for these individuals. The method by which this phenomenon was explored was the empirical phenomenological method as expounded by Giorgi (1985, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1994), aiming to explicate the phenomenon of hiding (in this research) as experienced by the child survivors of the Holocaust.



## CHAPTER 2: METHOD

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### 2.0 OVERVIEW

The focus of this research was to gain an enriched understanding of the experience of being a hidden child survivor of the Holocaust. While quantitative methods seek to explain, qualitative methods seek to understand (Kruger, personnel communication, 2001), and it was this which guided the choice of qualitative research. In a field of burgeoning literature on the Holocaust, there was a desire to go “back to the things themselves” (Husserl, 1931/1913, p. 252), and gain insight into what it meant for children to be hidden during this period.

The variety of qualitative research methods and strategies available today are a reflection of the diversity of interests across this discipline and the wealth and depth of the subject matter. Whereas traditionally, qualitative methods have been used by the various disciplines of anthropology and sociology, psychology - in its recognition of establishing a methodology more appropriate to the study of phenomenon in their natural environment - has more recently embraced the human sciences. Indeed there is “an embarrassment of riches” (Giorgi, 1994) in the human science field, opening up the selection of a particular method most suited to the phenomenon being researched. Among the many methods used today are Empirical Psychological Research (Giorgi, 1985), Grounded Theory Research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), Hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1966, Arons, 1971), Heuristic Research (Moustakas, 1994), Experiential Methods (Barrell, 1986) and Imaginal Psychology (Romanyshyn, 1986). Aanstoots (1987) provides a comparison between these major methodologies in human science and with the addition of Grounded Theory Research and Heuristic Research, which he did not include in his initial comparison, a tabulated form of these methods will be reproduced here.

**TABLE 1: Principal Methodologies in Human Science Psychology (Aanstoos)**

| <b>Methodologies</b> | <b>Leading Representative</b> | <b>Types of Raw Data</b>   | <b>Analytic Procedures</b>  | <b>Nature of Findings</b>  |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Phenomenology        | Giorgi<br>(1985)              | mundane descriptions of actually lived-through situations                          | eidetic intuition within a phenomenological attitude  | Essential structures (individual types and general)                |
| Experiential         | Barrell<br>(1986)             | mundane descriptions of generalized summaries of actually lived through situations | extraction of common factors  | Necessary and sufficient conditions to have the experience         |
| Phenomenography      | Marton<br>(1981)              | mundane descriptions of concepts about the phenomenon                              | lifting out of conceptual categories via progressive delimitation and grouping                    | abstract system of descriptive categories of conceptions           |
| Hermeneutic          | Arons<br>(1971)               | Cultural objectivations of expression (e.g. discourse)                             | Hermeneutic circle: guess and validate part/ whole dialectic via explication of pre-understanding | contextual perspective on socially meaningful phenomena            |
| Imaginal             | Romanyshyn<br>(1986)          | images from literature, mythology, architecture, etymology                         | finding and applying the appropriate metaphor to evoke a refiguring of the phenomenon             | Stories: fictions that point towards rather than away from reality |

**Additional two methodologies of the Human Sciences:**

|                          |                            |  |  |  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Grounded Research Theory | Glaser & Strauss<br>(1967) | transcribed interview of individual cases, incidents or experiences                    | coding of the transcriptions into categories and sorting of these categories | Theory as developed or constructed from the raw data                                       |
| Heuristic Research       | Moustakas<br>(1990)        | descriptions, art, poetry, self-dialogue – anything which depicts the human experience | active engagement of researcher  | creative synthesis of a compilation of depictions which remain close to individual stories |

For this research, the descriptive phenomenological method developed by Giorgi (1985) was selected, as it is a method which has clear criteria and well-developed procedures specifically for psychology. The source of raw data for this research was the mundane descriptions of actually “lived through” experiences for the subjects under investigation. The aim of the data analysis:

...is the explication of the essential structure of the phenomenon. This grasp of its essence is achieved intuitively. The technical term, eidetic intuition, is meant to signify the process of discerning the invariant coherence of the phenomenon across empirical and imaginative variations, within which the researcher has empathically immersed herself. (Aanstoos, 1985, p. 9)

The findings of the analysis develop to a general structure of the phenomenon, in which the individual structures for each subject are all considered and provide an explication of everything included in the original everyday descriptions of the phenomenon.

The descriptive phenomenological method as developed by Giorgi (1985) is based on the philosophical and phenomenological writings of Husserl (1913/1931) and Merleau-Ponty (1945/1962). This method has been sufficiently well established that only a brief sketch of the evolution of the method in psychology will be provided here.

Human sciences differ from the natural scientific approaches of Wundt (1832-1920) and Titchener (1867-1927). They were among the initial founders of experimental psychology, which assumed that studies of psychology including that of consciousness are most appropriately researched through methods of the physical sciences (Fischer, 1989). Further, phenomenological psychology challenged the dichotomous representation of the world in Cartesian terms of the separateness of the subjective and objective worlds, by recognizing that consciousness is contextual and intentional; that is, human experience exists only in terms of its interaction with the world and not in an isolated vacuum. Psychology, in its attempt to become accepted in the world of natural sciences, has for too long adopted its paradigms without discernment or consideration of its suitability for the study of human phenomena (Giorgi, 1984). While traditional

psychology looks at the measurement of human *behaviour* as its gauge, phenomenological psychology is concerned with the *meaning* of experiences, and uses descriptions of these experiences as its tool for analysis. As Giorgi (1985) asserts, in his claim for a phenomenological psychology for the human sciences:

The natural sciences have developed by assuming the external viewpoint and independence of variables prior to experimentation, and psychology began by attempting to impose the same criteria on its phenomena.... The difficulty is that while these criteria are valid for the natural sciences, they are not theoretical defensible when transposed to psychological scientific practice with human subjects. The practice of psychological science always exceeds the constraints of these criteria in a significant way and it undoubtedly would help psychology's scientific self-understanding if it invented modes of praxis more consonant with the givens of its research situation as revealed by more open-ended and precise descriptions. (p. 37)

Psychology must acknowledge the “*reality of the realm of meaningful experience as the fundamental locus of knowledge*” (Valle and Halling, 1989, p.43) and phenomenological psychology is an attempt to do this. Phenomenological psychology recognizes that the world we live in is “*Mitwelt*”, a world which we share and experience with others (Kruger, 1979). Phenomenological research is a journey of discovery to reveal the psychological meaning of an experience or the psychological structure of a phenomenon as it is experienced in the consciousness of the subject. It is important to distinguish between the universal truths sought after by philosophical phenomenology and the structures obtained by people in phenomenological psychology, and to state that psychology does not aim to find a universality in its structure. As Karlsson (1993) writes:

Philosophers want to know what learning is regardless of context, in its most universal sense, without cultural or social constraints. But if psychologists pursue the essence to that level of abstraction or that level of universality, our subject matter is transcended. Thus psychologists

seek a more contextualized, a more socialized, a more limited kind of invariant meaning of a description. (p. 48)

Kruger (1979) makes a similar claim, explaining that the human science researcher does not strive for the universal truth but rather makes explicit the essential understanding of a phenomenon.

Thus, in this research, what was being sought was not a *universal* understanding of hiddenness, but rather what the experience of hiding meant for these children. By using Giorgi's (1988) method of the "phenomenological reduction" and "imaginative variation", an understanding of the essence of hiding for these children will be obtained. Both these terms are based on Husserl's terminology; however, it is important to distinguish between the Husserlian search for essences which aim for a philosophical purity, and the invariant *psychological* meanings, which will be obtained in this research. In Giorgi's words:

The reduction implies two things: (1) that one brackets or renders non-influential what one knows freshly; and (2) that one refrains from saying that the given is what it appears to be. In brief, one neither imposes upon a given nor makes essential claims about it. (p. 172)

This process is achieved by the application of Husserl's notion of "free imagination", that is:

In this process, one attempts to vary the descriptive features of the given phenomenon in imagination in order to see what the truly invariant – or essential – features of that phenomenon are. If a characteristic is varied that leaves the identity of the phenomenon intact, it is not essential; if a change of the feature transforms the identity, then it would be essentially related to the identity that is guiding the variation. (p. 172)

Similarly, Merleau-Ponty (1945/1964) describes the process of imaginative variation as follows:



In order to grasp an essence, we consider a concrete experience and then we make it change in our thought, trying to imagine it as effectively modified in all respects. That which remains invariable through those changes is the essence of the phenomenon in question. (p. 63)

Thus the search for essences in psychological terms is not the search for the ultimate and most universal meaning, such as suggested by Husserl, but is a phenomenon explicated within the horizon of human experience.

## 2.1 SUBJECTS

The raw data of this research consisted of the descriptions by child survivors of the Holocaust of their experience of hiding. The usual number of subjects to be included varies from 1-20 (Polkinghorne, 1989) and the researcher is unable to appoint the number to be included before the data collection. As Wertz (1993) states:

Criteria for the numbers of subjects are also easy to specify in general but require difficult reflection in individual projects. The researcher uses the number of subjects necessary to manifest the various aspect of the whole phenomenon (each individual discloses a given aspect with greater or less salience) and the variations of the phenomenon critical for achieving the aimed-at-generality (a given subject discloses an idiosyncratic and perhaps typical variation). (Wertz, p. 36, cited in Aanstoos, 1993)

Subjects were selected on their basis of having been hidden and their ability to describe this phenomenon. The usual requirement for a description to be included as a depiction of the phenomenon is that the description be psychologically rich and well grounded in a concrete way in the everyday lived experience. That is, *“the most basic, minimal criterion for the choice is whether a potential subject has or can develop some illuminating relation to the phenomenon under study.”* (Wertz, 1993, p. 36)

However, this criterion was somewhat compromised in these descriptions, a fact of which the researcher became aware, only as a number of descriptions were collected. It seems that child survivors of the Holocaust were somewhat stripped of psychological richness in their descriptions of the experience of hiding. Mirroring their experience of hiding, (where they had to constrict themselves emotionally in order to survive in both a physical and psychological manner), this constriction of personality seemed to spill over into their descriptions. At times it seemed as if the child survivors were talking of someone other than themselves in their descriptions, an observation made by Friedman (1949) when he observed a young group of war orphans on a ship in Cyprus. The nature of the phenomenon itself dictated the richness of the descriptions obtained, and it was these descriptions, although some were sparse in their psychological content, that were examined in this study.

A total of eleven interviews were collected from child survivors. A variety of demographic details prevailed across these children, both in terms of country of origin, age at time of hiding, and the actual experience of hiding (either singular or multiple). A table detailing all these variables will be presented below.

**TABLE 2: Demographic Details of the Child Survivors' Hiding**

| Number | Name  | Age, Country,<br>Time in Hiding | How/Where They Were Hidden  |
|--------|-------|---------------------------------|---|
| 1.     | F     | 6<br>Brussels<br>2 ½ years      | False identity - children's holiday home<br>- family in country<br>- Christian family<br>- spinster lady<br>- rural café with woman<br>- couple with children |
| 2.     | SK    | 7<br>4 years<br>Belgium         | Escapade to France with brother, lived in Attic<br>False identity - convent   |
| 3.     | D     | 10<br>Hungary<br>18 months      | Hidden in house with other Jewish Children<br>Hidden in ghetto  |
| 4.     | R     | 6<br>Poland<br>4 ½ years        | Hid in cupboard for 14 months<br>False identity - disguised as a girl<br>- partisans in forest  |
| 5.     | ME    | 4 ½<br>Amsterdam<br>3 ½ years   | False identity - hid with Christian family  |
| 6.     | E     | Infant<br>Poland<br>15 months   | Hid in potato pit in Gentile yard   |
| 7.     | S     | 6<br>Hungary<br>18 months       | False identity - convent<br>- remote apartment  |
| 8.     | Mrs P | 8<br>Poland<br>2 years          | Hid with Christian family with mother   |
| 9.     | P     | 7<br>Budapest<br>1 year         | False identity - farm<br>- protected Red Cross<br>- Christian Nanny   |
| 10.    | Dr M  | 3<br>Poland<br>3 years          | Hid in cellar of home<br>False identity - as Christians<br>Hid in silo in country   |
| 11.    | MH    | Hungary                         | False identity - lived with cleaning woman<br>(commercial arrangement)  |

Of the eleven interviews, all were recorded, transcribed and analyzed according to the specific rigorous method prescribed by Giorgi (1985). One interview will be included in the main body of this research, with all the details of the analysis included, while the other interviews are appended to the thesis. Subjects were asked: *“Describe as clearly and accurately as possible, your experience of being hidden...”*

The interviews were open-ended; asking the child survivors to describe their experience of being hidden, and other than asking for clarification or elaboration of a point, no direction was given. Following one interview with a particular subject (the first one studied), the researcher requested a second interview when consideration of the initial description was not considered to be a rich enough description of hiddenness. This was partly due to the incomplete familiarization of the researcher with the methodological techniques of the interview, which required a continual refocusing on the phenomenon being studied, hiding, rather than on the war experiences of the children in general. The second interview was granted and additional descriptions were obtained of the phenomenon.

Out of the eleven interviews, one (MH) was not included in the analysis, as his description of the phenomenon was felt to be almost completely lacking in the psychological, instead focusing very much on the physical aspects of the hiding experience. Van Kaam (1969) has proposed that for the subject to be able to provide a full and sensitive description of the phenomenon under consideration, the subject must be articulate and have the ability to express sensitive thoughts or feelings without inhibition; and using this criterion, MH was excluded from the analysis. It could be argued that in fact the nature of the limited language of the interview is in fact revealing of the phenomenon of hiding. In other words, his limited affect and restricted psychological articulation are indeed a reflection of his hiding experience and this “frozenness” in speech and limited description should be thought of in this fashion as contributing to our knowledge of hiddenness as experienced by these children. Similarly, research conducted by Halling (2002, personal communication) on the experience of feeling hopeless, revealed that many of the interviewees seemed not to know how to articulate what it was like to feel hopeless.

Many of those interviewed seemed not to know how to articulate what it was like to feel hopeless; it was often the case that being in despair left them virtually mute. Metaphor was just about the only vehicle for communicating something about what had happened to them.

Similarly with the protocol of MH. Whilst in fact the lack of richness of the description prevented a line-by-line analysis of the material, the impoverished nature of the interview itself in fact, became a source of information of the deprivation and emotional emptiness experienced by the subject at the time, as expressed to the best of his ability.

It should be pointed out that researchers on childhood trauma (e.g. Terr, 1991) acknowledge that traumatic events are often more memorable in a child's mind than ordinary life events. That is, it is the unremarkable and unusual occurrences that stand out in sharp relief to the routine events of everyday life. Dr M commented in this study that although he was only three at the time the hiding began for his family, he has vivid memories of these events. He said: "I am an only child and my earliest recollections of childhood, I suppose, were, well, the things I traumatically remember, much more so than things that are pleasant." None of the subjects interviewed seemed to have any difficulty in remembering their time in hiding, despite the 50-odd years that have elapsed since then. One subject, E, was anomalous in the data in that she was an infant at the time of her hiding, and her memories were of what her mother had told her. E was a rather unusual case in her own right, as she was hidden with her mother in a pit for thirteen months, and has been living with her mother since then. Both she and her mother seemed to be permanently immersed in the Holocaust, even in the remote countryside of Australia where they live. She is an artist, surrounded by enormous canvases depicting Holocaust themes, and she has heard her mother's story so often that it has become her own. She is completely enmeshed in her mother's world and related to me their time in hiding totally in the first person, although she could not have conceivably remembered the events when they happened to her. Hiding has become the paradigm of E's being as she struggles to find reassurance and security in her everyday life. In spite of the fact that E's descriptions of hiding were primarily those that were transmitted to her from a very early age by her mother rather than being her own (as were the other interviewees' data), her description of the phenomenon is a valid one in

adding richness to the researcher's understanding of hiding (Giorgi, personal communication, 2001) and will be included with the rest of the data.

## **2.2 A NOTE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUBJECTS AND THE RESEARCHER**

The hermeneutical tradition concerns itself with the study of understanding, in particular, the study of understanding a text. Gadamer, a student of Heidegger, was the principal exponent of philosophical hermeneutics (1966, 1975). Gadamer's philosophy will be elaborated upon here to illuminate and further inform the researchers' own understanding of the phenomenon of hiddenness as well as how this perspective has informed the researchers relationship to the interviewee or the "text of the subjects".

Gadamer claimed that prejudices are an inevitable part of any aspect of interpretation, which is inherent in any dialogue. However, rather than these prejudices be discounted or ignored, Gadamer's radical suggestion was that they be embraced as a further source of data which adds to the understanding trying to be attained. In his own words (1966) :

Prejudices are not necessarily unjustified and erroneous, so that they inevitably distort the truth. In fact, the historicity of our existence entails that prejudices, in the literal sense of the word, constitute the initial directedness of our whole ability to experience. Prejudices are biases of our openness to the world. They are simply conditions whereby we experience something- whereby what we encounter says something to us. This formulation certainly does not mean that we are enclosed within a wall of prejudices and only let through the narrow portals those things that can produce a pass saying, "Nothing new will be said here". Instead we welcome just that guest who promises something new to our curiosity.

Thus, Gadamer emphasised the critical role of the researcher of the text, and acknowledges the individuals engagement with the text as one of the key informants about the data being investigated. Rather than hermeneutics being the task of achieving

absolute meaning, meaning only evolves as a dialogue between ones own presuppositions and that of the other subject. Thus a reflexive dimension of understanding is introduced here.

Salner, (1996) elaborates on this point further, particularly in relation to qualitative research. Salner notes that:

Correcting or reducing bias is at the heart of teaching research, regardless of the type of methodology employed. However, in qualitative research the task is complicated that qualitative methods are usually embedded in everyday situations where everyday habits of mind and practice are difficult to change. ...Qualitative research is an essentially hermeneutic endeavour. Once we have fixed our participation in the everyday world of our subjects in a written record, for example, in transcribed interviews, such records have become in effect texts....Because of the ambiguous relationship between symbols of “things” and the “things-themselves”, we have entered the hermeneutic circle-a form of self-reflexivity in which the referential relationship between text and world is dialectical and nonreducible. However, this circle does not revolve around the text (or the symbol) in isolation, but includes and has reference to the direct participation by the researcher that engendered the need to symbolise in the first place (p. 17).

Salner points out the importance of the researcher being aware of “his story” and how this influences the gathering of the research data. Thus the hermeneutical circle and to-and-fro dialogue does not only exist *within* a text, but must also be applied in a self-reflexive way between the researcher and the text or interview subject. Thus, taking the interview subject as the text which provides a description of conscious experience, the text is reflected upon and interpreted as a whole or Gestalt of interconnected meanings. The creative and interpretative act of the dialectical reverberation between the particular and the broader context of the text and its’ meaning *as well as* the researchers own perspective to that work, can be derived and informed by this understanding of the relationship. Again, in Salner’s words, “*these stories are collectively acceptable only*

*insofar as researchers are willing and capable to understand, not only the experience of their subjects, but the ways in which they have filtered subjects' experience through their own".*

Similarly, Gadamer's stance informs that one brings to any text or situation a set of presuppositions that have emerged from one's own historical and cultural background and experiences. Instead of trying to eradicate this set of "prejudices" (which Gadamer would argue is not possible), Gadamer embraces it as part of the research dialogue and says it is critical that this reality be accounted for.

In this study, both the researcher and the subjects came from the same background, albeit that the researcher is a child of survivors (that is second generation survivor) as opposed to the child survivors, who were the informants of this research. The cultural background, that is European, was familiar to the researcher, who is, once again, a child of European migrants. This cultural similarity certainly allowed for comfort and ease amongst the subjects of this research. While not all subjects were known personally to the researcher prior to the interview, there was a certain cultural rapport, between subject and researcher, present even before the interview began. Some of the subjects, used Yiddish phrases, or words, in their interview, or made cultural specific references that were easily understood by the researcher, and allowed for a greater sense of ease and comfort, while difficult and sensitive issues were being spoken about.

In contrast, Schreiber (2002) a researcher in Germany, looking at hidden children there, talks of a "crisis of testimony" in narrative interviews between a non-Jewish sociologist and Jewish victims of the Shoah (Holocaust) in Germany. Schreiber elaborates in her research, how the

"Separate worlds" – no matter if pertaining to inner or outer ones – render not only partnership, but even communication between members of two groups difficult. Most biographical researchers have probably experienced that the possibility of a "shared world" is a prerequisite for any dialogue, not only a desired consequence.



It was an important part of Schreiber's' research to acknowledge her role as a German researcher, interviewing victims of Germany's' Holocaust, and the effect this relationship had on the interview situation. It seemed one of her interviewees encapsulated this "crisis of witnessing" as she began to relate her narrative. Lore Frühling began her interview, by expressing her doubts about whether they would be able to communicate with each other successfully:

You see,...it's a subject you talk about but, naturally, one tends to repress details....And you weren't there yourself when it happened, so you won't be able to ask the questions you would have then, and I won't ask them, because a lot is being repressed. That's how it's always been and that's how it still is today.

Her introductory remarks indicates the precarious beginning Schreiber had to face in her interviews, embodied in a context of suspicion and distrust, could she ever really understand?

This research however, benefited from a shared cultural context between the researcher and the interviewees. Coming from the same background as the subjects of the study, there was an immediate empathy present, that seemed to be absent in Schreiber's work. Often, personal details were exchanged, such as "*where were your parents from*" , or "*were they hidden?*" almost as if these preliminaries established the researchers credentials in the area, rather than any academic or clinical qualifications. Rather than eliminate these prejudices and biases in the researchers' stance, these cultural factors in fact seemed to enhance the rapport between researcher and subject, as alluded to by the hermeneutic work of Gadamer, and became an important part of the work in which sensitive and highly personal descriptions were obtained with regards to their experience of hiding.

### **2.3 A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE ON DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN THE RESEARCH**

One other point to note, in considering the complexities of the research, is that despite the horrific material being described in the experiences of being hidden (including, for some children, loss of a parent, witnessing of deaths, abandonment with strangers and other highly charged important stressors for the child), there was a remarkable lack of affect accompanying these stories. It seems that one of the survival strategies children had to invoke while they were being hidden was to cut themselves off from feeling any emotions: whether crying at being left alone, complaining about lack of food, rejection by peers or living in cramped uncomfortable conditions. Yet for many of these children, it seems the “cut-offness” then remained with them for the rest of their lives, an unwanted legacy from those times when they had to suppress their emotions. Some used humour in their interviews, particularly when an emotive issue was being related, or skipped over any reference to pain by changing the tack of the interview. R is a case in point. An eight-year-old boy when he first hid with his parents in a cupboard for a year, R turned his story into a remarkable adventure laced with a lot of humour. He said of his time in the cupboard that finally he had his father’s attention for the entire year, as there was nowhere else for him to go! Later on in his hiding, R hid in the forest with Polish partisans, climbing in trees or submerging himself in the wintertime river to camouflage his presence from the enemy. To listen to R’s telling of his story, it seemed more like a friendly game of soldiers than an all too real process of hide and seek terrifying for a pre-adolescent boy. Yet R insisted there was no psychological aspect to his story; his tale was very focused on the physical details and arrangements of the hiding rather than the pain of separation, grief at his father’s killing, fear of being alone and having to rely on his own resources.

The lack of affect in his interview was echoed by many of the others, whose descriptions seemed to be stripped of psychological meaning and constrained in the emotional and psychological aspects of their experience. This highlighted the challenges of this research, where there was an inherent difficulty for the researcher in remaining faithful to the actual data and descriptions of the phenomenon as portrayed by people with a diminished capacity to articulate their psychological world. While noting some of the defence mechanisms used in these interviews which “hid” their true

emotional experiences of the time, it became difficult to tease out from their constrained descriptions the actual content of how that experience was felt by them. Thus the challenge for the researcher was to examine and analyze descriptions lacking in a psychological dimension, in order to gain and develop an enriched understanding of the very experience of hiding which, for some of these children, remained inaccessible or hidden to them.

## **2.4 THE STEPS OF THE ANALYSIS**

The aim of phenomenological inquiry is to reveal and unravel the structures, logic, and interrelationships that obtain in the phenomenon under inspection. Data analysis is the core stage of research efforts in phenomenological psychology. Its purpose is to derive from the collection of protocols, with their naïve descriptions to specific examples of the essential features of that experience. The researcher must glean from the examples an accurate description of their contents and the particular structural relationship that coheres the elements into a unified experience. (Polkinghorne, (1998) In R. Valle & S. Halling, [eds.], p. 50)

The raw data in this research consisted of the transcribed descriptions by child survivors of the Holocaust of their experience of being hidden. Hiddenness had different meanings for the interviewed subjects and the researcher allowed each individual to describe his/her own subjective version of hiding. For example, most understood “hidden” to be physically hidden from view; yet apart from two subjects, the remaining children were not hidden in this way but were in open hiding - that is hidden by pretending to be Christian and living in an open manner. Many apologized, saying this was not really hiding, although this distinction between “open” and “closed” hiding has been made in the literature in recognition of the various forms of hiding (Dwork, 1991; Marks, 1993; Stein, 1993). One woman felt she was still hiding some 50 years after the war, and had also hidden her own Grandson, in recent years. Another man, too, felt his hiding did not end with liberation, but continued well into his adult years, with his parents still bringing him up and educating him as a Catholic in Melbourne, Australia: a

secret he discovered only following their deaths. All these descriptions of hiding were included in the analysis and explication of the essential features of this phenomenon.

Before proceeding with the readings of the transcribed descriptions, the researcher had to adopt what is known as the "phenomenological attitude". This involves a two-staged procedure, consisting of (1) a bracketing of all information prior to the reading (epoche); and (2) the eidetic reduction. The bracketing consists of suspending one's natural attitude towards the phenomenon, "*including our past knowledge of the phenomenon encountered*" (Giorgi, 1997, p.248). This suspension of all inherent biases for preconceptions allows the researcher to approach the phenomenon afresh. The second part of the analysis, the "eidetic reduction", involves the transition from the individual features of the phenomenon to its more general essences. Particular features of a phenomenon are set aside while that which is universal is noted.

The steps of the analysis can be described as follows:

**(1) The researcher reads the full description in order to get a sense of whole.** This initial reading of the protocol is carried out by the researcher without any preconceived ideas or intentions in place. The descriptions are allowed to "wash over" the researcher in their original form. There is a sense of trying to obtain the "gestalt" view of the interview while reading in this naïve fashion.

**(2) The text is broken down into meaning units, with each meaning unit representing a discrete, self-contained meaning from a psychological perspective.** This is accomplished by the researcher reading the text and recording each occasion on which a change in meaning occurs in the description. At this point, a slash is made in the raw data of the text to indicate these changes. This process involves the researcher's judgement and may require several readings of the text. The interviewee's own language remains untouched at this stage. As Giorgi (1985) puts it:

It is essential for the method that the discriminations take place first, before being interrogated further (which is the next step), and that they be done spontaneously, although within the attitude and set described above,

(that is, within a psychological attitude and the set that the description is to be taken as an example of learning). (p. 11)

Importantly, following Gurwitsch (1964/1957), Giorgi (1985) makes the distinction that:

The meaning units constituted by this procedure are understood to be constituents and not elements.... A constituent is a part determined in such a way that it is context laden. An element is a part determined in such a way that its meaning is as much as possible independent of context. Thus the letter “I” as the 12<sup>th</sup> letter of the alphabet means the same regardless of where it is found, whereas the specific concrete meaning of a word more often than not depends upon the whole sentence or even the paragraph. The former would be an element, the latter a constituent. (p. 14)

**(3) The researcher transforms the meaning units into psychological language.** This is one of the more difficult aspects of the data analysis, where the researcher transforms the original text into psychological language with respect to the phenomenon under investigation: that is, hiddenness. This is achieved through two thought processes, that of reflection and that of imaginative variation. In the reflection, the researcher considers in psychological terms what is truly being described in the meaning unit under consideration. *“The ultimate object of reflection was not the description itself (despite its necessity for this reflection), but the subject’s actual situation as lived by him.”* (M. Parker, 1985, p. 68) Imaginative variation asks the researcher to consider the psychological meaning unit extracted and imagine it in a variety of situations beyond the immediate one, to determine the essential invariant necessary for the experience to qualify as an instance of the phenomenon. As Wertz (1983) wrote:

The transformation into psychological language is not a mere translation into or replacement with the abstract, sedimented terms of psychology. What is involved here is original speaking on the part of the researcher, for this phase is psychology in the making. (p. 210)

These transformations, which provide a psychological illumination of the phenomenon, are stated in the third person, and are the psychological transformations of the meaning units of the previous steps. They still remain individual or situated for each description at this point. Giorgi (1985) states:

These transformations are necessary, we said, because the descriptions by the naïve subjects express in a cryptic way multiple realities, and we want to elucidate the psychological aspects in a depth appropriate for the understanding of the events. (p. 18)

If the meaning unit was not considered relevant in terms of the phenomenon being investigated, that is, hiddenness, they were marked as “not relevatory of hiding” (NROH) in the transformation column.

**(4) A situated structure was written out for each individual subject describing the phenomenon.** These specific descriptions of the phenomenon of hiding, related to each individual interview as described the phenomenon of hiding as it revealed itself – in the experience of hiding - to each subject. The situated structure of F will be recorded in Chapter 3, with the remaining situated structures for each subject being appended to this work.

**(5) The synthesis of the situated structures into a general statement or structure describing the experience of hiding.** After completing the situated descriptions in the previous stage, the researcher develops a general description of the phenomenon of hiding from a synthesis of the individual subjects. All of the data in the form of the transformed meaning units are considered in the formulation of the general structure and the attitude of the psychological reduction is maintained throughout this process. While it is hoped a single general structure will be achieved in this last stage, the data do not always allow for this unique result, and more often a multifaceted structure will be presented, or differing levels of the general structure of the phenomenon being investigated. At the same time, for a structure to be considered general, it did not have to be present in more than one subject, or present in all subjects. Rather as Parker (1986) suggests, what is explicit in one subject may be implicit in other subjects and may therefore be of importance as a contribution towards a general structure. The

general structure should reflect the essence of the experience of hiding as it was lived by these child survivors, taking in the necessary and sufficient conditions, constituents and structural relations that constitute the phenomenon of hiding in general. This generalization of the structure considers all the particular aspects of the description of hiding and attempts to synthesize them into a coherent general description of the phenomenon. This stage of the analysis is a fluid one and requires the researcher to consider each encapsulation of the individual in terms of the general, all the while keeping in mind Wertz's (1983) two questions: (1) can we have the phenomenon (of hiding) without this description and (2) if we only have this description, will we have the whole phenomenon? Although not every structure will meet the criteria of these two questions, nevertheless the consideration of the individual structures in this manner will allow a more generalized understanding of the phenomenon of hiding.

## **2.5 COLLECTION OF THE INTERVIEWS**

Interviews all took place in the subjects' homes, as it was considered they would feel most comfortable in their own environments in relating what could potentially be traumatic material. Rapport was established quite easily with all subjects, even with those who were unknown to the researcher. This could possibly be due to the empathic understanding there was between researcher and subject, both coming from the same cultural background (Vegh, 1984). Interviews lasted for approximately an hour and a half.

Although the researcher was primarily interested in the experience of hiding for these individuals, the nature of the material itself often led the subject to continue on from his/her period of hiding and relate the impact of the hiding and the war period on the rest of their lives. No attempt was made to stop this process and often in this retelling of their lives the interviewees would interlace aspects of being hidden which they were only able to reflect upon in their later years, after the hiding had actually finished. A chapter on the impact of hiding on their later lives will be included in the discussion section.



## CHAPTER 3: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

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### 3.0 OVERVIEW

This chapter will discuss the findings of the phenomenological analyses of the interviews with child survivors. There were eleven, ten of which were analyzed according to the principles of phenomenological psychology. One interview was considered too sparse in its psychological description of the experience to allow for analysis. Further, another interview was with a woman who was a baby at the time of hiding and thus, while considered a child survivor, her memories were essentially her mother's and not her own. Although both self-descriptions and descriptions by another source validly describe the experience of being hidden (Giorgi, personnel communication, 2001) and E's interview was included in the analyses, some mention will be made of her particular case in a later section.

The first part of this chapter will discuss the individual analyses of each interview, that is, the experience of being hidden will be analyzed as to its meaning for each of the children interviewed. One analysis, 'F', will be given in full to illustrate the methodological procedure in detail, whilst the others will be appended.

The second part of this chapter will focus on the general structures of the analyses and look at that which is common across the individual analyses which thus become part of the General Structure of the phenomenon. While the General Structures may not be explicit in each of the individual interviews and analyses, if they are considered to be implicit in all cases they will be included as a General Structure of the phenomenon of hiding (Wertz, 1983).



### 3.1 OVERVIEW OF INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS

#### 3.1.1 Subject Histories

The demographic details of the ten interviews that were analyzed were given and tabulated in Chapter Two (refer Table 2). The countries of origin, ages of the children and places of hiding all varied across the interviews, yet these were not considered in the analysis of the experience of hiding. The focus of the analysis of the interviews was *the experience of hiding*, and each interview was analyzed with a view to exploring this phenomenon with deeper levels of understanding and enrichment. In Wertz's description (1983, p. 199) "*the individual phenomenological description of the phenomenon is a single person's expression of the matter we wish to study with all irrelevant statements excluded*". The following, F, is one such description which will illustrate the various steps of the phenomenological method taken to explore the experience of being hidden. F was chosen to be the exemplar interview, primarily because she was an extremely articulate subject, who was able to remain faithful to the phenomenon being explored, that is, hiddenness. Unlike some of the other subjects, F did not go on to discuss her life post-war, only in the context of being hidden. In fact after all the analysis were carried out, and the transformations into meaning units were established, it became evident, that F had the fewest number of meaning Units that were put aside as Not Relevant. The richness of her subject allowed for the explication of the phenomenon of hiding through the steps of the analysis, in a clear manner which will be apparent in the following analysis.

#### 3.1.2 Subject 1: 'F' (a) Background details:

F was born in Brussels in 1934 and was the elder of two sisters. Most of her extended family lived in Warsaw, Poland and her parents had moved to Brussels from Poland several years before she was born. F's period of hiding lasted from 1942 to liberation in Belgium later and consisted of six different moves to different homes where she was expected to integrate with the "host family". Her sister was with her in her first "hiding place", in a children's holiday home, but in the other five places F was "hidden" on her own. In between these periods in hiding, F returned to her parents briefly until they were

able to place her at a new home. Her parents' "home" during this period also changed a number of times.

### **3.1.2 (b) F's Original Interview of her Experience of Being Hidden:**

(R refers to the researcher and F the subject in the following interview)

**R: What I would like to hear from you is your story and your experience of being hidden, in your own words.**

F: All right. Well, I was born in Brussels in 1934. Belgium...war broke out in Belgium in May 1940, and my parents were immigrants from Poland, from Warsaw, and they'd come to Brussels in about 1930. So we still had a lot of family...most of...all the family in fact were left behind and were all in Warsaw.

Um, all the sigh...you want me to start straight into the hiding part?

Well, the first thing we did was run away to France before the Germans arrived, and we got as far as the north west tip, Normandy, no, Brittany, Brittany. And by that time my father had been conscripted into the Polish army because he was still a Polish citizen, and my mother and my sister and myself and a whole lot of other Jewish people finished up in this tiny little French village, and we stayed there ...I haven't got a very good thing with time at this point, but perhaps for a couple of months, and then the Germans, the Germans arrived there just a few days after we did.

Very friendly at that point. So then we went back to Brussels in the late summer or early autumn, and I started school, and my father, my father who had left, you know the Polish army I suppose fell apart, and all these people just took off their uniforms and ran away, and my father was in the south of France in the free part, and he wanted us to come there so we would cross into Switzerland. But mum wouldn't go along with this plan, so dad came back to Brussels as well, and life seemed to go on more or less normally.

It was the end of 1940. Restrictions must have started (to) come in at the beginning of 1942, and then dad who was, dad was a manufacturer of leather gloves, and he ran his own business and then he wasn't....Jews were not allowed to run businesses any more, and then Jewish children were not supposed to go to school. I'm not entirely clear about whether we were not supposed to go to school, or whether in fact it was too dangerous. Whether there was a clear sort of regulation that we were not supposed to be there, and meanwhile we'd had to start wearing the yellow star, and I remember that my mother sewed this yellow star on my coat. And we had these kind of satchels that we carried to school but sort of covered the yellow star, but we didn't wear it for very long.

In the summer of 1942 my sister and I got sent off to a place which was still in Brussels, a bit on the outskirts, and it was a children's holiday home. Now I don't know, I don't know, or didn't know, why we were there. I wasn't given any sort of explanation. I remember being very very (sic) miserable there, very lonely, and the strange thing was that there were all these children, and obviously there was sort of a happy purpose to the place, but it was the first time I'd been sort of really separated from my parents, and I was just, just totally lost.

I'm trying to remember when I sort of became, became aware of the fear, but I didn't know much at that point. I mean the Germans used to march up and down the streets and that was scary enough in itself. They'd be marching at 6 o'clock in the morning along the street, and you could hear them ... The whole street was shaking with the pounding and their loud singing, and that was scary. And I suppose from running away...there'd been bombing and we'd been in Paris, and we'd run down into the Metro for shelter

So there was all that background, you know, that there was the war, that something very scary was going on, but specifically I didn't have any idea, and in this children's holiday place, one episode stands out quite clearly for me. And that was um that the lady who ran it sent me off on an errand with her, I think, niece. The niece must have been a bit older than me and I was about eight and a half. So it was in a way a privilege she sent me off with this niece, and it was a beautiful sunny day and we went on trams

and whatever we, wherever we went. Suddenly I realized that we (were) only like a couple of blocks from where we used to live. From where my parents were. And I remember getting very excited about this and thinking that we could go and surprise them. I don't think I said anything to that girl, and then it suddenly hit me that this was something I was not supposed to do. That they might be very angry. That there was something scary about it, and so I dropped this whole, I just dropped this whole plan.

We stayed, I think we stayed in that place for perhaps a month. There were lots of Jewish children there. Parents would come visiting on a Sunday. I can remember that was very social, social occasion. So my parents came on the Sunday and visited, and then my mother took us out of there, and she felt that it wasn't safe. And apparently soon after, the Germans did raid the place. I don't know what happened.

Um, after that we went out to the country and I don't know how, I don't know how mum found all these places, but we went out to the country, and we stayed with a family who sort of um they fostered children, you know, so they fostered, they had I think about eight Jewish children staying there with them in a very isolated place. They were very unpleasant people. They had a boy who constantly wet his bed, and who was rather a pest, and there was nothing, there was nothing for us children to do there.

**R: Were you with your brother there?**

F: No, I was there with my sister. I was there with my sister. And the other good thing about it was....although I used to worry...I used to worry about my sister and I used to worry about the fact that we weren't getting properly fed, and the only good thing about it was I had a friend there, some children of a family that we were friendly with, and she was there as well, and I think we sort of kept each other company a bit.

And the man, and the man who was the sort of miserable... miserable fellow with some kind of disability, used to threaten us, and he used to say things like, you know, if the Germans, if the Germans get you that will be the end of you. So that we were kind of tipped and checked you know...We were scared.... apparently the other thing he tried to do was blackmail the parents, and he didn't want the parents to come and see what a

miserable place this was, and how we weren't, we weren't getting enough to eat, and altogether it was just ...just unhappy.

Then these people moved to another place in the country, and I remember we were digging potatoes in a field, and my mother did arrive one day out of the blue. I think mum was really quite....a very brave woman, because she wanted to see this place for herself, and when she saw it, and when she saw it she immediately decided that this was no longer, this was not for us, and again she sent somebody, she had to get herself back to town which was not a simple matter, and then she sent somebody to fetch my sister and I back home, and what I remember of that homecoming was my parents were still in their apartment at that point, and my mother used to make the most marvelous tomato soup. Just something stupendous, you know. (Laugh) I think I'll remember that as long as I, you know, as long as I live. What was this homecoming, (sic) and there was this tomato soup.

In this place in the country we used to sit around and they would sort of toast bread. You know in Belgium toast was not an institution the way it is here or in England, but somehow over the fire they would kind of grill this bread, and we would each wait our turn and having had one slice, we would sort of be, you know, we'd be sitting there looking to see if maybe there would be another slice to go around for everybody, which mostly there wasn't.

So I stayed with my parents, probably stayed with my parents, for a short time after that, and on to another place. You know, my story is that I was in about six different places from the summer of '42 to September '44 when we were liberated.

A lot of these things I've really only thought about since we've had the Child Survivors' Group. Before that I didn't think about them. I always considered that period of those two and a bit years of my life as a sort of ...if you do a movie you can kind of stop it, sort of freezes, and it was like the movie stopped, everything stopped, and almost I thought of it as if nothing happened in that time, and then it got going, started up again, when I went back to live with my parents. So it's really only the last eight or nine, eight years since belonging to this group that I've actually begun to realize, that you know,

between the age of eight and a half and ten and a half, a child does not stand still, so I've now had an opportunity to kind of, to look back at that time and to actually figure out some of the things that happened and how I really, you know, how I really felt at the time, and the sort of, I suppose, the sort of things that it's left me with, that when I start talking about it, I'm still a bit like, you know, wandering, I wander in this strange land and I'm thinking what was I doing, how did I...you know...I know how I coped, and know how most of us coped, and that was by...you just had to numb your feelings, deal with this, you know, just cut off. I mean...

Those adults were not sympathetic, you know they were not sympathetic. There was no one that you could sort of pour your heart out to, there was no one you could get angry with and there was no one that you could sort of go and cry on their shoulder, and you know.... So you had to damp all that down and forget about it.

We're up to the end of 1942, and the thing that I wonder at this point is that what a thing it was really to come into a strange situation over and over again. And this time I went to a family which consisted of the grandparents, their daughter who was married to an American musician/composer, and their three children, and that was a very, a very warm family, the grandmother was a very warm smiling person. She seemed to, as I remember she was looking after the children or certainly she was looking after me.

The grandfather was a very ..they were sort of a cultured musical lot. The grandfather had taught History of Music at the University. They were lovely people... they just were lovely people.

And then the children. Well, two of them were at school and one, the youngest one, was at home and she was about four or five years younger than me, and this was a bit of, what should I say, a bit uneasy. We couldn't really either play together or ,you know ...but I suppose it was a bit like (an) older sibling, younger sibling thing, and uh she obviously was the more important child in that situation, but while I was there, they had a three storey house and on the first or second floor landing, there was a big landing which was almost like a room, and it had floor to ceiling bookshelves, and I can still remember being in that house and somehow, someone had given me a book when I

arrived there, and I was sitting in this little room, my little room, it was the first time I had a little room to self. It was just a bed and a little cupboard, and there was that book there. And suddenly I discovered how much I enjoyed reading this book, and when you get into a book, you can sort of get through it in no time, and I was, I was kind of putting the book away for later and couldn't, couldn't sort of bear to put it away and picked it up again, and it was a great discovery for me this reading, and here they had these enormous shelves laden with books. So I could just go up and pick a book and read. I wasn't going to school, and during the day you know everybody was busy with their own things, and I remember on one particular day I read three books. They were children's books. A lot of Greek and Roman legends and myths and goodness knows, other countries, other places. Look, that was just wonderful.

And then the son-in-law of the household would sit with me at times and he would teach me arithmetic. And apparently I was good, you know, I was picking up quickly on what he was teaching me, and I got a lot of, I got a lot of praise for that and that was great.

And I wanted to say something about (the) strangeness of coming to a new place, because everything really was strange, and so one of the first things I remember is of course it was winter, very cold, and they used to heat and they had one of these fuel stoves, and they used to put bricks in the oven section to heat them up, and then they wrapped this brick in a rag, and you take that to bed to warm your feet you see. Well, I wasn't quite sure about that, but I discovered later that it was a jolly good thing. And then I remember lying awake in bed in the morning, and wondering whether it was time to get up, whether I should get up, what would the people do, what would they say, was I too early, was I.... And there was sort of real, uh, real uncertainty about what was the way to behave, and I think that was really a feature, because with each new place I had to kind of, I had to discover that, I had to suss that out. I remember that was very difficult, and also it was essential, I somehow got the message that it was essential to be, you know, to be good and please the people who were looking after me.

And the hiding didn't mean that I couldn't go out at all. There were various occasions when someone would take me out somewhere, and that seemed to be a reasonably safe thing to do.

**R: Were you supposed to be a member of their family there?**

F: I don't know, I don't know. Uh, I really don't know about that. They ....what turned out ...oh, we had Christmas and they had celebrations and they had a tree, and they had books of Christmas carols, and I enjoyed myself hugely. I loved all that ritual and all that stuff. My parents had sort of...were brought up very young as very Orthodox, but they threw away ...they broke with the whole religion thing and the joined the Bund, and then they migrated when they were very young so there was no family around us, and in fact it was only when I came to Australia that I sort of vaguely picked up when the Jewish festivals were, because we didn't keep, you know we didn't keep anything. And already before we went into hiding, in the apartment house where we were living, the people downstairs, the landlord and landlady who were Catholic and had lots of children, you know they used to have things like ..the girl did her Communion and they would you know celebrate Christmas and so on, and I was already aware then of how I thought this was so lovely, but we didn't have anything like it.

So I was in this nice family for Christmas and for the New Year, there were presents and all sorts of things, all sorts of ...they really included me into everything, and then soon after the New Year, one day the police came. I think there may have been a German, and they came to arrest the son-in-law who was an American citizen.

The grandmother said oh yes, he lives upstairs on the second floor or something like that, so they went upstairs and he was actually downstairs having his breakfast and he just put on his coat, and quietly left the house. And they must have realized when they came downstairs that they might have been tricked, and at some point, we were all sort of still sitting in the dining room, and I was reading a book, and at some point they looked in my direction and they said "And who is that?" The reason was that the children of the family were all redheads, and I was black. So she said, oh, that's just some neighbour's child come to play. And after that they decided it wasn't safe for me to be there, and they did a swap. They took my sister instead, who is five years younger, and I don't know how... she was supposed to look like the grandmother - her hair was lighter and it was supposed to be safer for her than for me - I'm not quite sure just how



this decision was made, but then had to leave, I had to leave this place and that was that. That was absolutely the nicest place I'd been.

So then I went back to my parents, and my parents by this time had moved into a very large house where they were renting a couple of rooms, and the advantage of that was that there was a hiding place. There was another Jewish couple there, and there was a Jewish man who was on his own I think, and there was a young Belgian who didn't want to go to labour in Germany, so these people were all illegal and they were all relying on this hiding place.

So I was there for a little while, but somehow ...that was in early '43, I had my 9<sup>th</sup> birthday there in February, I do remember that. And that was a very tense situation. I'm sure I was happy to move on to the next place because there were all these adults. There was nothing really for them to do. My father looked very foreign and he couldn't go out, so the tension must have been terrific, and they were just.....the one thing they were focused on was how fast they could all get into the hiding place. The hiding place was in a sort of basement under a staircase, and so you know, instead of there being .....there was a hole in the wall and you could get under into this space, and then someone would have to either push or pull a big cupboard to block off the hole. And at that time they were even trying another.....there was a courtyard with a sort of an old well in it, and they were trying out.....this was empty. .to see if that would be a better .....I mean this was the whole of life revolved around that, and I didn't have a very happy relationship with my parents anyway. So in a strange way I was there with them, but it was not a happy situation.

So then it was on to the next place, and the next place...and again there was always a kind of...I remember a bit of excitement about going somewhere new, as well as sort of all the anxiety there was a bit of excitement, and this was a spinster lady, and she was a friend of our old landlady and that's how we found her. She offered she would have me. And she did a lot of knitting...in those days it was hard to find wool, so she was always unraveling old things and knitting them back, and I was fascinated as she got me to help her wind the wool this way and hold it that way, and so all these things, and I

thought this was great. And she took me to church a lot, and I liked that. She was very devout so we were always going to church, Mass or evening or whatever.

And then I guess after a while the whole thing sort of started to sort of ...pall or deteriorate. Apart from her, I didn't really see anyone. She didn't have visitors much, she was on her own, so I had no contact with any children, and she had no idea, there was no warmth or no sort of sense of loving or...it was just...I would do jobs for her. She had very elaborately carved old furniture, you know, and the carving was something quite deep and I'd dust this furniture. I sometimes wonder where the time went. It's amazing. And then we'd run into all kind of difficulties. I was very bad at eating my breakfast and she would insist, you know, that I sit until it was all finished. I had to help with the dishes in the evening. On one occasion I went off to the toilet, and I think I took a book with me, and then got told and got told off and it was like we were.....there was no way of perhaps retrieving something...it just kept on going from bad to worse. I became a bad girl, and there was no way of getting back into some kind of happy situation.

One thing that really appealed to me there was she had a radio, and that was pretty unusual because in those days a lot of people didn't have radio at all. She had a radio and not only that, but she used it which was, I think, illegal, and she listened to the illegal news broadcasts. The Germans would jam the broadcast which meant there was a hell of a lot of interference, but it was...,this was good enough so we could hear the news, and in 1943 the Russians were, you know, making progress already, and the Germans were sort of going back on the Russian front, and the other place where there'd been a lot of ...Africa might have been over by then, and then the Allies landed in Sicily, and this woman had travelled, when she was younger she'd travelled a lot in Italy and in Sicily, and to Rome of course to see all the big Catholic, you know, all the churches and all the buildings. Anyway, she knew the place well, and we had maps on the wall, and we would hear the you know ....they would announce the names of wherever the Russians or the allies had taken various localities, and so we would look at the map, and we'd put little pins. And I remember that as a very good thing, because it gave me some sense that there (was) something happening.

Time is a very difficult thing when you are a child, and you know, at a certain point where people were saying that the war would go on till 1946 you know, this might have been '44, to me '46 was, like, you know, it would never come. So that was good. And the other thing that I discovered also, or actually it was in my family before, but sometimes after the news broadcast she'd just leave the radio on for a few minutes, and there'd be music. And that was a great treat. My father loved classical music, and I got that from him.

So I guess there were these little - what can I say? - these sort of pockets, these little things in the sort of overall .....it was like a no man's land.

So gradually, gradually, things deteriorated and on one occasion, well, I was 9, 1943 was getting on, I think, I was there for quite a long time. I was there probably from about May till the end of that year or even beginning of 1944. I remember the weather got colder again, and on this occasion I wet the bed, you know, so I was nine and a half and I wet the bed, and I felt very ashamed. I don't know what I did with my pajamas - I bundled them up and I must have hidden them somewhere, and of course she found out, I mean. So she asked me if I wet the bed and I said no. Well, then on top of having wet the bed, I told a lie, and you know in this Catholic scheme of things,....oh that's right. She also taught me things. She taught me Catechism. I don't know if you've ever come across Catechism. This is a Catholic thing that all children - certainly in Belgium they were taught - I don't know what they do here and it was like a question and answer. A question and a simple answer and you just learnt this off by heart. I'm sure it was good training. So I'd learned all this Catechism.

And the other thing that she did was she tried to teach me fractions. With fractions we really came a cropper, because something wasn't, you know...something just wasn't getting through. She's give me an exercise and I couldn't, I couldn't do it. And she got more and more irritated and she would ...whether she explained again, or by this time, I suppose by this time my mind had gone blank, and all I could feel was the dreadful thing of not being able to do it and her getting angry. Well, it was sort of cold anger, but it was anger anyway, and sending me off...by this time she was sending me off into

the next room and don't come back until you've done it, and do it again and again and again, and it was a sort of hopeless thing. Just totally hopeless.

Well that was kind of....they were the kind of things that were going on alongside some of the other ....or she would, I remember on this day it had snowed, and she wanted me to....she lived on an avenue that was quite close to a park, and on the other side of the park there was a special bakery or something. She wanted me to go and get the bread from the bakery. And sort of walk through the snow covered park, and (laugh) you've got five children you know, and sometimes you know, sometimes as a child you just feel that something is just absolutely beyond you, you know, but I can't remember what happened this time, I think I didn't go.

Anyway, finally she spoke with my mother and I had got, I must have got so miserable by this time, that there was absolutely no way to go on with this, and that was that. That was sort of the end of that. And, what I did, the other thing I did one day, she must have told me off about something, or she was telling me something, and I finally sort of landed on something that I could throw at her, and I turned around and I said "Well, you're only doing this for money anyway". And I think that summed up, must have summed up my feeling that I was not, you know, I was not valued and I was not, I was not loved, and I was not important, and what was really happening here, you know, what was it really for...and I guess this was how this came about because certainly it was not a fair judgement if you like, she was helping us. She was taking a risk. I had to be somewhere. But ....the arrangement was not...

So I then went back to my parents in the same place as before, except that where they'd had before this....it really was a huge sort of rambling house...how to describe. The front part of it was the sort of dwelling area, and my parents had had this small apartment on the ground floor. But then as you went in, there was a very big double door and I think they had sort of, these things were made so that a carriage could go through, could go in. And then there was a courtyard at the back, and the old man, the old landlord, had some kind of a workshop he'd made. Oh what was it like...batteries in fact, batteries, so, he had a huge workshop at the back of this courtyard. And there

must have been then some other little rooms there, because when I came back then to stay with my parents, they were in one of those little back rooms.

And there was another Jewish couple who were also in a little back room on the other side of the courtyard. So this would have been early 1944. And there was a system of bells, sort of, uh, you know, very unsophisticated, just a thing of cords, if anything, you know if any police would come to the house the landlord or landlady who lived in the front and who, you know, answered the door or whatever could give the alarm and people would you know rush could rush into the hiding place.

So now we were in one room instead of two and a half. I don't think I stayed very long. I remember sort of brewing hot drinks out of apple peels it was, that we used to sort of stick in hot water to make something approaching, I suppose, herbal tea. And we had this funny little square electric cooker or hot plate and you know that had an element. In those days the element was exposed and I can remember that my father was for ever fixing the element because the element would burn out, then you had to cut off the burnt out bit and you had to pull it out and sort of set it, screw it into the right spot again, and the thing was that progressively as we pulled the element out more and more it would tend to burn out more. Um, those were the joys. There was one good thing, one good thing happened to me in that place and that was that the old landlord had decided to teach himself English, and he had some book with, you know, lists of verbs and things that you could learn off by heart. I don't know what his accent was like, and for some reason he suggested that I come and do it with him. So perhaps a couple of times a week, I can't remember, I'd go and have an English lesson with him. And that again, you know, it made me realise how I really hungered for this, if anybody would show me how to do something or teach me to do something that was obviously very necessary or very beneficial or everything you know, I just thrived on having someone, uh, in the right spirit preferably, the fractious thing of course didn't go for anyone .... so I was there for a little while and um and then they found another place.

And this time it was outside of Brussels. It was sort of rural already with a woman who ran a cafe, the equivalent of a pub, except over there it was you know just one big sitting area, men and women together, and in fact on the weekend I remember people came in

families you know, they brought their children. And this was her living and her husband had been sent to Germany to work and she had no children. So once again there was the whole thing of a new, you know, a new lifestyle. Here I was wearing wooden clogs. The set up was that I shared a bed with this woman, and that took some getting used to. Sort of strange body, strange smells, strange everything you know. It was something I wasn't really, I wasn't used to, with a chamber pot under the bed.

I'd grown up in French although my parents spoke Yiddish at home, and I think when I was very little I only knew Yiddish because I do remember going first going to kindergarten and just not really knowing what was going on around me, but by this time I spoke French, my schooling had been in French and suddenly although that woman knew French in a funny sort of way, I could see all the mistakes she was making. But it was very important that I should learn Flemish as quick as possible because it, you know, the whole thing of blending in. This was a much more public place. I don't know...my name was slightly different, I think it was Fl. instead of F. F was a most unusual name and we didn't want an unusual name. I probably had another surname which I cannot remember. So that wasn't too difficult to get used to, being called Fl. as that's what it was. But it was a much more public place, I don't know what the explanation was for me being there, but lots of people came in and talked. Again I didn't go to school but I did get to know some of the girls that were coming in there, and on a Sunday I was, it was a good idea I should go to Church with those girls. So I could remember and I had been to Church many times before, but suddenly this was a more difficult situation because when I, whereas I had gone with the old spinster she knew I was Jewish, she knew exactly who I was. She didn't probably didn't pay much attention to what I did or didn't do.

Oh yes, I'd like just to go back to an episode about that. Staying with the spinster at M ...I discovered the joys of going to church, and she had a very lovely illustrated Bible, children's Bible, which was the Old and the New Testament and I guess I discovered this whole thing about Jesus and so we went to church very regularly. However, I couldn't go to communion because I hadn't been baptized. I couldn't join in, I couldn't go to confession and so one day while I was living with her it was not very far from where my parents were, I used to visit them on occasion. I used to just walk around

there by myself and pay them a visit, and on this particular occasion I came and I said I wanted to be baptized. Well, I think if I could have, you know, if the ground could have swallowed me up after I made this suggestion, I would have been happy. But I had no understanding of the, you know, the enormity of this, I had no idea. I thought, here I am, I'm doing my best to fit in, I've got to fit it. It would make life much easier you see (laugh), so I suppose I had that much sense of all this that, OK, I wasn't with them I had to be somewhere else. I had to be able to be something, but of course they just got very angry. They said don't you ever mention this again and there's no, out of the question, and my parents would go on and on.

Well, I can imagine how they must have felt but the main point was that I had no understanding at that stage. And it was not as if they took it calmly and said, well, you know, it's like this or it's like this. That was not something that they were able to do, so here I was alienating my parents, I mean, you know, how much worse could things get. So that was the episode about wanting to be baptized.

And then in this country place I was going to church with the girls and got very anxious to see that I was going exactly what they were doing, that they wouldn't sort of pick or start asking me, you know, "How come you're not whatever doing this or doing that" and the first thing you do when you walk into the church is, you go up to this strange shaped thing that contains the Holy Water and you dip your fingers in it and you make the sign of the Cross, and you make it in the proper, facing the proper way or whatever.

So the big routine in this place in the country was the cleaning up, and we would start because again I wasn't going to school. Other children were not around during the day, and well, at least I guess this provided some kind of route. We would start I think on a Wednesday afternoon and finish up on a Saturday morning, or was it Thursday afternoon perhaps. You'd start upstairs and with the cleaning and the washing and the ...my particular job was to wash all the wooden furniture in the café downstairs, and that got washed down with water and ammonia and that I hated. But everything was flagstones. The flooring was all stones. So you could pick up a bucket of water and you could just sort of slosh it all over the floor. You know from very little I was always interested in the cleaning lady and the water and all that stuff, and so in one way I guess,

again I enjoyed doing these things, except for the ammonia, and I was happy to be helpful and do what I could to sort of show myself worthy I guess. She taught me to iron handkerchiefs, and on Saturday morning was polishing the brass on the outside door and all that kind of thing. And I was doing all that.

But again she was a woman, a dour sort of woman, she had no children, she had no idea about children, and the same kind of ...the same kind of thing developed for me you know, after the initial thing of being helpful, and in every way that she expected. The reward didn't come, though, it didn't come...I wasn't getting what I needed.

She had a little dog, it was a cute, fat little thing. I'd never lived with a dog and anything that I left lying around this dog would chew up and I would get told off. Of course I should've...and the other big thing I did for her was to bring the bottles of beer up from the cellar and there my reward was that I'd get a drink of some beer, and I developed a great liking for beer. It was ...that was sort of the highlight I guess.

The other nice thing that would happen occasionally is, she had old elderly parents and a sister who lived somewhere not far away. And they also ran some kind of a very small pub, and when we'd go and visit, and they must have had fields of something, stuff that they were harvesting, (it) was summer '44. It was not summer '44, it was probably late spring, anyway, we would go there and we would spend the day. And they were much warmer, they're much warmer people, and I can remember this sister of hers cutting my nails and sort of doing things for me, and telling me, you know, how you should do this and what you should do, and obviously I enjoyed that. They made a bit more of a fuss of me, and then at some point she decided that year... the whole thing sort of deteriorated so that finally she decided no, she wouldn't have me sleeping in the bed anymore. She put me in the next door room, but the next door room didn't have a bed or what it had was one of those deck chairs, you know, a canvas deck chair. Well, by this time I was ten and a bit, I was not particularly small or short and I found that there was no way I could sort of arrange myself in this deck chair, so I put the deck chair flat on the floor, but of course it didn't provide very much, you know, there was no substance there. It was just this thin, it was on the hard floor. That was one of my problems, and the other problem was somehow the food, obviously, because she had



some containers of flour, and I remember trying to eat the raw flour to see how that would go. And she stopped taking me to her relatives when she was going to visit her parents and her sister, she stopped taking me, so I'd spend the day by myself and on one occasion she wanted me to, she wanted me to shell some peas, but what she had was about three or four kilos of, you know, the pods were rotten. The peas would still be OK, and I mean, you didn't throw anything away, but the pods were rotten. And it was again one of those jobs that I, oh, I'd reached the end. And there was an additional thing that I wanted to go off and visit some girls and I wasn't allowed to. Anyway, I wasn't going to be allowed to do anything until I'd done those peas.

One of the good things about being there was, as I said, that I had to learn Flemish quickly, and it happened that there was a very nice young woman next door who was training to be a primary school teacher, and she took me on. It was just heaven because she was nice, she was pleasant, she thought I was a good student and I was learning, you know, I was learning very well. And then she would ask me to rule up pages of paper for her. And I guess she was someone I could love and respect and look up to and so on. I was really, I adored her, and so I used to, very carefully, she had this paper that needed lines ruled on it for her course, I don't know, and I'd be very carefully lining up, drawing up lines on these pages. And my mother used to come, I think, well, as I said, mum always somehow managed to come and see, you know, where we were. I guess she did have to bring money to this woman, I suppose she sort of kept some kind of tabs on the situation in this way. But I mean, you know, she would arrive and leave. It was probably added torture.

On this particular day, one day I actually did break down. I really allowed myself something... then because, you know, you mustn't worry, you mustn't upset these and you mustn't upset those and there was nothing that could be done anyway, and I think it was about the time when somebody said, "Oh, this war might go on till '46. People were always talking, predicting, maybe it'll end, it's going well and maybe it'll end in three months, and now it's not going well and it won't end till '46. And I said ,broke down and cried, and I said "Oh, this is never going to end". And I guess I was beyond, I was just beyond dealing with it.

Soon after that she was supposed to come and she didn't come, and I used to, I used to sort of saunter up the street to where the tram came, but of course I was not supposed to look for her and I was not supposed to go up to her and all that. But I'd just sort of wander up a bit to see if she was coming. But she didn't come.

And then I think she says, it's the next time, she says, she did in the end arrive, but that was the day when the Germans came for them, and they all piled in to this hiding hole, and they weren't found, so all was well. But as soon as, as soon as the Germans had gone and it was quite early in the morning, they immediately left that place. She said that Germans had gone around, you know, there was ...sometimes it would be Gestapo and sometimes it would not be Gestapo, and they thought on this occasion that they were sort of maybe not, because it wouldn't have been so difficult to find them. But the Germans had gone around, they'd realized that the beds were warm virtually, everybody had just sort of, so they said "Where are these people, you know the beds are still warm" and the woman said "Oh, they've gone to work, but if you come later you'll find them". So they immediately left that place. They went to a friend who was somehow in a safe area because the Belgium's around were known to be anti-German and sort of protected them, I don't know. Anyway, they couldn't stay there very long, and they were then very fortunate to find a place and this was in June '44, and it happened to be exactly the day of the Allied landing in Normandy, so it was the 6<sup>th</sup> June. I didn't know all that at the time. And I think that probably the next time she came for me or she came to see me she said "Well, you know, pack your things, I'm taking you away".

And she says that she told the woman that my father had been taken, that she could no longer afford it, she didn't want to, sort of, you know, she didn't want to leave on a bad note, she didn't want there to be unpleasantness, and I don't know what I packed, because I'm sure I didn't have much stuff, and so mum took me to the last place.

Now, they'd found a couple with three children who were wonderful people, and this is a family that I've just done this Yad Vashem thing for. They were lovely, lovely, lovely people. My mother sort of kept house for them. The woman was a teacher, and her husband was an engineer, very generous, very kind, very ...you know...after the war they became friends virtually, and this woman had a sister and I think that mum talked

about me being unhappy where I was, and the sister immediately offered to have me. So I went to this sister who was an older, she was older by this time, she had an adult daughter who wasn't living there, and she had an optometrist shop, I think she was an optometrist, anyway she had her shop downstairs and she was busy with that. But her elderly father was living with her, and he sort of took me, he took me over, and this is what I talked about at the actual ceremony, that, well it was one more place, you know, and I'd already been through so many, what the hell. You would think what difference would it make. But yet, the difference in the atmosphere was just incredible, and you know by this time I was ten, I'd turned ten in February and this was June, well ten and four months. It didn't take me five minutes to sense, you know, and, to sense the difference in atmosphere. The difference in the people, their kindness, their generosity, whatever I did was OK, and if I offered to do something to help because nobody was doing any cleaning, and I thought, oh I can clean this. I'd had all this experience. They were delighted and the grandfather would sit and talk to me. He was very interested because...I checked this out with the granddaughter who is still alive....he was very interested in things relating to history and geography, and he had maps on the wall and he would show me and he would tell me things, and I was goggle eyed, and again I loved it, I just loved this attention, and then he would take me to his vegetable garden, that was the great thing because he had a vegetable garden. He being quite old, he had trouble with the weeding, so he taught me what the weeds were and I'd do the weeding and he would just sort of generally look after the other things, and point out all the plants to me. He was growing things that were unusual in Brussels in those days. He was growing corn, and he was growing...he had a nectarine tree, I think, and he was very proud of his garden, and I was very proud that you know, I'd learned to weed it. And there were books and there were things. And I felt suddenly a person, and looking back I think, well, it was just so important, that feeling of having space, of being able to be yourself and not sort of watching at every moment, at every point, you know, how it would be received, what would the reaction be, would you still be OK, would you not be OK.

So that was the great thing about this place, and I was only there June, July, August, probably a bit longer than that, but when I was there on one Sunday that we were liberated.

And then my parents found an apartment and after a few weeks probably, I went home. And that was not a joyous thing and that was not the, you know, the thing I might have dreamt about all that time unconsciously, and it wasn't that at all, not at all, and if I thought, didn't think really, that they'd leave hope that, you know, I was going to come into my own or something, I was going to be this happy family, this loved important person again, or more than I'd been, or get some kind of recognition, none of it was talked about, the whole thing, the whole thing I think was a great disappointment.

I mean, I was a strange child probably for my parents and they were strange to me. I had done some growing up independently and I suddenly found that there was a whole new, you know, new burden to take up, and that was going back to school and catching up on what had been missed, and living a normal life as if nothing had ever happened, and this was the task.

There is one episode that I did not tell you about. I'm not entirely sure...I think it happened while I was staying with the spinster and my parents went to live with a different family for a short time, and this was somewhere perhaps half an hour tram ride and walk away, and I went to visit them there one day, and then when the evening came my mother was bringing me back and so we were on a tram.. It was evening, and this tram was getting close to, you know, where I was supposed to finish up going home to the spinster. And suddenly the tram was stopped and everybody was made to get off the tram and the Germans were checking papers. Um, and my mother said to me, I think she said to me, you run home and tell dad what happened, something like that. Streets in Brussels are quite, well, that street was fairly narrow, there were two tram lines, so the kerb was not very far from where the tram was. I just got up on the kerb and I moved away, I moved away a few metres I think, no more, and I stood there, I was just rooted to the spot. I couldn't think, frozen, absolute, and I was just watching, there were not that many people on the tram, I think on a Sunday evening, and I was just watching this procedure. I'm not even sure, I can't remember actually seeing in detail what happened, all I can remember is the tram was lit up and on the kerb was fairly dark, I suppose, and just standing there waiting. And mum, mum had (a) false identity card which was essential, because my parents were still Polish citizens, and the locals

had a green card, foreigners had a yellow card with a red band across it, and possibly even *Jude* on it, I can't remember. So mum had this false identity card, and anyway, all was well in the end, because they accepted the false identify card.

**R: You were aware of the implications of the whole.....**

F: Yeah, and you know this is the strange thing, because being a hidden child in a place like Belgium, many of us, we didn't really know, we didn't really see, it was not like, and this has been pointed out many times, it was not like in Poland in a ghetto where children, you know, they saw the horrors. It was all out there, you know. They saw people dying, being killed, being rounded up, everything. We didn't really see anything, and the Germans certainly didn't do things in public the way that they did in the east. So you didn't, I didn't really know, but you just had this fear and the (un)certainity. Like I said, the man, in the early part, the man who was threatening us, I don't know if he told us much detail, but it was just made clear to us, you know, that if the Germans got hold of us we'd you know, we'd, be non existent. How you grasp it as a child I don't know. And on this occasion I didn't know, but I guess what I did know was, you know, I might not have a mother at the end of this little episode. That was all. It would have been as drastic and total as that, but what really it was, I didn't know.

So do you want to ask me any questions?

**3.1.2 (c ) TABLE 3: Natural and Transformed Meaning Units for the Experience of Being hidden for ‘F’**

|   | <b><u>NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR F:</u></b>   | <b><u>TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS FOR F:</u></b>  |
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|   | (Expressed in the subjects’ language as much as possible and based on the perspective that the description was an example of hiding)   | (Transformed into psychological language with respect to their relevancy to the phenomenon of hiding) |
| 1 | All right, well I was born in Brussels in 1934. Belgium...war broke out in Belgium in May 1940, and my parents were immigrants from Poland, from Warsaw, and they’d come to Brussels in about 1930. So we still had a lot of family...most of...all the family in fact were left behind and were all in Warsaw.  | Not Revelatory of Hiddenness (NROH)   |
| 2 | Well, the first thing we did run away to France before the Germans arrived, and we got as far as the northwest tip, Normandy, no, Brittany, Brittany.  | NROH  |
| 3 | And by that time my father had been conscripted into the Polish army because he was still a Polish citizen, and my mother and my sister and myself and a whole lot of other Jewish people finished up in this tiny French village and we stayed there...I haven’t got a very good thing of time at this point, but perhaps for a couple of months and then the Germans, the Germans arrived there just a few days after we did. Very friendly at that point. | NROH  |

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| 4 | <p>So then we went back to Brussels in the late summer or early autumn, and I started school, and my father, my father who had left, you know the Polish army I suppose fell apart, and all these people just took off their uniforms and ran away, and my father was in the south of France in the free part, and he wanted us to come there so we would cross into Switzerland. But mum wouldn't go along with this plan, so dad came back to Brussels as well, and life seemed to go on more or less normally. It was the end of 1940.</p> | NROH  |
| 5 | <p>Well restrictions must have started (to) come in at the beginning of 1942, and then dad who was, dad was a manufacturer of leather gloves, and he ran his own business and then he wasn't ...Jews were not allowed to run businesses any more.</p>   | NROH  |
| 6 | <p>And then Jewish children were not supposed to go to school. I'm not entirely clear about whether we were not supposed to go to school, or whether in fact it was too dangerous. Whether there was a clear sort regulation that we were not supposed to be there.</p>   | <p>The hiding took place in an atmosphere of unawareness about what was going on in terms of the war, but with an increased sense of persecution of Jews as experienced through their stigmatization.</p> |
| 7 | <p>And meanwhile we'd had to start wearing the yellow star, and I remember that my mother sewed this yellow star on my coat. And we had these kind of satchels that we carried to school but sort of covered the yellow star, but we didn't wear it for very long.</p>  | NROH  |

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| 8  | In the summer of 1942, my sister and I got sent off to a place which was still in Brussels, a bit on the outskirts, and it was a children's holiday home. Now I don't know, I don't know, or didn't know why we were there. I wasn't given any sort of explanation.                                | F's first experience of being "hidden" was when she and her sister got sent to a children's holiday home and there was an element of confusion for F about why she was there.   |
| 9  | I remember being very very miserable there, very lonely, and the strange thing was that there were all these children and obviously there was a sort of happy purpose to the place, but it was the first time I'd been sort of really separated from my parents and I was just, just totally lost. | This was F's first experience of being separated from her parents and although it was supposed to be a "happy" place, F recalls feeling totally lost and miserable there. It seems F picked up a sense of foreboding about the situation, without really knowing why. |
| 10 | I'm trying to remember when I sort of became, became aware of the fear, but I didn't know much at that point.  | Slowly fear began to seep into F's consciousness, even though she had no real understanding of the source of her anxiety.   |
| 11 | I mean the Germans used to march up and down the streets and that was scary enough in itself. They'd be marching at 6 o'clock in the morning along the street, and you could hear them.... The whole street was shaking with the pounding and their loud singing, and that was scary.              | F used to hear the continual "sounds of war" in the street outside the home; the street appeared to her exaggerated and "larger than life" and felt very frightening.   |
| 12 | And I suppose from running away...there'd been bombing and we'd been in Paris, and we'd run down into the Metro for shelter. So there was all that background, you know, that there was the war, that something very scary was going on, but specifically I didn't have any idea.                  | The war routine had gradually penetrated into their everyday lives with concomitant fear, without F having any real understanding of the specificities of the situation and the confusion surrounding her.  |



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| 13 | <p>And in this children's holiday place, one episode stands out quite clearly for me. And that was um, the lady who ran it sent me off on an errand with her, I think niece. The niece must have been a bit older than me and I was about eight and a half. So it was in a way a privilege she sent me off with this niece and it was a beautiful sunny day and we went on trams and whatever we, wherever we went. Suddenly I realize that we (were) only like a couple of blocks from where we used to live. From where my parents were. And I remember getting very excited about this and thinking that we could go and surprise them. I don't think I said anything to that girl, and then it suddenly hit me that this was something I was not supposed to do. That they might be very angry. That there was something scary about it, so I dropped this whole, I just dropped this whole plan.</p> | <p>F was hidden in close geographic proximity to her parents, which stirred up in her an enormous sense of longing and anguish. However, she restrained herself from going to them as she had a sense that it was forbidden to her to visit them, because of the danger this would inevitably involve.</p> |
| 14 | <p>We stayed, I think we stayed in that place for perhaps a month. There were lots of Jewish children there. Parents would come visiting on a Sunday. I can remember that was very social occasion. So my parents came on the Sunday and visited and then my mother took us out of there, and she felt it wasn't safe.</p>  | <p>The infrequent but regular visits by F's parents were very welcome to F; she remained there until she was removed by her mother, who believed the situation was no longer safe.</p>   |
| 15 | <p>And apparently soon after, the Germans did raid the place. I don't know what happened.</p>   | <p>NROH</p>  |
| 16 | <p>Um, after that we went out to the country</p>  | <p>The context of this hiding place</p>  |

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|    | <p>and I don't know how, I don't know how Mum found all these places, but we went out to the country and we stayed with a family who sort of um they fostered children, you know, so they fostered, they had I think about eight Jewish children staying there with them in a very isolated place. There were very unpleasant people. They had a boy who constantly wet his bed and who was rather a pest, and there was nothing, there was nothing for us children to do there.</p> | <p>was extremely unpleasant for F: she was placed in an unstimulating environment with intrusive family members.</p>   |
| 17 | <p>I was there with my sister. I was there with my sister. And the other good thing about it was .... although I used to worry....I used to worry about my sister and I used to worry about the fact that we weren't getting properly fed, and the only good thing about it was I had a friend there, some children of a family that we were friendly with, and she was there as well, and I think we sort of kept each other company a bit.</p>                                     | <p>F assumed a protective role for her younger sister in this place, which gave her a sense of purpose in being there. She also forged a friendship with another child there who kept her company, all of which made her feel positive towards this place of hiding.</p> |
| 18 | <p>And the man, and the man who was the sort of miserable ....miserable fellow with some kind of disability, used to threaten us, and he used to say things like, you know, if the Germans, if the Germans get you that will be the end of you.</p>  | <p>However, the man of the house was continually threatening and menacing towards them, invoking fear and tension in them all.</p>   |
| 19 | <p>So that we were kind of kept in check you know...we were scared...and apparently the other thing he tried to do was blackmail the parents, and he didn't want the parents</p>   | <p>This hiding place became an unhappy one for F and she was often scared by the host, who would threaten the children and</p>   |

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|    | to come and see what a miserable place this was, and how we weren't we weren't getting enough to eat and altogether it was just unhappy.  | control the place through fear.  |
| 20 | Then these people moved to another place in the country and I remember we were digging potatoes in a field and my mother did arrive one day out of the blue. I think mum was really quite...a very brave woman, because she wanted to see this place for herself, and when she saw it, and when she saw it she immediately decided that this was no longer, this was not for us, and again she sent somebody, she had to get herself back to town which was not a simple matter and then she sent somebody, to fetch my sister and I back home. | Her mother, who was seen as a courageous woman, eventually came to rescue F from this environment, removing her from this hiding.  |
| 21 | And what I remember of that homecoming was my parents were still in their apartment at that point and my mother used to make the most marvelous tomato soup. Just something stupendous, you know. (Laughs) I think I'll remember that as long as I, you know, as long as I live. What was this homecoming, (sic) and there was this tomato soup.  | On being released from hiding and reunited with her mother, F experienced a heightened sensual awareness and appreciation of the world in a manner that was almost idealized, which has impressed her for the remainder of her life. It seems that the whole emotional experience of the homecoming, after a period of sensory deprivation, became infused for F with food and the comfort of the tomato soup. |
| 22 | In this place in the country we used to sit around and they would sort of toast bread. You know in Belgium toast was not an   | The splendour of the food upon reuniting with her parents contrasted to its scarcity during the  |

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|    | <p>institution the way it is here or in England, but somehow over the fire they would kind of grill this bread, and we would each wait our turn and having had one slice, we would sort of be, you know, we'd be sitting there looking to see if maybe there would be another slice to go around for everybody, which mostly there wasn't.</p>   | <p>hiding: food and the amount of it was a huge focus of life then.</p>   |
| 23 | <p>So I stayed with my parents, probably stayed with my parents, for a short time after that, and onto another place.</p>  | <p>This period of respite from hiding, with her parents, was quite brief before F was moved to another hiding place.</p>  |
| 24 | <p>You know my story is that I was in about six different places from the summer of '42 to September '44 when we were liberated.</p>   | <p>F experienced several different hiding places during the two years.</p>  |
| 25 | <p>A lot of these things I've really only thought about since we've had the Child Survivors' Group. Before that I didn't think about them. I always considered that period of those two and a bit years of my life as a sort of...if you do a movie you can kind of stop it, sort of freezes, and it was like the movie stopped, everything stopped, and almost I thought of it as if nothing happened in that time and then it got going, started up again, when I went back to live with my parents. So it's really only the last eight or nine years, eight years since belonging to this group that I've actually begun to realize, that, you know, between the age of eight and a half and ten and a half, a child does not stand still, so I've now had an opportunity to kind of, to look</p> | <p>In retrospect, F realizes that she thought of her hiddenness as a period of suspension of normal and everyday life, which remained fixed in a static form in her memory. F claims she felt that nothing happened during this time. It is only in more recent times that F has begun to integrate this period of hiddenness with the rest of her life sequence.</p> |

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|    | back at that time and to actually figure out some of the things that happened and how I really, you know, how I really felt at the time.   |   |
| 26 | And the sort of, I suppose, the sort of things that it's left me with, that when I start talking about it, I'm still a bit like you know wandering. I wander in this strange land and I'm thinking what was I doing, how did I...you know... I know how I coped, and know how most of us coped, and that was by you just had to numb your feelings, deal with this you know, just cut off. I mean... | F believes she coped with the strain of the hiding and the many moves she made during this time by simply cutting herself off from her feelings.  |
| 27 | Those adults were not sympathetic, you know they were not sympathetic. There was no one that you could sort of pour your heart out to, there was no one you could get angry with and there was no one that you could sort of go and cry on their shoulder, and you know...So you had to damp all that down and forget about it.  | F felt she had no supportive adult to depend on during these times, forcing her to suppress and deny all her feelings of hopelessness and despair.  |
| 28 | We're up to the end of 1942, and the thing that I wonder at this point is that what a thing it was really to come into a strange situation over and over again.  | F realized quite early in the hiding period that there was an expectation that she had to adapt to the unfamiliar, in order to survive and adjust to a new environment.                               |
| 29 | And this time I went to a family which consisted of the grandparents, their daughter who was married to an American musician/composer, and their three children and that was a very, a very warm family, the grandmother was a very warm   | F's next move was to a family where she experienced a great deal of warmth and nurturing from the family members, which eased some of her pain of being separated and moved once again in hiding. She |

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|    | <p>smiling person. She seemed to, as I remember, she was looking after the children or certainly she was looking after me. The grandfather was a very... they were sort of a cultural musical lot. The grandfather had taught History of Music at the University. They were lovely people, they were just lovely people.</p>   | <p>revelled in the warmth and culture of this family.</p>  |
| 30 | <p>And then the children. Well, two of them were at school and one, the youngest one, was at home and she was about four or five years younger than me and this was a bit of, what should I say, a bit uneasy. We couldn't really either play together or, you know...but I suppose it was a bit like (an) older sibling, younger sibling thing, and, uh, she obviously was the more important child in that situation.</p>  | <p>Nevertheless, F keenly felt her place in the hierarchy of the family as being inferior, and recalls that there was some tension between the "real family" and her.</p>  |
| 31 | <p>But while I was there, they had a three-storey house and on the first or second floor landing, there was a big landing which was almost like a room, and it had floor to ceiling bookshelves, and I can still remember being in that house and somehow, someone had given me a book when I arrived there, and I was sitting in this little room, my little room, it was the first time I had a little room to (my)self. It was just a bed and a little cupboard and there was that book there. And suddenly I discovered how much I enjoyed reading this book, and when you get into a book, you can sort of get through it in no time,</p> | <p>F found within the home a sanctuary amongst the books, which provided a type of haven into which she could escape. This discovery of books opened a whole new world for F and provided for her a sense of continuity through the fragmentation of hiding.</p> |

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|    | and I was, I was kind of putting the book away for later and couldn't, couldn't sort of bear to put it away and picked it up again, and it was a great discovery for me this reading, and here they had these enormous shelves laden with books. So I could just go up and pick a book and read.  |   |
| 32 | I wasn't going to school, and during the day you know everybody was busy with their own things, and I remember on one particular day I read three books. They were children's books. A lot of Greek and Roman legends and myths and goodness knows, other countries, other places. Look, that was just wonderful.   | While the other children went to school, F sought refuge in the pages of books which she described as a wonderful escape.   |
| 33 | And then the son-in-law of the household would sit with me at times and he would teach me arithmetic. And apparently I was good, you know, I was picking up quickly on what he was teaching me and I got a lot, I got a lot of praise for that and that was great.  | F also began maths lesson with one of the people who was hiding her; she received great kudos for her abilities here, which strengthened her.   |
| 34 | And I wanted to say something about (the) strangeness of coming to a new place, because everything really was strange, and so one of the first things I remember is of course it was winter, very cold, and they used to heat and they had one of these fuel stoves, and they used to put bricks in the oven section to heat them up, and then they wrapped this brick in a rag, and you take that to bed to warm your feet you see. Well I wasn't quite sure about that, but I | F remarks that she learnt through her various placements in hiding to anticipate the various idiosyncrasies of each family with which she was placed, and this was a hard thing. There was great uncertainty during the time of the initial transition, until F learnt the routine of the hiding place. |

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|    | discovered later that it was a jolly good thing. And then I remember lying awake in bed in the morning and wondering whether it was time to get up, whether I would get up, what would the people do, what would they say, was I too early, was I...And there was sort of real, uh, uncertainty about what was the way to behave, and... |  |
| 35 | I think that was really a feature, because with each new place I had to kind of, I had to discover that, I had to suss that out. I remember that was very difficult.   | This was a feature of each new place of hiding, with F working out for herself the various routines of the family and having to slot herself into these without being told, which was quite a difficult task.  |
| 36 | And also it was essential, I somehow got the message that it was essential to be, you know, to be good and to please the people who were looking after me.   | Subliminally, F understood the most critical imperative, that she always had to please and oblige each "host family" keeping her hidden.   |
| 37 | And the hiding didn't mean that I couldn't go out at all. There were various occasions when someone would take me out somewhere and that seemed to be a reasonably safe thing to do.   | Being "hidden" didn't mean that F was confined indoors all the time, she was allowed out in special and supervised circumstances.  |
| 38 | What turned out...oh we had Christmas and they had celebrations and they had a tree, and they had books of Christmas carols, and I enjoyed myself hugely. I loved all that ritual and all that stuff. My parents had sort of...were brought up very young as very Orthodox, but they threw away...they broke with the whole religion     | F found herself thrown into the ritual of the Catholic religion and, surprisingly (to herself), she found that she enjoyed these rituals. It appeared that the experience of hiding increased her openness towards the joys of religious festivities other than her own, and |



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|    | <p>thing and they joined the Bund, I don't know if you've heard of the Bund, and then they migrated when they were very young so there was no family around us, and in fact it was only when I came to Australia that I sort of vaguely picked up when the Jewish festivals were, because we didn't keep, you know, we didn't keep anything. And already before we went into hiding, in the apartment house where we were living, the people downstairs, the landlord and landlady who were Catholic and had lots of children, you know they used to have things like...the girls did her Communion and they would you know celebrate Christmas and so on and I was already aware then of how I thought this was so lovely, but we didn't have anything like it.</p> | <p>she found these routines to be of comfort and reassurance to her.</p>   |
| 39 | <p>So I was in this nice family for Christmas and for the New Year, there were presents and all sorts of things, all sorts of...they really included me into everything...</p>   | <p>F was included in all the festivities, which felt wonderful and reassuring to her.</p>  |
| 40 | <p>And then soon after the New Year, one day the police came. I think there may have been a German, and they came to arrest the son-in-law who was an American citizen. The grandmother said, oh yes, he lives upstairs on the second floor or something like that, so they went upstairs and he was actually downstairs having his breakfast and he just put on his coat and quietly left the house. And they must have realized when they came downstairs that they might</p>  | <p>F was perilously close to being discovered in a German raid; however, the family protected her and prevented her discovery.</p> |

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|    | <p>have been tricked, and at some point, we were all sort of still sitting in the dining room, and I was reading a book and at some point they looked in my direction and they said, “And who is that?” The reason was that the children of the family were all red heads, and I was black. So she said oh, that’s just some neighbour’s child come to play.</p>  |   |
| 41 | <p>And after that they decided it wasn’t safe for me to be there and they did a swap. They took my sister instead, who is five years younger, and I don't know how...she was supposed to look like the Grandmother - her hair was lighter and it was supposed to be safer for her than for me - I'm not quite sure just how this decision was made.</p>   | <p>As in other decisions about her hiding, F was excluded from the decision to move her from this home, which was a huge disappointment to her.</p> |
| 42 | <p>But then I had to leave. I had to leave this place and that was that. That was absolutely the nicest place I’d been.</p>   | <p>F was forced to leave this hiding place with great reluctance as she viewed it as the best she had experienced.</p>                              |
| 43 | <p>So then I went back to my parents, and my parents by this time had moved into a very large house where they were renting a couple of rooms, and the advantage of that was that there was a hiding place. There was another Jewish couple there and there was a Jewish man who was on his own I think, and there was a young Belgian who didn’t want to go to labour in Germany, so these people were all illegal and they were all relying on this hiding place.</p> | <p>F returned to her parents briefly in their new hiding place, which they shared with other illegally hidden Jewish people.</p>                    |
| 44 | <p>So I was there for a little while, but</p>   | <p>However, this period was fraught</p>   |

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|    | somehow...that was in early '43, I had my 9 <sup>th</sup> birthday there in February, I do remember that. And that was a very tense situation.  | with tension throughout.   |
| 45 | I'm sure I was happy to move on to the next place because there were all these adults. There was nothing really for them to do. My father looked very foreign and he couldn't go out, so the tension must have been terrific, and they were just... the one thing they were focused on was how fast they could all get into the hiding place. The hiding place was in a sort of basement under a staircase, and so you know, instead of there being ...there was a hole in the wall and you could get under into this space, and then someone would have to either push or pull a big cupboard to block off the hole. | F recalls feeling relieved to leave this place where her parents were, in spite of the anticipated reunion with them. It seemed her parents were preoccupied with their own fears, and were no longer a source of comfort and reassurance for F. |
| 46 | And at that time they were even trying another...there was a courtyard with a sort of an old well in it, and they were trying out...this was empty... to see if that would be a better....I mean this was the whole of life revolved around that.   | The entire focus of all their lives at this point was on the nuances of "hiding" and the issue of safety, which created much anxiety and uncertainty.  |
| 47 | And I didn't have a very happy relationship with my parents anyway. So in a strange way I was there with them, but it was not a happy situation.  | F's own relationship with her parents at this point was very strained, so, although she was reunited with them and this should have allowed her to feel secure, it was not a happy time for her.   |
| 48 | So then it was on to the next place, and the next place...and again there was always a  | This resulted in yet another move to a new hiding place. These   |

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|    | kind of... I remember a bit of excitement about going someone new, as well as sort of all the anxiety there was a bit of excitement.   | moves always involved both tension and anxiety in the unknown that lay ahead, but at the same time was tinged with a sense of excitement in the novelty of the situation.                    |
| 49 | And this was a spinster lady, and she was a friend of our old landlady and that's how we found her. She offered (that) she would have me.  | This move was to a spinster who was unknown to F.  |
| 50 | And she did a lot of knitting...in those days it was hard to find wool, so she was always unraveling old things and knitting them back, and I was fascinated as she got me to help her wind the wool this way and hold it that way, and so all these things, and I thought this was great. And she took me to church a lot, and I liked that. She was very devout, so we were always going to church, Mass or evening or whatever. | F became involved in some of the woman's knitting and accompanied her to church regularly: she found this quite comforting.  |
| 51 | But I guess after a while the whole thing sort of started to sort of, kind of, pals or deteriorate.  | However, the situation deteriorated after a short time.  |
| 52 | Apart from her, I didn't really see anyone. She didn't have visitors much, she was on her own, so I had no contact with any children, and she had no idea, there was no warmth or no sort of sense of living or... it was just....I would do jobs for her. She had very elaborately carved furniture, you know, and the carving was something quite deep and I'd dust this furniture. I sometimes wonder where the time went.      | Living with this woman, F was very isolated from others and did not seem to be offered emotional warmth or companionship, yet all the while she was required to do domestic and menial jobs. |

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|    | It's amazing.   |  |
| 53 | And then we'd run into all kind of difficulties. I was very bad at eating my breakfast, and she would insist, you know, that I sit until it was all finished. I had to help with the dishes in the evening. On one occasion I went off to the toilet, and I think I took a book with me, and then got told and got told off.  | It seemed that the woman had no understanding of what it was like being a child and would frequently reprimand F for seemingly innocent and childlike behaviour.   |
| 54 | And it was like we were...there was no way of perhaps retrieving something...it just kept on going from bad to worse. I became a bad girl, and there was no way of getting back into some kind of happy situation.  | Once F had assumed the role of "bad girl" in the woman's eyes, she was unable to retrieve any goodness in their relationship.  |
| 55 | One thing that really appealed to me there was she had a radio, and that was pretty unusual, because in those days a lot of people didn't have radio at all. She had a radio and not only that, but she used it, which was I think, illegal, and she listened to the illegal news broadcast. The Germans would jam the broadcast which meant there was a hell of a lot of interference, but it was...this was good enough so we could hear the news, and in 1943 the Russians were, you know, making progress already, and the Germans were sort of going back on the Russian front, and the other place where there'd been a lot of.... Africa might have been over by then and then the allies landed in Sicily. And this woman had traveled when she was younger, when she | The one thread that seemed to sustain F during this time was the fact that the woman had a radio, which was considered a rare window to the outside world: together they would listen and keep track of the progress of the war. This allowed for some interaction between F and the lady, as the latter was quite knowledgeable about geography: they became involved together in using the maps and so forth. This provided F with a sense of connection to the outside world and she felt reassured by the knowledge. |

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|    | <p>was younger she'd traveled a lot in Italy and Sicily and to Rome of course to see all the big Catholic, you know, all the churches and all the buildings. Anyway, she knew the place well, and we had maps on the wall, and we would hear the you know...they would announce the names of wherever the Russians or the Allies had taken various localities and so we would look at the map and we'd put little pins. And I remember that as a very good thing, because it gave me some sense that there was something happening.</p> |  |
| 56 | <p>Time is a very difficult thing when you are a child, and you know, at a certain point where people were saying that the war would go on till 1946 you know, this might have been '44. To me '46 was like, you know...it would never come. So that was good.</p>  | <p>Having some knowledge about the war situation gave F some sense of hope in the midst of depressing rumours that the war would go on for years - an eternity for a child.</p>  |
| 57 | <p>And the other thing that I discovered also, or actually it was in my family before, but sometimes after the news broadcast she'd just leave the radio on for a few minutes and there'd be music. And that was a great treat. My father loved classical music, and I got that from him.</p>   | <p>Occasionally the radio was left on after the news for a brief time while music played: F enjoyed this immensely as she felt connected to her father at these times, recalling his great love for classical music.</p> |
| 58 | <p>So I guess there were these little - what can I say? - These sort of pockets, these little things, in the sort of overall...it was like a no-man's land.</p>   | <p>These occasional "treats" were set in what was essentially a time of great despair and bleakness.</p>   |
| 59 | <p>So gradually, things deteriorated and on one occasion, well, I was 9, 1943 was</p>   | <p>Their relationship continued to deteriorate, with F feeling more</p>  |

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|    | <p>getting on, I think, I was there for quite a long time. I was there for quite a long time. I was there probably from about May till the end of that year or even beginning of 1944. I remember the weather got colder again, and on this occasion I wet the bed, you know, so I was nine and a half and I wet the bed, and I felt very ashamed. I don't know what I did with my pajamas - I bundled them up and I must have hidden them somewhere, and of course she found I mean. So she asked me if I wet the bed and I said no. Well, then on top of having wet the bed, I told a lie and you know in this Catholic scheme of things.</p> | <p>and more miserable, culminating in her wetting the bed one evening and then denying it, which was considered a grave misdemeanour.</p>   |
| 60 | <p>Oh that's right, she also taught me things. She taught me Catechism. I don't know if you've ever come across Catechism. This is a Catholic thing that all children - certainly in Belgium they were taught - I don't know what they do here and it was like a question and answer. A question and a simple answer and you just learnt this off by heart. I'm sure it was good training. So I'd learned all this Catechism.</p>   | <p>She spent quite some time learning various Catholic rituals from the woman.</p>  |
| 61 | <p>And the other thing that she did was she tried to teach me fractions. With fractions, we really came a cropper, because something wasn't, you know...something just wasn't getting through. She'd give me an exercise and I couldn't, I couldn't do it. And she got more and more irritated and she would.... Whether she explained again,</p>   | <p>Although F was accomplished in Catholic rituals, she could not master the maths equations the woman was attempting to teach her, which became a great source of friction between them.</p> |

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|    | or by this time....  |   |
| 62 | I suppose by this time my mind had gone blank and all I could feel was the dreadful thing of not being able to do it and her getting angry. Well, it was sort of cold anger, but it was anger anyway, and sending me off...by this time, she was sending me off into the next room and don't come back until you've done it. And do it again and again and again and it was a sort of hopeless thing. Just totally hopeless.   | F felt enormous frustration at not being able to master these exercises. She was well aware that her non-compliance would increase the tension between the two of them, which made her feel even more despondent and desperate. |
| 63 | Well, that was kind of...they were the kind of things that were going on alongside some of the other...or she would, I remember on this day it had snowed, and she wanted me to...she lived on an avenue that was quite close to a park, and on the other side of the park there was a special bakery or something. She wanted me to go and get the bread from the bakery. And sort of walk through the snow covered park and (laugh), you've got five children, you know, and sometimes you know, sometimes as a child you just feel that something is just absolutely beyond you, you know, but I can't remember what happened this time, I think I didn't go. | In this climate of tension, F was asked to go and buy bread while it was snowing and she remembers that this was totally beyond her: she felt unable to persevere any more with the situation, and then refused to go.          |
| 64 | Anyway, finally she spoke with my mother and I had got, I must have got so miserable by this time, that there was absolutely no way to go on with this, and that was that. That was sort of the end of that.   | This resulted in the woman speaking to F's mother, and the decision was made to take her away from this hiding place.   |



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| 65 | <p>And, what I did, the other thing I did one day, she must have told me off about something or she was telling me something and I finally sort of landed on something that I could throw at her, and I turned around and I said “Well you’re only doing this for money anyway”. And I think that summed up the, must have summed up my feeling that I was not, you know, I was not valued and I was not, I was not loved, and I was not important and what was really happening here, you know, what was it really for.</p>   | <p>In one particular outburst, F remarked to the woman that she was only hiding her for monetary gain, which reflected her feelings that she was not loved or wanted for her own sake, but simply was a means for the woman to make money.</p> |
| 66 | <p>And I guess that was how this was how this came about because certainly it was not a fair judgement if you like. She was helping us; she was taking a risk. I had to be somewhere. But, the arrangement was not....</p>   | <p>In retrospect, F realizes she was somewhat harsh on the woman, who was taking a risk in harbouring her even if it was for financial reasons.</p>  |
| 67 | <p>So I then went back to my parents in the same place as before, except that where they had, before this...it really was a huge sort of rambling house.... how to describe. The front part of it was the sort of dwelling area, and my parents had had this small apartment on the ground floor. But then as you went in, there was a very big double door and I think they had sort of, these things were made so that a carriage could go through, could go in. And then there was a courtyard at the back and the old man, the old landlord, had some kind of a workshop he’d made. Oh, what was it,</p> | <p>So F returned once again to her parents, who were now hiding in the back of a large rambling house.</p>   |

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|    | batteries in fact, batteries, so he had a huge workshop at the back of this courtyard. And there must have been then some other little rooms there, because when I came back to stay with my parents, they were in one of those little back rooms.   |   |
| 68 | And there was another Jewish couple who were also in a little back room, on the other side of the courtyard.   | F's parents shared the room with another Jewish couple.   |
| 69 | So this would have been early 1944. And there was a system of bells, sort of, uh, you know, very unsophisticated, just a thing of cords, if anything, you know, if any police would come to the house the landlord or landlady who lived in the front and who, you know, answered the door or whatever could give the alarm and people would you know rush, could rush into the hiding place.  | They had arranged a system of bells in this place which would alert them to go into hiding when someone came in.  |
| 70 | So now we were in one room, instead of two and a half. I don't think I stayed very long. I remember sort of brewing hot drinks, out of apple peels it was, that we used to sort of tick in hot water to make something approaching, I suppose, herbal tea. And we had this funny little square electric cooker or hot plate and you know that had an element. In those days the element was exposed and I can remember that my father was for ever fixing the element, because the element would burn out, then you had to cut off the burnt out bit, and you had to pull it out and sort of set | They were more confined physically in this hiding place than previously; however, F holds fond memories of some of the times they had in this place, particularly when thinking of the sharing of the food. |

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|    | it, screw it, into the right spot again, and the thing was that progressively as we pulled the element out more and more it would tend to burn out more. Um, those were the joys.  |  |
| 71 | There was one good thing, one good thing happened to me in that place and that was that the old landlord had decided to teach himself English, and he had some book with, you know, lists of verbs and things, that you could learn off by heart. I don't know what his accent was like and for some reason, he suggested that I come and do it with him. So perhaps a couple of times a week, I can't remember, I'd go and have an English lesson with him. | During this period of hiding F had English lessons with the landlord, which again provided her with intellectual stimulation as well as an incentive to learn. |
| 72 | And that again, you know, it made me realize how I really hungered for this, if anybody would show me how to do something or teach me to do something that was obviously very necessary or very beneficial or everything you know, I just thrived on having someone, uh, in the right spirit preferably, the fractions thing of course, didn't go for anyone.  | Having this personal attention made F aware of how much she craved this stimulation during her hiding and how she thrived on it.                               |
| 73 | So I was there for a little while and, um, and then they found another place.  | Her stay was brief until another hiding place was decided for her.   |
| 74 | And this time it was outside of Brussels. It was sort of rural already with a woman who ran a café, the equivalent of a pub, except over there it was you know just one big sitting area, men and women together, and in fact on the weekend I remember  | The next hiding place for F was in a rural "caffe" with a woman who had no children.   |

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|    | people came in families you know, they brought their children. And this was her living, and her husband had been sent to Germany to work, and she had no children.   |   |
| 75 | So once again there was the whole thing of a new, you know, lifestyle. Here I was wearing wooden clogs. The set up was that I shared a bed with his woman, and that took some getting used to. Sort of strange body, strange smells, strange everything you know. It was something, I wasn't really, and I wasn't used to. With a chamber pot under the bed.   | F experienced once again the adjustment to a new environment and lifestyle. In particular, she had to share a bed with this woman, which she found to be foreign and uncomfortable. |
| 76 | I'd grown up in French although my parents spoke Yiddish at home, and I think when I was very little I only knew Yiddish because I do remember going first going to kindergarten and not really knowing what was going on around me, but by this time I spoke French, my schooling had been in French, and suddenly although that woman knew French in a funny sort of way, I could see all the mistake she was making. But it was very important that I should learn Flemish as quick as possible because it, you know, the whole thing of blending in. | Although F and the woman had a limited language in common, F quickly had to learn her language so that she could "fit in".  |
| 77 | This was a much more public place. I don't know...my name was slightly different, I this it was Florence instead of Floris. Floris was a most unusual name, and we didn't want an unusual name. I probably had another surname, which I  | As this hiding place was more "open", it was imperative that F blended in, even to the point where her name was changed.  |

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|    | cannot remember. So that wasn't too difficult to get used to, being called Florence, if that's what it was.   |   |
| 78 | But it was a much more public place, I don't know what the explanation was for me being there, but lots of people came in and talked.   | Her exposure to the outside world was increased in this hiding place.   |
| 79 | Again I didn't go to school, but I did get to know some of the girls that were coming in there, and on a Sunday it was a good idea I should go to Church with those girls. So I can remember, and I had been to Church many times before, but suddenly this was a more difficult situation, because when I, whereas I had gone with the old spinster, she knew I was Jewish, she knew exactly who I was. She didn't probably pay much attention to what I did or didn't do. | Although F didn't attend school during the week, she joined the girls in going to church on Sundays. And although she had been to church previously, her previous caretaker knew her "real identity" and did not pay attention to any lack of proficiency in church rituals, yet here she was expected to be "one of the girls" completely. |
| 80 | Oh yes, I'd just like to go back to an episode about that. Staying with the spinster at M, I discovered the joys of going to church. She had a very lovely illustrated Bible, children's Bible, which was the Old and the New Testament and I guess I discovered this whole thing about Jesus and so we went to church very regularly. However I couldn't go to communion, because I hadn't been baptized. I couldn't join in, I couldn't go to confession.                 | F quite enjoyed the rituals of attending church here, although she was prohibited from participating fully because she had not been baptized.   |
| 81 | And so one day while I was living with her it was not very far from where my parents were, I used to visit then on occasion. I  | In her naivete, F actually approached her parents about being baptized so that she could fully  |

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|    | used to just walk around there by myself and pay them a visit, and on this particular occasion, I came and I said I wanted to be baptized. Well, I think if I could have, you know, if the ground could have swallowed me up after I made this suggestion, I would have been happy. But I had no understanding of the, you know, the enormity of this, I had no idea.   | blend in, without understanding the implications of what she was asking them. They were outraged at her request and F felt humiliated by their reaction.   |
| 82 | I thought, here I am, I am doing my best to fit in, and I've got to fit in. It would make life that much easier you see (laugh), so I suppose I had that much sense of this that, OK, I wasn't with them, I had to be somewhere else. I had to be able to be something, but of course they just got angry. They said, don't you ever mention this again, and there's no, out of the question and my parents would go on and on. | F felt perplexed and confused by her parents' reaction to her request, as she was receiving conflicting messages from them: she was expected to fit in, while on a different level they still expected her to "hold back". It was difficult for F to appreciate this subtle distinction, but she was forced to accept the ruling of her parents. |
| 83 | Well I can imagine how they must have felt but the main point was that I had no understanding at that stage.  | In hindsight F can appreciate their reaction, but at the time she had no understanding of the delicate balance that was expected of her.   |
| 84 | And it was not as if they took it calmly and said, well, you know, it's like this, or it's like this. That was not something they were able to do, so here I was alienating my parents, I mean, you know, how much worse could things get. So that was the episode about wanting to be baptized.  | Her parents did not explain the situation to her in <i>a priori</i> fashion, but reacted quite strongly, so that F felt she had alienated them by her request.   |
| 85 | And then in this country place I was going to church with the girls and got very  | While attending church, F was very particular about blending in with   |

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|    | <p>anxious to see that I was going exactly what they were doing, that they wouldn't sort of pick or start asking me, you know, "How come you're not, whatever, doing this or doing that" and the first thing you do when you walk into the church is, you go up to this strange shaped thing that contains the Holy Water, and you dip your fingers in it and you make the sign of the Cross and you make it in the proper, facing way or whatever.</p>  | <p>the other girls in the rituals of the visit.</p>  |
| 86 | <p>So the big routine in this place in the country was the cleaning up, and we would start, because again I wasn't going to school. Other children were not around during the day and well, at least I guess this provided some kind of routine. We would start I think on a Wednesday afternoon and finish up on a Saturday morning, or was it Thursday afternoon perhaps. You'd start upstairs and with the cleaning and the washing and the...my particular job was to wash all the wooden furniture in the café downstairs, and that got washed down with water and ammonia and that I hated. But everything was flagstones. The flooring was all stones. So you could pick up a bucket of water and you could just sort of slosh it all over the floor. You know from very little, I was always interested in the cleaning lady and the water and all that stuff, and so in one way I guess, again I enjoyed doing these things, except for the</p> | <p>The focus of F's time in this hiding place was on "cleaning", which provided her with some sort of structure and routine. F found herself enjoying the chores and felt she was being somewhat helpful in her domestic contribution.</p> |

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|    | <p>ammonia, and I was happy to be helpful and do what I could to sort of show myself worthy I guess. She taught me to iron handkerchiefs and on Saturday morning was polishing the brass on the outside door and all that kind of thing. And I was doing all that.</p>  |  |
| 87 | <p>But again she was a woman, a dour sort of woman, she had no children, she had no idea about children and the same kind of...the same kind of thing developed for me, you know, after the initial thing of being helpful, and I every way that she expected. The reward didn't come, though, it didn't come.... I wasn't getting what I needed.</p> | <p>Yet in spite of her contribution, F felt her efforts were not appreciated and her own needs were not being met.</p>   |
| 88 | <p>She had a little dog; it was a cute fat little thing. I'd never lived with a dog and anything that I left lying around this dog would chew up and I would get told off. Of course, I should've...</p>  | <p>Again, F experienced some difficulties in adjusting to the unfamiliar; it seemed her host was not very forgiving of her or any slip-ups she might make, however minor they might have appeared.</p> |
| 89 | <p>And the other big thing I did for her was to bring the bottles of beer up from the cellar and there my reward was that I'd get a drink of some beer, and I developed a great liking for beer. It was...that was sort of the highlight I guess.</p>   | <p>For some minor activities F did get rewarded, which became a highlight for her time in hiding.</p>  |
| 90 | <p>The other nice thing that would happen occasionally is, she had old elderly parents and a sister who lived somewhere not far away. And they also ran some kind of very small pub and when we'd go and visit and</p>  | <p>Another highlight of her stay here was visiting the lady's extended family, warm people who used to fuss over F and offer her a nurturing that she lacked whilst in</p>                             |



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|    | <p>they must have had fields of something, stuff they were harvesting, (it) was summer '44. It was not summer '44, it was probably late spring. Anyway, we would go there and we would spend the day. And they were much warmer, they're much warmer people, and I can remember this sister of hers' cutting my nails and sort of doing things for me and telling me, you know how you should do this, and what you should do and obviously I enjoyed that. They made a bit more of a fuss of me.</p> | <p>her hiding place.</p>   |
| 91 | <p>And then at some point she decided that year.... The whole thing sort of deteriorated so that finally she decided no, she wouldn't have me sleeping in the bed anymore. She put me in the next door room, but the next door room didn't have a bed or what it had was one of those deck chairs, you know, a canvas deck chair.</p>   | <p>However, things deteriorated to the point where the woman decided F could no longer share her bed and moved her to a deck chair in an adjoining room.</p> |
| 92 | <p>Well by this time I was ten and a bit, I was not particularly small or short and I found that there was no way I could sort of arrange myself in this deck chair, so I put the deck chair flat on the floor, but of course it didn't provide very much, you know, there was no substance there. It was just this thin; it was on the hard floor. That was one of my problems.</p>  | <p>It was immensely awkward for F to make herself comfortable in this deck chair and she experienced great discomfort.</p>                                   |
| 93 | <p>And the other problem was somehow the food, obviously, because she had some containers of flour, and I remember trying to eat the raw flour to see how that would</p>  | <p>F also remembers being quite desperate for food in this hiding place, even tasting raw condiments to see if they could provide her</p>                    |

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|    | go.  | with some sustenance.  |
| 94 | <p>And she stopped taking me to her relatives when she was going to visit her parents and her sister, she stopped taking me, so I'd spend the day by myself and on one occasion she wanted me to, she wanted me to shell some peas, but what she had was about three or four kilos of, you know, the pods, were rotten. The peas would still be OK and I mean, you didn't throw anything away but the pods were rotten. And it was again one of those jobs that I, oh, I'd reached the end. And there was an additional thing that I wanted to go off and visit some girls and I wasn't allowed to. Anyway, I wasn't going to be allowed to do anything until I'd done those peas.</p> | <p>The sense of deprivation extended not only to the physical, but the lady stopped the visits to her extended family which had previously provided F with emotional sustenance and warmth. This resulted in F once again feeling everything was just beyond her and overwhelmed with the hopelessness of her situation.</p> |
| 95 | <p>One of the good things about being there was, as I said that I had to learn Flemish quickly, and it happened that there was a very nice young woman next door who was training to be a primary school teacher, and he took me on. It was just heaven because she nice, she was pleasant, she thought I was a good student and I was learning, you know, I was learning very well. And then she would ask me to rule up pages of paper for her.</p>  | <p>In the context of being hidden by the woman, a relationship with a neighbour who showed some interest in F allowed her to become "alive": the neighbour spent time teaching her and stimulated her craving to learn.</p>  |
| 96 | <p>And I guess she was someone I could love and respect and look up to and so on. I really, adored her, and so I used to, very carefully, she had this paper that needed lines ruled on it for her course. I don't</p>   | <p>This neighbour provided F with a role model that she could look up to and admire and she took on the learning tasks set for her with great enthusiasm and devotion.</p>   |

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|     | know, and I'd be very carefully lining up, drawing lines on these pages.  |   |
| 97  | And my mother used to come, I think, well, as I said, mum always some how managed to come and see, you know, where we were. I guess she did have to bring money to this woman, I suppose she sort of kept some kind of tabs on the situation in this way.   | There was always a sense of her mother hovering in the background of her hiding and keeping a check on her welfare.   |
| 98  | But I mean, you know, she would arrive and leave. It was probably added torture.  | However, these brief visits by her mother seemed to highlight even further for F the pain of separation and made her hiding even more difficult to sustain.   |
| 99  | On this particular day, one day I actually did break down. I really allowed myself something then because, you know, you mustn't worry, you mustn't upset those and there was nothing that could be done anyway.  | On one of these occasions, F finally broke down, noting that to have done so she really must have been desperate, because she knew the importance of never upsetting the situation in any way.  |
| 100 | And I think it was about the time when somebody said, "Oh, this war might go on till '46." People were always talking, predicting, maybe it'll end, it's going well and maybe it'll end in three months, and now it's not going well and it won't end till '46. And I said, I broke down and cried, and I said, "Oh this is never going to end". And I guess I was beyond, I was just beyond dealing with it. | F believes this was a reaction to hearing the news that the war would continue for some years yet, making her feel absolutely desperate and believing that she would not be able to sustain the predicted length of the war hiding in this fashion. |
| 101 | Soon after that she was supposed to come and she didn't come and I used to, I used to sort of saunter up the street to where the  | Although her mother indicated to F that she would come for her, this did not eventuate and F would  |

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|     | <p>tram came, but of course I was not supposed to look for her and I was not supposed to go up to her and all that. But I'd just sort of wander up a bit to see if she was coming. But she didn't come.</p>  | <p>wander looking for her in a discreet manner.</p>   |
| 102 | <p>And then I think she says, it's the next time, she says, she did in the end arrive, but that was the day when the Germans came for them, and they all piled in to this hiding hole and they weren't found, so all was well. But as soon as, as soon as the Germans had gone and it was quite early in the morning, they immediately left that place.</p>  | <p>She eventually did come for F, having herself to balance her own hiding places and remain safe throughout.</p> |
| 103 | <p>She said that Germans had gone around, you know, there was...sometimes it would be Gestapo, and sometimes it would not be Gestapo. And they thought on this occasion that they were sort of maybe not, because it wouldn't have been so difficult to find them. But the Germans had gone around, they'd realized that the beds were warm virtually, everybody had just sort of...so they said, "Where are these people, you know the beds are still warm" and the woman said "Oh, they've gone to work, but if you come back later, you'll find them". So they immediately left that place.</p> | <p>Her parents themselves had had to leave their hiding place because of a recent German raid.</p>                |
| 104 | <p>They went to a friend who was somehow in a safe area, because the Belgium's around were known to be anti-German and sort of protected them, I don't know. Anyway, they couldn't stay there very long, and they</p>  | <p>They went and hid with some Belgian friends who were deemed to be safe.</p>                                    |

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|     | were then very fortunate to find a place and this was in June '44 and it happened to be exactly the day of the Allied landing in Normandy, so it was the 6 <sup>th</sup> June. I didn't know all that at the time.  |  |
| 105 | And I think that probably the next time she came for me or she came to see me she said, "Well you know, pack your things, I'm taking you away".   | So on the next visit, F's mother told F to come with her.  |
| 106 | And she says that she told the woman that my father had been taken, that she could no longer afford it, she didn't want to sort of, you know, she didn't want to leave on a bad note, she didn't want there to be unpleasantness, and I don't know what I packed, because I'm sure I didn't have much stuff and so mum took me to the last place.   | Her mother told the woman she was moving F because of financial constraints, not wanting to upset the host or cause any friction between them.   |
| 107 | Now, they'd found a couple with three children who were wonderful people and this is a family that I've just done this Yad Vashem thing for. They were lovely, lovely, lovely people. My mother sort of kept house for them. The woman was a teacher, and her husband was an engineer, very generous, very kind, very...you know....after the war they became friends virtually and this woman had a sister and I think that mum talked about me being unhappy where I was and the sister immediately offered to have me. | The move to hide with this final family highlighted once again F's sensitivity to their lovingness and warmth, which had been lacking in her previous hiding place. The gratitude F felt towards this family seems to have sustained her through her life. |
| 108 | So I went to this sister who was an older, she was older by this time, she had an adult   | This woman lived above a shop, together with her elderly father,   |

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|     | daughter who wasn't living there, and she had an optometrist shop. I think she was an optometrist anyway, she had her shop downstairs and she was busy with that. But her elderly father was living with her, and he sort of took me, he took me over.  | who took F in to hide there.  |
| 109 | And this is what I talked about at the actual ceremony, that, well, it was one more place, you know, I'd already been through so many what the hell. You would think what difference would it make. But yet, the difference in the atmosphere was just incredible, and you know by this time I was ten, I'd turned ten in February and this was June, well ten and four months. It didn't take me five minutes to sense, you know, and to sense the difference in atmosphere. | F comments that although she had already been to many and various hiding places, and she arrived with the attitude of "what difference will this place make", the atmosphere was immediately different and monumental in this new home. |
| 110 | The difference in the people, their kindness, their generosity, what ever I did was OK, and if I offered to do something to help because nobody was doing any cleaning, and I thought, oh I can clean this. I'd had all this experience.  | These people were warm, generous and accepting of F.  |
| 111 | They were delighted and the grandfather would sit and talk to me. He was very interested because...I checked this out with the granddaughter who is still alive...he was very interested in things relating to history and geography, and he had maps on the wall and he would show me and he would tell me things, and I was goggle eyed and again, I loved it. I just loved his attention, and then he would take me to his   | They were very appreciative of all her efforts and the grandfather nurtured a genuine relationship with F, involving her in his various interests.  |

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|     | <p>vegetable garden, that was the great thing, because he had a vegetable garden. He being quite old, he had trouble with the weeding, so he taught me what the weeds were, and I'd do the weeding and he would just sort of generally look after the other things, and point out all the plants to me. He was growing things that were unusual in Brussels in those days. He was growing corn, and he was growing, he had a nectarine tree, I think, and he was very proud of his garden and I was very proud that, you know, I'd learned to weed it. And there were books and there were things.</p> |   |
| 112 | <p>And I felt suddenly a person, and looking back I think, well, it was just so important, that feeling of having space, of being able to be yourself and not sort of watching at every moment at every point, you know, how it would be received, what would the reaction would be, would you still be OK, would you not be OK.</p>   | <p>In this place F began to feel valued as a person, which she had really been deprived of in her previous places of hiding. She felt released from the tension of not knowing what to do and how it would be received.</p> |
| 113 | <p>So that was the great thing about this place, and I was only there June, July, August, probably a bit longer than that, but when I was there on one Sunday that we were liberated.</p>  | <p>Although F was only at this place briefly until liberation, she has strong and fond memories of this family.</p>   |
| 114 | <p>And then my parents found an apartment and after a few weeks probably I went home.</p>  | <p>After liberation she moved back with her parents into an apartment.</p>  |
| 115 | <p>And that was not a joyous thing and that was not the, you know, the thing I might have dreamt about all that time,</p>  | <p>The return to family life in F's experience was very disappointing, as she realized the realities of</p>   |

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|     | unconsciously and it wasn't that at all, not alt all.  | everyday life did not match the fantasies she had had while in hiding.  |
| 116 | And if I thought didn't think really, vaguely hope that, you know, I was going to come into my own or something. I was going to be this happy family, this loved important person...again, or more than I'd been, or get some kind of recognition, none of it was talked about, the whole thing, the whole thing I think was a great disappointment.   | Further, F felt she was not given any acknowledgment about her own trials and tribulations during the hiding period.  |
| 117 | I mean, I was a strange child probably for my parents and they were strange to me.   | F felt foreign to her parents, a feeling they reciprocated.   |
| 118 | I had done some growing up independently and I suddenly found that there was a whole new, you know, new burden to take up, and that was going back to school and catching up on what had missed, and living a normal life as if nothing had ever happened and this was the task.   | F felt burdened by the routine of everyday life and having to catch up on all that she had missed while in hiding, whilst again there was no acknowledgment of the reasons for her missing out on schooling.  |
| 119 | There is one episode that I did not tell you about. I'm not entirely sure...I think it happened while I was staying with the spinster and my parents went to live with a different family for a short time, and this was somewhere perhaps half an hour tram ride and walk away, and I went to visit them one day, and then when the evening came my mother was bringing me back and so we were on a tram....It was evening and this tram was getting close to, you know, where I was supposed to finish up, going | F recalls an incident early in the time of hiding after she visited her mother, who was accompanying her by public transport back to her hiding place when they witnessed the Germans checking everyone's papers. Although her mother instructed F to run home to inform her father, F was completely frozen from fear. |



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|     | <p>home to the spinster. And suddenly the tram was stopped and everybody was made to get off the tram and the Germans were checking papers. Um, and my mother said to me, I think she said to me, you run home and tell dad what happened, something like that. Streets in Brussels are quite, well, that street was fairly narrow, there were two tramlines, so the kerb was not very far from where the tram was. I just got up on the kerb and I moved away. I moved away a few metres I think, no more, and I stood there, I was just rooted to the spot. I couldn't think, frozen, absolute and I was just watching, there were not that many people on the tram, I think on a Sunday evening and I was just watching this procedure.</p> |   |
| 120 | <p>I'm not even sure, I can't remember actually seeing in detail what happening, all I can remember is the tram was lit up and on the kerb was fairly dark, I suppose and just standing there waiting.</p>   | <p>F cannot recall many details of this incident.</p>                   |
| 121 | <p>And mum, mum had (a) false identity card which was essential, because my parents were still Polish citizens, and the locals had a green card, foreigners had a yellow card with a red band across it, and possibly even <i>Jude</i> on it, I can't remember. So Mum had this false identity card and anyway, all was well in the end, because they accepted the false identity card.</p>  | <p>Her mother had false papers for them, which seemed to save them.</p> |
| 122 | <p>And you know this is the strange thing.</p>   | <p>This incident made F become</p>                                      |

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|     | <p>Because being a hidden child in a place like Belgium, many of us, we didn't really know, we didn't really see, it was not like and this has been pointed out many times, it was not like in Poland in a ghetto where children, you know, they saw the horrors. It was all out there, you know. They saw people dying, being killed, being rounded up, everything. We didn't really see anything and the Germans certainly didn't do things in public the way that they did in the east. So you didn't, I didn't really know, but you just had this fear, and this (un)certainty.</p> | <p>aware of her own fear during this time, although she was not witness to some of the horrors experienced in other countries.</p>   |
| 123 | <p>Like I said the man, in the early part, the man who was threatening us, I don't know if he told us much detail, but it was just made clear to us, you know, that if the Germans got hold of us, we'd, you know, we'd be non-existent. How you grasp that as a child I don't know.</p>  | <p>Similarly, when threatened by the man who hid them early in the piece, although F did not understand the full implications of her predicament and what hiding actually entailed, the fear was embedded quite deeply in her even as a young child.</p> |
| 124 | <p>And on this occasion I didn't know, but I guess what I did know was, you know, I might not have a mother at the end of this little episode. That was all. It would have been as drastic and total as that, but what really it was I didn't know.</p>   | <p>In this episode on the tram, F realized that she was at risk of losing her mother to death.</p>   |
| 125 | <p>So you want to ask any questions?</p>  |  |

### 3.1.2 (d) Situated Structure for 'F':

In response to being asked to describe her experience of being hidden, F began by detailing the background of the beginnings of the war, which broke out in her country of origin in 1940. F was six years old at the time. Initially, F fled, together with her mother and sister, to a different village for a short while for safety, before returning to their hometown during a brief respite. F seemed to accept these initial changes in her life without much thought or awareness of the impact they would have.

However, restrictions for the Jews began to filter in by the beginning of 1942 and life as it was normally experienced began to change. There was a sense of life beginning to shift for F and her family without F quite being able to articulate how or when these changes manifested themselves. It appeared at least initially and superficially that the changes occurred against the background of normality, which gave F some reassurance.

F's first experience of being "hidden away" was in mid-1942, when she and her sister were sent away to a type of children's home. This was F's first experience of being separated from her parents and even though she was still with her sister, her sense of longing for her mother began at this point. They were given no explanation for this move and perceived it as an expulsion from home; F recalls feeling isolated and miserable in her separation from her parents, in spite of it being a seemingly pleasant placement. At some stage during this period, F became insidiously aware of the continual background noises of the war, and it seems that the fear began to seep into her consciousness without F being aware of its' onset. Yet it was apparent that the war situation seemed less threatening and frightening to F compared to her feelings of despair at being separated from her family during the hiding. F experienced the actual physical restrictiveness of the hiding quite acutely on an early occasion when she was sent on an errand outside the children's home. In passing her parents' house, she was overcome with the realization that she was not supposed to visit them, in spite of her intense longing to go home. Home had become a forbidden place to F, which was intensely frightening and sad for her.

This hiding place ended after approximately one month when F's mother came and took them out of the children's home for fear of its lack of safety, and they were moved to a family in the country which fostered a number of Jewish children. It seemed that F had to change her perception of "the family" which up until this point in time had meant a place of security and sanctuary from the outside world; however, the hostilities from within this host family towards F came as quite a shock to her. Slowly F's "known" and familiar world was becoming filled with the "unknown" and foreign. The host family was quite hostile towards the children and they were poorly fed, with little for them to do. Both they and their parents were continually threatened by the landlord with exposure to the Germans. F did have the companionship of a friend from before the war in this hiding place, which provided some solace to her and offered her some comfort amidst her misery. However, as soon as her mother became aware of the situation, both she and her sister were removed from this family.

On returning home, F found she possessed a heightened sense of appreciation of all that was part of her normal domestic life (a feeling still extant today). F relished food, which was a major focus of life in hiding. It seemed as if the warmth and generosity of the sharing of meals in the family context was in marked contrast to the controlled restrictiveness and deprivation of hiding.

However, this respite back home was brief before F was moved to another hiding place.

Until recently, F thought of her time in hiding as a period when life seemed to be suspended or put on hold but in recent years she has come to integrate her time in hiding with the rest of her life and has begun to reflect on the events which occurred during this time. However, F was left with a sense of vagueness about this period and believes this might have been a way for her to cope with the many changes in her life then. She dissociated herself from her feelings and did not pay attention to the changes besieging her life in a meaningful way. Even at the time of her experiences, it seemed that F was travelling along an unfamiliar road and her absorption of the meaning of what she was experiencing only grew gradually over time. In part, F believes she suspended this section of her life from her consciousness as a reaction to how she coped as a child,

when she believes she “cut herself off” and numbed herself to the overwhelming traumatic feelings she experienced during her hiding.

Being hidden meant that F developed the skill to adapt to the unfamiliar and fit in with a new environment, in order to survive. F became aware of this “need to adapt” quite early in her experience, and over the years of hiding learnt to refine this skill till it became an automatic part of her nature.

Her next place of hiding was with a warm and nurturing family; yet in spite of this, F still felt an outsider to the host family. There was a continual tension between her and the real children of the home, and F was made to feel that she was the inferior child in the family’s hierarchy. Nevertheless, F found refuge in this hiding place in the library of the home and discovered the pleasures of escaping through reading while the other children attended school. She also began private lessons with a family member who stimulated her thirst to learn and gave her a sense of self-value and attention, on which she thrived. F’s need to feel valued and treated as a person in her own right (as experienced in these “pseudo-lessons,” which assumed a vital meaning for F) became apparent at this early stage.

Along with this, F developed an understanding of the “need to please” her host family, and how to maintain favour with them, irrespective of the strain this put upon her. Subliminally she took her cues from those around her and suppressed her own personality and needs through this process. The sense of “other” became more important for F’s survival than the sense of “self”. In a practical sense, F noted that she learnt through her experience of hiding to adjust to the various idiosyncrasies of those hiding her and she understood implicitly how to adapt to their behaviours and demands. Although, at times, this was quite difficult for her to master, she understood the crucial nature of this balance and the importance of blending into the home culture.

Her hiddenness did not mean a complete physical hiding and F was allowed out in certain, monitored circumstances. Instead, her hiding demanded a psychological hiding and transition to a Christian/Gentile world and F had to learn and participate in many Catholic rituals. In spite of her own secular upbringing, F found the religious Catholic

rituals to be a comfort to her and she enjoyed the festivities involved. Prior to her hiding, F had admired her Catholic neighbours and their religious practices, and she was pleased to be given an opportunity within the hiding to participate in this lifestyle. The warmth of the Christmas celebration with all its presents felt especially wonderful to F.

However, the sense of danger was always very near for F and after one particularly close encounter, she and her sister were forced to leave this family. F recalls being totally excluded from this decision to change hiding places, almost as if she were her parents' "chattel" instead of their child who had developed an attachment to her host family.

F was briefly reunited with her parents: however, instead of this being a joyous reunion it was fraught with tension and fear, as her parents were very aware of the dangers of the war situation and the threat under which they were hiding. Her parents at this stage were hiding with other adults in a room and the whole situation felt very foreign and unfamiliar to F, which made her feel frightened. Thus F experienced relief at being sent away from home and into another hiding place.

Once again, F anticipated this new move with mixed feelings of anxiety and excitement as she entered her new home with a spinster woman. Although initially F found familiarity in the church services which she attended with this woman, and the novelty of the new situation seemed to be exciting, the situation deteriorated quite rapidly for her. It seemed that the woman had no understanding or experience of children and made F do all the menial and domestic jobs for her without offering her any warmth or companionship in return. F felt quite objectified and demeaned in her role in the home, yet she managed to find a glimmer of hope among the gloom of this placement: occasionally she was given the opportunity to listen to the lady's radio, which provided her with a link and connection to the outside world. The knowledge of what was going on outside her hiding gave F a sense of empowerment and comfort. Occasionally the radio was tuned to classical music which was reminiscent to F of the music her father enjoyed and which again provided F some comfort in her listening and a connection to her previous life. However, these "pockets of pleasure" were rarities set amongst the bleak conditions of her hiding. The woman who was looking after her became

increasingly demanding of her over time and the tension between them grew until F felt totally helpless and despairing in her hiddenness. Fortunately, when F's mother learned of this situation, she was able to rescue her from this hiding place. In retrospect, F believes she was not sufficiently grateful to the woman who hid her and whom at the time she accused of hiding her purely for pecuniary gain.

Once again F moved temporarily back with her parents, who at this stage were themselves hiding in very cramped conditions. The tension in their hiding place was rife, but F remembers feeling great relief and joy at being reunited with her family and again recalls with joy the wonderful shared meals which became such a focus of their hiding.

The next hiding place was in a rural pub, with a childless couple. Once again, F was challenged to adjust and adapt to a new and unfamiliar lifestyle, which this time included, sharing a bed with a stranger and learning a new language. As her place of hiding was relatively open here, it was essential that F blend in as much as she could, even having to change her name. Consequently, her identity was totally transformed to all who encountered her and F found this process to be both isolating and lonely. It felt to F that her identity was disconnected from the person she had become, who felt alien and foreign to her. Once again, the rituals of church attendance provided F with a sense of comfort. In fact, F became so involved with her new identity and the cloak of religion, that in her efforts to fit in she approached her parents about being properly baptized, totally oblivious to the impact her request would have upon them. F did not understand or appreciate at the time the delicate balance of her blending in her hiding yet still remaining separate, and was confused by her parents' expectations of her which made her experience feel even more isolating. Furthermore, the true situation was never fully explained to F, yet she was expected to understand it, almost innately. So while F focused on blending in, her parents' reaction to her request to be baptized made it clear that she would also have to hold back. These contradictory feelings were experienced in the context of F feeling alienated from her immediate host family, although some of the extended family were warm to her. Physically and emotionally, F felt deprived in this hiding place until once again she reached a point of total helplessness and despair where she felt unable to continue. As the conditions

deteriorated between them, the host lady forbade F from visiting her extended family as a type of punishment which made the living conditions even more unbearable for F. Her mother did make occasional visits to her in this hiding place, but these visits seemed to highlight the separations even more painfully for F as she tried to maintain a brave facade. Again there was some respite for F as she had Flemish lessons with a neighbour next door, on which she thrived and which highlighted once again for her the importance of being valued as a person in her own right. Ultimately, however, F broke down in front of her mother, knowing that she was breaking a serious unspoken rule between them. But F had reached a point at which she felt she could not sustain her hiddenness for a moment longer and gave in totally to her despair without thinking of the consequences of her actions.

Eventually, F's mother came for her and she moved hiding places for a final time. The final family contrasted sharply to the one before, in that they were warm and nurturing in their care of F and this experience seems to have sustained F throughout her life. F remains grateful to this family for her experience there, and expressed her appreciation to them in a retrospective ceremony in Israel recently. The contrast in this hiding place presented itself sharply to F compared to her previous homes, highlighting to her even more acutely her sense of deprivation in some of her previous hidings. F notes that she felt as if she were a person in her own right in this hiding place and although the differences were subtle in practical terms, the meaning of this change had an enormous impact for F in her sense of self-valuation.

From this hiding place, F was reunited with her own family of origin, which turned out to be a great disappointment for her. It seemed she had idealized family life while in hiding and the reality of her reunion did not match her fantasies. Nor did her parents acknowledge her experience of hiding or separation. The reunification felt foreign both to F and her parents, with the routine and the mundane nature of life being hard to adjust to.

F finally recalls an incident in hiding very early on in the war where she was totally frozen by fear in a dangerous incident where her mother was at risk. F realized that this fear had seeped into her consciousness quite early on in her hiding without her



becoming aware of its presence. F notes that even without witnessing the many overt traumas of war evidenced in other countries, fear was forever present in an insidious fashion and a real and palpable part of her experience of hiding.

### 3.2 OVERVIEW OF GENERAL STRUCTURES:

This section will present the general structures of the experience of being hidden as retrospectively described by child survivors of the Holocaust. The description of the general structures attempts to articulate the diverse individual expressions of the phenomenon of being hidden as described by individual subjects and encapsulate the various facets of the phenomenon in a more general way. To meet the criterion of a general structure, individual structures were analyzed and considered as suggested by Wertz (1983) in terms of two questions:

- (1) Can we have the phenomenon without this structure?
- (2) If we have only this structure, do we have the whole phenomenon?

The role of the researcher is to *“formulate the essential, that is, both the necessary and sufficient conditions, constituents, and structural relations which constitute the phenomenon in general, that is, in all instances of the phenomenon under consideration”* (op. cit., p. 235).

The general structure analyses revealed that for these children, the defining moment of being hidden was the suppression of their identities as Jews. By being hidden, they had to suppress totally the essence of their beings - their names, family details, their connections to others - all in an effort to conceal their Jewishness. Other themes to emerge were the pervading fear that enveloped their entire experience in hiding and the experience of suspended normality during this period, which sometimes extended over a period of years. A “cut-offness” and personality constriction seemed to be present throughout the descriptions of these children and seems to have developed as a method of coping with the trauma of their childhood. Overlaying all of this were general insecurities about the capriciousness of the war and the contextual specificity of their

actual hiding places to which each child had to adjust. Connections or relationships to another person seemed to play an essential role in the dynamics of the everyday during the experience of hiding and often shaped some of its psychological and emotional aspects.

### 3.3 ELABORATION OF THE GENERAL STRUCTURES:

When presenting the general structure of the phenomenon, the various elements of that phenomenon will be presented as they emerged in the analysis. Although they will be presented in a linear form, that is, in a list-type fashion, it is important to bear in mind that they are in fact not a hierarchical list but rather should be thought of as various threads making up the whole in a Gestalt-like way. The interconnection between the various elements should also be born in mind and this presentation should be thought of in terms of the “hermeneutical circle” of which there is no beginning and end-point as such, but there is an ever-continuing informing of each element with another.

#### 3.3.1 Suppression of Identities in Hiding:

Essential to the experience of being hidden was the suppression of the children’s identities in hiding. The first and most obvious form of this suppression was (1) the **suppression of their identity as Jews**: they had to adopt false identities, create a new persona and deny their Jewish identification. Children learnt quite quickly in their hiding that they had to “blend in”, even if they could not explicitly describe what this meant. There seemed to be an innate sense of trying to please the family or people in the place they were hidden and having always to anticipate what was expected of them. In their suppression of their Jewishness, they also had to adopt new personalities that would take into account the expectations and needs of those around them while simultaneously denying themselves those very same constructs.

More subtle variations of the suppression of identities were also expressed in terms of the children’s (2) **sense of self in hiding**. Even with “new identities” it emerged that these children had little sense of self-identity. Nearly all decisions regarding where they

would hide, for how long and so forth were made by the adults; the children were expected to fall in with this plan. Obviously this was a reflection of the culture of that time, where children did not assert themselves or their individuality as we might expect today. However, in a desperate quest to hide these children and protect them from the threat of death which was very real and present then, the subtleties of care and nurturing had to be suppressed and the individual needs of these children had to be denied in the face of the overall need for survival. During this process, some of the children felt depersonalized, devalued and even came close to depression as their identities were not only suppressed in terms of their Jewish affiliations and identifications, but their sense of self as children was also ignored and denied in their hiding. Contrasting with this were those children who were made to feel “special” or “valued” in their hiddenness and the encouragement this gave them.

Another aspect of identity to emerge was (3) **the heightened sense of identity** that some of these children developed in hiding *because their identity was denied to them*. That is, by adopting a “false identity” they strengthened their resolve to remain true to their Judaism even further.

### **3.3.1.1 Suppression of Identity as Jews:**

Unique to the experience of hiding for child survivors during the Holocaust was the suppression of their identities as Jews. In hiding, there was a differentiation between those who were physically hidden completely out of sight (such as R in the cupboard or E in the potato pit) and those who were “openly hidden”, that is, they assumed a different identity while still living openly, albeit somewhat restrictively. R had to change his identity and became a “retarded Gentile girl”: retarded so that he could feign having limited speech in order to conceal the nuances of grammar which would reveal him as being a boy; and “female” because boys could easily be identified as Jewish simply by checking if they were circumcised. This “disguise”, carefully thought out by his mother, is typical of the many layers of elaborate planning and thinking which went into their disguise in their change of identities, that many of these decisions had to be taken hastily and without much deliberation.

Other children were taken into convents, where they had to “blend in” with the other girls there, suppressing their Jewishness and attempting to fall in with the routines of Catholicism. Even when private Christian families agreed to take a child into hiding, an elaborate “explanation” for the addition of an extra child in the home had to be fabricated; new family structures were developed and rehearsed and new identities were given to these children. For some who were very young, this was very complex and dangerous, as they were unable to appreciate the gravity of their situation. One subject describes her continual fear that her younger brother, who did not understand “what they had to do”, would break into a Jewish song unwittingly and thereby give the whole family away.

Hidden children were often very isolated in their hiding. Although some did hide with parents or siblings, others were placed in hiding on their own. Having to suppress their identities by going into hiding meant that all former connections to schools, friends and relatives had to be severed completely. All that was familiar had to be withdrawn and a new and alien landscape became their home. They had to camouflage themselves completely to remain safe, deny their identities and assume new ones. In discussion with child survivors, it emerged that to suppress their identities so completely left many of them feeling bereft, as if in a vacuum for this time. They had to deny their connections to Judaism and adopt an alien and unfamiliar persona, and this suspension between the two worlds could often extend for many months or even years, leaving them unsure of who they were and where they belonged. This has been described by Wijzenbeek (1977) as being a “*no-man in no-man’s land.....*” Wijzenbeek further elaborates by claiming that the real suffering of Jews began during the hiding period “*Man’s identity is based on his name, his personal and cultural background. In hiding permanent harm was done to the core of the individual, who lost his most personal and individual possessions...(his identity)*”. (p. 72)

Another facet of this loss of identity particular to the group of children in hiding was the reality that most were isolated in their hiding and had no-one with whom they could share the trauma of this identity suppression. Although the concentration camps were filled with many horrors, child survivors acknowledged (in personal discussions with the Child Survivor Group) that there was a certain feeling of solidarity and sense of

belonging in being a part of a group in camps. In that environment all were victims, and in a sense they were able to share their fate together. Unlike those who went into hiding, they did not have to deny their identities, although the degradations of the camp and the replacement of their names with a number certainly stripped them of any individualism.

Erikson (1968) describes identity as *“a process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture, a process which establishes the identity of those two identities”*. Certainly, for those children in hiding, both facets of this identity were denied to them. Not only were they suppressing their own personal details of identity - their names, language, family relations and religion - but they also had to suppress the community culture to which they belonged, their Jewish context. Those in concentration camps were certainly stripped of their identity in terms of the humiliations of their names being replaced by numbers, their clothing by prison uniforms, their bodies stripped and heads shaved so that a uniformity existed among them where individualism was not allowed to arise. Nevertheless, the context of their Judaism was not denied to them: that is, they were allowed to be Jewish in the camps and belonged to a group with whom they were able to share their traumas. A certain group solidarity seemed to emerge in the concentration camps and this was acknowledged to be of vital importance amongst these survivors (personal communication by Child Survivor Group, 2000). For those who were hidden, there were no such opportunities: being hidden often entailed being isolated or separated from one's families or group, and even when they were together, they had to deny their “group's identity”.

A particular example of this phenomenon is portrayed by S's description of being in a bomb shelter one night with her “new family” which was hiding her. Although she suspected that probably everyone else in the shelter was Jewish, they were unable to let their guard down even momentarily, in case there was someone present who might betray her. Unexpectedly, her biological father came into the shelter one evening, but the girl was unable to acknowledge him, in spite of having been separated for some weeks, as her true identity and her connections to this man had to be suppressed. The pain and poignancy of this child's wish to hug her father had to be suppressed because of her “new identity”.

### 3.3.1.2 Sense of Self in Hiding:

The hidden children's sense of self in hiding varied from one extreme to the other, and was an important element of their hiding. For some, the period of hiding, meant a transition from being a child to becoming objectified. In the words of one child, 'F': "*I was like another chattel.*" Others were valued and respected in their hiddenness and this had a strong impact on their sense of self and identity.

In the interviews, it was revealed that children themselves had little to do with the decisions made at a time of enormous pressure and great fear. Adults decided where the children would be "farmed out" or hidden, and the children simply had to fall in with these plans. Most children were able to accept their parental decisions unquestioningly, as was consistent with the values of that period; however, it seems that for some the arbitrariness of the situation was too much to bear. There was no consideration of the child's individual needs, matches of personalities, analyses of temperament or the like. In the frenetic attempts to save the children from death, survival was the fundamental objective and hiding was the means to achieve this.

In the fundamental wish for survival, the subtleties of care had to be overlooked and the children had to "make do for themselves". ME commented that almost from the start, she felt she had "no place" in the host family: biologically, she could not have been a member, as the ages of the two children she was placed between were too close to her own. This sense of displacement haunted her throughout the three years of being with the family; she always felt on the outside, not really belonging and not being allowed to have an identity of her own. She was almost considered a non-person, since she did not obviously fit into the family and their treatment of her further confirmed her own sense of alienation. Her needs as a child in her own right were not considered, she experienced a sense of being shunted around the family, hidden in the cellar without warning and not being allowed to play outside with her other "siblings". As an adult, ME realized these restrictions were enforced for her own safety; yet her recollection of the experiences reflected a resentment towards her mother, in that she "should have" found a more appropriate placement for her. This example illustrates that it was not simply the overall suppression of identity which was an intrinsic part of the hiding, but

the more subtle nuances of identity were ignored and denied in these placements. It was as if the children had *no identity of their own*, but were simply pawns being placed or hidden to enable their survival.

This lack of identity or depersonalization of the children sometimes took place over a period of time: that is, there seemed to be a transition from being a person or an individual at the beginning of the hiding to one who subsequently became objectified and stripped of his/her identity as the hiding progressed. An example of this is F, who was placed in six different homes during her hiding period of more than two years. Her experiences varied according to the host family she was with, but at one point she felt totally overwhelmed by the whole hiding and unable to continue with the whole farce. This was when she was told the war might last several years more, and she felt totally overwhelmed by the uncertainty of the length of her hiding and that it was beyond her capacity to deal with it any further. Interestingly, this news was received at one of the lowest points of her psychological states in hiding, where her individuality and being a child were long denied to her. She was forced to sleep on a canvas chair, she resorted to raiding dry packets of flour out of hunger, and commented that the pet dog of the house received preferential treatment to herself. Her status as a person had reduced itself to being even lower than the dog, she had become objectified and stripped of all sense of self, afterwards reaching her lowest point in hiding where she felt unable to sustain her hiddenness and broke down on one of her mother's visits to her.

Contrasting to the absolute deprivation of the sense of self and devaluation of the child as experienced by some of the children was the experience of SK, hiding in a convent. Although she was unfamiliar with Catholicism prior to her hiding, she did her best to blend in with the girls of the convent, aware that she was not supposed to be conspicuous in her daily routines. However, SK tells of one occasion when she was lining up for her daily meal and the Mother Superior singled her out of the queue and sent her to her room. Ashamed and tearful, SK was unaware what she had done wrong to be denied her food and sent to her room, but obeyed dutifully. The Mother Superior then came to her room and quietly whispered to her that it was Yom Kippur, the most solemn day of the Jewish year, a day of fasting. SK, crying at this point in the interview, said that this was a pivotal moment of her time in hiding: she felt valued by the Mother

Superior, who was respectful of her beliefs to the point that she had singled her out and intervened to acknowledge them. She described the events as follows:

That was the turning point. From that day on, I can't explain it, I just walked with my head high, never mind that I'm a servant, I'm better than all the other girls up there, I am Jewish and I am going to survive. And I think that's how I spent the rest of my time.

SK felt from that point she was able to feel proud of her identity as a Jew: even though she had to suppress it totally in her environment, this external recognition by the Mother Superior gave SK an enormous encouragement in her recognition of self and she believes, sustained her throughout her hiding.

A more subtle example of how important the sense of self was for these children in hiding and how deep this was suppressed was the example of R while he was hiding in the forest. At the age of 9, R found himself amongst Polish partisans (non-Jews) fighting the German enemy. Unlike some of the other children, during this phase of his hiding R was part of a group who were all hiding in the forest, albeit that he was both the only Jew and only child in the group. But one of his most poignant and most moving memories of this phase was the time when he was given a loaf of bread for his birthday from the other members of the group.

For my ninth birthday, 1944 in April, I got what was the most precious gift I have ever received...I have had a good life, lots of gifts, but nothing that will ever, ever pass that, nothing, nothing... For my ninth birthday the partisans gave me bread, the Ukrainian bread, which is more sawdust than wheat anyhow, it's a bread.... Which I had, because it was my own possession, it was something that belonged to me. It was my birthday cake. And I put that bread inside my shirt, because we were all covered in rags, April was still cold, and I scratched on it, right until we were liberated, about August, for about three or four months I scratched on my bread...That bread was my most precious possession...it belonged to me and no-one else...



To be acknowledged as an individual was a very rare phenomenon for these children in hiding and those moments where the self was acknowledged and recognized, as in the giving of a birthday present, were tremendously important for their sense of self in hiding, enabling them to sustain the more ever-present level of depersonalization and suppression of self.

Similarly, F describes having oases of pleasure during her various hiding places in which she was usually made to feel not valued as a person and, in extreme instances, even objectified. But there were several instances in her hiding where various individuals took the time to get to know her as a person with needs, a child craving to interact with someone else, to learn and be nurtured. When this did occur, as happened on several occasions when F was taught a language or given maths tutorials, she seemed to blossom, despite her physical conditions remaining poor. In her own words:

There was one good thing that happened to me in that place, and that was (that) the old landlord had decided to teach himself English and he had a book with, you know, lists of verbs and things that you could learn off by heart. I don't know what his accent was like and for some reason he suggested that I come and do it with him. So perhaps a couple of times a week, I can't remember, I'd go and have an English lesson with him. And that again made me realize how (I) really hungered for this, if anybody would show me how to do something or teach me to do something that was obviously very necessary or very beneficial or everything, you know...I just thrived on having someone.

### **3.3.1.3 The Heightening of Identity Through the Suppression of Identity:**

Paradoxically, for some children, the very act of suppressing their Jewish identity seemed to have a profound impact on the meaning of this very identity and heightened their awareness of identity issues. Even though externally they were made to adopt a new persona, this very act seemed to strengthen their Jewishness. A vivid example of this was the story of SK, who was hidden in a convent while her brother was hidden in a nearby monastery. The nuns, having pity on this young girl who was obviously very

lonely, allowed SK to go and visit her brother every few weeks outside the monastery. During one such visit they heard the church bells ringing, whereupon her little brother said that he must return now. SK was surprised and said they still had plenty of time together, but her younger brother replied that if he did not get back to the church in time for prayers, he would be unable to be a priest when he grew up. SK was horrified, as she realized her brother was actually being influenced by his Catholic environment and was beginning to integrate their teachings into his own identity. Feeling totally outraged by this notion, instead of returning to her own place of hiding she stormed into her parents' hiding place and demanded of her father that he turn her in for deportation, claiming that she would rather die than have a brother who was a priest! This melodramatic outburst was very sincere as told by SK, as she risked both her own life and the lives of her parents in exposing their hiding place: however, she felt so strongly that her brother's spiritual identity was being eroded that she made these demands. It turned out that her family shared the same concerns as SK and agreed to move her younger brother out of the monastery, the threat to his Jewish identity being of more importance than the potential physical threat to their lives. It was more important for them to remain true to their identities and potentially die for this than to remain safe in hiding, but be spiritually bankrupt.

The issue of religion and how this shaped their identities in hiding also seems to have had a strong influence. An argument could be made that some of these children were even more meticulous in their Jewish rituals during their time in hiding than they were previously in their ordinary lives. For D, prayers before bedtime and not eating any meat which was not kosher became almost a mantra for her in hiding, and she recalls many positive instances where her adherence to these laws during hiding actually helped her. For example, on one occasion all the children in the hiding place she was in were made violently ill by some tinned meat they had found, but she avoided this as she hadn't touched the meat. At another time, someone burst into the room where they were hidden but had compassion on D as she was saying her evening prayers. In D's words: *"I'm telling you this...twice something amazing like this happened to us, because I was a believer."*

The importance of clinging onto her identity, together with the rituals, even in the depths of hiding cannot be underestimated for this child.

Most children were hidden in environments which were hostile, at least overtly, to their Judaism, and the suppression of their identities had to be total for the success of their hiding. For some children, this seemed to have had no impact on their internalized belief system, even if they were hidden in a convent. The most striking example of this was S, who was hidden on and off in convents over a period of some eighteen months. At no point did she feel threatened by Catholicism or did her own belief system feel shaken. Admittedly she came from an extremely orthodox home where the tenets of Judaism were strongly inculcated in her very being, and she was almost able to glide through the very foreign culture of the convent without it penetrating her being at all. She recalls that her parents used very strong language in teaching her to suppress her Judaism:

I had to learn the prayers, I wasn't allowed to say I was Jewish, it had to be completely wiped out...I was drilled and trained, in strong language I was threatened. I knew it was critical to know who I was...I had to know a new name, my age was the same.... It was a completely new identity....

For S, this new identity was almost meaningless to her sense of self, as she always viewed the adopted persona as only a temporary state to enable her survival, unlike the previous example of SK's younger brother, who seemed to be drawn to the offerings of Catholicism. Whether this was a reflection of the varying ages of the children and their level of understanding about assuming a new identity for the period of hiding, or whether it was an expression of their Jewish identity before their hiding period, is indeed difficult to tease out and must remain purely speculative.

Before concluding this chapter on the suppression of Jewish identity during hiding, it is important to mention a certain group of children whose hiding continued even after the war had ended and, in some cases, a new life had been established in another country. Dasberg (1992) suggests that this could explain why "hidden children" as a subgroup

avoided being researched for some 30-40 years as *‘most child survivors had, in fact, been physically hidden in monasteries or with Christian families during the years of persecution and show a lifelong tendency to continue to hide their “concealed” past’*. (Dasberg, p 72.)

In this study, P describes his hiding as the time in which he became Christian and his identity was changed. However, he glosses over most of the wartime experiences claiming that he was not unhappy during this period as he spent most of the time with his nanny on her country farm. However the “hiddenness” began for P upon his migration to Australia with his parents, where he was brought up as a religious Catholic and never learnt of his Jewish identity until his parents deaths in the 1970’s. Upon this discovery, several religious artifacts found in his parents estates encouraged P to begin a journey of self-discovery and detective work to piece together his past and discover his Jewish roots. P reflects with some sadness that it was only after his parents’ deaths that:

Gradually this realization has crept into me, there was a wall between my parent and me and this is where the hidden child, the story really comes into significance. Because the war, that was just a scramble to stay alive and my memories of that are vague and dim. And I don’t think that they were hard times that were harmful to me. The harm really came during my teen-age years together with my parents, as an only child living in the country and not knowing the gap...

P felt most affected not by the hiddenness during the war itself, but the fact that his Jewish identity was suppressed far *beyond* the war years and that his parents continued to persist with the façade throughout their entire lives. His hiddenness albeit a psychological state, continued as what he believes his parents must have seen as a survival technique to establish themselves in a new country. To survive meant to assimilate and blend in with the country of Australia, and to this end, their Jewish identity continued to be suppressed.

### 3.3.2 Fear in Hiding:

The sense of fear in hiding pervaded and directed every nuance of emotions and behaviour for these children. From the moment their hiddenness began, they were invariably instructed by their parents, or caretakers, to suppress, to conceal, to hide, or the consequences would be death. For some, this construct - of fear of exposure of death - had little meaning in the early phases of the hiding, as they were initially unable to anticipate the horrors of the war, being totally unfamiliar with such experiences. In a world that changed from normality to being hidden, fear only gathered meaning over time as the external “sounds of war” became louder and the reality of death became incorporated into the landscape of these children. To be hidden did not mean to be protected in an absolute sense, and there was no “comfort zone” in hiding. Rosa, a child survivor, observes: *“We were in so much danger. That’s why people who were hiding were, in some respects, under much more tension and pressure than people who were already caught, because we always had to be on guard”* (cited in Marks, 1993, p. xxi).

Magnus (1997) further indicates that as children, they had no *“backdrop of normality”* against which they could measure their experiences of horror as the war began. He writes:

We had no way to distinguish between a normal life and crimes against humanity. Indeed, for those of us of a certain age, crimes against humanity just were normal life. We could not distinguish a normal life from the Shoah in the sense that there was no contrast available to us between life and the Shoah. For those in my age cohort, (4-5) life and the Shoah meant - quite literally - the same thing for the children of the Holocaust (p. 2).

For some children, the sense of fear established itself almost immediately with the commencement of the war. There was a continual sense of transience and instability during the time of hiding: from one day to the next, what might have been a secure hiding place became unsafe. No one could be trusted, everyone had to be treated with suspicion for fear they would turn them in to the authorities. For S, the predominant

theme in her interview was this “fear” and she expressed this as the very first emotion to describe her time in hiding. Her opening words were:

It was fearsome...we were prepared for it. What it means, prepared for being hidden...we had different identity papers....I wasn't allowed to say I was Jewish, that had to be completely wiped off...I was drilled, trained, whatever strong language you like to call it, I was threatened.... We were living openly, well, we went out as little as possible, and when we did go out we were as non-Jews, to our neighbours we were non-Jews, it was very fearful because we were scared that we could be identified on the street. The whole situation was very fearful.

Later in the interview, S recalls how someone in the street recognised her mother as being Jewish and told the landlord that he had Jews renting his home. When confronted with the accusation that she was Jewish, her mother vehemently denied this, yet within the hour packed her belongings and moved to another hiding place. For some of the children, this continual moving between hiding places became the norm, as they continually strove to stay ahead of the authorities and find a more secure and safer hiding place. For S, the fear was the very first experience of her hiddenness and this stayed with her and moulded her entire period of hiding.

For others, fear began to gather meaning as time went on. In part this was due to the nature of the Nazi occupation in some of the countries, which began as a series of restrictions, such as the wearing of the yellow star, being forbidden to go to certain places, having a curfew at night. It was only over a period of time that these restrictions became more extreme and harsh and the round-ups for concentration camps and exterminations began, causing Jews to go into hiding. For F, the restrictions began with the wearing of the yellow star and then being sent away by her parents to a children's holiday home, without much explanation. Initially her reactions were bewilderment, confusion as to why she was being sent away and feeling miserable in her separation from her family. She acknowledges that she had no sense of fear at this point, saying:

...I'm trying to remember when I sort of became, became aware of the fear, but I didn't know much at that point. I mean the Germans used to march up and down the streets and that was scary enough in itself. They'd be marching at 6 o'clock in the morning along the street and you could hear them...the whole street was shaking with the pounding and their loud singing and that was scary....And I suppose from running away....they'd been bombing and we'd been in Paris and we'd run down into the Metro for shelter. So there was all that background of, you know, that there was the war, that something very scary was going on, but specifically, I didn't have any idea.

So although F was aware of the physical presence of the Nazis and refers to the background noises of war, fear as such did not have a meaning for her in the early stages of her period of hiddenness. However, over time fear gathered meaning for F and became more threatening to her. Several months later, she and her sister stayed with a couple in the country who seemed to be caring for a number of Jewish children, and she comments here:

And the man, and the man who was sort of miserable...miserable fellow with some kind of disability, used to threaten us, and he used to say things like, you know, if the German, if the Germans get you that will be the end of you.

"The Germans," who might have initially been an abstract backdrop to the lives, began to take on a more personalized and specific meaning when the man of the house used them as a threat against F.

For R, spending 13 months hidden in a cupboard with his two parents and being fed through a bucket dropped daily in exchange for their waste did not feel frightening for himself as a young boy of eight but more of an adventure. Yet it was only two years into his hiding, when they left the cupboard and were arrested and placed in a ghetto, that the war began to take on some meaning for R and he began to feel scared.

We spent there six months in the ghetto and the reality of war suddenly came to me in full...its full aspect, everything about it. You came to the situation where from the very first day, first night, because as I said it was winter then, bodies were being taken out in the morning early. They used to come with trolleys in the morning and all the bodies were put outside, usually they were the very young and the children that had frozen and died during the night, always naked because in those days already in '43, in those days clothing was currency which they changed clothing for food...and there were no burial, no Jewish burials anymore, in the beginning yes, but there were just too many of them so the cart would just go up and the bodies would be lined up.... And this happened and that was regular and you could already understand what life and death meant.

Up to this point “fear” had not entered R’s vocabulary of understanding and relating of what had happened to him in hiding, but with these observations, his hiding took on a new dimension.

The capriciousness of their situation in hiding also increased the children’s fear. Even if they were separated from their parents and families and had to establish new connections with the family within which they were placed, there was no guarantee they would be able to stay with these people. No stability was offered in these placements: often for reasons totally out of their control these children were moved between placements and, more often than not, this was outside their understanding. F describes this pervasive fear as governing every aspect of her life, including where she would be placed during a police raid at her host family’s home.

Soon after the New Year, one day the police came. I think there may have been a German and they came to arrest the son-in-law who was an American citizen. The grandmother said, oh yes, he lives upstairs on the second floor or something like that, so they went upstairs and he was actually downstairs having his breakfast, and he just put on his coat and quietly left the house. And they must have realised when they came



downstairs that they might have been tricked; at some point we were sort of still sitting in their dining room and I was reading a book and at some point they looked in my direction and they said and who is that? The reason was that the children of the family were all redheads and I was black. So she said, oh, that's just some neighbour's child, come to play. And after that they decided it wasn't safe for me to be there and they did a swap. They took my sister instead who is five years younger and, I don't know, she was supposed to look like the grandmother, the hair was lighter and it was supposed to (be) safer for her than for me, I'm not quite sure how this decision was made...

Mrs P, who was hidden in a bedroom of a home for some two years, together with her mother, often had to spend many hours in a closet within that room if an outsider came into the house. For her, the fear was ever-present: they were not allowed outside, they were restricted to a single room and they had to be completely contained and quiet within this space. In her own words:

It is very hard to imagine, because there was always that fear...you know you couldn't walk in shoes, we walked constantly barefooted and they constantly told my mother...they used to tell her that they could hear her walk. So if they weren't at home, we were even afraid to walk. We moved between the kitchen and the room, but we were afraid to exist. With fear you know.... It's something you can't....

It seems Mrs P herself, some fifty years after her hiding, was unable to quantify the fear that pervaded their lives so thoroughly as to influence every step they took and every movement they made. They had to make themselves invisible while still maintaining their normal functions of life, sleeping, eating and so forth over a period of 23 months.

For some, fear was a very solitary experience, even if the child was hidden amongst others. Dr M, who throughout his hiding was together with his parents, describes the experience as such. His initial memories of being hidden, he recalls, were when they were living in a two-storey building (after having moved out of their home) together

with other families, and he would be suddenly woken in the night by his parents and taken down into the cellar of the building. Dr M was never able to acclimatize to the randomness and abruptness of the situation, which left him with feelings of insecurity in his adult years. He recalls:

This was one of my absolute nightmarish scenarios, that this could happen and this was on apparently for about four years....The main thing was this constant fear of being awakened from a deep sleep and being rushed into this place...you would be asleep and the next thing, you would know your parents would bundle you down into this dark cellar where you would sometimes stay for hours...

Apparently there was no security for Dr M in being bundled by his parents, nor in the fact that in the cellar were other children with their families: instead, the fear just overcame Dr M, who reflects that he continues to be traumatized by this scenario even today.

There was also a strong sense that even if these children were scared in their hiding, they had to keep this fear within themselves. Often these children were hidden in an alien environment, whether it be a convent or another family, and they had a strong, almost innate sense not supposed to complain in these places, but instead be grateful for the refuge and haven offered. So although fear dominated their very existence they had to suppress this fear, internalize it, and pretend on the outside that everything was fine. For some, this withdrawal led to an almost depressed state as the fear was internalised and an exterior façade was presented to the outside world. F was acutely aware of suppressing all her tensions and anxieties in the need to fit in with her placement families.

In discussion with the Child Survivor Group (2000), this suppression of fear was mentioned as being one of the identified differences between being a hidden child survivor and a child survivor who went through the camps. Although both sets of children experience intense fear, as they witnessed death, children being separated from their parents and other horrific incidents of the war, those who were hidden did not have

anyone with whom they could share these experiences. In the camps, people could talk to one another about what they had witnessed, but within a hidden environment children were often isolated and had to keep their fears totally to themselves.

Interestingly, the fear the hidden children spoke about had little to do with the processes of war directly but had more to do with a fear of “discovery”: of being caught, being found out, being betrayed.... This was the fear the children had to face. The fear of being found out was a constant one and guided each movement in their hiding. Elaborate plans were made to avoid being caught, identities were formulated and stories were fabricated.

As commented on by Magnus (1997), *‘the mere fact that I was circumcised proved a constant danger, which meant that I could not even urinate in a public place for fear of giving away my Jewish identity’*. (p. 5) His very physical being was a threat to his exposure and the tension in concealing this characteristic led to grave fears. In this research, R was faced with a similar dilemma when wandering the streets in Poland disguised as a non-Jew, together with his “Aryan mother”. His mother solved this problem by disguising R as a girl (after a period of 13 months in a cupboard, his hair had grown to the length of a female hairstyle) so that no Nazi official would think of identifying him as a Jew by exposing his circumcised penis. Grammatical nuances in Polish distinguish between male and female: because she was afraid that her eight-year-old son would slip up in his girl’s disguise, his mother pretended he was retarded so that he did not have to make more than a few grunting noises. Layer upon layer was fabricated to avoid discovery or exposure as Jews.

So although fear was a constant companion for all children of World War II, there was a subtle, qualitative difference in the fear experienced by hidden children. Their fear was to do with being found out, exposed and subsequently deported and killed. Their fear led to an all-pervasive distrust of others, which many child survivors found hard to relinquish in post-war years. S commented that everyone was put under suspicion: they were taught not to trust anyone, for fear that the next moment that person might turn against them. Even innocuous tasks, such as going down to the shop to collect food, became a major logistical operation: what they said had to be practiced beforehand, who

they would meet and what they were doing, all had to be thought out and planned very carefully. There was a total lack of spontaneity and casualness about their everyday goings on, and everyone outside the immediate family were placed under suspicion and feared.

Fogelman (1993) makes the observation that for hidden children, “hide and seek” was a reality, not a game. She says: *“At any moment a hidden child could be confronted with life-and-death decision. As a result the basic trust that a child develops in an ordinary childhood is absent among hidden children”*. (cited in Marks, p. 295) Fear, which may not have been a familiar part of their childhood initially, quickly crept into their lives in an insidious manner and suspicion and distrust became the modus operandi for these children.

### **3.3.3 Feelings of Insecurity and the Role of Relationships in Hiding:**

Closely linked to the general and pervading fear that was present for the hidden children were their varying feelings of insecurity about the randomness of war and the capriciousness of their hiding, which could come undone at any moment during this time. A sense of discovery and death was always in the unspoken background of these children’s lives and they came to realize that often it was only chance that kept them alive in their hiding. Dr M relates vividly this sense as he and his family were crossing a border hidden in a mail van.

How we escaped was...in those days they used to have these mail vans, which had actually, was a car...like a motor bike car. They put us into this van, one on top of the other so the two boys were right on top. My father was below and everybody stacked up like that, and we drove to the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia. This was a common way of escaping apparently, because there was a truck in front of us, and they stopped the truck, and they stopped the cars and I heard...my father said to keep quiet, and I heard them, there were people screaming and there were shots, and apparently they had found three Jews in the truck...

Dr M broke down in the interview at this point and asked for the interview to cease as he took some time, over 50 years after the event, to collect himself again: sick with the realization that death for them had only been a whisker away and it was sheer chance that they too had not been stopped and shot to death.

R, too, relates in a more detached and matter-of-fact manner how, in the ghetto, there was no place for children to exist, and as the parents went out to work during the day he had to make himself invisible in the house.

I did very little during the day. I manned the stairs to the curtains to see what's happening, outgoing and so on. I was just sitting, mainly behind a couch or some old wreck or something between the curtain and the couch, I would just sit there and would wait for my parents to come up and spend all of my time in hiding. I was told to hide, I am not sure why I had to hide but that was the reason I think, because I found out after that if I don't hide I would get extinguished. That other boy that I had, a friend, taller boy, he disappeared too, he went somewhere.

The casualness of R's narration of his friend's disappearance is indicative of the little value life had for these children and of the reality that was ever-present: that, perhaps tomorrow, R too could disappear. The thread of survival was very tenuous, and the insecurities of this context impacted on these children constantly.

To counteract this general sense of insecurity, it appears that a mechanism for survival that was to develop for these children was to somehow *connect to another*. Segal (1986), a survivor researcher, emphasizes that communication and connections to another is a crucial element of survival. Bettelheim (1960), too, in commenting on the observations he personally made in concentration camps, argues that loners simply did not make it. In hiding too, this connection to another seems to have been a crucial element in the quest for survival, probably as a mean to counterbalance all the insecurities of the ever-changing hiding places and capriciousness of war. Wisjenbeek (1977) makes the distinction between concentration camp survivors and hidden survivors along these lines, saying : “ *The basic trauma for the group of Jews in hiding*

*was that they were separated from the group. Be it the population...or the smaller family group. In the camps there were on the contrary, strong group formations.”* (p.72) It appears that a number of relationships emerged in hiding which helped sustain the children in their insecurities about being hidden. Three predominant types of relationships emerged in this research as being of particular importance in hiding. They were: **(1) the hidden child’s relationship to the host family;** **(2) the hidden child’s relationship to his/her parents** which was often internalized during times of separation in hiding; and **(3) the sibling relationship** which emerged among children who were hidden away together, which developed into an almost parent-child relationship among two children. The relationships in hiding were a crucial element of providing some stability and security in the context of ever-changing chaos and the total capriciousness of the situation. Gampel (1988) observed that the will to live was matched almost equally in tenacity by the secret clinging of the child to the “good object”, often only present in a psychological reality in circumstances where relationships were severed. For the hidden child this good object was usually the parent (either present or removed), the host family, or others of significance, such as a younger sibling. If the external elements of their hiding could not be stabilized, it seems some children focused on the relationships within hiding, in an attempt to provide a sense of security and comfort to sustain their hiding and ultimate survival.

### **3.3.3.1 The hidden child’s relationship to the host family:**

For some children the overriding factor in their security was the presence of the “host family” who seemed to provide much more than the material elements of sustaining their survival: also offering a psychological sense of security in acting as a buffer for them against the outside world. Similar to the role in Winnicottian language of the father, who protects the mother-baby union against that of the hostile outside world, the host family also appeared to fulfil this protective role.

Where children were hidden in “foster families”, the host family seemed to play an important role in the child’s and family’s perception of how “safe” they were in hiding. It seems the host family served as a buffer between the hidden family and the outside threatening world, and the very presence of this family provided a sense of security for the children in hiding. Interestingly, it was not the provision of food or removal of

waste – that is, the physical manifestations of the hiding process – that the hidden family valued so much in the presence of the host family. Rather, it seemed to extend deeper into the psychological security that this family could provide. There was almost a psychological umbilical cord between the hidden family and their Christian “protectors”, and while this was in place, the family felt safe; in contrast, while they were absent insecurity plagued the families to the point where they gave up their hiding. Two examples of this in the current research illustrate this relationship.

E was hidden with her mother in a potato pit in the garden of a Polish doctor. The doctor would visit the pit daily to remove waste in one bucket and provide food in a second. However, when the doctor had to travel to eastern Poland to arrange for her parents to be transported somewhere, E’s mother simply lost her nerve and came out of the pit with E. E explains:

This was the time when nobody would look after her, her safety. The lady who took care of her, the lady doctor, she was not there for some time and mum was told at this time, would have to be careful twice, but mum simply didn’t have the nerve to be there when this other lady wasn’t. Mum said, there was no-one watching, it wasn’t safe anymore, so she just lost her nerve and she simply walked out of this and just walked out onto the streets and then she was picked up and took to Auschwitz with me.

It was a similar situation with Mrs P, who, with her mother, hid in a Christian home for some 23 months, for almost all of that time confined to the bedroom in the back of the house. When the host family decided to move to the country for their own safety, Mrs P and her mother no longer felt secure in their hiding place and they simply walked out. It seemed that her mother lost the capacity to fight and hide once her “protector” had left them and although the physical hiding place could still be considered secure, the absence of their host family left the hidden child and her mother feeling exposed and open, to the degree that they simply gave up their hiding and walked out onto the streets.

### 3.3.3.2 The child's relationship to the parent in hiding:

For other children, it was the internalization of parent figures – notwithstanding the fact that they might have been physically separated from them in hiding - that was able to sustain their images through hiding which gave them a sense of security. F describes an awareness of her mother “hovering in the background” as a presence that would be able to retrieve her from a situation if life became too miserable in her hiding place. Indeed, on more than one occasion during hiding in various placements, F was able to experience her mother's interventions as a rescuer when things got really desperate. Although F was alone in most of her various hiding placements, she felt she was never totally abandoned by her mother, who seemed to be able to care for her even while separated.

For S, her sense of belonging and connection to a family unit with strong religious convictions remained unwavering during her time spent in a convent and she was nonchalant in her attitude to her foreign environment. She simply saw her placement as a “means to an end” and was so secure in her own sense of self and entrenched in her Jewish values that she did not seem to absorb any of the influences of the Christian world in which she was placed. Nevertheless, S describes her period of hiding as a time of continual transience, moving from one hiding place to the next, with rearrangements of family constellations and changing identities a number of times as extremely traumatic and unsettling. For a child, stability of residence is one of the most crucial aspects of development, yet these children were denied this stability.

F moved some six times during her period of hiding, sometimes interspersed with fleeting reunions with her parents, while at other times she was simply moved from home to home. Decisions to move her were made by her parents: she had no prior knowledge of where she was to go, or understanding as to why. She talks about being “*sent off...*” as one would treat an object, to a new home where she had to adjust to that particular family and learn to fit in. She remarks on the anxiety of arriving at a new place and not knowing the routines of that home, yet being expected to “fit in” without fuss. She says:



I want to say something about the strangeness of coming to a new place, because everything really was strange...there was some real... uncertainty about what was the way to behave, and I think that was really a feature, because with each new place, I had to kind of, I had to discover that, I had to suss that out. I remember that was very difficult.

Even when F was reunited with her parents, in between various hiding places, there was not the reunion one might imagine; but this time was fraught with tension, as F had to suppress her fears in the face of her parents' preoccupations with finding safe places for their children and themselves to hide. Once again, the transience of the war situation and the ever-changing external climate meant that what was safe on one day could not be considered secure on the next, and F was moved a number of times. With each move, F had to try and form a relationship with her "protectors" and adjust and adapt to their lifestyle. As time wore on, this became more and more difficult for F, and her own sense of self diminished over time as she began to feel increasing despair against the backdrop of continual change, upheaval and lack of stability. Yet throughout this whole period, F remained acutely aware of her mother orchestrating each move in hiding and she felt protected by her presence, even if this protection seemed to take place by remote control.

R spent eighteen months in the forest with a group of Polish partisans (non-Jews) estranged from his parents. During this time he had some contact with his father who was working as a physician in the forest "hospital", visiting him there every few months. R, who had several experiences of hiding during the war, describes this period as one of the most stable times. He was barely eight at this stage, yet remarks that *"life became quite normal again. It was different, but acceptable. There was a certain degree of danger, but that in itself was challenging and fun"*. One might assume that for an eight year old to be in the company of adults hiding in the forest would be frightening and unbearable, yet it seems that the strong relationship with his father which R was able to internalize was able to sustain R's estrangement from him. In fact, R seemed to keep up a relationship with his father during this period of separation and this seemed to offer him the security of overcoming the trauma of being alone in the forest. Another aspect of R's experience also developed his sense of security within the

group. He was given a role within the group of partisans by being made the “Feather Boy” who had to hold a feather under the nostrils of the dead German soldiers to determine if they were truly dead. Being given a task within the group, having a role to play within the unit, added to his sense of importance and made R feel he was part of a cohesive group once again. This illustrates how important the connections to others were in the face of constant change and crises.

### **3.3.3.3 The sibling relationship in hiding:**

Two children in this group of child survivors hid with their younger siblings. For D, this became the total focus of her hiding, as she saw her role, as the older sister to protect and provide for her younger sibling. Her determination not to be separated from her sister sustained her throughout her hiding: even on one occasion when, in a convent, she was sent to an infirmary and she asked to be released so that she could be with her sister. She guided her sister in what and what not to eat (keeping to a kosher diet) and had a remarkable sense of survival which, in looking after her sister, provided her with a sense of purpose and focus in her hiding.

SK was the other child who took on the parental role with her younger brother M, to the extent that even when they were separated at one point in their hiding (she was in a convent while he was at a nearby monastery) she was able to arrange regular visits to see him, with the nuns’ permission. These visits were not purely social: SK seemed to take on the role of spiritual protector for her younger brother’s welfare, so that when she sensed that he was falling under the influence of the monks with whom he was living, she marched into her parents’ hiding place and demanded they find him somewhere else to hide or she would give herself up! In her words:

He said, “Can’t you hear the bells ring, Jesus is calling,” and he said, “If I don’t go and pray, I can’t be a priest when I grow up.” So the Jesuits had tried, had started to brainwash him. So I took him back and kissed him goodbye, and on the train back I said to myself, I’ve got to do something about it. When I got back, I did something that was absolutely forbidden to me, instead of going back to the convent, I went back to where my parents were hiding and I stormed in there, I mean I was very naïve

because I remember I said to them in German, “Ich muß bitte deportiert werden.” Please may I be deported? And my father was aghast.

SK saw her role in protecting her brother as not just a physical one, but caring for his spiritual welfare too. She felt despair where she saw him falling under the influence of the Jesuits and gave up her sense of fighting for survival in the face what she regarded as his spiritual defection. She fought with what Yaffa Eliach has termed a “spiritual resistance” (cited in Stein, 1993, p. 77); that is, a determination to hold on to those values of Judaism that they were faced with eradication. Her sense of connection to both her Jewishness and her younger brother is what seemed to give SK life in her fight for survival, and while she was content to live in a convent, assume a new identity and go along with the game of hiding, she gave up when she felt her brother was beginning to absorb the “game” into his reality. What previously had been considered a sanctuary for hiding her brother now seemed to be a threat, not in terms of external exposure to danger, but in terms of keeping his Judaism intact. This example is indicative of the complexities and ever-changing nature of the hiding places for these children and the meanings imbued in the relationships between siblings.

A final comment needs to be made on the capriciousness of the hiding situation and the randomness of the general war situation for Jewish children. From a child’s perspective (indeed from an adult’s perspective too), there was nothing that they had intrinsically done to merit their hiding being. That is, seemingly from one day to the next they were thrust into a hiding situation, and this decision was beyond their control. It was assumed that these children would “fall into line” with little or no understanding about what was occurring in the larger picture. ME expresses her confusion quite aptly as she was taken to a home of a family with two children. Feeling totally abandoned by her mother, ME says:

I always felt with a child’s anger that - two things: that my mother had abandoned me and that they were only taking me in because of the Eternal Soul, because it was the Christian thing to do... And I felt threatened by the fact that I really biologically didn’t fit into the family. And apart from that, not being allowed to play, you know, having to sit

inside while watching my...I didn't understand why I was not allowed out to play, and I didn't, you know, I resented the fact that I was treated differently from the other children.

ME felt completely impotent and bewildered by the situation, not sure why her mother had sent her to strangers, not understanding why she and the other children in the home were treated differently, yet at the same time not having anyone to whom to express those feelings of displacement and hurt.

Adults were invariably the decision makers in the children's lives in hiding: where they would hide, when the placement would have to change, who would be placed with whom, what identity need to be adopted and so on. The care extended to the circumstances of the hiding was fundamental for the survival of the child, but it seemed that the desperateness of finding a secure hiding place for children was **so** great that the subtle details of the placement could not be considered. A reflection of the ever-changing landscape and the quick decisions that had to be carried out is seen in the desperation of these parents who strove to place their child sometimes with total strangers in an effort to save them. The treatment of these children as pawns in a game, or objects that could be placed anywhere without consideration of their feelings, reveal the brutalities of the hiding that had to be borne in order to survive. That no respect was paid to the subtle details of placements is again indicative of the high levels of anxieties and insecurity inherent in these arrangements. Thus the feelings of insecurity in hiding are somewhat different from the fear described in the previous section, but are related to the capricious nature of the hiding and the connections formulated in hiding, sometimes benefiting the child's survival and sometimes yielding to their feelings of despair and resignation.

### **3.3.4 Suspension of Normality in Hiding:**

In the words of child survivor Paul Valent, hiddenness meant being suspended in a state between "being and not being" (personal communication, November 2000). For child survivors, their time in hiding meant that they had to stop going to school, friendships had to be cut off and they were usually confined to particular places and certainly

restricted in their movements. Hiding, for these children, meant not only a separation from the familiar, but also an exclusion from the mainstream of their contemporaries (Kestenberg & Brenner, 1996). Wisjenbeek (1977), when considering whether there is a hiding syndrome, refers to hidden Jews as “*adapting themselves to the new position of no-man in no-man’s land*”. (p. 69) There was no point of reference in hiding: suddenly life was put on hold. A waiting period ensued: for how long, no one was certain. In this waiting period, the ordinary didn’t matter, everyday events, which previously had been of some significance suddenly lost their importance. The overriding factor in hiding was survival, nothing else was important.

Yet for children this was not a natural state. Suddenly they had time on their hands: they were not attending school, they did not play with friends, they had nothing to do. S, whose hiding experiences took place initially in a remote apartment building with relatives, reflects that it was very strange. She says:

There was little to do. I was six years old, what could I do in the flat? I don’t know if we even took games. Later on, when my brother joined us, I remember playing cards with him, or sort of...we made up board games or things like that. But as a six year old, it was (a) very unnatural situation...very fearful...

Dr M too comments on the suspension of normal life for the period of hiding and says:

We lived in this room for four years, with lots of other people, lack of food and constantly hiding. No school, of course. I don’t know how we amused ourselves. I don’t have any childhood memories of games or...I think my mother taught me to read perhaps, but there was no recreation, no going out, it was all sort of indoors.

Dr M reflects on this suspension of normality and wonders how they were able to sustain this no-man’s land for the period of four years. He contrasts this to the family’s later escape to Hungary in 1944, where they had to live in semi-hiding prior to the German invasion of Hungary and recalls:

We lived in a room that had an earthen floor, there were no planks on it. And I used to spend my time going out with the farmer picking grapes and trampling on them. There was us and this other family, we were all living there then, it wasn't too bad because at least we had food and there was something to do. And I think, I remember playing with the other children and it was all sort of outside although the accommodation wasn't terrific, it was in the middle of the country. For a child it was quite pleasant.

This stay on the farm seemed to provide an oasis for Dr M in his hiding period as he *had something to do* and there was some structure to his days, albeit he was not attending school.

Magnus (1997) makes the point that child survivors particularly those who were in the younger group of children (up to approximately eight years of age) had an experience that was qualitatively different from their adult counterparts during the war, in that they had no contrasting normality with which to compare their hidden experiences. Thus their early experiences were devoid of the normal routines of childhood that most take for granted: games, schooling, birthdays, presents, freedom and fun.

### **3.3.5 Personality Constriction in Hiding:**

Many of the descriptions obtained in the interviews were surprising in their lack of affect mentioned. While acknowledging that they were describing the most disturbing and traumatic period of their lives, the survivors remained remarkably detached in their actual descriptions of this period, tending to focus on the concrete and physical details of the hiding period rather than the emotional traumas and separations. Even when prodded to “*give more details*” or “*elaborate further*”, some of the interviewees remained steadfast in their “matter-of-factness”. It seems that for the children, the way to cope with the hiding was to cut themselves off from the emotional: that is, develop a “hard shell” to deal with the traumas of upheaval, separation, change, intimate exposure to death and the enormous deprivations of hiding. Valent (1998) claims the “numbing

of feelings” and “suppression of emotions” for these children was crucial for their survival, and it seems that this way of thinking and functioning spilled over to the telling of these stories. Thus, the phenomenon of surviving through hiding seemed to invoke a certain “cut-offness” in these children, which was obviously a successful survival mechanism during their persecution. Kestenberg and Kahn (1998), when talking of child survivors, remark: “*Memories of persecution and traumatization are repressed, denied or disconnected from affect and from their deepest meaning.*”(op. cit., p. 61).

Singh and Richards (Conference presentation, 1999, *Issues of Rigour in Qualitative Research*) argue that in qualitative research, “core categories” are often not present in the raw data, yet are central to the analysis and description of a particular phenomenon. In this analysis of hiddenness, it appears that the structure of cut-offness and personality constriction are indeed the “missing data” in descriptions of hiding. Many such descriptions began with a dismissive comment, such as “*I was not really hidden*” or “*it wasn’t that bad in hiding*” or other apologetic remarks such as these, as if the survivors were trying to minimize their childhood experience of hiding. Part of this, as elaborated in a previous chapter, can be attributed to the general minimization of the children’s experience immediately after the war by their adult counterparts, who usually did not acknowledge their lives in hiding. But it must be said further that the children themselves *did not acknowledge the emotional side of their hiding* and remained very cut-off and matter-of-fact in relating their experiences. Obviously this cut-offness and hardening of the self was a crucial element in surviving the traumas of hiding and was employed as a defence mechanism by children when faced with extreme traumas, as is the case with other children surviving trauma, such as sexual abuse (Valent, 1995).

R is a particularly good example of this phenomenon. R was extremely articulate in narrating his period of hiding, which ranged over four years, from the narrow confines of a cupboard to hiding in severe conditions in the forest, posing as a retarded girl and fighting with Polish partisans. In his own words, the most abnormal became his everyday reality. The necessities of survival and hiding literally for one’s life, created a “stripping down of life to very practical details” where there was no room for emotions. A particularly poignant part of his interview was when R described the last meeting he

had with his father, in the forest. He was a young boy of eight hiding with a group of Polish partisans in often-treacherous conditions, while his father was an acting physician in a different part of the forest. R had adapted to the group and made himself useful to them as a “feather boy”, while maintaining a strong psychological connection to his father. One night, after heavy bombing, R came across a dismembered leg, and decided that it would be useful for his father. He exerted enormous effort to lug that “dead leg” to his father’s makeshift hospital and was then disappointed by his father’s reaction: an almost cursory glance at the “gift” before breaking down, wondering what had the world come to, at the sight of his son bringing him a leg? R had absolutely no comprehension of his father’s reaction to what he considered was a most valuable gift, claiming he could not understand his father’s tears; partisans were told “not to cry”. In his conditioning as a soldier, R lost the capacity to “feel”; emotions were considered a sign of weakness. The only emotion R allowed himself to feel was hatred for the enemy; anything else had to be denied. The hiddenness and the hardening of himself that accompanied R’s experiences did not allow him access to the feelings that his father was experiencing and, although this was to be the last meeting with his father, R’s focus, even in the telling of the story, was on the very physical details of the encounter: the snow, the weight of the leg, the danger involved, his father’s job as a doctor and so forth. It was as if R was still child-like in his constriction of emotions, which served as a necessary and crucial element in his survival in hiding, and he could not allow himself the luxury of reflection or consideration of the tangle of emotions involved in this final separation. In his bewilderment at his father’s tears, R had to rationalize why this was so, and said: *“Crying? But then I worked it out in my own brain, that doctors are allowed to cry but partisans don’t, none of them cried, they were in great agony and pain...they moaned and they groaned, but partisans didn’t cry.”* A striking feature of this interview was R’s determination “not to cry” and at various points, where the researcher felt R was going to talk of the emotional aspects, he would leave the text hanging, with oblique dismissals using phrases such as *‘and so on...’* If asked to expand or elaborate, R reverted back to some practical details of the incident, as if he himself had no access to any emotive side of the narration. In fact, when the tape recorder was switched off at the end of the interview, R exclaimed:



I know what you are trying to get at, but you won't because it wasn't there. There were no emotions at the time, they didn't exist, we didn't have the luxury of them then, we simply had to get on with whatever it took to survive.

It is what *wasn't said* in R's interview or that which was implicit, between the lines, which encapsulates the phenomenon of hiding in the experience of being hidden. The lack of emotions, this hardening of the self in order to survive, emerged as an essential feature of the hiding.

Fogelman (1993, cited in Marks, p 301) claims: *"The secret to surviving as a hidden child was to remain silent, not to feel or express any needs or desires, to be as invisible as possible."* Repression of emotions became part of the training for children in hiding, they were not allowed to complain or cry, and if they were traumatized by events witnessed in their hidings, their separations and deprivations, they were not allowed to express these emotions. In a discussion with child survivors (November 2000), it was very apparent that it was not simply the emotions that had to be suppressed concerning one's identity but even the emotions that the children were feeling *about* the hiding: any fear, sense of abandonment, despair at separation or other anticipated feeling of childhood trauma, all had to be suppressed and withheld. One survivor described the cutting off of feelings very graphically, as if *"a curtain would come down...and a block of concrete suddenly set in"* (Child survivor meeting, 2000). For some, the dissociation or cutting off occurred at a pre-verbal age, before four years old, which made the articulation of this experience even more difficult as there was no verbal memory of what had occurred. Again, Valent (1998) compares these experiences to those of torture victims, who seem to be able to split off a part of themselves and detach from their human core, in order to survive the extreme torture. This very primitive defence is the mechanism by which the mind protects itself in trauma and allowed the children to sustain their hiddenness.

For some children, it was not merely the actual hiding, but the way in which they were treated in their hiding situations that invoked this desensitization to emotions. ME described her hiding period as a sense, from her perspective as a child, of being

abandoned by her mother. Although as an adult she has been able to rationalize those feelings and make sense of why her mother “gave her to strangers”, she feels unable to resolve the very primitive experiences of being abandoned and the toughening of character that she developed to cope with this extreme feeling. She says:

I always felt with a child's anger that my mother had abandoned me...and I really didn't fit in with that family...I know intellectually that she didn't abandon me, but in a way...I was four years old...the emotional effect...it never goes away.

Her feelings of abandonment and detachment from her family were further compounded by her different treatment in hiding in relation to the Christian children with whom she lived. ME experienced being treated like an object: no consideration of how she might be feeling was extended to her.

F, too, reflects at one point in her hiding that the dog was given better treatment than she was, so that it was no wonder that she became almost robotic and emotionless. In her words:

I know how I coped, and I know how most of us coped and that was by, you just had to numb your feelings, deal with this, you know, just cut off. I mean, these adults were not sympathetic, you know they were not sympathetic. There was no one that you could sort of pour your heart out to, there was no one you could get angry with and there was no one you could sort of go and cry on their shoulder and, you know...you had to damp all that down and forget about it.

S claims it was simply part of her upbringing not to question any suggestion her parents made and to accept their wisdom with complete faith, even if it meant something as alien as moving into a convent (her situation of hiding). She says of her experience:

We took it because we had to take it, there were no questions asked. We didn't delve (sic) on it, in the sense that we didn't take sympathy, we

didn't get sympathy, we just had to go on with living. And that's all I can remember. It was traumatic in a sense that we had to be careful, we had an existence that I wouldn't wish it upon anyone, but at the time, we had to accept it. No questions asked...

The sense of absolute obedience was very strong in S's experience of hiding: she never questioned her parents' decisions as a child and again, at a very early age, learnt to withhold this questioning and "toughen herself" for the ordeal.

P too claims that there was no anxiety experienced in his separation from his parents when he was hidden on a farm with his nanny. He claimed to remember the "events" of his hiding and all the details involved here, but experienced no associative feelings with these events. He believed he simply *had no* emotions as a child and that perhaps emotions were an adult phenomenon. As a child, however, he accepted whatever his parents told him to do and continued his everyday life without any emotion.

The personality constriction of these hidden children extends beyond the suppression of their Jewish identities to their suppression of almost their entire personalities, as they were expected to blend in and adapt to their hiding places, whether this might be a foster family or an orphanage or convent. They were not permitted to have needs or feelings of their own: if they did, these had to be suppressed. Feelings were considered a luxury in times of survival: their experience was that of "not experiencing feelings". Life became stripped down to the practicalities of surviving in hiding; the nuances of personalities and individual details of these children were largely ignored as irrelevant details in the broader picture of survival. For some, this cut-off state in hiding seems to have permeated their articulation of the experience as they present their experiences in basic terms, detailing the physical routines of the hiding and being unaware of the more subtle undercurrents of the psychological and emotional void that existed.

Of note: there was one interview that was not analyzed *because* the description was so sparse and the researcher was unable to obtain much insight into the psychological world of this particular hidden child. Obviously we are unable to untangle the particular personalities prior to the war and hiding experience and how this varied for children in

hiding, or whether the experience of the hiding made this individual so cut-off from his emotional side. Furthermore, this individual was particularly dismissive of his hiding experience, claiming it had little or no effect on his childhood, yet he spends much of his adult life ruminating on the experience, has never had an adult relationship and has had several experiences of clinical depression in adult life.

### 3.4 SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL STRUCTURES

The defining moment of being hidden for child survivors occurred when their identities as Jews had to be suppressed. This suppression and masking of their identities seemed to be a demarcation point between life as they knew it normally and the beginning of their experience of being hidden. However it was not merely a temporal demarcation but seemed to envelop their entire period of hiddenness and direct their whole existence for that time. For some, remaining “visible” in their hiding meant the total and absolute suppression of their identities of being Jewish: names, personal details, family connections, contextual surroundings such as schools and synagogues, all had to be sealed off and totally hidden for their survival in hiding. Identities could only remain intact for those who were totally *physically* hidden and who disappeared totally from sight, as occurred for some of the subjects interviewed at least for part of their hiding. But for most, psychological hiddenness was the more common occurrence of this experience as they were placed in foster homes, orphanages or convents in which their true identities had to be suppressed in this way.

Other themes to emerge were the pervading fear which enveloped their entire experience in hiding and the suspension of normality for this period, which could extend over any time frame from several months to several years. The fear of revelation and exposure, which often meant death, and the heaviness and extremity of this fear was deeply experienced during the hiding. A “cut-offness” and personality constriction seemed to be present throughout the descriptions of these children and seems to have developed as a method of coping with the trauma of the childhood. This personality constriction was often described by the survivors in their narrations of their experience and sometimes was present in the actual description itself. This was for some a very

matter-of-fact and cursory account of the experience, lacking the expression of emotions which one might speculate to have occurred at times of trauma. Overlaying all of this were general insecurities to do with the capriciousness of war and the contextual specifics of their actual hiding places to which each child had to adjust. Connections and relationships to another person (either familial or the host family) also emerged as being highly significant in the dynamics of the everyday experience of hiding and often dictated the nature of the experience of hiddenness.



## CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

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### 4.0 OVERVIEW

This section of the research will consider the phenomenological findings of the enquiry and consider them against the contextual literature relating to this phenomenon. That is, the explicated general structures of the phenomenon of being hidden will be considered against the current literature on hidden child survivors as well as other instances of hiddenness. As Giorgi (1985) states when speaking of learning, the general descriptions have a nomothetic value. One would try to relate them to other findings about learning and to other phenomena in a variety of contexts.

A child's first experience of hiding is usually the "peek-a-boo" game played with his/her mother, and this "separation" - at first only momentary - develops into longer periods over the child's first year as he begins to separate and individuate from the mother. In the context of a secure attachment to the mother or primary caretaker, this individuation evolves smoothly as children learn to grow and become independent people in their own right (Bowlby, 1969). During the Nazi persecution, the normal developmental process of individuation and separation, which begins in childhood and progresses as the child develops into a teenager and then emerges an adult, were interrupted and distorted during hiding (Kestenberg & Brenner, 1996). For hidden children, hiding meant separation, abandonment, suppression of identities and suspension from the normalities of life. Fear of exposure was equated with fear of death, and the precariousness and randomness of the war situation dominated most moves of their lives. Hiding was not a game, but became an issue of life and death in stark reality.

Of particular note with the subject population interviewed here was that it was often felt by the researcher throughout the interviews that their descriptions were sparse, matter-of-fact and limited in their descriptions of affect. In part, this can be attributed to their general minimization of the experiences as described earlier. This was reinforced after the war, when the adults surrounding them post-hiding paid scant attention to those experiences. It seems that in the process of hiding, their personalities constricted to the point where they had become almost superficial in their affect. For some, the stories were related with limited emotions. Many explained that during their hiding, they were not permitted to have needs or emotions of their own; as D said: *“We were not allowed to cry...who would listen to us if we cried? We were good children, all hidden children were... You had to be good.”* It seems that the hiding experience, in denying their own needs and personalities, cut them off from a depth of emotions when they were describing the experience. As R said, when the interview had finished and the tape recorder was switched off,

I know what you want from me but you are not going to get it, even if you sit here all day. I had the same experience with P (who interviewed R for a book) and he sat here for nine hours asking me about the psychological side of it, but there was nothing to tell, because it did not exist. We just simply did these things without thinking about it...That was how it was, there is no more to it.

For child survivors, their survival in hiding was often followed by migration, involving a new set of strategies for adaptation to a new language and culture. These children might also have had to adjust to new family constellations in the face of the losses of the Holocaust. There was little time for reflection or “debriefing” in the immediate post-war years and this often led to further suppression and closing-off of the experiences of the hidden child. For some, post-war stresses could be as severe as those of wartime:

One way to cope was to continue the survival mentality of not feeling, simply plodding forward to the future. Psychologically, child survivors coped with additional post-war traumatic situations on the one hand by repressing past memories and feelings, and treating remaining memories

as belonging to an irrelevant past, and on the other hand by dealing with current stresses as they did with past ones: that is, by cutting off the present and focusing on the future. (Valent as cited in Kestenberg and Kahn, 1998, p.114)

Another survivor described the following:

People would ask me to talk about my experiences or what had happened and I would talk about it. But I felt I was talking about someone else. Not myself. I felt as if I was talking about this little girl, somewhere in the background, whose name was Rivkah, (who) had gone through all these things. And when I would talk about it, (it was) completely dispassionately, as if it weren't me at all. I naturally knew it was me, but I- I didn't- I could not believe that this really happened, that such a thing is even possible to happen, even (though I) knew it must have been me. (Greene & Kumar, p.244)

The challenge for the researcher, therefore, was to search for the psychological meanings in descriptions that often lacked psychological depth. For the children, the suppression of their feelings was extreme, to the point where they were unable to express their emotions even afterwards were unable to express in their descriptions that which had been suppressed. Without wandering too far into the realm of interpretation of the descriptions as a clinical psychologist, the researcher must acknowledge the very dryness of some of the descriptions as a psychological phenomenon and the survival techniques in which these hidden children engaged, both while hiding and in their subsequent descriptions of their hiding. The psychological tension in this to-ing and fro-ing between the actual words of the description and that which is *not* said is precisely the challenge of this methodology. In trying to glean the essence of the phenomenon being studied, the researcher moves through the cyclical layers of the analysis as it unfolds, moving between the "text" and the "gestalt" (or "wholeness") of the descriptions as well as having an awareness of what is *implicit* in the material, yet may not be articulated.



The discussion of results and its interface with the literature will largely follow the same format as the descriptions of the general structures outlined in the previous chapter.

#### **4.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON HIDDEN CHILD SURVIVORS**

There is a considerable if recent literature on child survivors of the Holocaust, and within this there has been a growing recognition of the differential trauma experienced by child survivors in contrast to their adult counterparts (e.g., Kestenberg, 1985, 1987, 1996; Fogelman, 1988, 1993; Dasberg, 1987, 1992). However, even though child survivors as a group are a recent phenomenon in Holocaust literature, *hidden* child survivors have been less of a focus. Of the three books written specifically on the subject of hidden children and published only within the last ten years, two have the following subtitles: *The Hidden Children: The Secret Survivors of the Holocaust* (Marks, 1993) and *Hidden Children: Forgotten Survivors of the Holocaust* (Stein, 1994). The concepts of being forgotten or secret seem to accompany the hidden children even beyond their hiding years. One survivor interviewed here, P, explained that the trauma of his hiding in war-torn Europe with his nanny, separated from his parents, was nothing compared to the continued hiding he endured in Australia, being brought up a Catholic by his own Jewish parents with a “wall of secrets” between them which did not come down until after their deaths.

As mentioned, the focus of the literature on Holocaust child survivors has only very recently begun to take into account the varying experiences of children during the war. Recent studies have looked at the varying effects of PTSD on hidden versus concentration camp survivors (Yehudah et al., 1997) and another study has compared children of hidden survivors with those of American Jewish parents (Maggids, 1998). There have also been comparative studies undertaken comparing the various types of persecution suffered by the child (e.g. Robinson, Rapaport and Rapaport, 1994) and establishing a type of hierarchy of mental suffering which indicates that those children in death camps suffered more than those who survived other forms of persecution. Hogman (1983) interviewed adults who were child survivors of the Holocaust and found the Holocaust experience had had a profound impact on their identity

development. She found that these adults tended to view their adult experiences through the childhood lens of their wartime experiences, such as the need to escape, hide or save themselves, and many had integral feelings of inferiority or shame which affected their post-war functioning. However, there has been little to date in the literature focusing on the actual *experiences* of hiding and the various elements which contributed to the phenomenon.

The focus of the current discussion will be on hiding in child survivors of the Holocaust and the results and discussion of this study will be considered against the theoretical literature. As well as this, other people in society who have had the experience of hiding will be explored and discussed in relation to these findings.

#### **4.1.1 Suppression of Identity:**

In psychodynamic theory, identity refers to the inner core of a psychic structure that a child develops as he/she assimilates external objects into his/her inner being. Erikson's (1968) seminal work on identity developed this notion further, claiming that the identity process is located both within the core of the individual and in his common culture. Through his elaboration of the eight stages of identity formation, Erikson describes the constant interplay and interaction between the ego synthesis and its development as it resonates against the context of a society or social organization. His work emphasizes the significance of early childhood experiences in the continuing formation of self and the child's ability to face crises and trauma in later life, as related to the developing capacity of positive definitions of self in the early years.

For this population the defining point of the hiding came when the child had to hide their Jewish identity. This seemed to be the pivotal point in their descriptions, where their situation changed from "persecution" to "hiding". That is, for many the war began to build momentum gradually, first with curfews being introduced for Jews, then restrictions beginning and the wearing of the Yellow Star being made compulsory. However, the *hiding* only began for these children when their identities as Jews had to be obliterated and denied. As ME said, the transformation into hiding began apparently

innocently in her mind. Her mother told her that they were going on an outing. She says:

She told us we were going on a picnic, we were going to (be) having fun. And we were taken to the countryside, a very small town. And we remained there for three years, until my mother came to pick us up after the war finished. They had manufactured a name, I was K. My mother actually practiced me using that name, so that I was supposed to be K. I was supposed to be a relative of theirs, who had been evacuated because of the flood...I was supposed to have come from there, you know, the flood...

With the name came a story, an explanation as to how she had suddenly come to be with this family.

My mother too went into hiding...It was a kind of hiding that was more profound than physical hiding. She hid emotionally, changed her name, you know, kind of acquired identity papers, and she just persuaded herself that she was this person and behaved as if she wasn't Jewish. I don't know how she got away with it...

Giving up their Jewish identities meant playing a part, becoming someone else. (Tec, 1993) Hiding under an assumed identity meant a loss of all familial and community supports and required an uprooting of familiar patterns of behaviour, adoption of unfamiliar ways of life and constant vigilance, in view of the consequences of discovery. As Wijsenbeek (1977) points out, few authors, in describing the effects of the stresses of war, explicitly talk about the *loss of identity* involved; yet for hidden children, this construct was paramount. As he states, the very aim of the German war machine was to eradicate Jews, rob them of their identity, their separateness as a nation. Paradoxically, to maintain this identity and survive, Jews had to suppress their identity.

It is important to acknowledge that the suppression of the Jewish identity for these children did not, as one might imagine, simply mean the suppression of a religion or

ethnic identity, but in fact the suppression of Judaism involved an elaborate fabrication and identity transformation of nearly every aspect of their lives. This suppression had no bearing on, or relationship to, the level of identification prior to the war, and whether the family was an assimilated one or an orthodox one, as their persecution as Jews was unilaterally meted out.

An example of this was one child survivor who related to the researcher his first moments of liberation (P, personal communication, December 2000). Being a young boy of seven, he was not aware of what liberation actually meant: witnessing his father spitting on a German soldier gave him a momentary thrill, yet what was most pressing for him as a child was the fact that he could now reveal his real age. He asked his father while he was spitting: “ *Can I say that I am seven now and not six?*” While superficially it might seem that the boy was concerned with everyone knowing he was really grown-up, the issue of age was a complex one. Being Jewish, he was not allowed to attend school (which began at age seven), yet posing as a Catholic, he should have been there. To avoid this issue, P had to pretend to be a year younger than he was and thus legitimately not be attending school. He had begun school aged seven but this had been stopped by the Nazi ban on Jewish children receiving formal education. Posing as a Catholic, he should have been at school, which would have risked his exposure: to avoid this, P had to pretend to be six and thus not required yet to be attending school. So it was not just his Jewishness that had to be suppressed, but every element of his personality: he had to pretend to be younger than he was and never to have been at school. For R, in Poland, the issue of posing as a non-Jew was an even more complex one when he came out of a cupboard where he had hidden for 13 months with his parents. His mother had blond hair and Aryan features and was able to pass fairly easily as a non-Jew, but how to hide an eight-year-old Polish boy? Boys were at particular risk of discovery, circumcision being an easy identifier of Jewishness. His mother decided R would be a girl (his hair having grown somewhat during his time hidden in the cupboard) which would eliminate the risk of his circumcision giving them away. But in Polish, speech differentiates between genders: how could an eight-year-old boy be trained to speak as a girl? Too frightened to risk this language transformation, R had to pose as a *retarded* girl who would not be required to speak at all, other than a few grunts: this again reduced the risk of slipping up or making a mistake which might lead

to the exposure of their true identities. Further, being retarded would excuse R from attending school and having to explain his sudden appearance at a different school to the authorities. R and his mother spent six months like this, before moving on to another mode of hiding. Thus hiding one's Jewish identity was not simply a suppression of these children's Jewish features, but involved elaborate and complex transformations of *their whole identity* for any period of time.

The World Federation for Mental Health pronounces that the "*identity of an individual is a property which is inalienable from him, but in another sense an individual's identity is only needed, and it may be argued only possible, when he is a member of a group*". (Wijsenbeek, 1977, p. 15)

For these children, not only were their identities suppressed but also they were separated from the *context of their identification*, making the trauma even more unbearable and difficult to integrate. According to Kestenberg and Brenner (1996):

The identity of the child is moulded within the family and within the holding environment of the group. The external environment and its object define the child. Playmates provide a feeling of sameness - of belonging to the group, day after day. The Jewish child under the Nazi yoke suffered a break in continuity; pride in self and in the extension of self among peers and community was shattered. (p. 194)

Particularly for those children who were placed in hiding on their own, whether in a convent (such as SK or S) or in a foster family (ME or F), being isolated from their group, both familial and cultural, had its own further challenges and impact on their identities. This isolation differentiated children who were in camps from those who were in hiding. As Tec (1993) says of her own hiding,

All hiding children had to learn many new facts to support their new identities: names dates, places regarding not only themselves but also their fictitious relatives. Inconsistency could arouse suspicion; one slip could mean disaster. Giving up our identity meant playing a part,

becoming someone else. The better we played the role, the safer we were. Sometimes we were so caught up in the new part that we actually forgot who we really were. This was temporary. Though helpful, this forgetfulness was emotionally costly. For many of us, giving up our true identity created an emotional void. It made us feel anxious, anxious that we might never recapture our past. We also felt guilty, ashamed that we were giving up that which had been cherished by our parents, by those we loved. (Marks, p. 287)

In this study, F has several hiding places over the years and increasingly her “sense of self” and identity disappear; she becomes depressed over time as she is increasingly estranged and isolated from her biological family and treated more and more as an object in her relationships with her hosts.

Her struggle to fit in with the new families and adapt to their ways is made more difficult by her parents’ unspoken expectation that she maintain her Jewishness. In her own words, F describes the dilemma as follows:

And so one day when I was living with her, it was not far from where my parents were, I used to visit them on occasion, I used to just walk around there myself and pay them a visit and on this particular occasion, I came and I said I wanted to be baptized. Well, I think if I could have, you know, if the ground could have swallowed me up after I made this suggestion, I would have been happy. But I had no understanding of this, you know, the enormity of this, I had no idea. I thought, here I am, I am doing my best to fit in, I’ve got to fit in. It would make life that much easier, you see. So I suppose I had that much sense of this, that okay, I wasn’t with them, I had to be somewhere else. I had to be able to be something, but of course, they just got angry. They said, don’t you ever mention this again, and there’s no...out of the question and my parents would just go on and on. Well, I can imagine how they must have felt but the main point was that I had no understanding at that stage.

Her identity was torn between the need to fit in to the best of her ability with the Catholic family who were harbouring her and the need to still maintain the “core identity” of her childhood.

Some children were actually aware of this struggle and feared their loss of self in hiding. Rustow (1989), studying the impact of the cumulative trauma on three Jewish children who hid in Catholic institutions during the war, described one girl, Eve, as saying in the middle of the night:

Will I remember when it's over, if it is really over, that once upon a time  
I had a name that was not Marie-Catherine, that I was not a person who  
went to church, that I had parents and a life that used to be very sunny?  
(Marcus and Rosenberg, p. 279)

For other children, however, the separation from their Jewish heritage and family seemed to make them almost *more* determined to keep the laws and rituals, even when it would not be expected of them to do so. It seemed that their adherence to Judaism in the face of threatening and adversarial conditions strengthened their resolve to be strong in their identification. As D says:

The older children opened up some cans that they took from the storeroom and they were meat, meat cans and my sister was hungry so she wanted to eat and fortunately because I was kosher I wouldn't let her take any of it and I said: “You have your roll, you can eat your roll.” In the night and during the next morning everybody was sick who ate this meat, because this had to be cooked for a while. In the tin, but it had to be cooked. So we were very fortunate, we were really the only two...

Under these circumstances, D would have been permitted to eat non-kosher meat, but it seemed her adherence to the stringent dietary laws not only saved her and her sister from being sick, but gave her an inner resolve that by keeping her identity strong they would survive. It seems her psychological identity became strengthened under the

threat of persecution and made her more resolute in her adherence to her Jewish identity.

Kestenberg and Brenner (1996) further elaborate on the double/split identity issue with which many hidden children were forced to grapple. In their transition to the Christian world, it was drilled into them never to reveal their names, to claim they had no relatives due to bombings and to take on identities of Christian children. These children learnt very early to blend in and not be recognised as Jews. Yet for some children, Catholicism represented safety and comfort and, indeed, many wanted to adopt this new religion and identity in a very sincere manner. Kestenberg (1985) reports on a child survivor, Krall, who was envious of the Polish Gentiles who could go to school and belong somewhere, while he had to remain at home. ME, in this study, also relates feeling like a second-class citizen who could never fit in and feeling totally resentful of this:

I felt threatened by the fact that I really, biologically, didn't fit into the family; apart from that, not being allowed to play, you know, having to sit inside while watching my...I didn't understand why I wasn't allowed to play and so I didn't, you know...I resented that fact that I was being treated differently from the other children...I looked different, they were very blond, very Dutch. I didn't belong in that society, I didn't belong to that family...I guess I probably had a lot of anger and resentment about being dumped there by my mother...

Lying about one's identity became the necessary tool for survival, they grew up “*in the role of a Catholic hating Jews and pretending to be Christian, knowing well that one is a Jew*”. (Kestenberg and Brenner, 1996, p. 43)

With Jewish children, it was the actual assault on their identities that became the intention of Nazi Germany. They were living in a culture where to be a Jew was to be an outcast, the external culture shunned Jews. For some children, it was difficult not to integrate part of this denigration into their sense of self, almost unwittingly. In this study, Mrs P was hidden in a Christian home together with her mother. She recalled:



Even the lady who saved our lives used to tell me that I was not a Jewish child. She said something went wrong, I couldn't be a Jewish child because I was so pretty and clean and all Jewish children were ugly and dirty, that's what she heard.

Subliminally, Mrs P was almost complimented by this notion that she did not look like a Jewish child, but looked "cleaner" and "prettier". In an environment where the culture was continually being denigrated and Jews were humiliated, tortured and killed because of their identity, it was hard for some of these descriptions not to seep into the self-identity of some children. There was a sense of shame about being Jewish, which - while it may not have been a part of their self-identification initially - at times crept into their unconscious feelings about themselves. Similar to the inappropriate and misplaced shame of the sexually abused child, the external projection of shame and feelings of inferiority churned out by the Nazi propaganda seemed to cloud the thoughts of young children in hiding.

One insightful child survivor expresses her ruminations as follows:

Why would I have to hide if my very being was not unsightly, ugly? I didn't understand the reasons that it was an embarrassment to be Jewish, but I had no doubt that something about me was repulsive only because I was Jewish... Since I didn't know what it was, it was best to hide my whole being. But it was bigger than what I could comprehend at my age. But it wasn't something I did, it was my way of being. How do you live with something like that? How do you go beyond it at age eight, or even later? Well I didn't, I just went deeper into hiding... On the one hand, I felt ashamed of being Jewish, that is, different from them. On the other hand, every time I looked at them, I felt ashamed for feeling I was just like them, bad. Shame got me coming and going. All my life I have been struggling against this dual oppression of self. That false self behind which I learned to hide, if I wanted to survive, kept sticking to me with remarkable stubbornness. (Stein, 1993, p. 28)

Another child, Yankel Kuperblum, coming home one day to face his entire family gone, hid for the remainder of the war as a Catholic, wandering around Polish villages and farms. One time in a village, the farmer called out to him:

“Go and hide somewhere my child...run quickly...” Yankel reflects: “I stood for a moment looking at their backs, feeling abandoned. In the courtyard, chickens were cackling and picking grain from the earth. How I envied them, they didn’t have to hide and run. Perhaps I could hide in the chicken house... The ground was cold and damp and the air had a stagnant odor. I looked on the earth beneath my feet, gazed at the walls around me and saw hundreds of minute bugs and insects busily engaged in their own world. I envied them, for they were free to do as they pleased and didn’t have to hide. If only I could be a little bug!” (Eisenberg, 1982, p.196)

In this study, F’s sense of self had plunged to a severe low in hiding and her host family treated her in an increasingly disparaging way, like an object. She too wished she could be the pet dog, not so much for the apparent freedom the dog was able to enjoy but because of the importance of the dog in the family hierarchy - more important than the Jewish child. She says:

She had a little dog; it was a cute fat little thing. I’d never lived with a dog and anything that I left lying around this dog would chew up...and I got told off... And then at some point the whole thing sort of deteriorated, so that finally she decided no, she wouldn’t have me sleeping in the bed anymore. She put me in the next door room but the next door room didn’t have a bed, or what it had was one of those deck chairs, you know, a canvas chair. Well, by this time I was ten and a bit, I was not particularly short or small and I found there was no way I could sort of arrange myself in this deck chair.

Aside from the physical discomfort and impracticalities of the situation, F was expressing an inner psychic pain, of being degraded to the point that she was told off for the dog's misdemeanours and then relegated to the deck chair. She had no value as a child, she was treated like an object, with little or no regard to her needs.

Kestenberg and Kestenberg (1988) found that child survivors suffer greatly from a feeling of not belonging anywhere. They argue:

The country of their origin has rejected them and their Jewishness has been a plague rather than a source of pride. Many of these children found out they were Jewish only when they were jeered at or attacked by other children or teachers. Reared in Catholic families or in convents where they were hidden, many became attached to the Holy Family. Some became priests or nuns without renouncing their Jewish origin. Others did not want to return to their Jewish families after the war, they were attached to their rescuers; still others, who returned to Judaism, still succumb to the conflict between their Jewish and Christian beliefs. (p. 41)

Kestenberg further describes a child survivor that she treated in psychoanalysis, whose core issues in therapy surrounded the identity of both her and the therapist. In her treatment, she persistently tried to denigrate and shatter the professional identity of the therapist as a reflection of her own issues with being excluded and being deprived of life through being different. It was only when the therapist's identity remained palpably intact in spite of the patient's "persecution" that the patient was able to integrate her own identity in modelling herself after her therapist and find satisfaction in her work.

According to Kestenberg and Brenner (1996), drawing in depth on some 1,500 interviews with Holocaust survivors from around the world who were children living with these assumed identities, these survivors had had to undergo a psychological splitting of the ego.

The ego ideal of children who were born during persecution suffered most as they grew up in an atmosphere of distrust and defamation. Many wished to be born Gentile and some who had been converted looked down on Jews as inferior. Many times, however, a prevailing Jewish identity and a feeling of belonging to Jews dominated over the wish to be protected by persecutors. This representation created a split in the superego, especially between the penal code and the ego-ideal. To want to be a Nazi who had killed your family was bad, but the wish to belong to the protected who could survive persisted nevertheless. (p. 190)

There was a rupture of the conscience into two parts for these children and there was confusion between the ego and superego functions. In Freudian terms, this splitting of the ego denotes the coexistence of two psychological attitudes towards the external reality: the first attitude taking reality into consideration, and the second attitude disavowing this and replacing it with a fantasy of desire. For these children, this meant being torn in their inner psychological world with conflictual feelings: on the one hand being Jewish and having to hide their identity in the face of persecution, whilst at the same time posing as Gentiles, with some harbouring a secret wish that this was really so. For some children, there was a psychological desire to *be* that Gentile and disavow their Jewishness, even if this meant identifying with the enemy.

Kestenberg (1996) remarks further that often the well-dressed Nazi in his full regalia became an object of admiration for young children, who looked up to these soldiers even though they were the enemy. She says:

Identification with the aggressor as a means of survival was not uncommon. Children who stole, who lied to kapos (prisoners who were supervisors of work details), to the SS, and to Jew hunters did what the persecutors had done to them and their families. Those who attached themselves to kapos, predominantly boys, were often abused sexually but identifies with their protectors, wearing insignia and clothing reminiscent of the SS. They also were cruel to the less privileged children and treated Jewish adults with contempt (Kraus, 1990). Quite a few (Kosinski,

1978), who admired the tall, clean Nazis with their shiny boots, identified with them by adopting their vilification of Jews. (p. 190)

Indeed, in this study, R relates the time they came out of hiding in the cupboard and were immediately arrested and taken down to the police station. He says:

For the first time I came close to a German officer and he was fascinating. The excitement was that officer, he had tall boots, boots would come nearly up to my chest because I stood there and he stood there very straight, very tall, he looked like...I think the nearest I can describe him some forty years later when I was in Florence at the Statue of David...I find that quite impressive, you know, it's a monument, it's a monumental statue, something which is quite significant. Now to me, alright, it's hard to compare an SS soldier with Michaelangelo's *David*, but something which impresses visually...he stood there with gold buttons, I nearly went to touch them but my mother was very quick...He did not smile, nothing...we were in rags and my mother and father were hunchback, my mother never recovered from staying in the cupboard and he looked so majestic, it was really a wonder that such a cruel animal could look so good.

Momentarily, R was caught up in the splendour of the description of this SS soldier who had revealed little R as a Jew moments before by wrenching down his pants and exposing his circumcised penis. It seemed the glory of the uniform and perhaps *the wish to be protected by the enemy* obliterated the immediate threat of the situation in R's mind as *he nearly reached out to touch the buttons*. Even in his narration of the incident, it's as if his confusion is still that of the six-year-old child: R reminds himself that indeed this was a cruel animal cloaked in glorious clothes. R, as he is transported back to being an eight-year-old boy, experiences a tension in his description between embarrassment at his dishevelled parents and glorying in the splendour of the Nazi officer. His mother, who stops him from touching the gold buttons, brings his wish to be "part of the glorious regalia of the uniform" to reality. With resonances of Anna Freud's description of the "*identification with the aggressor*", children who were faced

with the overwhelming persecution of their Jewish identity wanted to “cross the line” and become Gentiles like everyone else. Indeed, Kestenberg (1996) makes the claim that identification with the aggressor was not uncommon among children.

As evidenced in some of the interviews in this research and elsewhere (e.g. Brenner, 1996; Quindeau, 1997), the very narration of the hiding and trauma was often so overwhelming in the minds of the children that it was hard to assimilate and at times became fragmented. Quindeau, a German researcher (cited in Kestenberg and Fogelman, 1997), discusses the narrative interview and describes his experience with interviewing survivors, relating that some children used the interview process as a means to *construct* their identity. Quindeau writes:

The narrator constructs a story that integrates elements of pain and affliction into a meaningful whole, lends continuity to one’s own experience and combats the perception of randomness. This process contributes to the formation of ego identity. At the same time this ego identity is also the basis of the unity of one’s life story, the same consistency that gives individual episodes their proper places. (p. 37)

The children who were overwhelmed at a very basic level between the meaning of life and death, where “*death was the norm and survival was the contingent*” (p. 38), found it difficult to integrate their experiences into their lives post-war; the narration of their experiences often reflected this lack of integration and relied on the splitting of their identity. It is almost as if there are two distinct parts to their lives: when hiding and when not hiding.

Rather than this representing simply a temporal discontinuity, it enters a deeper psychological level of splitting also present in other children who have been traumatized, such as the child victims of sexual abuse. For example, with sexually abused children, often the abuser was the very person who could give them images of goodness, which led to great difficulties in the integration of the child’s mind of the ego and superego functions. They coped with their trauma by withdrawing, cutting off and creating splits in their minds, compartmentalizing the abuse from other aspects of their

lives and hiding their identities as victims (Valent, 1995). Furthermore, it is observed that these children, who out of fear submit to the sexual attacks of the adult, then introject the guilt feelings of the adult back onto themselves. (See Ferenczi, 1932, in his discussion on the “identification with the aggressor”) Similarly, hidden child survivors of the Holocaust seemed unable to integrate their hiding as children with the rest of their lives in a psychologically meaningful way. As F maintains, it is only since the formation of a Child Survivor Group in Melbourne some ten years ago that she feels she has been able to reflect on her time in hiding and integrate it with the rest of her life. She says:

A lot of these things I've only thought about since we've had the Child Survivor Group. Before that, I didn't think about them. I always considered that period of those two and a bit years of my life as a sort of...if you do a movie, you can kind of stop it, sort of freezes and it was like the movie stopped, everything stopped and almost I thought of it as if nothing happened in that time, and then it got going, started up again, when I went back to live with my parents. So it's really only the last eight or nine years, eight years since belonging to this group that I've actually begun to realize that, you know, between the age of eight and a half and ten and a half, a child does not stand still, so I've now had an opportunity to kind of, to look back at that time and to actually figure out some of the things that happened, and how I really, you know, how I really felt at the time.

Again, Valent (1995) draws the parallel between child survivors and child victims of sexual abuse, in that both groups have only found their identities as a group in recent years while having a social history of being denied their trauma. He states:

Both groups of children coped at the time of their trauma by numbing themselves, dissociating, suppressing emotions, clinging to some good hopeful object or thought, looking to the future and ignoring the past...Both groups grew up with major concerns in the field of their identities. (p. 86)

Furthermore, as F stated in her interview, because this fragmentation and dissociation of their identities and personalities in the face of trauma was taking place *at the very time when they were forming and establishing their identities*, the integration thereafter was made the more difficult. The persecution created a conflict in these children and a tension seemed to establish itself in their identities: a tension between belonging and feeling different, a tension which in some form or another seems to have settled itself in a residual manner and is reflected in these children's psychological lives. It remains open to interpretation whether the establishment of the "false self" in trauma then establishes itself permanently in the inner psyches of these children, and whether in the quest for survival these children had to undergo a major trimming of their psychological lives, to the point where this became an inevitable pattern of their psychological make-up even when the threat of persecution was removed. As S states in this study:

The less said the better it was because I might reveal something that I was not supposed to, so the less we said the better. I believe this is somehow still with me...it is personal. I can't come out with personal details. I think this is because of those times...although it might not have anything to do with it. I cannot reveal, because I do not remember who said to what and that maybe they were going to use this against me at some time, or they might pick me up on something. And this is still with me. I don't know if I was born this way or I was conditioned but I believe I was conditioned because I don't think many people are like that...I don't know.

When considering the suppression of identity in this group of child survivors against the broader backdrop of other children who may have "hidden" in their lives, the victims of child abuse come readily to mind, as discussed above. In fact Valent (1995), having worked extensively with both groups of (now adult) children, argues that there are many similarities between the two groups. (Note: Valent is referring to child survivors of the Holocaust as a group and not hidden children in particular.) He claims that while both groups have displayed similar effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, more complex and varied diagnoses need to be considered to cater for these children. He writes:



Both have a social history of being denied their traumas, in spite of having suffered extreme threats to their physical, psychological and social integrities. Both groups of children coped at the time of their traumas by numbing themselves, dissociating, suppressing emotions, clinging to some good hopeful object or thought, looking to the future and ignoring the past... Both groups grew up with major concerns in the field of their identities, both forming groups at about the same time. (p. 81-89)

Others have also commented on the resistance to using traditional diagnostic classifications when describing survivors of the Holocaust (e.g. Herman, 1992; Yehuda and Giller, 1994), claiming that a standard nosological system underestimates the uniqueness of the trauma of the Holocaust on survivors. Further, when considering the reaction of survivors to their trauma, Frankl (1959) points out that an abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation *is* normal behaviour. Kellerman (1999) argues that it is more appropriate to consider Holocaust survivors as a diverse group with diversity in their presentations, rather than viewing them as one homogenous group with PTSD.

When considering other types of people who might have had to undergo identity suppression for the sake of survival, it became more difficult to find similarities in other groups. It could be argued that not so long ago homosexuals felt driven to hide their sexual identity, and indeed in some circles (for example, certain religious groups) this attitude still prevails. Some have argued that to suppress or hide their heterosexual identity was tantamount to *hiding who they really were*. Thus there is some degree of similarity with hidden children; those who were not physically hidden had to pretend to be Christian, just as some gay men find it necessary to pretend to be homosexual. Child survivors, in their hiding of their identities, were faced with a pervading persecution of their very Jewishness in a way that other victims of the Holocaust were not (Kestenberg & Brenner, 1998, make the observation that gypsies or sick or retarded German children were exterminated, yet were not made to feel inferior in the same way as Jewish children were). Homosexuality has also faced discrimination, both in the work-place and in the social sphere.

Others in society who might “hide” are those who commit illegal acts, the adulterer, the paedophile, the thief or the rapist, to name but a few. However, there seems to be a qualitative difference in the hiding of these crimes, which the law dictates are wrong in a society, and the hiding of one’s identity because of an external criterion imposed by the Nazi regime in the quest for a superior Aryan race. Furthermore, it seems that in these situations the perpetrators are hiding the “act” rather than their intrinsic selves, and whilst in this process an individual might have to fabricate aspects of his/her life to conceal this act, he/she does not have to hide his/her very self.

When considering people in society who have to assume new identities and erase their old ones in the same way that these child survivors did, the only groups of people who appear an appropriate comparison are spies or people who enter witness protection programs. Not surprisingly, because of the very secrecy that surrounds these programs, psychological research in these areas seems to be almost nonexistent and an extensive search in both these areas provided very little material. There was one clinical report (Koedam, 1993) on the treatment of a patient who was a participant in the witness protection scheme, and, indeed, the issues of identity became a core issue in the treatment of this individual. The therapist treating the individual wrote:

Hidden witnesses are expected to take on a new, manufactured identity, which is alien to their life history. They must adopt a new name, a new community and begin to create a set of behaviour patterns to which they are unaccustomed. The fear of being recognised is something they live with on a daily basis. The consistent vigilance in their social interaction to ensure they do not “slip” and give away information about their past must be overwhelming... As they attempt to create bonding and friendships within their new world, they must always keep the majority of their real life history a secret. (p. 364)

Once again the differences between these two populations include the fact that the witness protection program or spy programs usually involve consenting adults, who choose to participate of their own free will. This was not an option extended to most

hidden children, as adults mostly made the decision to hide them and *told* them of their new identities and the roles they were expected to play.

Thus the suppression of identity for these survivors presents as a unique, defining feature of children in hiding. Whilst at the time most children accepted this suppression of identity as a means of immediate survival, it was a complex feature of their hiding going to the very core of the trauma: invoking mixed feelings towards Judaism and Catholicism, splits in the formation of the superego, feelings of loyalty tinged with feelings of betrayal and an overall confusion about “who they were”. Their very sense of self was under attack in hiding and the cumulative effects of this erosion seemed to impact on their identity beyond the years of actual hiding. As Kestenberg noted of her interviews with child survivors:

Survivors often feared to disclose their identities as Jews...even in countries where Jews could feel safe. Some Jewish children who were in hiding continued to deny their Jewishness after the war and sometimes upheld their false identity into the third generation...(cited in Robinson 1992, p. 39)

#### **4.1.2 Fear in Hiding:**

As part of the systematic genocide whose aim was to extinguish Jews forever, children of the Holocaust were not spared any of the horrors (Tec, 1993; Valent, 1994, 1995). The presence of hidden children in Nazi-occupied Europe represented an opposition to the German policies of annihilation. Furthermore, the “uselessness” of children in their inability to “work hard” under the German regime made them especially redundant in the Nazi scheme of events, and their extra needs were treated with impatience and brutality. *“For instance, infants who could not evacuate a hospital in Lodz ghetto during a roundup were thrown out of a window; children were used for target practice, medical experimentation, were tortured; but above all, they were killed.”* (Valent, 1998, p. 519) Tec (1993) makes the observation that these children were forced to endure these formidable stressors alongside their adult parents, yet without the coping resources and adaptations that an adult would have. Furthermore, as the persecution

against the Jews gained momentum and escalation, these children had to witness their parents' increasing dread and fear which more often than not led to separations in hiding.

Fear was a common thread of the experiences of the children in hiding. There was a fear of "being caught" or "being discovered": much as the exposure or revelation of being caught in a game of hide-and-seek, only here the game had far higher stakes. The fear in hiding seemed to be a pervasive one and had a qualitatively different "feel" to it, compared with those children who were interned in camps or were exposed to the "sounds of war". Valent (1991), in a talk at the International Hidden Child Conference, says:

Hiding from bombs does not rate high with me, nor does it rate high in child survivor literature. I remember the fear and the frights, but they were somehow "clean" - tangible, shared, and open. There was greater anxiety hiding from humans. It was a lonely, "unclean" anxiety, because it included fear of oneself and one's protectors. One move, a sneeze in a cupboard, could be disaster for all, or turn others against oneself.

In this study too, when talking of "fear" little attention seems to be given to the overt "sounds of war" heard during the hiding. The fear in hiding seemed to be far more diffuse than relating to a single event such as a bomb falling, or a bullet being fired. F relates:

I'm trying to remember when I sort of became, became aware of the fear, but I didn't know much at that point. I mean, the Germans used to march up and down the streets and that was scary enough in itself... And I suppose from running away, they had been bombing, and we'd been in Paris and we'd run down into the Metro for shelter. So there was all that background, you know, that there was the war, that something very scary was going on, but specifically, I didn't have any idea.

Dr M, in describing his experiences of being hidden, begins with the very early years of the German invasion of Hungary when they would conduct random raids on various homes during the day or night. He says:

The hidden part was that we would be herded down into this cellar thing and there were a lot of other children...and children as well, we were told not to, obviously, not to cry. Not supposed to cry, this was sort of told to us, I remember this very distinctly, that it would be dark there, it would be cold, or whatever it was, and we were not supposed to make any sound whatsoever...This was one of my absolute nightmarish scenarios, that this could happen, and this went on, I supposed...for about four years... But the main thing was this constant fear of being awakened from a deep sleep and rushed into this place.

The fear seemed to be all-pervading during the hiding, an omnipresent construct hovering over their lives. When asked to describe her experience of hiding, S responded immediately with the words: "*It was fearsome...*" She then went on to explain the details of their hiding and how they learnt and adopted new identities to hide themselves. S was quite matter-of-fact in relating her experiences, which included being separated from her family and living in a convent (a totally unfamiliar place for a young girl from a strictly orthodox home); yet the one emotion she kept referring back to many times in her interview was *fear*. Again, when first entering the convent, she recalls:

It was very fearful, because they were all in white, these nuns...I didn't feel sorry for myself because I had no time to do so. I knew I had to get on with life and was not allowed to make a slip, the less I talked the better... I knew we were in danger because when I looked out the window, there was barbed wire everywhere and there were soldiers guarding. Soldiers of Nazis or Gestapo, I don't know what they were called, but they had guns or swords, and for a little child this was very frightening.

Even later when they were “hiding openly” and pretending to be non-Jews on the street, S recounts:

To our neighbours we were non-Jews, and it was very fearful because we were scared that we could be identified on the street. We had a code, we had to press the button, four or five times, so that family members knew it was a family member and (would) open the door for them. The whole situation was very fearful. When our father came home we had to hide him, because he was not officially in the house. If a stranger came into the house, we were petrified...

Child survivors were faced with death on a regular basis. Many too young to know of a normality before war or hiding (Magnus, 1997), thought that death was an expected occurrence (Kestenberg and Brenner, 1996). Few hidden children were spared the experience of witnessing violent death. They witnessed brutalities such as line ups and shootings in the ghettos, or being held at gunpoint by Germans when asked if there was anyone hiding in their homes.

For those hiding with the partisans, death was a regular occurrence as they saw both their colleagues and German soldiers being killed. R says of that period: *“In the forest life was in some ways interesting and in some ways difficult...very difficult. There was this permanent hiding, fear of being killed...”* However, with the partisans, fear became a negative attribute, something which had to be overcome in their battle against the Germans. As R relates, while hiding with the Polish (not Jewish) partisans in the forest:

Unfortunately the bombs didn’t distinguish between the partisans and the German soldiers, so some of them got hit, I was okay, but in the morning when I came down in the daylight, there were a lot of bodies, we lost a lot of bodies... I looked around and everyone was very upset, I didn’t know what to do...no-one had time for me...everyone was upset...

R by this stage had unwittingly become accustomed to the sight of bodies and dead people lying around. Indeed, one of the roles given him by the Partisans was to put a feather under a dead body's nose to check if the victim was still breathing. R became known as the "Feather Boy" and says: *"This was quite an honour, because now I became a fully fledged partisan, they went with guns and swords and knives and I went with my feather."* R was told by his fellow partisans: *"For every one of them that dies, one of us survives, so don't feel sorry for their children and wives, because they kill them, it's better to live than to die, so you kill them before they kill you."* Life had very little value for R during this period: he had become desensitized to the sight of dead bodies, and fear was a trait to be conquered and directed towards attacking the enemy.

Fear was not only a unique feature of the children who were hidden by Gentile families in relation to their *own* discovery, but there was a fear that if discovered, not only they but the very people who hid them would be killed. Being discovered not only endangered the children themselves, but also the rescuers who protected them. Children feeling abandoned by their parents in strange homes had the added fear that failing to please their new guardians would mean abandonment by them too (Moskovitz and Krell, 1990). ME describes feeling very rejected and not loved in her place of hiding with a Christian family and carries with her feelings of resentment at being abandoned by her mother and simultaneously being an "outsider" in her "foster family". Yet when returning to visit this family many years after the war ended, as an adult, she relates:

We started to talk about the war, and he told me that he'd had to hide because it was not safe to come home. I just realized that they risked their necks every day for three years, not only their own necks but their children's necks and I was just overcome...

Fear of discovery was fear of imminent death for both the child and the Gentile family who hid ME, and the magnitude of this altruistic act did not impact on ME until many years after the hiding. Mrs P too reflects on the drilling they were given not to reveal who hid them, when she says: *"We were told if we were ever to survive we were never to tell anyone that they hid us, that she the woman hid us, because to hide a Jew was worse than to kill your own mother."*

Hiding often demanded many place changes and transitory events, each bringing its own challenges. One child survivor who was a young adolescent, Ester, describes her open hiding as a Christian. She said:

Each time of hiding had its own demands, each demanding that you attend to the current one, you couldn't get stuck in what worried you at the last place. That doesn't mean that each new burden didn't feel heavier than the previous one, just because your back had been already bent under the weight of everything that came before. The same was true for fear. (Stein, 1993, p. 160)

She continues further, saying that being in constant hiding had alleviated her fear of the Germans *per se*, she was too consumed with being unmasked as an impostor by someone in the neighbourhood. She describes the feeling of there being no place to hide:

Instead of taming fear by turning it into a familiar and therefore less demonic presence, she felt more and more oppressed by it, her previous fears weakened rather than reinforced her emotional foundations. No sooner did one cause for fear disappear around the corner, than another one, even more forbidding, appeared on her horizon (p. 161)

F too recalls the fear washing over her afresh with each move into yet another hiding place. She says: *"So then it was on to the next place, and the next place...and again there was always a kind of, I remember, a bit of excitement about going somewhere new...as well as sort of all the anxiety..."* Each new place demanded new adjustments, new ways of "fitting in", and with no-one to share the fears and anxieties that plagued the children in hiding.

In this study there were two instances where fear seemed to overwhelm the children and absolutely freeze them into a situation where they felt they could not go forward.



Luckily, in both cases, the moment of paralysis passed uneventfully as the immediate threat seemed to remove itself. D recounts:

I remember walking with my father to the Jewish Communal Centre where we all had to meet and suddenly my father felt that there was danger and he said to us: "You walk on this side of the street, I'm going to cross the street and if they arrest me, the building is just at the end of the street, you just go on to that building." And I immediately thought, if my father is going to be arrested on the other side, I don't think I can continue walking...

F too recalls an incident early in the time of her hiding when she had left her hiding place to visit her mother. She relates:

I think it happened while I was staying with the spinster and my parents went to live with a different family for a short time and this was somewhere perhaps half an hour tram ride and walk away. And I went to visit them one day and then when the evening came, my mother was bringing me back and so we were on a tram, it was evening and this tram was getting close to where I was supposed to finish up, going home to the spinster. And suddenly the tram was stopped and everybody was made to get off the tram and the Germans were checking the paper(s). And my mother said to me, I think she said to me, "You run home and tell dad what happened," something like that... I moved away, a few metres I think, no more, and I stood there, I was just rooted to the spot. I couldn't think...frozen...absolute...I was just watching...(She continues)...this is the strange thing. Because being a hidden child in a place like Belgium, we didn't really know, we didn't really see...it was not like in Poland in a ghetto where children saw horrors, it was all out there, you know. They saw people dying, being killed, being rounded up, everything. We didn't really see anything...but you just had this fear and this certainty. How you grasp that as a child I don't know.

Haber (1988) reports from the analysis of a latency-age survivor of the Holocaust that the first months of therapy were dominated by the patient's fear that the analyst would deem her not suitable for therapy. He writes:

The persistent fear that I would discard her unfolded at several levels. Mrs A recalled feeling as if she was a burden who had to be pushed in a dung cart as her father had pushed her as a child. ...I interpreted her mistrust and related it to her suspicions that some Jewish children were given away to Gentiles or abandoned to make it easier for the parents to evade the Nazis. (p. 645)

She recalled that she had no fear of Germans or death. The only fear was separation from her parents. Separation, she felt was death. Indeed, there is evidence both in this study and the literature that children's greatest fear was that of abandonment or separation from their parents, which often happened more than once as part of their hiding. Brenner (1988) notes, in his work with Holocaust survivors in analysis, that the risk of a patient leaving analysis due to their intense feelings of fear of abandonment is consistent with reports of children with early object loss. ME, in her interview, kept referring back to feelings of abandonment and rejection; although intellectually she understood that her mother was forced to do this in order to save her life, she was never able to fully reconcile it in an emotional sense. Still talking as a four-year-old child who has been "dumped" with strangers she did not know and who did not treat her particularly well, she comments:

I always felt, with the child's anger, that my mother had abandoned me and that they were only taking me in because of the eternal soul, that it was the Christian thing to do... I know intellectually that she didn't abandon me, but in a way, I mean, I was four years old, the emotional effect of that, I don't think has ever gone away.

In considering the data, there needs to be a teasing out between the fear of the general persecution and the fear particular to the experience of hiding. It seems to emerge from these interviews and the analysis of the phenomenological data that in fact the fear in

hiding was quintessentially different to the fear in general. Many referred to the fear not being that of the external world of war, the Germans, the bombing or the raids, although these circumstances must have preyed on their minds. Yet for hidden children, the fear seemed more personal, more immediate, the fear of their hiding place being discovered. Perhaps, for young children, this was all their minds could absorb; they knew little of the reality of the world beyond their immediate circle. But within the circle of hiding, the fear became all - encompassing and - pervading. In the words of Mrs P, who was hidden with her mother in somebody's home:

It is very hard to imagine, because there was always that fear...you know you couldn't walk in shoes, they walked constantly barefooted and they constantly told my mother, who was a bit heavier, she was not a ballerina exactly, they used to tell her that they could hear her walk. So if they weren't at home, we were even afraid to walk in...we moved between the kitchen and the room but we were afraid to exist. With fear...you know...it's something you can't...

For these children, there was no room for them in the hiding, no place for a young child who might betray the hiding place with a sneeze that could not be suppressed, a cry that could not be stifled. If they were posing as non-Jews, there was no place for the child who was too young to work, but had no place in the school. Furthermore, there was the intangible omnipresent fear of hiding while in public (Valent, 1991), all the time being aware that one inadvertent look or act could reveal their Jewishness. They were afraid to exist and had to hide this fear too. All their energies were focused on making themselves invisible in hiding. Rosa, a child who was hidden in the Ukraine, says: *"That's why people who were hiding were, in some respects, under much more tension and pressure than people who were already caught, because we always had to be on guard."* (Greenfeld, 1993, p. xxi) There seems to be a level of fear in all descriptions of the experience of hiding, whether implicit or explicit. The essence of hiding itself involves concealment, and the exposure of hiding for these children meant being caught and inevitably killed. In the words of child survivor Goldstein:

I read stories about animals in the forest that were being protected. There were laws that you can't shoot a deer, and all of a sudden it dawned on me that these animals were better off than we were. You couldn't hunt them, while we had absolutely no protection. What really bothered me the most, I think, was (that) there was no safety net. There was no one you could go to. You couldn't go to the police, you couldn't go anywhere. It was like being worse than an animal. I realized at the time that our level of existence was worse than an animal. They had some protection, there were only certain months you could shoot them... (p. 5)

#### **4.1.3 Feelings of Insecurity and the Role of Relationships in Hiding:**

When commenting on the apparent resilience of child survivors, Valent (1998) highlights that many survived through their attachments to others. It seems in the confusion and upheavals of the war, particularly for those in hiding who often had to move several times, that a connection to another was all-important. As outlined in the previous chapter, there were three main relationships which seemed to be significant for those in hiding: (1) the child's original relationship to his/her parents before the hiding; (2) the child's relationship to his/her host family; and (3) the child's relationship to a younger sibling if they were hidden together, as in several cases in this study. This section will further explore the psychological meaning of these attachments for hidden children and how these relationships served as a buffer in sustaining the survival instinct in the face of trauma in hiding.

In situations when children were separated from their parents in hiding - that is, they were placed in a home on their own - an awareness of their parents, or more particularly the mother, on the outside was crucial for their psychological well-being and to negate a sense that their parents had completely abandoned them. Many children who were still with at least one of their parents at the beginning of the war continued to hope that their parents would help and save them. They felt insulated from the horrors of their realities of separations and hiding, buffered by their inner knowledge that their mother would save them if things deteriorated too terribly. This thought seems to have been in the back of F's mind in these interviews. F, who was moved many times during her hiding,

remained aware throughout that her mother was on the outside and was hovering over the situation, so that if things became too bad she would always be rescued and her hiding changed. Initially, in the earlier stages of the war, it seemed that F's mother made regular visits to F's hiding place; yet as the dangers of the war increased, her mother's own movements were restricted and visits to F were less frequent. Yet the psychological knowledge that somewhere in the background there was this mother that could save her - even if this was more of a fantasy than a reality - seemed important in saving F from her bleakest moments in hiding. She recalls of the early days:

I think mum was really quite a brave woman, because she wanted to see this place for herself, and when she saw it, she immediately decided that this was no longer, this was not for us...and she sent somebody to fetch my sister and I back home...

Later on in the hiding, however, the situation changed. F recounts:

And my mother used to come, mum always managed to come and see where we were. I guess she did have to bring money to this woman and I suppose she sort of kept some kind of tabs on the situation in this way...(but) soon after that she was supposed to come and she didn't come. And I used to, I used to sort of saunter up the street to where the tram came, but of course I was not supposed to look for her and I was not supposed to go up to her and all that. But I'd just sort of wander up a bit to see if she was coming...but she didn't come...

F reflects that at this time she had reached one of the lowest points in her hiding, feeling desperate that it would never end and yearning for contact and reassurance from her mother.

ME, who reports feeling terribly abandoned by her mother, also reflects that there was a certain vague awareness that her mother was in the background of her hiding. She comments:

I always used to call my foster parents aunt and uncle. I never lost the feeling that they were in no way substitute parents for me. Now I remember one time, my mother actually came, no, I didn't know it was her, but I remember wondering. There was an arrangement that, it may have been someone's birthday, because it was summer, that we were brought to a certain park somewhere, and that my mother actually came and observed us from a distance and I remember that I wondered who this person was and I had some inkling, maybe it could have been my mother, but I didn't dare to question.

Depending on the age of the child on separation from his/her parents for hiding and the nature of their relationship before the separation, it appears children were able to introject the empathy, nurturance and respect of their earlier relationship, in order to endure the hardships and torments of the separation. The longer and more beneficial the pre-Holocaust period had been for the children, the more strength they had to cope with the traumata. (Kestenberg, 1985) For example, it could be argued that the intense bonding of R to his parents in the cupboard for a period of thirteen months helped R to sustain himself upon separation from them. He seemed to carry with him the close relationship to his parents, particularly his father, in all his various hiding situations. Thus, when they went to work in the ghettos and he was left hiding in the folds of the curtain all day, he would *"remember a story and I would try and relate...my father would come at night and I would show him what (I) had remembered from my hand schooling, my palm schooling, to put it in (to) practice"*. Later, whilst hiding with the partisans in the forest, it seemed that R remained focused on his relationship with his father, as if this was the backdrop to all he did. He continually thought to himself how proud his father would be of his fighting with the partisans, and indeed, after a particularly gruesome bombing which left many of his colleagues dead, R's focus was on a severed leg he came across and how he could make of this a useful gift to his father - who was a doctor in a different part of the forest. At this stage he hadn't actually seen his father for some six months, but recalls:

I looked around and everyone was very upset...the captain too...and then suddenly I came across a leg, which was about the same height as me.

The leg was just sort of coming up to my eyesight, a full leg, a perfectly good, one boot and all...that somebody had lost and I thought it would be a good idea to take this leg to my father, because with all the wounded, perhaps one of them would want a leg... So I took the leg, but the trouble was that it took me about three or four hours to get that...where my father was...because the snow was soft and I would dig in and dig out and I pulled the leg up and the leg pulled me down...and it took hours to cover maybe two kilometres...

The sheer determination of R to trudge through the snow in the forest to gift his father this dismembered leg was illustrated by R's strong feelings of connection to his father and his hope that he could please him through this gift. The horrors of the immediate situation, the bombing, the deaths around him, seemed to impact little on R's determination, as his total focus was on pleasing his father.

Older children from orthodox households seemed more able to retain their feelings of Jewish identity and maintain their connection to their parents' strong upbringing. S, who came from a strictly orthodox home yet was hidden in a convent, comments:

We didn't analyze it, we knew it was only temporary, only superficial, we didn't go into it. I didn't internalize the religion. We didn't question it, but we didn't internalize the religion, of this I am one hundred percent sure. We did not take Catholicism as a religion, we knew it was there as an aid. Although I was only a child of six, I understood we had to save our lives by being Catholics, but it was only my name, and it was not going to be there forever.

Kestenberg and Brenner (1986) refer to the good memories from a childhood beset by deprivations and disturbances of rules and routines frequently attaching themselves to a single physical object which gave the child a good feeling. Kestenberg and Gampel (1983) report an instance where a four-year-old child carried with him his mother's identity bracelet, despite the fact that the discovery of this object could betray his origin. Brenner (1996) too points out that amid the chaos and life-threatening turmoil of the

war, children discovered that by acquiring these inanimate objects they were maintaining a sense of contact with the normality of life before the hiding. He writes: “*Such bridges to lost objects may occur developmentally or in response to trauma.*” (p. 70) Brenner argues that in younger children, who could not maintain a cognitive memory of their parents at the time of separation, sensory experience could sometimes be revived in memory and connected to earlier experiences. An illustration of this was the five-year-old Alice, who was hidden with a Gentile woman in the Polish countryside while her parents were marched off by soldiers:

Because she was so young, and an only child, the separation from her parents and her placement in a large, strange, rural family, was bewildering. She felt very much alone. Her soft, refined, dainty clothing was taken away from her, and she was given a typically rough linen dress to wear so as not to look conspicuous. By smelling the food, the rich heavy aroma of chicken soup, she could conjure up the illusion of being with her parents. Though she could not visualize the image of her parents, she could re-create the feeling of being home through her sense of smell and touch (p. 71)

Other children could not maintain physical contact with their separated parents but instead had some sort of “transitional object” which provided them with a representation of home. In psychoanalytical terms, the transitional object described by Winnicott (1987) is a material object such as a blanket or dummy that has a special value for the young infant and represents the first transition for the baby from his relationship with his mother to the outside world. Tangible objects in hiding, such as locketts or combs, reinforced the attachments to home and better times and seemed to provide sustenance in the depths of their abandonment (Gampel, 1988). SK recalls:

My father had given me the tiniest, tiniest little mezuzah (*inscribed Jewish parchment put on door-posts*) before I went to the convent, it wasn’t much bigger than a pin, and he told me to keep it close to me. So somehow, nobody ever found it, I had it next to my heart, but nobody



would have known what it was because it was so tiny, and he told me as long as I said my prayers I would be all right. So I did.

S describes her own family as not particularly religious, yet this religious object given to her by her father became a significant connection to them and seemed to give her extra confidence in her Jewish faith - thus sustaining her even in the most foreign circumstances, such as the convent.

Sometimes the connection to the hidden child's life prior to hiding or separation from parents happened inadvertently, as in the case of F. While hiding with a dour spinster lady, F relates:

One thing that really appealed to me there was she had a radio, and that was pretty unusual, because in those days a lot of people didn't have a radio at all. She had a radio and not only that but she used it, which was I think illegal, and she listened to the illegal news broadcast...and I remember that as a very good thing, because it gave me some sense that there was something happening...And another thing that I discovered, or actually it was in my family before, but sometimes after the news broadcast she'd just leave the radio on for a few minutes and there'd be music and that was a great treat...My father loved classical music and I got that from him.

The radio not only provided F with news of the outside world (which was important to her) but also the music broadcasts reminded her of her father's love for music and in those moments she felt a warmth and connection to him which provided a sense of comfort and security against the deprivation and loneliness of her hiding. She continues: *'So I guess there were these little...what can I say...these sort of pockets, these little things, in the sort of overall...it was like no-man's land.'* The snatches of classical music for F and the mezuzah necklace for SK linked both to a more secure and stable past, before their period of hiding.

The relationship to the host family was also of extreme importance to those children (and adults) who were hidden in Gentile homes. Just as a parent is usually considered a buffer for a child in the external world, in times of hiding the host family was the buffer between the hidden children and the outside hostilities of persecution. As alluded to in the previous chapter, this buffer was not merely a practical and physical one but also a psychological one that provided the hidden families with a sense of being protected. E and her mother came out of their hiding in the potato pit when their host family (the Gentile doctor) left for a stay in the country. Mrs P and her mother also came out of their house when their protectors left them for a holiday. She said:

My mother decided as their people went away, they just left them, they said they couldn't look after them any more and they had to go. And my mother said that they couldn't stay there, that would be the end of them, anybody could walk in...and we just walked out...

It seemed the uncertainty of walking out was preferable to being left vulnerable and unprotected in their hiding place, illustrating the importance of the role of the protectors. In psychoanalytic terms, the role of the protector was similar to the role of the Winnicottian father at the time of the birth of a new baby. The father's role is to buffer and protect the new mother and the infant as they bond against the impingements of the outside world. *"This enabled the mother to become preoccupied, to have but one concern, the care of the baby that is there in her body or in her arms."* (Winnicott, 1987, p.71) The host family here is the "father" protecting the vulnerable mother-child dyad, and enabling the mother to focus completely on survival in hiding without extraneous impingements from the outside world. For the host to leave was to render the hiding unbearable and unsustainable for these children and their parents, who chose to come out and expose themselves to the world.

A common feature for these children in hiding was the loneliness they experienced in the lack of interaction with other children their age. As formal schooling had to be stopped there was little opportunity to play with other children, or have any sort of relationship with others. Yet it seemed that many craved this absence, in spite of initially having no understanding of why friends were rejecting them. As SK relates:

I first found out when I was about four, coming back from kindergarten, that the next door neighbours' child who used to play with me, dolls and things, suddenly spat in my face and said, "I can't play with you any more, you're a little Jewish pig," and I ran in crying to my mother and I didn't understand what it was all about. She went and marched into the neighbour and you know, she was all upset, and the neighbour said: 'Look, you'd better not stay here because if my husband sees you, he'll beat me up, because he joined the Nazi party last night.

For children and parents alike, their social world suddenly narrowed and became very restricted, with hiding often transitory. The children were not in one place long enough for any relationship to be established even if there were other youngsters present.

Some children became the protectors of their younger sibling in hiding, such as both D and SK in this study. For both these children, being the older sister parentified them in their roles and the focus of their hiding became looking after the welfare of their younger charges. Both D and SK described their time in hiding with continual reference to their younger siblings, even if they were separated from them during periods of their hiding. It seemed as if their relationship with their younger sibling became the context for their time in hiding and their experience of hiding was against the backdrop of this relationship. The responsibility imbued in them gave a sense of purpose to their hiding and made their survival instinct that much more intense, as they were responsible for another. At one stage, D was ill and was sent to an infirmary in the children's home where she and her younger sister had been hidden. She recalls of the adults from the children's home who sent her there:

They took me to the infirmary and I was left there. So I was fretting very much for my sister as well (when they were separated) and one night they came and we were discovered... The infirmary had a glass door so we could see their outlines and hear what went on in the office... So I went to my sister and we gathered up a few things... They said they are only taking us for a walk, but young as I was I knew this was not so. They

told those in the infirmary that we can stay there if we want, they won't take us, we can stay in the hospital. But because I had my sister there, I wouldn't stay.

Even though D might have had a refuge in staying in the infirmary, she would not do so if this involved deserting her younger sister. Her relationship with her sister and the responsibility involved was paramount in D's hiding and dictated to her how she was going to conduct herself in hiding.

#### **4.1.4 Suspension of Normality in Hiding:**

Children who were hidden had to stop normal living, as previously experienced. Life was put on hold for the period of hiding and all ordinary notions and routines of life suddenly lost their significance. Those physically hidden (such as R and Mrs P) were constricted to a cupboard (R) or a single room within a home (Mrs P). E was hidden in the depths of a potato pit, together with her mother. The world became a microcosm of one room: that is, the focus of the hiding was centred on the physical and practical arrangements of life in these severely deprived circumstances. The overriding factor became survival in hiding and anything not relevant to this quest was ignored. R describes the commercial arrangement between his father and the farmer who hid them, which enabled them to hide in his cupboard and he would bring food and remove waste on a daily basis. R elaborated on the types of food given to them, the water pail, the bucket with the lid that was to be used for waste...this was the extent of his world and his relating of this part of hiding was told in a very matter-of-fact tone. E too goes into enormous detail in describing the physical conditions of her hiding in the potato pit, partly to impart the actual living conditions they endured in hiding; but in a psychological sense, it was almost as if the physical world had become the focus and metaphor for the psychological deprivation that was taking place, albeit, this was probably an unconscious shift in focus. In the face of such severe trauma and deprivation, perhaps this focus was also a means of avoiding too much reflection on the internal, or on the terrible losses and threats of death they had to endure during this time of persecution. Starvation and prolonged immobilization in dark, airless places led to dehumanization and de-individualization (Kestenberg and Gampel, 1983), often

unbeknownst at the time to the children themselves, who were preoccupied with just getting by day by day. Many were unaware of the level of their deprivation as they became accustomed to it, only realizing the extent of the lack of normality when they came out to society once again. Mrs P comments:

We were all standing, you know, like people used, like people used to stand, in front of the houses, they were still fighting and they looked at us. You know, you could see if you are two years without fresh air and, you know, and we were looking pale and frightened and unhappy and the first thing they heard was, 'Look at them, they came like mushrooms after the rain'..

Mrs P felt "naked", as they came out into the daylight, there was a sense of vulnerability about their exposure to the normal everyday sounds of the street that she had been unaware of in hiding.

In hiding, there were no routines as there were in concentration camps or labour camps and this lack of structure seems to have induced a greater anxiety and fear in the children (Hogman, 1983). These children had not yet had a chance to experience a normal childhood and the deprivation of normal childhood routines, most particularly play, seems to have impacted on their later lives. Schooling had to cease, friendships were aborted abruptly, all childhood activities stopped. Play was serious, not fun, there was no "pretend" function in their games (Breiner, 1996). The "hide-and-seek" childhood game became a game of life and death, with a reality far more threatening than being discovered by your childhood mate. The normal noises of childhood had to be suppressed to avoid detection: cries were muffled, singing was stopped, and all forms of spontaneity were suppressed in case the children revealed their Jewishness. Their ages were crucial in their understanding of what was occurring and the roles they were expected to take on. ME comments that her sister was younger than her and therefore had an easier time of reattaching herself to a foster family (her perception of the situation as a child); yet in some cases, being "too young to understand" posed a threat to their security as the younger child was more likely to slip up. In some instances these young children had no concept of what keeping a secret was and would inadvertently

blurt out a significant fact, as did the two-year-old who recited both her Christian and Jewish names to her Christian rescuers. In this study, S spoke of her fear that her younger brother, who “did not understand”, might break into a Jewish song, which would give them away. She says: *‘I remember L singing ‘zmiros’ (Jewish songs), and my mother was so upset, my mother was worried that someone would recognize the song that he subconsciously...’* . The details of their everyday life all had to be suppressed or put on hold for an indefinite time, to maintain their survival.

The resilience and inventiveness of some of these children was striking in the interviews; at times when normality was suspended from their lives, they still seemed able to create some structure. Games were created out of nothing, learning took place even in the most deprived conditions. R, reflecting on his time in the cupboard with his parents, comments:

In that cupboard, life for me was quite normal. There were many things...there were a few advantages for me in that cupboard. First of all, I spent much more time with my father than I had ever before. My father was always a busy doctor...occasionally I would see him at weekends, but very rarely...he was just too busy for that sort of thing. But in the cupboard, he just wasn’t going anywhere, we spent a lot of time together. He taught me how to read and write on the palm of my hand, numbers, how to read numbers...that was my first year of school...One got used to the dark, we just went ahead and did everything in the dark, it was no problem, we did everything by feeling, not by seeing.

R was able to turn around his experience of absolute deprivation and confinement and discover good in it. His father obviously realized the importance of structure and learning in a young child’s life and devised an exercise program and learning routine within the confines of a cupboard, which, beyond the skills learned by R during this time, also gave him the incredibly important feeling that things were normal when they obviously were not. D, too, seemed to have a remarkable ability to occupy herself and others, in places where they had little to do. She describes how when the restrictions

began and they could no longer attend school, she used to take more books out of the library which kept her busy with reading. When later they were moved to a children's home and they were not allowed out, she encouraged the other children to organize a play. She says:

This was quite a big undertaking, because we really had nothing. There was a lamp, a standing lamp, that someone had sent in, but the lampshade was torn, so it was really of no use to anybody, so we decided to cut this up and make little bags with drawstrings and save things and eventually we will put something in every bag...We made, we cut out...these are the things that I recall... We cut out paper dolls and we made dresses for them and we used to draw nice things. We also prepared a play that we were going to do.

Children of school age have a natural hunger for knowledge that reinforced their curiosity about the reality of their lives in hiding (Kestenberg and Kestenberg, 1996). Children were given a double message in childhood hiding "to know and not to know" (Auerhahn and Laub, 1984). Generally children were not included in the plans for their hiding, they merely carried out what their parents provided for them; yet they were expected to know how to behave and act in this abnormal situation. The abruptness of the changing situations in hiding and the general capriciousness of the war made it difficult if not impossible for any type of preparation to be given to these children, as they were often thrust into unfamiliar circumstances or surroundings.

Several children spoke of how there was no place for them in hiding. During a period of time spent in the ghetto with his parents, R was left in the overcrowded house each day while his parents were taken to forced work. He relates:

Here the reality of war suddenly came to me in full... From the very first day, or first night, bodies were being taken out in the morning early. I wasn't supposed (to go) to the window but I did, and when I got caught I got pulled back again, but fortunately my parents were asleep. We were not allowed to go out of there...my parents went to work and I had to

stay in hiding in the building. You see...I wasn't supposed to exist in this house, I was supposed to be hiding. If they would come and catch us, or catch some children, they would straight away send them to the gas chambers, they were not going to ask for the permission of the parents...it was not that sort of thing...

R spent most of his days hiding crouched behind a couch or in the folds of the curtain at the window, peeking out to the world as he waited for the return of his parents in the evening.

P too spoke of his experience of not belonging when his mother and father took on assumed identities in Hungary. His father travelled to a different part of the country, while his mother, with her blonde hair, pretended to be an Aryan nurse whose lover had gone to fight for the Hungarian army. There was no room for P in this "new family constellation": the nurse did not have a son, he was not supposed to exist. P says:

My father escaped from forced labour camp and went back and lived with her (my mother) as her lover and the whole house was completely shocked by this arrangement, so they left them alone...they were ostracized...but I certainly didn't fit in there...I was sent away to hiding in the country which was thought to be safe and then when it was unsafe, I was discovered, I had to be relocated elsewhere.

Again, there was this notion that a child didn't fit in, there were no normal families here, everything was contrived and layer upon layer of fabrication occurred, resulting in P being separated from his own parents. Normality was a distant and foreign concept.

Aside from the actual hiding period being a time when normality was suspended, it also appears that hidden children often did not integrate their experiences of this period into their overall lives: thinking of it instead as a period when normal life stopped, resuming after liberation. F reflects that it is only in recent years, particularly since the formation of the Child Survivor Group in Melbourne, Australia, that she has begun to think of her period in hiding as being a part of her life. She comments:



A lot of these things I've really only thought about since we've had the Child Survivors' Group..... So it's really only the last eight or nine years, since belonging to this group, that I've actually begun to realize, that you know, between the age of eight and a half and ten and a half, a child does not stand still, so I've now had an opportunity to kind of, to look back at that time and to actually figure out some of the things that happened and how I really, you know, how I felt at the time.

F realizes that until relatively recently she had thought of her time in hiding as a period of suspension of normal and everyday life and she believed that nothing actually happened during this time; life only resumed post-war. It was as if time had stopped for her when she went into hiding and resumed some two and a half years later when the family were reunited and "normality" began again.

This sense that the period of hiding was a period of suspension for the hidden children was further compounded when they were reunited with their families, post-liberation. Their parents, adult survivors themselves, were more often than not consumed with their own traumas and focused on resettling the family. This often meant migration to another country: a new language to be learnt, new skills needed and an urgency in providing protection and stability for their families. The attitude of parent survivors to their children was usually one of "glossing over" the intervening period where often they would have been separated. This was not carried out with any malicious intent but adult survivors, themselves traumatized, may truly have believed that their "children were too young to have been harmed" or certainly too young to remember anything, and there was an expectation that they would fit right back into their previous lives. Once again, F articulates this reunion and the painful transition it represented for her with some poignancy, after having moved some six times during her hiding. She says:

It was July or August or something like that and then we were liberated. And then my parents found an apartment and after a few weeks, probably, I went home. And that was not a joyous thing, and that was not, you know, the thing I might have dreamt about all that time,

unconsciously, and it wasn't that at all...not at all. And if I thought ...vaguely hoped that, you know, I was going to come into my own or something, I was going to be this happy family, this loved important person ...again, or more than I'd been or get some kind of recognition, none of it was talked about, the whole thing, the whole thing I think was a great disappointment. I mean I was a strange child probably for my parents and they were strange to me. I had done some growing up independently, and I suddenly found that there was a whole new, you know, a new burden to take up, and that was going back to school and catching up on what I had missed and living a normal life as if nothing had ever happened...this was the task.

There was a sense of alienation for F from her parents, who treated the period of hiding as if it were an encapsulated and contained period that actually had no bearing on the continuum of life, so it was no wonder then that F herself did not begin to integrate these experiences until more recent years.

R too comments on how his reunification with his mother brought sharply into contrast his hiding experiences against the so-called normal reality that took place before the war. R spent the later eighteen months of his hiding in the Polish forests at the age of eight with Polish adult partisan fighters. He recollects being reunited with his mother shortly after liberation, when he was a boy of nearly 10 years of age. He remarks with bewilderment:

She was worried about my appearance. I hadn't worn shoes for a couple of years, in the forest you just had rags on our feet with oil or whatever they put on it, a bit of fur, and the same clothes I had worn the last time I saw her, with an extra layer on top of what I wore and dirty like anything. I hadn't had a shower for a few years. And my mother, her first remark was something like dirty nose or something, she mumbled to me. She cried from excitement this time and she said something about, don't you have a handkerchief or something and I looked at her and shook my head. I had eaten my handkerchief about two years ago, the last

handkerchief, it was soft, it was good to eat when you are hungry, it was good. I ate all the corners of my shirt (too). We just ate little things, when you are hungry, it was not very nourishing, but the fact that you are chewing something is okay when you are hungry.

The sharp contrast of his mother's question with the realities of his life then startled R in his reunion with his mother; whilst before he had been eating handkerchiefs, now he was expected to use them to wipe his nose. R himself had no understanding of the depth of his mother's emotions at the time, seeing his reunification with her as no big deal:

It was just another event when you live one day at a time... She was worrying about a handkerchief, she thought I was a nine and a half year old child...well...I put a feather under one hundred noses, and I survived minus 40 degree winters...the abnormal became normal, because I had no comparison. I know I was given this bizarre childhood, but I lived a day-to-day existence. I am still confused about what is normal. (In Valent, 1994, p. 109)

Bettelheim, himself a child survivor, was one of the first psychoanalysts to comment on inmate behavior in concentration camps, in his early work on the Holocaust "*The Informed Heart*" (1960). He suggested that the psychoanalytic framework, which he had found to be the most useful tool to describe and explain human behaviour in general, was inadequate in explaining concentration camp behaviour, because of the extremities of the situation there rendering all previous terms of reference irrelevant. The same way of thinking can be extended to those children who were hidden. All previous terms of reference were made null and void in a context where little explanation was given to these children made to adapt to a "foreign land". They were children, but often with different "parents"; they were Jews, but usually had to pretend to be Christians; they were child-like, but were expected to behave as adults. They yearned to cry and to play, to attend school and learn, yet for the most part they had to sit still and keep quiet. This suspension of normality existed for months and sometimes extended into years for the period of hiding. Some children had become so acclimatized

to this abnormality that they had no memory of what life was like before the hiding and therefore only came to realize the severity of their situation when life post-war began to take on some form of normality.

However, for some children, this normality took a long while to establish itself: new adjustments were demanded, often in a new land with a new language and with various family constellations of survivors. School, friends, normal childhood activities seemed almost frivolous in contrast with the survival skills they had been required to use in the previous years. Furthermore, this “gap” in their lives, the period of hiding, was often not validated by their parents: compounding the hidden children’s belief that this was a suspended time somewhere between “being and not being” (Valent, personal communication, 2000) which became difficult to integrate into their resumed post-war lives. Being taught to “know but not know” during their years of hiding often left them with an implicit legacy of difficulties in remembering what they were forbidden to know: their childhood persecution (Kestenberg and Kestenberg, 1996).

#### **4.1.5 Personality Constriction in Hiding:**

Bettelheim (1943), in talking of concentration camp survivors, refers to the dissociative mechanism many of them invoked to safeguard the integrity of their personalities as a defence against the traumas of persecution. Indeed, this “shutting down” as a response to trauma has been well-documented in the trauma literature (e.g. Herman, 1997; Terr, 1991). Krystal (1968, 1978), a psychoanalyst studying the long-term effect of trauma on concentration camp survivors, noted that the response to trauma seems to be a progressive blocking of emotions in order to survive. Friedman (1949) saw child survivors detained in Cyprus after the war. He commented:

Many of the children all had this in common: they all displayed fatigue beyond anything which could be satisfactorily explained by their physical condition. But a more striking characteristic was their emotional behaviour. Indeed, one could be astonished by the shallowness of their emotions and this was true of all those who had been exposed to

continuous danger, whether they had been in concentration camps or not.  
(p. 602)

Although this early reference mentions “those not in concentration camps”, it seems the literature barely took up the suggestion of emotional constriction in hidden children in subsequent years. Wijzenbeek (1977), when considering if there is a “Hiding Syndrome” similar to the “Concentration Camp Syndrome”, comments that as a group, hidden children seem outwardly to be able to cope and adapt to life in Israel, post-war. (He looked at Dutch Jewish children who were hidden and mostly ended up settling in Israel.)

But listening to them or to yourself, you will encounter the same symptoms as in the concentration camp syndrome. Mostly I found depressive mood, guilt feelings, mourning reactions, tension, and sleep disturbances and dreams of bygone days. Most of them suffer from a certain anhedonia, a restriction of personality with less joy and less grief, pondering the meaning of life and death. (p. 70).

The data evidenced in the current research supports the notion that hidden children underwent a similar “emotional constriction” and “psychic numbing” to those suffering in camps. Lifton (1968), in his work with survivors as a military psychiatrist, theorizes that in response to extreme situations, psychic numbing is the defence that predominates. The individual manifesting psychic numbing becomes “dead” to his feelings; pain and pleasure become minimized as his affect becomes flattened.

Most of the people in these interviews were noticeably lacking in affect in their narration of their experiences of hiding. Although there were moments when the “child” felt emotional, it seems this only occurred with the retrospective vision of an adult looking back and marvelling at how incredible their survival was under such extreme circumstances. Many claimed they actually *felt* nothing at the time, they simply got on with their hiding and survival and did not reflect on what they were doing. P says:

One has memories of happenings and things of one's life perhaps. One has a memory of one's room or of going to school, but one doesn't have the memories of course, only facts. Things happen to people and at people and that's exactly how it was with me. I was put here, I was put there and that's where I stayed, and I didn't question these things.

Interestingly, in his arguing that he remembers events and not feelings or emotions surrounding those memories, P talks of himself in the third person as if to emphasize the complete detachment he felt from those memories. Continuing that the experience of hiding felt somewhat surreal, he reflects:

If one was to ask me whether there was anything horrible or frightening or upsetting, there was none of that. It's just going through life and letting it happen to me. These things are all adult emotions, kids don't have those...

Others were perhaps more aware of their sadness or loss, but knew that this would have to be buried away, that there was no one available with whom they could share their sorrows or misfortunes. F relates:

I'm thinking what was I doing, how did I...you know...I know how I coped, and know how most of us coped and that was by, you just had to numb your feelings, deal with this, you know, just cut off...I mean...these adults were not sympathetic. There was no one that you could sort of pour your heart out to, there was no one you could get angry with and there was no-one that you could sort of go and cry on their shoulder and, you know...so you had to damp all that down and forget about it.

Some became hardened over time, as they increasingly saw death and brutalities around them and the value of life diminished. R relates that the last time he saw his father was when he brought him a severed leg, whilst in the forest:

He came over to me and he kissed me and said that he was very happy and so on, I was very happy because I had brought a leg and I was showing my father, oh good boy, oh good boy, I remember him telling me. And then he started crying and he mumbled something to the effect, which is the last thing that I heard him say, something to the effect about what sort of world do we live in, or what has happened. I think he was displeased that his son would be carrying a leg. He had other ambitions for me, I guess. It's not what he envisaged for me, so he was sad and he was crying and R kept on saying to myself, crying? But then I worked it out in my own brain that doctors are allowed to cry, but partisans, none of them cried, they were in great agony and pain, they moaned and they groaned, but partisans didn't cry.

R, in the telling of his dramatic time in hiding, also peppered his interview with a lot of humour, emphasizing the "adventure of war" almost as if, even now, he was not able to get close to the pain. Furthermore, in his narration of this incident (his final parting from his father) R remained very focused on the *physical* aspects of the story - the size of the leg, the depth of the snow, the distance he had to cover - seemingly at the expense of the emotional aspects of the story.

Some children only seemed now, looking back on this period, to appreciate the magnitude of what they had suffered in hiding. Some wondered how *did* they cope? Others claimed they were too involved in the everyday practical arrangements of the hiding to reflect on the psychological issues surrounding it.

In the very practical sense, the hiding itself required total constriction of their physical beings. Children learned to subdue the ordinary, to play quietly and not attract attention to themselves (Moskovitz and Krell, 1990). They learned to play quietly, be good and not be noticed. D relates: *'We were very good children, you will find that with all hidden children, we were exceptionally good. We had to keep everything tidy and we had to be good. We were happy to be good because we were safe there...'*

Tauber and van der Hal (1997), in their Child Survivor Therapy Groups, noted that in order to survive children had to risk trusting strangers without knowing if they could betray or kill them. It was hardly ever safe enough to express their emotions. S recalls in this study:

There was so much we could not reveal...if we met a stranger on the street and we looked back each time, is he watching where we are going? No one would dream of going by taxi, because, that taxi driver, we didn't trust him. He picked us up from one address and took them to another, but he might be an informant, and tell (the) Gestapo. We couldn't trust anybody...this is still with me in many ways.

As with other traumatized groups (particularly children of sexual abuse), it seemed the coping mechanism for these children was to “shut down” and simply block out *any* feelings, lest they give way to despair. Dr M was rather emotional in his telling of his hiding with his parents during the interview and more than once asked for the tape recorder to be turned off as he broke down crying. Yet of his time *during the hiding*, he recalls:

It was night-time before we came to the Polish Alps, actually the mountains, and we started walking. We had three guides and it was pitch dark, it was a very dark night. I am...because I was only seven, I lagged behind, because I was tired, I suppose, and I got lost in the darkness. I couldn't see anybody. And I couldn't cry, because I remember my father always used to tell me about the gunshot...not to cry...

It had been totally inculcated into Dr M, a young boy of seven, not to cry as this would lead to his death, so that even at this moment of possibly fatal danger he was able to suppress the emotions.

In a discussion with Child Survivors (2000), all readily recognized the mechanism of “cutting-off” of their emotions as a survival strategy. For some children, this sense of being cut off was exacerbated by the object-like way in which they were treated. F used



terms such as “*I got sent off*” or “*They did a swap with me*”. It seemed there was no “child” present in these phrases, F could be talking of an inanimate object, and there was no consideration of where it would be appropriate to send F according to her needs. The experience of being placed and sometimes the treatment in these placements was dehumanizing, not because of the sometimes commercial arrangement which precipitated Gentiles into hiding the children, but psychologically, because there was no contemplation of the individuality of these children nor their needs.

For most children it was not possible to express their pain in hiding. “*Some were afraid that should they do so, they would be identified as Jews. For others, expressing their feelings would entail a loss of strength essential for survival.*” (Gampel, 1988) S recalls being in a bomb shelter together with her mother and hearing a particular bombing that they believed had killed her father. She says:

Then my father came down at the very end, because he was hiding above with Rabbi B’s brother...but we had to pretend we never met him. It was very, very hard, seeing my father but I couldn’t go to him. And even if I did, I had to call him Mr. H, not father, I had to be careful that it didn’t slip the tongue.

Valent (1998) talks of the resilience of child survivors in that they were able to arrange their psyches as seemed desired.

Although they experienced dread, desolation, panic, grief, despair, anger and guilt akin to adults (Kestenberg & Brenner, 1986; Hogman, 1985), like adults they could also freeze, numb, and make the emotions and their contexts unreal (Gampel, 1988; Hogman, 1985).

The repression of the emotions of these children was certainly further deepened after the war, in what has been termed the “*post-traumatic embrace*” (Tauber and van der Hal, 1997). Mostly the children’s experience after the war was not acknowledged by their parents, who believed they were “too young to remember” or who themselves were

preoccupied with establishing a new life which often involved migration to a new country. F recalls:

It was not a joyous thing and that was not, you know, the thing I might have dreamt about all that time, unconsciously...it wasn't that at all, not at all. And if I thought, didn't think really, vaguely hoped that, you know, I was going to come into my own or something, I was going to this happy family, (be) this loved, important person again, or more than I'd been, or get some sort of recognition, none of it was talked about, the whole thing, the whole thing was a great disappointment.

Life was expected to resume as if the hiding had never taken place, and the children were given the implicit message by their parents not to talk about it. Having survived the hiding by cutting off their feelings and not giving in to their emotions, it seemed as if post-war adaptation demanded similar responses from these children. Lifton (1968) notes in his discussion of Vietnam veterans that while the "psychic closing off" is a positive defence mechanism when facing survival, at other times, when the threat is no longer present, this can have its own ramifications. He notes that the Vietnam soldiers, who at that time were aged between 17 and 21, were exposed to situations for which they did not have a well-developed response. The defences they may have employed at the time to deal with the extremities of this situation then became an integrated and perhaps maladaptive part of their personalities, which had not fully formed at the time of this trauma. Similarly, many of the hidden child survivors were far younger than the Vietnam soldier and would have had an even more immature personality to deal with the trauma inflicted upon them. The defence of psychic numbing, which may have been a useful and even crucial survival technique while in hiding, became maladaptive following the war. Furthermore, the lack of acknowledgment which many children found post-war for their experiences in hiding seemed further to encourage this coping mechanism of "blocking everything out" and repressing these feelings. Kestenberg (1996) reported that post-war, many parents, rescuers or adoptive parents believed, perhaps mistakenly, in protecting the children by not discussing the atrocities and experiences they had undergone. Schools, communities and health professionals further corroborated this attitude, resulting in many children continuing to hide their innermost

feelings of their experience. Many still seem to be doing so, feeling constricted in talking about their hiding as well as repressed in their emotional reflections of this period.

## 4.2 THE IMPACT OF HIDING ON THE REST OF THEIR LIVES

The primary focus of this research was the experience of child survivors of the Holocaust of being hidden; the phenomenological analysis deepened and enriched our understanding of this experience. However, in addition to this discovery, it is inevitable that we are left thinking about the implications of this experience on the rest of the lives of the child survivors. There have been many studies looking at the adaptation of child survivors to adulthood in general, although fewer focused on the specificities of hidden child survivors. Indeed, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore these studies, other than to highlight that which was illuminated by the interviews conducted here. Many of the survivors in this study themselves reflected on the effect of the experiences upon their later lives without any prompting by the researcher, as if the experience itself and the later development of their personalities, including the unfolding of subsequent events, were intertwined. In reality, any study of a human phenomenon interweaves with it many threads of life. Human experience cannot be teased out as a single variable, such as a drug in a clinical trial of drug testing where all other variables are controlled. The very nature of phenomenology makes it difficult to define its nature and boundaries in a strict sense. It is, however, a *human* science within which we are exploring *human* experiences, which by their very essence are complex and multifaceted. Thus, in this study, it became impossible to look at the experience of being hidden as a temporal or discrete event in the child's life, without also exploring the rippling effect of the experience on their subsequent lives.

Many subjects, in their narration of the interviews, spontaneously drew references to the subsequent development of their personalities as a consequence of their time in hiding. For example, R attributes the determination and drive he has applied to many aspects of his adult life to his time in the cupboard, hidden with his parents, where he learnt the value of discipline and structure in the most deprived circumstances. Interestingly, he

has felt this characteristic to be both a positive and negative influence over his life, for while it helped him win the chess championships in Australia, he also felt it contributed to the break-up of his first marriage, as his single-mindedness became a destructive influence in his life. Perhaps trivial in contrast was R's ritual each morning, which he demonstrated to me before beginning the interview, of throwing leftover bread to a flock of birds which gathered every day on his lawn. Having been deprived of food for so many years in hiding, R claimed he could not bear to allow even a crumb to go to waste, and saw his bread throwing as a therapeutic daily ritual allowing him to appreciate his current situation in life.

D describes her trauma, close to the end of the war, while she was hidden with a number of other children and there were rampant lice in the group. She says:

And then there was once when they noticed I was scratching. I had these long plaits and I was scratching myself, my hair, and about that time, everyone was scratching themselves. And they decided to cut off my hair. And to me, you could do anything, you could beat me, you could be nasty to me, you could do anything, I didn't care. But my hair...I promised my father, my hair won't be cut until I'm 17, 18 years old. And I made such a big fuss that they said, 'All right, we'll cut off your plaits, but you can keep your plaits.' So they just took one shoulder length, then the other one, and that was it. My hair never grows any longer than that. It was such a traumatic experience for me.

The trauma was compounded for D in the immediate moments post-war, with her reunification with her parents who failed to recognize her. While they were preoccupied hugging her younger sister, D had to identify herself to them, saying, *'I'm D...to my own parents. Because I wanted a hug too.'* D wears her hair as a shoulder length bob today and claims it will not grow past this point, some 50 years on.

Dr M, too, claims without any doubt of his conviction that his entire life was shaped by his experiences in hiding and the legacy of insecurity that he was left with as a child. He said:

Yes I was lucky. But it affected my life. It affected my career. Whatever success I've had has been difficult in the sense that I would have been better if I had had a normal childhood. I firmly believe that. Because even when I was living in Australia, we lived relatively poorly... My mother went to work, my father went to work...and I went to school. But I couldn't...because I was an only child, I couldn't go home after school because I felt insecure (not) to stay and wait for my mother...I must have been about 17 or 18, all my friends were going home and studying this and that. I think it affected my career, because I should have done things...I should have done something different.

Dr M claimed his choice of specialty, his choice of marriage partner, his choice of residency were all influenced by his inherited sense of insecurity and his desperate feelings of not being left alone.

So too was the experience of ME, a professional woman in her sixties, who seemed unable to shake off feelings of abandonment which she experienced as a young child, left by her mother in a foster placement. She reflects:

And so I always felt, and this was unjust, I'll go into this later, but I always felt with the child's anger, that...my mother had abandoned me...I realize that I had done them a great injustice and my mother a grave injustice, but it's only now in the last few years that I've come to realize how unjust those childhood perceptions were...the abandonment. So I guess we come to what have I been left with, and that's very hard to assess, because I have panic attacks, I will never know if I would have had panic attacks anyway, but I do. And I have had a lot of therapy and, you know, people say, well yes, you know that probably the contributing factor was abandonment. That is an issue for me right throughout my life, and I know about it now, but I quickly feel abandoned, not just, you know, by husbands and lovers but by all kinds of...I feel very quickly abandoned. That is a feeling that just hits me, I don't know, when

someone doesn't agree with me, or something...abandonment has always been a big issue for me.

Undoubtedly, for P and E, the experience of hiding ultimately shaped their lives in a very observable manner.

P discusses his whole experience of hiding as not the time he was physically hidden on a remote farm during the wartime period, but his parents' concealment of his Jewish background from himself and everyone else when the family emigrated to Australia. His chance discovery that he was Jewish, having been raised as a religious Catholic, only came about upon his parents' deaths, when P was an adult in his thirties. The sense of betrayal and shock at the secrets which had shaped his relationship with his parents set him off on his own journey of discovering his roots, remarrying a Jewish woman and becoming ultimately an active member in the Jewish community. Asked to relate his experiences of being hidden, he responds:

The real part or the big part of my being hidden was that I was supposed to be Christian. And gradually this realization has crept into me, that there was a wall between my parents and me and that is where me, the hidden child, the story, really comes into significance. The war was just a scramble to stay alive...and my memories of that are very dim and vague. And I don't think they were hard times that were harmful to me. The harm really came in my teenage years, together with my parents, as an only child and not knowing...

E was both a child survivor and a child *of* survivors and although her experience in hiding took place from her birth until the second year of her life, her actual memory of these times was faint. Nevertheless, E was able to describe the experience with graphic detail and articulated the events in the first person, almost as if the memories were her own and not those of her mother. In E's words:

I cannot remember things which happened at this stage, it was not possible...I will tell you what my mum told me, all the information I

have at this stage is actually from mum...I was there, but I don't remember. I wasn't there with my memories, but when my Mum told me all of this, I could imagine... I got it in and felt for her (mother), what she went through, as if it were myself and in a sense I was too little to know, but I felt part of it. My mother transmitted it so well that I could feel it. My mother describes it so literally, she always repeats those things, she could never forget them, she couldn't live without it. She has explained them so many times to me that I have built them in(to) my system.

Indeed, E's interview depicts vividly the concept of *transposition* originally coined by Kestenberg (1989) and described by Barocas and Barocas (1979) as:

Children of survivors showing symptoms that would be expected if they actually lived through the Holocaust. The children come to feel that the Holocaust is the single most critical event that has affected their lives, although it occurred before they were born. (p. 331)

Examples of transposition in clinical literature abound, with child survivors of the Holocaust often presenting with symptomology belonging to their parents, for example; through the acting out of the symptoms, the children seem to bring the chaos of the Holocaust into order (Kestenberg, 1996). In E's case, although she was born at the time of her hiding and she acknowledges that she has no memories of her own from this time, her experience can be considered as that of a child of survivors who has *transposed* herself into her mother's world.

Klein and Kogan (1986) report on the analysis of a child of survivors, Gabrielle, who grappled with issues of confused identities in the transference, not knowing who she was or who the therapist was. Klein and Kogan explain:

This process of confusion of identities lasted for quite a long time in the analysis, suggesting the existence of a similar process in an early stage in her development, which existed between herself and her own mother. The dreams and the stories about the Holocaust that appear later in the

analysis do not show any trauma which belong historically to her own past, but to the past of her mother. It seems that she was absorbed entirely into her mother's feeling and was not able to differentiate between herself and her mother. (p. 59)

E was born just before her hiding, and by her own admission her memory of these events was largely her mother's. Yet to step into her home, in a remote part of Melbourne where she lived together with her husband and elderly mother, was to experience a stepping back in time to Poland under the Nazi regime. There was nothing ostensibly in the environment which provoked this image, yet the atmosphere was unquestionably so.

E many times used phrases such as "*my head is still in a war...*" or "*the Holocaust continues for me in a miniature form*" and there was a heavy sense in the interview that these sentiments were indeed her reality. E's relationship with her mother was more than simply identification with her experiences: she had actually transposed herself into her mother's past and was reliving it in the present. In the absence of her own memories, she clung to her mother's memories and adopted them as her own. As Kestenberg (1989) has noted:

The difference becomes hazy for those who are both survivors and children of survivors. Those who were very young during persecution have to depend on their parents to tell them what happened. They too use transposition to supplement what meagre body memories they may have.  
(In Marcus & Rosenberg, p. 69)

In brief, E's narrative of her experience of hiding begins when her mother faltered in the streets of Poland attempting to reach a hospital in order to give birth to E at a time when restrictions had already begun for Jews. She was taken into a clinic by a Gentile doctor who noticed she was in labour; the doctor realized she was Jewish and decided to hide mother and newborn baby in a potato pit in her own back yard. The pit was a deep, dug-out construction completely hidden from view, which they lined with blankets and straw. The Gentile doctor would drop a bucket into the pit with milk and food and pull



a bucket up with their soiling. They lived in this way for more than a year, until they came out towards the end of the war. After liberation, E and her mother carried on living in Poland with the Gentile doctor and her family but continued to suffer persecution from others. E began school, was teased for being different and experienced a lot of hatred. E married very young and eventually migrated to Australia, together with her mother and a young son to whom she gave birth in Poland. Life in Australia did not treat E kindly: her only son died in a motor bike accident, leaving behind two young children. At the time of his death he was separated from the children's mother, who had continued to look after their daughter while E raised her grandson. However, after her son died, custody of the grandson went to the child's mother, in spite of E being involved in his upbringing for many years. A desperate call to E from her grandson, one day when he was twelve, led to E taking the boy into her home and hiding him from his mother for a period of four months before he was discovered by police. E showed me the room where she hid her grandson, a small space behind a false wall with a high window which had been papered to black out any risk of discovery. There was a small table and chair and, indeed, the room looked as if there was still a small boy living there. During this period of hiding the boy did not go to school, did not go to shops or have any contact with people outside their isolated country home. E explains with an eerie sense of "history repeating itself" that the boy was not confined to this room all the time; it was only during police inspections or when visitors came that they had to hide him in this severe manner. Whilst E was aware that this was not a normal way for a young boy to live, she nevertheless felt she was saving him from a dangerous situation (in this case an abusive parent) and she felt morally compelled to protect him.

For E, it seems her whole life was etched out by her early experiences of hiding in a potato pit in Poland. Breaking down to cry many times in the interview, E intersperses in her story many phrases such as "*it is impossible to understand*" or "*probably my head is just war*" as well as the statement that "*for me, the Holocaust continues in a miniature form*". It seems E was never able to go past her experiences of hiding and many of the subsequent practicalities of her life were certainly echoes of the repetitive compulsion of her early such experiences. Far beyond these tangible aspects of her life, it seems from E's own words that she is unable to shake off the psychological prison of

hiding in her own mind, leading to the extreme situation where she broke the law (and was subsequently imprisoned for this) in hiding her own runaway grandchild.

S believes she has been overprotective in bringing up her own children and claims there is an almost instinctual distrust of most people with which she struggles within her own personality. She feels markedly different to her husband's attitudes towards their children, as he was born in Australia and, she believes, operates from a totally different context. She says:

The less I said, the better it was, because I might reveal something that I was not supposed to. So the less we said the better. I believe this is somehow still with me. I believe it is personal, I can't come out with personal details. I attribute this feeling to those times...I cannot reveal because I do not remember who I said to what and that maybe they were going to use this against me at some time, or they may pick me up on something...and this is still with me.

Thus, for these children, there is a variety of ways in which the hiding has impacted on the rest of their lives, ranging from the extreme of E who subsequently hid her grandson to the more apparently innocuous example of D's hair not growing beyond a certain length. Certainly, in the last few years, child survivors have begun to reflect on their early childhood years of hiding and no doubt this reflection will bring for each of them in varying ways a realization of the impact of their early experiences.

#### **4.3 THE LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

One of the primary concerns in this study, in its limitations, was in fact something that was not foreseen in carrying out this research. In asking adults to describe their childhood experiences of hiding during the war, it was revealed that many were quite "cut-off" in their descriptions of their inner psychological worlds. As alluded to previously, many of the subjects focused on the factual details of the hiding experience rather than their feelings or emotions at the time. Many times the researcher attempted

to prompt the interviewees to elaborate more on their feelings or reactions to certain happenings, but this was often met with a slight confusion, as if there were no psychological issues involved. P quite literally described his experience as “*simply going through life and letting it happen to you*”. He even challenged my suggestion that it might have been frightening for him as a young boy, by saying that fear was an adult emotion that one had to learn, and a naïve boy of eight had no such experience. R, too, after I had turned off the tape recorder, also dismissed my gentle probing by claiming that I could stay there for days on end talking to him, but I would never get to the psychology of it, because it was nonexistent. It seemed that one of the survival strategies these children enacted in hiding was to cut themselves off from their emotions, in much the same way that children do in other sorts of trauma (Terr, 1991; Herman, 1992). This cutting off allowed them to get on with the everyday demands of their survival in hiding. In a very real sense, there was no one to whom they could open up and reveal their vulnerabilities in their hiding. Often these children were without supportive adults in their hiding, which created a vacuum in their lives. As F remarks:

And the sort of, the sort of things that is left with me...that when I start talking about it, I'm still a bit like, you know, wandering. I wander in this strange land and I'm thinking what was I doing? How did I...you know...how did I cope...I know how I coped, and know how most of us coped, and that was by, you just had to numb your feelings, deal with this you know...just cut off. I mean, those adults were not sympathetic. There was no one that you could sort of pour your heart out to, there was no one you could get angry with, and there was no one that you could sort of (go) to and cry on their shoulder, and, you know...So you had to damp all that down and forget about it.

As Herman comments (1992), in situations where the children are powerless to change, and where they have no-one to support them, they simply go into a state of surrender. “*The system of self-defence shuts down entirely. The helpless person escapes from her situation not by action in the real world, but rather by altering her state of consciousness.*” (p. 42) Psychologically they had to cut off that “feeling part” of themselves and numb themselves, in order not to be overwhelmed by the despair of

these sensations. Herman continues that these states are analogous to animals, which “freeze” when faced with attack. For the child in these situations, perceptions may be numbed or distorted, and while events may continue to register in awareness, they lack their connection to meaning.

The challenge for the researcher, therefore, was to gain a psychological insight into the meaning of their experience of hiding, when the very phenomenon that was being explored was lacking in these areas. One protocol was not analyzed at all because it was too factual in nature and did not provide a rich or psychologically illuminating description of the experience of hiding. However, in all the protocols there was an element of this lack of awareness about the psychological aspects of the hiding experience. At times it was very obvious to the researcher that the interviewees were adopting a defence mechanism to protect the “child” in themselves, in any number of ways. One subject dictated when the tape recorder should be turned on and off, to allow her to “collect and compose herself” at various points of the interview, to remain in control of the process. Another subject had a tendency to turn everything into a joke, when it was felt the narration was becoming too emotionally threatening for him. Others were apparently bewildered at the suggestion that they as children might have experienced anything at the time, other than simply “doing as they were told” and “being good”.

Yet there were times that the researcher found herself being drawn into the focus on the practical details of the experience of hiding and away from the psychological aspects of hiding. This experience reinforced for the researcher the importance of “standing back from the work” and reevaluating it many times over, often with supervisory input, to “view the data afresh” and not become caught up in the content of the descriptions. This cyclical and deepening movement of the analysis was indeed time-consuming, yet without doubt rewarding, as it enriched the researcher’s understanding of the phenomenon of hiddenness.

While this study was focused on understanding the phenomenon of hiding for child survivors of the Holocaust, this understanding then encourages us to think of other forms of hiding in our society and how the general structures obtained here might

pertain to other forms of hiding. Unlike the general persecution of the war, it emerged that the children in hiding felt very personally persecuted, as if it was they that were bad, and they seemed to internalize this construct. There have been similar reports of the sexually abused child or rape victim, who at some level internalizes an element of shame that should pertain to the perpetrator. The issue of identity and the vacuum in the hiding of a group identity emerged as an important factor for these hidden children, and one can speculate about other hidden groups in our society and how hiding impacts on their identity formation. Differences were found between the various ages of those who were hidden, with perhaps the older adolescents, having a more formed identity before the hiding, compared with those of a younger age. It would be interesting to look in more detail at the hiding at the various age points, and how this impacted on the subsequent formation of identity for these children.

Other variables that were not taken into account here were, for example, whether the child was hidden with a parent, sibling or significant other, or whether they were hidden in isolation. Further, it emerged that there were differing experiences for those hidden in a family unit, compared with those who went into hiding in a convent, orphanage, or a partisan group. While this study recognised and acknowledged the importance of the relationships in hiding, both the actual ones and the psychological ones, it was beyond the scope of this research to analyse these differences and further work could explore the more minute variations of these experiences.

The fear invoked in the hiding was distinguished from the general pervasive fear of the wartime persecution, but once again this construct could be scrutinized further in relation to the various experiences of hiding. Among this data, some claimed to have no fear at all while others claimed their whole experience was fearsome; thus these differences could be explored further to see whether the various experiences were as a result of the resilience of the individual child in hiding, or whether it was a function of the denial of their feelings in hiding and thereafter.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, hidden children were special. Unlike the majority of Jewish children of the time, they were selected to be rescued. For most, the path to becoming a hidden child began with a decision by parents or guardians. While the decision to be hidden held out the promise of survival, it also involved many hardships, hardships that were perhaps not foreseen, and even if considered, could not be alleviated during these pressured times. Hiding was different to persecution and became defined at the point when their Jewish identities had to be suppressed. This was reflected in the descriptions of the interviewees, including one who described hiding as continuing into his 30s, most of that time in Australia away from the Nazi regime - but his identity had been concealed from him for that whole time by his parents, who raised him a Catholic. For many children, giving up their Jewish identities created an emotional void and uncertainty in their lives, and produced anxieties that perhaps they would never be able to recapture their pasts. For others, the giving up of their Judaism sometimes involved a commitment to Christianity while in hiding which left some with a conflictual legacy to be resolved post-war. Some remained committed to the Christianity which had protected them. Others felt that to survive, even in a new country, necessarily meant a denial of their Jewish ties. Some of these children, even today, reveal warmth towards the church and its religion, which had been a significant part of their earlier development (Child Survivor Group meeting, Melbourne, 2001). The younger children in the group had no clear knowledge of what their identity was like before the hiding, they had no memory of normality before the war. One child, survivor B, relates that the first time she heard the word "Jew" was in fact when she was six years of age, and already in hiding. (Child Survivor Group, Melbourne, November 2001) The word had no meaning or relevance in her life up until that point. Having had their pivotal identities made the very subject of persecution for their time in hiding, identity became a very charged issue in their lives.

There was a different normality operating in hiding, not only because of the war affecting all of Europe, but life became very constrained, very limited for these children, both in a physical and psychological sense. Fear pervaded their lives completely; the very act of hiding by definition invokes an element of fear and danger. All movements were monitored and measured, suppressed and withheld; if the child was scared,

frightened or traumatized, there was generally no one with whom he could share his emotions. As a way of coping with these tremendous feelings, many learnt that to survive and adapt meant to cut off emotionally; while this seemed to be an effective, tool within the hiding, the numbness has impacted on their post-hiding lives. Their descriptions of the experience of hiding reflect this cut-offness and the lack of affect is noticeable. Relationships both before and during the hiding period were critical in how the children felt about themselves in this unfamiliar period, with some withdrawing further into themselves and others marking out a role for themselves to sustain them throughout their hiding. The hiding represented a state of suspension between “being” and “not being”, in the words of one hidden child survivor. (P., Child Survivor Group, Melbourne, 2001) It seems there was an unspoken feeling of conflictual ambivalence about belonging or hovering between two worlds, the Christian and the Jewish, their biological family or their host family. These conflictual states were often quite compartmentalized during the hiding, due to the demands of the situation, but it seems that many children struggle with these mixed psychological feelings beyond the confines of their hiding. Gampel (1988) noted: *“For many, return to normal life continues to be a constant and slow struggle in which physical survival does not necessarily imply psychological survival.”* (p. 509)

This research, looking at the phenomenon of hiding using the methods of phenomenological psychology, aimed to go beyond the apparent measurable aspects of the experience, and delve into a deeper understanding of what the phenomenon of hiding actually meant for child survivors. Identity appeared to be an essential feature of hiding, almost capturing the essence of the phenomenon. Overlaying this were elements of fear and a suspension of normality. Personality constriction, both in the physical and actual sense but also psychological repression, became crucial in hiding, yet its legacy of being cut off from feelings seems to extend beyond this time. Finally, the role of relationships to parents, siblings and host families, whether real relationships or an internalized representation of this connection, revealed itself as being a significant influencing factor in being sustained in hiding. It is hoped this qualitative analysis of the experience of hiding has contributed to a greater understanding and enrichment of this phenomenon while highlighting areas open for further exploration.



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## **APPENDIX A:**

### **TABLES OF NATURAL AND TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS FOR EACH SUBJECT. (SUBJECTS 2-10)**

#### **SUBJECT 2:**

|    | <b>NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR SK.</b>  | <b>TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.</b>   |
|----|---|---|
|    | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden.)  |   |
| 1. | All right in a nutshell. From the moment I was hidden? Because I was separated before I was hidden. Well I think to give you a bit of background which I think you need, as far as my personal life was concerned.  | NROH (Not relevant to hiding)   |
| 2. | I first found out when I was about four, coming back from kindergarten, that the next door neighbour's child, who used to play with me dolls and things, suddenly spat at my face and said "I can't play with you any more, you're a little Jewish pig" and I ran in crying to my mother, and I didn't understand what it was all about. She went and marched into the neighbour and you know, she was all upset, and the neighbour said, "look, you'd better not stay here because if my husband sees you, he'll beat me up, because he joined the Nazi party last night".   | SK began to sense changes in her environment when her familiar network of friends began to alienate and abuse her because she was Jewish. |
| 3. | And that was the beginning as far as I was concerned.   | This marked the beginning of the bad times for SK.  |
| 4. | I didn't realise at that stage that I was in a Jewish kindergarten only because we had to, my parents probably would have chosen it, but it wasn't by choice, we had to go to Jewish kindergarten, to Jewish schools, and soon there were signs up all over the place that you weren't allowed to go to public parks and you weren't allowed to go to many things like museums and so on, movie theatres, everywhere was signs up, "No Jews, bicycles or dogs allowed".   | There began a level of segregation between the Jews and the rest of the community.  |
| 5. | So they put us on par with bicycles and dogs. And bit by bit, it got worse and worse.   | NROH  |
| 6. | The next big thing was Krystalnacht, in November '38 which I remember vividly. At that stage my father was arrested and taken to Buchenwald. He was released approximately six weeks after on the pretence of leaving the country, and he got out and managed to take my older brother and smuggle himself into Belgium.  | NROH  |
| 7. | At that stage I was left behind with my mother and my little brother. My mother tried very hard to get the three of us into Belgium, but it was very difficult, because most smugglers wouldn't take her because she had asthma, and they were afraid if she starts sneezing at the border that they would be given away, and they said they can only take my little brother who was at that stage two and a half, they could only take him if they give him an injection and put him to sleep. My mother asked the smuggler how can you guarantee he will wake up, and he said, "I can't, it's your risk, I can't guarantee that. I'm not a doctor". So of course we didn't do that. | NROH  |
| 8. | So, my mother organized to have me taken by an aunt to Cologne, which was quite a long train ride. I believe from Leipzig to Cologne it's about four hours or something. My aunt took us there with my little brother. Bought us a ticket on the Pullman Express which is a train that only stopped for two minutes at a time at the border, and it went around in circles to all the different cities, France, Luxembourg and so on.   | NROH  |
| 9. | Somebody had suggested to my mother that if I get on that train, they won't have time to search and that will make us slip through. That's what happened.   | NROH  |

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| 10. | That was my first time of hiding actually, except Krystalnacht we were all hiding. But this was my first time of really hiding. I was hiding in the Cathedral in Cologne until the evening with my brother.   | SK's first experience of hiding was together with her brother in a Cathedral for a day, on route to escaping.  |
| 11. | And then, I mean I had instructions from my auntie, a certain time I had to go to the station and present my ticket and get on the train with my little suitcase, and that worked out all right. We came to the border and the police, the border police, came on the train and they asked papers from everybody, and I pretended to sleep. I'd given my brother his bottle and he was really asleep, and by the time they had examined all the other papers from all the other passengers, he came up to me and I pretended to be deeply asleep, so by the time he shook me by the shoulder and he woke me up, and my mother had said to me, and I was at that stage nine, my mother had said to me "don't think about anything else, just delay. Just be very slow and play dumb and delay". So he asked me for my papers and I said to him, what do you mean "paper, paper?" So he said "documents" and I said, "what's a document?" So he said "passport, have you got a passport?" And I said "my mother told me without a passport I can't go visit my grandmother in Brussels for her birthday" So he said "all right". I said "oh, by the way my mother took us out and she had a photo taken for the passport and it's a very pretty photo" and he said "all right already, all right already" and I said "my mother bought me a special little dress so I would look nice on the photo" and he was really starting to get upset at that stage, and he said "well, where is that passport?" "Oh mummy said if I lose the passport I'll never make it to Brussels, so she put it in my little handbag which she bought me at the department store". "And where is your pretty little handbag?" "Oh I wasn't going to lose my handbag so mummy packed it in my suitcase to make sure I wouldn't lose it" "And where is your suitcase?" I said "the nice gentleman next to me put it right on top of the luggage part", so by that time the whistle blew and he marched out of the train and I was through. | SK also had to travel by train together with her brother and was able to carry off her false identity quite cleverly and successfully despite being interrogated by one of the guards. |
| 12. | Now I know that I was lucky, because I looked out the window and he was talking to somebody in a long black leather coat, I remember this distinctly, who of course was a Gestapo, and the chap was yelling at him, and he was showing him that he's crazy, whatever he was saying to him I couldn't hear of course, the train was moving away, but I know for sure because my little friend who was a year older than me and her brother who was a year older than Max, was supposed to try the next Wednesday, the train only went once a week, and they were promptly taken off the train and they were told that "once two little Jewish pigs can get away, but not twice".   | SK appreciated how lucky she was in this situation as she witnessed two young children being pulled off the train shortly after their narrow escape.                                   |
| 13. | So we slipped through. So that was my first little miracle of actually getting to Belgium.  | This was SK's first escape into another country.   |
| 14. | Mum didn't make it until about eight months later.  | Her mother only joined them at a later stage.  |
| 15. | I was with my little brother, but I rejoined my father who was already there, and my older brother. So that was our first experience of having to do things by ourselves.   | Initially, she was just with her little brother and father.  |
| 16. | And then life was more or less, you know, we lived as refugees until the Germans came into Belgium in May 1940. And meanwhile I'd been to school and Max had been to kindergarten and we lived more or less in our, living in one room which wasn't normal for us, but children adapt.  | During this time period, the family lived as refugees in confined physical environment, but with a more or less normal existence.  |
| 17. | And then on the 13 <sup>th</sup> , the 10 <sup>th</sup> May, they came into Belgium. On the 13 <sup>th</sup> May my father said that we absolutely have to run away. He made arrangements with a fisherman to take us across to England, and paid him, and there was again a whole thing, my mother was sick, and she was going to go to the coastline by ambulance where we met the fisherman, and the ambulance couldn't take the children, so my father went with her in the ambulance and they put us on a train to the coastline, which is about like sending two little children from Melbourne to Lorne. You know, it wasn't far. Or to Portsea let's say.   | But when the Germans invaded Belgium, they were forced to flee once again.   |
| 18. | As the train left the station, my father had actually put us on the train, and as the train left the station about twenty minutes later, the rails were bombed and the train diverted.  | Once again SK travelled by train with her younger brother in order to escape.  |

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| 19. | And the train went on for seven days, stopping a few times, the Red Cross threw some bits and pieces like sultanas and biscuits into the train for people and a couple of times we stopped in the middle of nowhere, and the farmers would come up and hand us a piece of food, or if we had a bottle which we had with Maxy, they would give us a bit of milk or something. And after seven days, we stopped at the Spanish border in the south of France.  | The train ride continued for several days, and SK had to sustain both herself and her brother during this time.   |
| 20. | Meanwhile, you probably know your history, half of France had been occupied by the Germans, the other half was free. We were in free France, there was no way of communicating with the other side and we were completely lost.  | Upon arrival at their destination, SK and her brother were completely alienated and bewildered with no means of communicating with their family.  |
| 21. | So this is not I suppose what you call 'hiding, hiding', but we were by ourselves once again. By that stage I was just turned eleven, and Max was four and a half, and we were all alone, there for eight months in the south of France.   | Although they were not 'hiding' in this place, they were forced to set up house on their own, isolated from all family members.   |
| 22. | So, it was, I suppose looking back, very traumatic. For us, it was. I don't know, we were just two little lost children.   | This was a very traumatic time for SK, as she felt totally isolated and lost.   |
| 23. | And slowly after being in a, they put us into a school house and then into a mad house, and then into a barracks, an old army barracks, finally they, because we weren't all Jews on that train, it was a train of Belgium refugees running away from the German. So they finished up putting us all back into a train and taking us along the railway, wherever the train went, every village they stopped. And every village there was an official from the village and they said "we can take five, we can take six, we can take twenty" and so many refugees were off-loaded, and being accommodated in those villages.  | They were initially placed in a variety of accommodations until they boarded a train once again and were distributed in a haphazard fashion amongst the surrounding villages.   |
| 24. | And we were off-loaded in one of those villages and we were allocated a room by ourselves with two straw rags, two blankets, two plates, an army mess, you know like aluminum things, and of all things, a Primus methylated spirit cooker. Little children, I could have blown up the whole place, and two mugs and that was it.  | SK and her brother were dropped off into one of these villages into a room of their own with some basic supplies. The expectations that SK could look after her brother with the provisions supplied were way beyond her years. |
| 25. | And every Monday all the refugees lined up and got five francs and we were considered a family and we lined up for the two of us, and we got our five francs. And somehow I set up a household and we started to manage. We lived a lot on the food that fell off the trees along the highway, apples and pears and berries, oh so many berries and chestnuts in the forest and things like this, and we managed.  | Each week they got provisions as refugees.  |
| 26. | And then one day, my brother had found a book as we were walking from the train to the first place, I don't know how long we walked, it seemed like a long time, and people who had lots of luggage started throwing away. And I remember somebody carrying a sewing machine and throwing it away and somebody carrying a typewriter and throwing it away. So my brother one day found a book and he said to me "I know I'm not supposed to pick up things on the street but this is just a pretty colour, it's red". So I looked at the book, it was a French German dictionary. Now I couldn't speak a word of French of course, because in Belgium I'd been in Flemish school. So I started teaching myself a few words, and I could go shopping, and you know buy the bare necessities, I went to the farmers usually, and I bought potatoes and they would give me a couple of tomatoes and a bit of home made cheese. I suppose because we were two little kids, you know. | They taught themselves to speak a few words of French, which enabled them to go shopping, and buy basic provisions.   |
| 27. | Everybody said that when I go shopping, like there was another few families there, somehow, you know we had goody goodies, because the farmers liked us.   | SK was eventually able to organise that they could get a return passage to Brussels, to rejoin her parents.   |
| 28. | But one day I went to the shop and that was about three kilometers walk from where we lived to the village, so I went into the shop and I asked for... "Do you speak French at all?" (A little bit) I asked for <i>la paine</i> , I wanted to buy a loaf of bread. And the chap wanted to give me a rabbit. So I said to him, "no, no, <i>la paine, la paine</i> " and I showed to the bread, so he gave me the bread and all of a sudden this man stood there and he said to me something in very fast French and he kept saying " <i>ecole, ecole</i> ." And I didn't know what that meant, so I handed him my dictionary and it was school. So he showed me on  | Upon their return, her father's ambivalence and fear was evident and in fact he was arrested several days after their return.   |

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|     | his watch, eight o'clock, next morning I was supposed to be in school. So you know, a grown up tells you to do something, we walked next morning the three kilometers to the school and we started going to school.  |   |
| 29. | So bit by bit I started to speak French. I explained to this man that we were lost, that we don't know where our parents are, they're probably back in Belgium. And anyway, it's a long long story. He sent us to the Governor of the province and the two of us, he put us on a train and he sent us to the big city, and I had to go to the Governor and speak to him and he organized for the Red Cross to eventually get us back to Brussels.  | SK was able to organise that they were sent back to Brussels.   |
| 30. | So in January 1941 we came back to Brussels. I remember my father's first words in Yiddish. He said to me " <i>Kinderloch, ich bin glicklach yir lebt, nor yets kimt yir zurig, mi chapt Yidden af di gas</i> ". Did you understand that? Because they were just starting to arrest people on the street when we came back. And we were home eleven days when my father was arrested and taken to Braindorg with my older brother.   | Upon their return her father greeted them with very mixed feelings, concerned that they were placing themselves at risk by returning to a hostile environment. In fact her father himself was arrested several days after this. |
| 31. | So at that stage my mother who was asthmatic, had a very bad attack of asthma, she was taken to the hospital again, and we were again left alone in the house, because the people who owned the house hadn't come back for the exodus, so we had the top floor of the house and that's where I was left with my little brother again, every day we marched off to the hospital to visit my mother which was an hour and a half each way, but we did it every day, we had nothing better to do.   | Her mother too was hospitalized leaving SK once again to be the primary carer for her younger brother. Much of their time was filled in making trips to the hospital to visit their mother.                                     |
| 32. | And one day I came back and the house had been confiscated by the Germans. There was a big seal on the door and you couldn't get in.   | However during this time their house was confiscated by the Germans and sealed off.   |
| 33. | And I knew enough to know I couldn't break the seal, but we had to sleep somewhere and the downstairs window was open, so we climbed into the window and we were hiding in the house.  | They were forced to sneak back into the house through a window to sleep.  |
| 34. | So then finally, my mother told me, I went and told my mother of course, and my mother said I should go and see the estate agents, you know, where we pay rent. It was a big office and when I explained what was wrong, everybody in the office was laughing, I don't know why, but thinking back of it, you know there's two kids come in and say, you know, such and such a thing has happened.   | NROH  |
| 35. | So they sent us to their solicitor who was looking after all the things to do with their real estate part and all the rent part, so I went to the solicitor and I said, "my mother paid the rent and they took away our house, and I can't... so he sat me down and made a few inquiries and he got us permission to open the place for forty-eight hours.   | NROH  |
| 36. | So in those forty eight hours, I didn't know what to do, my mother told me to go and ask the corner, like a grocer, a Jewish grocery place, if they know anybody who has got a spare room. So I went there and they emptied their attic, and they said "well, you can move everything in here, and you can stay here". So you know, move. I mean, you know, I was eleven at that stage and Maxy was, well four and a half. Move. So I didn't know what to do.  | They were able to find an attic in the local grocery store that was willing to hide them.   |
| 37. | My older brother had a girlfriend, who is now my sister-in-law and we were in those days, when young people went out they were taking along, dragging along their little brothers and sisters as chaperones. So I was always dragged along as a chaperone and my sister-in-law always had to drag along her brother as a chaperone, so we became friendly.   | NROH  |
| 38. | At that stage, he was just passed Barmitvah, so I went up to him and I said "have you got anybody who can help me, you know, we've got to move all these things". So he assembled all the boys from the street and there was a whole army of boys helping me and I used Maxi's pusher to put in pots and pans and plates. And they actually carried the mattresses, nobody could carry the beds, but mattresses and blankets and whatever we could carry in forty-eight hours, between those boys and us. We just dumped in into that one room, and then I had to give back the key. | SK enlisted the help of the friends who were children like her to help her move her belongings into their new hiding place, to the best of their ability.   |

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| 39. | So this was, well, maybe not exactly hiding, but this was at the stage we were more or less hiding, because you ran the risk of being arrested, but they were not deporting people yet. That was 41   | They stayed in this place to avoid being arrested.   |
| 40. | '42 they started deporting people. My father had been liberated from Braindorg at that stage. That means he had been in Buchenwald, he had been in Braindorg, and he knew that we have at all costs to avoid being arrested because that would be the end.  | NROH   |
| 41. | Antwerp is Flemish. Antwerp was very fascist. Antwerp, a lot of people put on the black armband and joined the Nazi party as soon as they walked in.  | NROH   |
| 42. | Brussels which is only half an hour away by train, is quite different. Brussels is French speaking people, very very different people. And they said that in Brussels life had been much easier for the Jews, they were not arrested on the streets yet like in Antwerp. So we all moved to Brussels.   | They then moved on to Brussels, which was less oppressive in their treatment of Jews.  |
| 43. | Meanwhile of course, what I skipped was a very, very important thing in my life. I was thrown out of school like all the other kids. We had to stop going to school, because you don't have to be educated to be killed, so I remember the head mistress was in tears when she told us all to take our books and leave. But we had to.  | However they were forced to leave school during this period.   |
| 44. | And we went to Brussels and in Brussels we went straight into hiding.   | In Brussels they went straight into hiding.  |
| 45. | So this is when the hiding actually started. In the beginning of '42 we were in hiding, and we lived in a cellar, we lived in an attic, we were all over the place, we finished up living in...a mosach, a gable room I suppose you call it, it was under the roof in a house where there was a family living, they had a butcher shop in the front, and they gave us this top part of their house and we were hiding there for a while, a few weeks I suppose. I don't know exact dates.   | They stayed here for several weeks.  |
| 46. | The rent was paid to the landlady. The butchers were also renting from the landlady. So now we paid part of the rent and the landlady came up every couple of weeks. I think it was to get the rent, and she could see how we were living there, you know in hiding.  | They entered a commercial arrangement with the landlady of the shop.   |
| 47. | And my father talked to her and he said "well, is there any, I would like to put my children somewhere safe, is there any way you could help us"? So he spoke to this landlady and she was very nice. Madame Foneyn, and she said she would talk to her priest and she'd see what he comes up with. And she came back to us and she said that he has organized to put me into a convent and my brother into a monastery.  | Her father arranged with the landlady longer term arrangements for SK, which involved putting her in a convent to hide there.  |
| 48. | It was very difficult, we had to have a few lessons because I knew nothing at all about the Catholic religion and at my age I was already supposed to know, I was supposed to have had my first Communion. For Max, it wasn't so dangerous yet, because he was still only six, and he didn't have to know much, as long as he knew to make the sign of the Cross, that's about all he had to know. And we had two, three lessons, and then one day we were just picked up and taken to the different destinations.  | This transition was very difficult for SK who had to learn basics of the Catholic religion to adopt her new identity. Her brother was also taken to a monastery, but it was a less demanding role for him as he was considerably younger and not expected to know much. They were thrown into this new situation shortly after some few lessons. |
| 49. | I was in Brussels, my brother was in Louvain, in the country, just outside Louvain. I was terribly, terribly miserable. Because whereas all the other time I had been in hiding, I had never been completely isolated from my family. I always had at least my little brother with me, and I must point out that as long as I had my little brother with me and I was responsible for him, I didn't feel as unhappy, because I was too busy, you know, it was my responsibility. I felt suddenly I was grown up, I had you know a little somebody to look after and it was quite different. | Being separated from her brother was extremely painful for SK, as this was the first time she was truly isolated from all family members. Having no one to look after also made her feel miserable and lonely.   |
| 50. | When I arrived at that Convent it was very very strange. I mean I hated the idea of having to pretend to be Catholic. I don't know whether I would ever   | SK found the convent to be totally foreign and she resented having to hide her Jewishness. Not knowing if  |



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|     | see my parents again. I didn't know whether I would see my brother again.  | she would ever see her family again also depressed SK greatly.  |
| 51. | And the nuns could see how unhappy I was, and apparently the landlady was in touch with the nuns, I didn't see her, she never came into visit me, that would have been too obvious the connection, but she was in touch and she somehow talked the Mother Superior in to letting me go visit my brother every few weeks.   | The nuns were sympathetic to SK and empathized with her sense of alienation and thus arranged for her to visit her brother on a semi-regular basis.   |
| 52. | I can't remember if it was every three weeks or every month, so for a while they let me go, gave me some money, let me buy a ticket, it was like on a suburban train. You know, like if you wanted to go from here to Geelong, or something, you've got a suburban train, so I had to go on the suburban train, which stopped every few minutes somewhere else, and I had to find my way there on a country road, but I soon found it, and every time that I knocked at the door monastery, I wasn't allowed in female, they brought him to the door and we spent the afternoon just walking in the countryside and playing in the fields and making daisy chains and time was up, I took him back to the Convent, I went back to the stations.                | SK managed to make the trip to visit her brother at his monastery on her own and was able to spend several hours with him.  |
| 53. | I just realised now, how important it was for me to have a little watch, but I had one and I had to be back at the Convent at a certain time because there was a curfew. You couldn't go out in the street anywhere, whether you're Jewish or not, you couldn't go out on the street anywhere.   | SK was very conscious of how precious her time away was and was very aware of the curfews set upon her.   |
| 54. | That made the hiding a little bit easier.  | These visits managed to ease SK's sense of isolation.   |
| 55. | I was hiding in a Convent which was a ladies College, and I would say THE ladies College in Brussels, because it was all La Noblesse de la Belgique, it was all the people with daughters of aristocrats were there, amongst them was the daughter of the King of Belgium. So that's just to show you what kind of Convent it was.   | NROH  |
| 56. | But among them was also the daughter of the De Gaulle's, who was the top Nazi in Belgium, and the daughter of other Germans officials. So they decided they had to keep me away from the class rooms, just in case I betray myself. And they put me, they had five orphans who were working as servants in the Convents, they put me with the orphans.   | SK was among some quite prominent children, who were being educated in the convent but was prevented from attending the formal classes, in case she would expose her identity.  |
| 57. | So I didn't go back to school and they didn't either, the orphans, and we were just used as well, maids I suppose.   | SK was then grouped with the other orphans and used as a servant.   |
| 58. | The nuns treated me a bit, I mean they treated everybody nicely, but they tried to make it a little bit easier for me and I was usually used as a kitchen help, which I suppose was very good because sometimes crumbs falls off from this. That and the other, because the ladies, the College ladies, went home every weekend to the country, to their parents, and they usually came back with some extra food. They came back with, I don't know, a piece of roast lamb, or leg of lamb, or they came back with a chunk of cheese and it was up to the nuns to divide it and give them a little bit every day. And little crumbs fell off, and they gave it to me, they wouldn't eat it, but they gave them to me. So I think that helped me a little bit. | SK seemed to feel the nuns, who selected her for kitchen duty, which was considered to be a privileged position treated her quite favorably, as she might be able to secure extra food for herself.   |
| 59. | And then one day I went to see my little brother, and he came out, and he was happy and he played nicely and all of a sudden he heard the Church bells ring and he said to me, "well, I've got to go now." And I said to him, "But Maxy, we've got another hour at least, why do you have to go now?" He said, "can't you hear the bells ring, Jesus is calling". And he said, "if I don't go and pray, I can't be a priest when I grow up". So the Jesuits have tried, have started to brainwash him. So I took him back and kissed him goodbye, and on the train back I said to myself, I've got to do something about it.   | A pivotal moment during SK's period of hiding, when she came to the realization that her brother was actually being corrupted by his hiding, and was drifting away from his Jewishness. SK saw herself as her brother's protector both physically and spiritually and was alarmed when she saw that she was losing him as a Jew and saw this as being akin to losing him altogether and realized it was up to her to do something about this. |
| 60. | When I got back to Brussels I did something that was absolutely forbidden to me, instead of going back to the Convent, I went back to where my parents were hiding, and I stormed in there, and I mean I was very naïve, because I   | This shocked SK into doing something completely forbidden to her and instead of returning to her  |

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|     | remember, I said to them in German, "Ich musste bitte deportiert werden". "Please, may I be deported?" And my father was aghast.  | hiding place she went to confront her parents in their hiding place demanding to be deported.   |
| 61. | First of all he was upset because I came, but then he was absolutely aghast at what I said, and he said "you don't know what you are talking about" and I said "well I don't know what it means to be deported but it must be better than having a brother who is a Priest".  | Her father was completely shocked by her visit, firstly because of the risk she was taking in potentially exposing their hiding place and also by her request. But SK felt being deported was a better option to having a brother who would become a Catholic priest. |
| 62. | So my father took me very serious and he sat me on his lap and he asked me to tell him the whole story exactly what happened and then he disappeared into the second little room they had there where they kept as a storage room but for whatever food they could have together and so on and he came out with a little velvet bag with some jewellery in it and he said "Give this to the Mother Superior. If you don't find us after the war that should be enough to take you to Palestine".  | Although her father realized he was going to risk himself in trying to smuggle her brother out of the Convent, he acceded to SK's request agreeing that it was imperative that her brother does not succumb to Christianity.  |
| 63. | He made me memorize the address of my Uncle in Palestine and he said to me, "don't, worry, (crying) don't ever worry about your little brother, I'm taking him out of that Convent immediately". And that was it.   | Her father reassured SK that he would withdraw her brother from the Convent, taking her position quite seriously.   |
| 64. | And that's the last I heard of either of my parents or my brother till the war was over.  | This was SK's last contact with her family until the end of the war.  |
| 65. | Well sorry Vicki, I'm telling people today who tell me they can't find a Jewish girl or they can't find a Jewish boy to marry, that my father jeopardized his life and his little boy's life by taking him out of the Convent.  | SK feels a very strong commitment to her Judaism going back to their childhood years. Her father appreciating her strong feelings agreed to remove her brother from the Convent in spite of the risks entailed in this move.  |
| 66. | He managed to find a smuggler, and he was lucky enough for this man to take him from Brussels, you know, more or less walking all the way, to the Swiss border, and he got him across the border. So, but when he left, he didn't know whether he was going to make it or not, but he took that risk.   | Her father managed to organise for her brother to be smuggled out of Brussels at great risk.  |
| 67. | And my mother was left where she was staying, hiding, and I was left in the Convent. I never knew this, I never knew that they had got to Switzerland until the war was over. My mother never knew if they had made it either, she just knew that he picked up the child and left.  | Neither SK nor her mother knew if her father was successful in smuggling him out until after the war.   |
| 68. | By the way, when my brother came back and I remember, I was so happy to see him and in those days, we had in the house what we now drink out of our free will, because we don't want to put on weight, we drink skim milk. We had some skim milk in the house and I said "I can make you a hot chocolate" and he was so excited. When I made it he said "I can't drink this, I'm sorry, and I said "why" and he said "the cup has got a crack in it and that makes it non-kosher and I want to be a Rabbi when I grow up" so this is, he went from one thing to the other, but this is the story about that particular thing. | NROH  |
| 69. | Anyway, while I was in hiding, it got worse and worse and I hadn't told you that on a couple of occasions I was nearly arrested on the street.  | Conditions then began to deteriorate for SK in her hiding.  |
| 70. | One day as I was just getting into the train, there was a Belgian policeman and I was going onto this platform and he told me to go on that platform and I started to argue with him and he just picked me up bodily, threw me into the other train and the train left. And I looked out the window and the other train was just being emptied by the Germans. I hadn't noticed that. So I went one stop on the wrong side and then I went back. I mean he actually saved my life. That was the first time.   | There were several instances where SK was saved from death in very narrow escapes.  |
| 71. | Another time I was coming back from my little brother and there was a raid on the train and they came and they asked for papers and of course I didn't have any papers. So I said to the chap, "I'm only twelve years old, and I haven't got any paper" and he said "you must have papers" and I said "well" and I was cheeky on top of it, and I refused to speak German to him. I spoke   | SK seemed to have a 'street smartness' about her, which managed to save her from many tight situations.   |

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|     | to him in French and I said, "Well maybe in your country children need to have papers, here we don't need papers until we're sixteen". And he got really angry at me because you know, I had talked back to him and he started yelling at me, and an old lady who had been standing next to me, looked him straight in the face and said "leave my grand-daughter alone". She said, "I know how old she is and she'll get papers when she's old enough, but you keep out of it and you leave her alone". And he said, "sorry madam" and he walked on. Well she was a complete stranger to me, so you know, this was one of the things, there were a few other things. |   |
| 72. | Each time when I came back and I had such an incident, the nuns would get on their knees and pray and say "my guardian angel had saved me" and maybe it was.  | Each time SK would experience one of these skirmishes and return to the Convent the nuns would express their gratitude by praying.              |
| 73. | The day I came back from my father with this little velvet bag, I was hanging on outside the tram, it was the last tram before curfew, and as I tried to pay the bag fell out of my hands and fell on the street. So I jumped off the tram and ran back for it. And then I walked. Curfew was approaching and I was afraid to walk, it was already getting dark, so I walked from one doorway to the other, trying to hide, and as I came to the next block, the same tram was stopped and being emptied.   | SK experienced several narrow escapes from danger.  |
| 74. | So you know, I had a few very narrow escapes, and after this the nuns said, "well, that's it, you're not going out any more." So I didn't go out any more and I was, I wasn't happy. I didn't cry every day, but I cried myself to sleep most nights.   | Eventually the nuns felt they had to restrict SK's outings as it was becoming too dangerous, which caused SK great unhappiness.                 |
| 75. | My father had given me the tiniest, tiniest little Mezuzah before I went to the Convent, it wasn't much bigger than a pin, and he told me to keep it close to me, so somehow nobody ever found it, I had it next to my heart, but nobody would have known what it was because it was so tiny, and he told me as long as you say Modeh Ani, every morning, and you lein Krishme at night, we'll be all right. So I did.  | Her father gave her a Jewish talisman, which enabled SK to feel a sense of connection to her Jewishness.  |
| 76. | The nuns, Mother Superior, was the only one who knew I was Jewish. She would call me into her office, and tell me that she'd just listened on the clandestine radio and she said to me "Today a train with fifteen hundred or twelve hundred", whatever it was, "of your brother and sisters, they're sent off to Poland" she said, "and I called you in my office to pray. You pray your way."   | The Mother Superior, who knew of SK's true identity kept her continually, informed of the situation of the Jews, inviting her to pray for them. |
| 77. | She never forced me to pray her way. She got on her knees, she recited the Rosary and I sat on my chair, the only thing I knew was the Shma, so I kept repeating it and she told me, later on she told me when the allies were advancing, and you know, when the war was nearing an end, she kept me posted as much as she could, and it was marvelous.   | The Mother Superior never forced her own religion on SK but respected her religious beliefs.  |
| 78. | But still I was terribly miserable. There I was a servant. I was cold all the time, I never had enough to eat, then I was working like a maid.  | Nevertheless SK was very miserable at the Convent; feeling deprived both physically and emotionally.  |
| 79. | But the first thing, I didn't know whether any of my family was alive. My older brother had left with his new wife, he got married in a hurry and left because they wanted to live together and of course in those days you couldn't live unless you were married, so they got married and left. That was the beginning of '41. We didn't know till after the war that they were actually alive, made it to Switzerland, and came back with two babies. So you know.  | SK had no knowledge of her family's safety or whereabouts during this time, which distressed her greatly.                                       |
| 80. | But I was in this Convent, not knowing if any of my family was allover, if I'd ever see anybody again and very, very miserable.   | This fear of the unknown caused her great misery.   |
| 81. | And then one day, I must have been there for a few months and every day at 4:30 we had to get up and go and queue up for our daily bread. I mean literally. We got 125 grams of some black bread, and there wasn't very much in 125 grams because it was very heavy, with a spoon of jam. And we put it into our lockers. We nibbled a little bit, put it into our lockers because we could go back and nibble during the day. If we eat it all in the morning, that was it. So that was the highlight of the day, to get your piece of bread.  | Each morning very early SK would receive her rations of food for the day.   |

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| 82. | And I'm queuing up there one morning, very, very early, cold and hungry and Mother Superior comes up to me and she says in a very harsh voice to me "Go back to your room immediately". I said to myself, "what have I done wrong?" "You're not on duty, go back to your room". So I curtsied, because you had to curtsy every time she spoke to you, and I started walking back. And as I started walking up the stairs, she caught up with me and she looked around to see if there was anybody else, you know, could overhear us, and very quietly she whispered into my ear "Yom HaKipporim" (Cries). | A pivotal point during SK's hiding in the Convent came when the Mother Superior acknowledged a respectfulness for her Jewishness and the traditions of Judaism in a foreign and non-sympathetic environment. This external protective gesture made towards SK confirmed for her commitment in her Judaism. |
| 83. | So that was the turning point. From that day on I can't explain it, I just walked with my head held high, never mind that I'm a servant, I'm better than all the other girls up there, I am Jewish and I am going to survive. And I think that's how I spent the rest of my time.   | This was a pivotal moment for SK, as this recognition seemed to instill in her a sense of value and pride which dignified her being in the Convent and allowed her to sustain herself during this period of isolation in hiding.   |
| 84. | A few months later she came up to me and she said to me, "Look you get a bit extra cabbage and you get a bit extra vegetables or whatever we had, I spoke to Sister in the kitchen". She said "it's Pesach, you can't have bread this week". And I mean she kept my diary for me. I mean it's just so unbelievable.   | On a further occasion this gesture was repeated to SK by the Mother Superior which imparted a sense of self-worth for SK as she felt cared for spiritually and emotionally by the Mother Superior.   |
| 85. | Meanwhile, oh, I forgot to tell you, that at the beginning there was four other Jewish girls. We never admitted to each other that we were Jewish, but there were some other maids in the place, other servants, and I somehow picked them and I suppose they picked me, but nobody ever said a word. Officially, I was the daughter of a political prisoner of the Resistance and they were going to shoot my father, or they had shot my father, whatever it was, and they put me into hiding. So they knew I was hiding for a reason.  | SK was aware of other Jewish girls also hiding in the Convent, although this was never openly acknowledged between them.   |
| 86. | And one day there was this, the nun came into our dormitory and quick, quick, quick, quick, get dressed and we hardly had time to put anything on, we were taken out the back door and somehow we were made to disappear. All of us.  | On one occasion they were all hustled out of the dormitories with no explanation.  |
| 87. | And we were put in private homes as servants. And we found out later on that we had been betrayed and there was a raid next day and the Germans came through and they told them there had been five or six Jewish children here, and give them up immediately, and they interviewed everybody and they threatened everybody and they screamed at all the nuns. And somehow they held steadfast and they didn't give away.   | They were placed in private homes as servants as the nuns had been informed of a raid and managed to sneak them out of the Convent and denied all knowledge of them.   |
| 88. | I found out afterwards, that one of the nuns actually betrayed us. She went afterwards to Confession and she apologized us and she promised she'd never do it again.  | It was later revealed that it was one of the nuns who actually had betrayed them.  |
| 89. | So the Mother Superior and one other Mother went around to all the homes where the girls were to see if they were all right, and I believe all the other girls were quite all right. They were in nice homes and they didn't mind staying there for the rest of the war.  | It appeared that the other Jewish children were placed in reasonable placements and were willing to stay there to the end of the war.  |
| 90. | Whereas I was in a house which, the people were not nice to me. I had to serve them dinner and do everything and then if there were any leftovers, I got them afterwards in the kitchen. Their kids were lice infected and I had to clean them and do all the dirty work in the house and they really, you know, I was just there, but I didn't trust them. I thought, you know, if I don't do exactly what they want they'll give me up to the Germans. I just didn't trust them.  | However SK was placed in an unpleasant environment where she was treated very poorly and she felt insecure within the family where she was placed.   |
| 91. | So when the Mother Superior came to see me I cried and I said, "Look, I really feel that I'm not safe here and I really feel they're not nice to me" so she said "Look you're the only one, so we'll take you back, just you". So she took me back. And after this I was the only child in hiding in that Convent.  | On a visit from the Mother Superior, SK expressed her unhappiness and sense of insecurity in her placement and it was agreed that she could return to the Convent to hide.   |
| 92. | And then there was one more raid, and I don't know who betrayed us that time. There was one more raid about, I don't know if it was a few months later or what, I must tell you I lost completely, you know, I had no idea of time or anything. I don't know, time just passed, and when you wait and   | There was another raid in the Convent although the continual tension of each day prohibited SK from remembering  |

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|      | you're anxious every day, the time just passes and you don't count the days, but one day there was all of a sudden that noise.  | exactly when this occurred.   |
| 93.  | See what happened, the Convent was very big and there was a great big garden, a beautiful garden, and the other side of the garden was the schoolhouse. And the Germans have requisitioned the school house at the other side of the garden was requisitioned. And the Germans were walking up and down in the garden all day long.   | The Germans moved into an adjoining property to the Convent, which inhibited SK's movements even further.   |
| 94.  | That means I could never go outside the place. In case somebody recognizes me or sees me, which clearly doesn't make much sense, I didn't particularly look Jewish at that stage, but still I didn't go out.  | SK became restricted to staying totally within the walls of the Convent.  |
| 95.  | And all of a sudden I hear this German screaming in the building, and I didn't know what he was screaming about, but before I knew it, nuns had literally picked me up, put me into the dumb waiter, you know what a dumb waiter is, and they put me up half way between the kitchen and the dining room, made a knot on the rope, closed the doors and I was there for hours and hours and hours.  | On one occasion when the Convent was raided, SK was hidden within the walls of the dumbwaiter, in-between rooms, in darkness.   |
| 96.  | I could hear the screaming and I could hear the door slam, and I could see the light shaft coming through because in the dining room upstairs they opened a door too loud and the light shaft gets through. But when they looked down it must have been dark so they didn't see anything. Then they were in the kitchen and they opened the door and I could see the light shaft from down there. But they didn't see anything. So they left this.  | Even when they looked into the lift, they were unable to see SK hiding and although she was aware of the screaming and noise of the raid, she was hidden quite effectively. |
| 97.  | After hours and hours when they took me out, they had to physically carry me out because I couldn't straighten my legs. I'd been sitting like cramped, I wasn't very tall, but still I'd been sitting like this for so many hours, not moving, too scared to move or too scared, you know, to change position or anything, and finally they took me out and I think that's the last time we had a raid from the Germans. That they really came to look, because they had been tipped off.   | When SK was finally pulled out of her hiding it seemed as if her body had frozen up from fear after being hidden like this for several hours.                               |
| 98.  | And after this they said I have to be even more careful, and I shouldn't walk along the corridors and I shouldn't walk here and I shouldn't walk there, so I was really like a little mouse hiding in the kitchen, and then after dark running up to the dormitory.   | This raid meant SK had to become even more discrete within the walls of the Convent.  |
| 99.  | The other little orphans didn't mind, because one of them really her father was a political prisoner, and the other one, her father was a Resistance fighter, and you know she was living there under an assumed name so even though they weren't Jewish and  | NROH  |
| 100. | I of course was living under an assumed name as well. And also after that incident with the identity card, they made me false papers. So they made me a false identity card, gave me a new mane and you know, but I never actually had to use it, because I didn't leave the place.   | They arranged for a complete change of identity for SK after this, although her confinement to indoors meant she did not have to use the new identity papers often.         |
| 101. | And after a while I started saying that I miss, besides missing my family, besides missing everything else, I miss so much that I couldn't go to school because I loved learning, I was such a good student, and the other orphans didn't seem to miss it, but I did.   | SK began to crave schooling as well as missing her family.  |
| 102. | So they gave me access to the library in the hours when the library was officially closed. And I started reading, and I was reading everything. I was reading, every few minutes I was reading and of course Convent libraries are very restricted you can only read certain things. So I was reading history and astronomy and all these kinds of things that were permitted, which was the only thing there anyway.   | She was thus allowed access to the Convent library.   |
| 103. | So towards the last year of the war, I started talking to one of the nuns, you know, how much I miss school, so she said "Look, if you want to, after you finish to work in the evening, I can teach you English". She was an English nun. So she got permission from the Mother Superior, and in the evening I spent with her and she taught me English. And then another nun came forward and she said she'd teach me bookkeeping and typing and shorthand. So the last year that I was in the Convent, through these private nuns, I had | A couple of the nuns appreciating her love for learning took SK on as a private student, teaching her some basic skills.  |

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|      | some self-education.  |   |
| 104. | And when I came out, I actually sat for exams, and got diplomas in both English and shorthand, typing and bookkeeping. So, I got some education in those years, and that helped me a lot, because you know I had to study and think about it and so on, and that somehow made me fret a little bit less and made the loneliness a little bit fuller.  | After the war SK was able to sit for formal exams based on this piecemeal education, which made her feel in some sense valued as an individual and respected as a person. |
| 105. | Sometimes we had a very nice snack. The servants up on top took us plate of bit of jam up to our room. We crawled on to the roof and we got some snow and we made our own ice cream. We had snow and jam. Tasted terrific.  | On occasions SK got snacks during these lessons which made her feel included and valued once again.   |
| 106. | And I don't know what else to tell you. In September '44 we heard a lot of screaming and a lot of going on outside in our garden, and Mother Superior said to me "Today you can come and join the fun". And she took me by the hand and she took me out in the garden and all the Germans which were there lined up in front of the schoolhouse, ready to march out.  | NROH  |
| 107. | And Mother Superior said, "Before you leave I wanted to inspect the place". So she and another nun went inside to inspect the place which was filthy by the way, we helped clean it up afterwards, and the Germans were outside and they were making a big noise, and they were going to leave, and all of a sudden the other nun comes out, comes out holding a German by the back of his collar and said to the Commandant, "You forgot something here" And everyone expected the chap to get into trouble or to get shot or something. The Commandant said to him...(end of Side 1). | NROH  |
| 108. | The Germans were stealing every bicycle they could lay hands on. I even saw a couple of them on, you know, the scooters the kids used to have. I even saw a couple of those and they started marching out.  | NROH  |
| 109. | That night we crawled on to the roof because we heard that Brussels was burning, so we weren't allowed to do this of course, we crawled on to the roof and we sat on the roof, crying our eyes out, because a lot of the official buildings, they didn't have time to destroy their papers, so as they marched out they just set the places on fire. I mean it was so sad.  | NROH  |
| 110. | And next day we were allowed outside. In front the nuns had set up trestles with jugs of water and with cups. That's the only thing they had to offer, so the allied soldiers who marched in, we handed them water to drink and they in turn handed out chocolates and cigarettes. And we knew it was the end of the war.   | NROH  |
| 111. | I was allowed to go out with another girl to line up for the first free newspaper 'La Lique De Belgique' which I did.   | NROH  |
| 112. | I didn't know where to contact my mother. I mean she didn't have a telephone and I had no idea where she was.   | NROH  |
| 113. | So anyway, I came back to the Convent with my newspaper, and by mid afternoon my mother turned up.  | NROH  |
| 114. | So she really had nowhere for me to stay for another few days. I stayed another week or two there, which didn't bother me at all, I mean the war was finished. Mum came to see me and a couple of weeks later I went back to live with my mother up in the top room there and that was September '44.   | NROH  |
| 115. | We still didn't know anything about my father or my brother because there was no way of corresponding. They were still in Switzerland and the fighting was going on. You see, Belgium was liberated. The war didn't finish till May but we were free and Belgium, we had another problem there.   | NROH  |
| 116. | We were not in hiding any more, but the Germans were sending pilotless missiles, the first time I heard about missiles is V1 and V2 and they were sending them to London but they bad at the time, they were not accurate and many, many of them fell on the way in Brussels. Many of them. One just across the road from us. And one I remember, I was on the street, running to a shelter, and before I could reach the shelter, the shelter was hit.   | NROH  |

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| 117. | So it was still very, very dangerous and we were still very anxious, because we didn't know if our parents were alive.  | NROH |
| 118. | By that time nobody knew yet what had happened to the people who were deported and my father couldn't wait for the war to be finished. As soon as he heard Belgium was liberated, he paid someone again to get him across the border into France, into Belgium and he turned up I believe it was March, to see if we were alive. And he told us that he had left my little brother with my big brother who he found in Switzerland. They came back as soon as the war was finished.   | NROH |
| 119. | But before they came back, my father, the minute, news started leaking through that there was extermination camps, and there was gas chambers and there was crematorium and so on, and I mean it was just so unbelievable, when that dawned on us we couldn't quite absorb what happened, but he knew that everybody who had been left behind maybe dead and so on.   | NROH |
| 120. | There was a coffee shop in the centre of Brussels and it was full of people going in every day with soldiers and talking to people who started trickling back. "Have you seen this one, have you heard of that one?" And people started to come back. Some were liberated by the Americans. I'm talking about the camps. Some were liberated by the Americans, and some were liberated by the allies. Some young prisoners ran away towards the end and made their own way back.  | NROH |
| 121. | So one day when my father went in there with his photos, asking people's questions, he had met a young girl who used to be my sister-in-law's best girlfriend, and he told her that he had just come back from Switzerland, and that my brother and my sister-in-law were alive, had two babies, so of course she was very excited. And I think it's all destiny will have it, as she walked away from that coffee place and she walked through the city, all of a sudden, she sees a young man coming towards her. This was my sister-in-laws, brother. The young boy who helped me move.  | NROH |
| 122. | He also when out father was in Braindorg, every week my mother sent us with a small food parcel and he would come along to help me and also because his sister would bake a little cake or something to send for her boyfriends who was my brother, and we take every week a full parcel. We schlepped out little chaperone along. Max, look at that stage I was a big girl, I was eleven and a half and he was fourteen and a half. And Max was coming along. And every week we gave those two parcels. My father and my brother never saw one.  | NROH |
| 123. | When my father was liberated from Braindorg, which is another long story, I was just coming home from school. I met my girlfriend, I saw this man trying to cross the road, and I said to my girlfriend, "I think this man is sick, I'm going to give him a hand". And she said "Don't be silly, I think he's drunk. He looks to me like a real shocker". Because he put the foot down and a foot up from the kerb, he was afraid to cross the road. And I said, "let me try". And I went up to him, and I said to him in Flemish, I said, "excuse me sir, could I help you across the road?" It was my father; he threw himself into my arms. And he weighed 36 kilos and he wouldn't have lived much longer.  | NROH |
| 124. | My brother was liberated two hours after him, because he was the opposite, he was all blown up from eating potato peels and dirt and what happened is that the camp they were in was a fortress with a moat around I and one of the political prisoners, a young Belgian boy, swam the moat and got himself in to the Royal Palace and got himself into the presence of the Queen Mother and he said, "Look have me shot after I tell you this story, but this is what happens to your citizens." He told her the story, in a nutshell; she called the commander of Belgium and north of France which was from Firegenhausen. Told him what happened. He pretended he didn't know anything about it, promised to send the Red Cross and the Red Cross picked from all the prisoners, the twelve prisoners who couldn't lift their leg high enough to get on to a little foot stool, and my father and brother were among the twelve people liberated that day. The Red Cross said, "We'll come back every month". The month after when they came back they had all been deported, there was nothing left. | NROH |
| 125. | OK? So this is just to tell you how bad things were.  | NROH |

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| 126. | Anyway, coming back to this girlfriend of my sister-in-law's and she walked down the street and who does she meet but that young boy, her brother. And he said, "Look, I've come back and nothing is left. I went to Antwerp. Our house, nothing is standing. My mother has been gassed the first day we arrived in Auschwitz. My sister has disappeared and I'm going to enroll and go to fight for the Haganah, I'm going to Palestine. | NROH |
| 127. | And she said, "What do you mean your sister has disappeared? She has got two children, she lives in Switzerland" and he said, "How do you know?" She said, well, I just found out from her father-in-law. So they ran back together to the coffee shop, my father was still there and he bought him home.   | NROH |
| 128. | Now just to divert for a moment. It's got nothing to do with hiding. The minute my father brought him home and my mother and I got busy in the kitchen making something for him to eat, I said to my mother, "You see, Hashem sent him back for me". And that's my future husband.  | NROH |
| 129. | I had proposed to him when I was eleven and he was fourteen. He told me to wait till we grow up. So well that was the story.  | NROH |
| 130. | I don't think there is much more to tell you as far as the war is concerned.  | NROH |
| 132. | He was the one who helped me move. He's the one who helped me carry the parcels to the camp. Brother and sister married brother and sister, about eight years later. Like my brother was eight years older than me, married the sister and I married the younger brother.   | NROH |
| 133. | That's it in a nutshell. Then we migrated and we came to Australia. You may still want to hear this, because my father after everything he went through, and this is what still upsets me more than any of the other things, after everything he went through we finally managed to come to Australia, seven and a half weeks on a migrant ship and the night before we landed, my father died aboard ship. (Cries.)                      | NROH |



**SUBJECT 3:**

|     | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR D.  | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.   |
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|     | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden).  |  |
| 1.  | Ok. Well, I lived, I was born, well I lived in Budapest during the war and lived a very happy childhood. My parents were well to do, I went to Jewish school and suddenly restrictions started, wearing of the yellow star and of course the restrictions were worse for my parents at that stage, but then from this very happy household, we were suddenly shunted into other premises.   | D describes how life changed for them as their happy and normal lives became restricted and confined.  |
| 2.  | In Budapest pre-ghetto they had houses, yellow star houses, where only Jews could, where not only Jews, but Jews were obligated to take in other fellow Jews to live with them, and then that house became predominantly Jewish.  | Initially they were forced to move into shared premises with other Jews.   |
| 3.  | My father was taken into what they call like an <i>arbeitslager</i> , it was actually like an army service, in the beginning they were actually given uniforms, but no arms. When they were sent to the front, they were just gun fodder because they could not defend themselves.  | NROH   |
| 4.  | So there was only the three of us living with another Jewish family.  | NROH   |
| 5.  | My father was always able to do things like get false papers for people and bribe a lot of people and therefore very often he used to come home, he was a textile merchant by trade and he somehow always managed to get a piece of fabric and then bribe his people in that army, so he was able to leave and when other people became endangered, he bribed them out from his squadron. He was quite a well-known personality and somehow always made money out of nothing. Even though he was interned there...  | NROH   |
| 6.  | He actually was never sent to the front, because he took drugs, he took a drug which make his heart beat faster and also he pretended that he can't bend one of his legs. He walked with a stiff leg, and he used to tell me that sometimes at night, he tried his leg because he believed it himself that it became stiff. Doctors could hammer and he just wouldn't move his leg, so therefore he was actually never sent to the front.   | NROH   |
| 7.  | He also had a wonderful contact in Budapest - a school mate of his - a lady, was very beautiful, looked Aryan and had connections, paper and she was somehow working for the Jewish Distribution Centre, and she had her fingers on the pulse of what's going on, and where to hide children. Later on I met up with her in the ghetto as well.   | NROH   |
| 8.  | So he used to supply her with goods in order to buy people out and she on the other hand told him when there was danger and things like that.   | NROH   |
| 9.  | When we moved to this other house, which was not our home actually, there were rumours that if you were to convert you could save yourself. So my parents enrolled my sister and I. I had, I have a younger sister, to do this course. What it entailed was that a priest used to come to the cellars, the air raid shelter, that every house had in Budapest, and used to teach you to become a Christian, and I didn't want to do it, but the Chief Rabbi of Budapest said that to save your life you're allowed everything. And he was actually the first one; they honorarily converted him, because he knew enough about the religion, they considered that he knew enough about religion, so he gave the example. | Both D and her sister enrolled in a course to convert to Christianity, in the hope that they could save themselves from persecution.                           |
| 10. | And so we went down into the cellar and they paid for the whole course of conversion. I attended the first lesson and at the end of the lesson we were all obliged to cross ourselves and say the right words and I did it, and I went upstairs afterwards and I said to my mother "this is it- I'm never going down there again". And she sort of gave me all the arguments and I said, "I don't care, I'm not doing it any more. It's not for me." So that was the end of that.   | Although they paid for the course, after D attended the first lesson, she felt too deeply committed to her own religion that she could not continue the farce. |

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| 11. | As it happened it turned out to be a ploy. They took all our money and didn't help one iota.   | NROH   |
| 12. | At that stage, I was no longer going to school but I just thought of it this morning that I actually still belonged to two libraries, so I could still borrow books, I also lent the maximum number of books that I was allowed, so I could do that.   | Although D was forbidden from attending the regular school she self-educated herself through the library.  |
| 13. | I befriended one other girl in this house. There weren't that many children and what we did in our spare time - we devised an idea that we want to help some people and we have all this time, let's do something with our time. But we were not sure if our parents would approve, so we used to sit on the steps, the building was four storeys high and next to the elevator lift, we sat and we made things. Mostly out of fabric.   | D managed to fill her time with creative activities although she was very limited in her resources.  |
| 14. | There were two young women in the house, whom we took in to our confidence, and one of them gave us things and the other one was astonished at the things we made. She actually had a little child and was a painter, and she painted all our better efforts. So we did this for quite a long time, for about two months, also in the house there was a man who made envelopes and we used to help him, and he gave us all the bad ones, that didn't comply with regulations, and so we gathered and we gathered and after a couple of months we made a big placard and there were, don't forget there were about 500 people living in the house by that time, we were so cramped. We made a big placard, big bazaar and my girlfriend had two little children's tables and we put all our wares out and bazaar, big bazaar. | D also involved others in all her activities.  |
| 15. | We were hoping that we will make five to ten pangas, that was our aim.   | NROH   |
| 16. | People were so astonished. At that time you couldn't but things anymore, so everything was of great importance.  | NROH   |
| 17. | One lady just came to change money from us, when we were already doing well and she left us a five-panga tip. So altogether we made, 200 pangas, which was an absolute fortune.  | NROH   |
| 18. | And then we had a problem, what to do with all that money.   | NROH   |
| 19. | She wanted to give her half, we divided it in half, and she gave her half to a Jewish orphanage.   | NROH   |
| 20. | And I chose to give my half, because just then, we had word about an uncle of mine who was in one of these squadrons, Jewish army squadron, and they were kosher and the authorities wanted to make a big example of them, not that they got meat anyway, but because they were kosher, they decided that they'll punish them and they won't give them any food. So I thought if we could send them some food that would keep them going. That was my intent, and the reason why I'm telling you this, because later on it will come into the picture.   | NROH   |
| 21. | Then this lady told us that things are very bad, things are going to get a whole lot worse, that it would be advisable for my sister and I to be hidden, and she found a place where they would take us.   | When they were informed that conditions were becoming increasingly dangerous, it was advised that D and her sister should be hidden.   |
| 22. | So I said that I would go provided my girlfriend and her little brother can come too. So my father arranged for them to come as well.  | D only agreed to go into hiding, if her friend and her brother could accompany her there, to which her father agreed.  |
| 23. | And I remember walking with my father towards the Jewish Communal Centre, where we all had to meet and suddenly my father felt that there was danger, and he said to us, "you walk on this side of the street, I'm going to cross the street, and if they arrest me, the building is just at the end of this street, you just go on to that building. And I immediately thought if my father is going to be arrested on the other side, I don't think that I can continue walking.   | In the experience of being hidden, the prospect of actually losing a parent to the Germans suddenly froze the future for D and made it inaccessible to her, making her unable to continue. |
| 24. | As it happened, he wasn't picked up. To be around that area was very   | D and her sister were eventually able  |

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|     | dangerous, and we made it there.  | to make it to their hiding place.   |
| 25. | And we waited until it was dark, there were other children waiting as well and we had to get into this taxi, which was going to take us to a hospital which was built on the very outskirts of town. It belonged to a Jewish doctor and a non-Jewish doctor and they were going to open this hospital but they decided to leave it all the rubble outside and to hide the children as though was not completed as yet.  | They met up with other children en route, who were also going in to hiding.   |
| 26. | So we knew where we were going, and we were all piled into this taxi. We had siblings sitting on our laps and my girlfriend and I were talking in the cab and planning our new life, because we were now going to be, don't forget, we were both ten years old, we were going to be independent and we devised that we're going to have, we'd never actually seen it, but beds with shelves on eh back of the beds so we can keep all our books there, and we're going to move them head to head, so that we can talk to each other in the evening. And we were even discussing what sort of curtains we were going to make for the windows, because by then we were very good at sewing. | Although D was aware that she was going into hiding, she had no idea of the reality of the situation and what this would mean. In their imagination, her and her friend were busy planning their new and exciting lives together. |
| 27. | And we drove and drove and finally the taxi stopped and we were taken into this big, big room.  | Their final destination of hiding consisted of just one single room.  |
| 28. | There were only a couple of candles somewhere on a mantle place, we had to feel our way because everyone was on the floor and we sort of just had to sardine ourselves wherever we could find a spot, we couldn't even stay next to my sister, she had to be put somewhere else.  | They were squashed into this room in a haphazard way and D was separated from her sister.   |
| 29. | Everything was pitch dark and that was our 'how do you do'. This was our arrival you know, from our... I remember it so distinctly because it was such shock to our system. From one minute of dreaming about some you know being independent, and then suddenly just being a body on the floor.  | The room was completely dark and the contrast between their fantasizing and the blunt reality of the situation came as a great shock to D.  |
| 30. | Anyway, we stayed in that place, what I forgot to tell you was that when I went to hand over the money that we gathered, we had to go to a Jewish Communal Centre for them to send it on.   | NROH  |
| 31. | When we arrived to the courtyard there, I remember that there was a Jewish wedding taking place and I was absolutely astonished that at a time like this, people were still getting married, and I had eyes only for this wedding taking place.   | NROH  |
| 32. | But someone walked up to my father and they embraced themselves, embraced each other and I looked at this man and I had a terrible shock because he was very very skinny. I remember him looking very, very skinny and I just remembered that my father put some money into his hand and later he told me that they were in the same squadron by this man was sent to the Russian front. So you can imagine how many things my father went through in order not to be sent to the Russian front. And then we handed over the money, and that was just one moment of looking at this man.  | NROH  |
| 33. | But to my luck, I have a photographic memory for faces to this day. Not for names unfortunately.  | NROH  |
| 34. | So when we were placed in this home, we sort of, the morning was you know, shown a different light, things were not so desperate, we had nothing, there was absolutely nothing there, but later on our parents sent in beds and we set up a kitchen and things became more normalised.  | Their hiding place improved somewhat during the daylight hours and over time D's parents were able to send some items in which helped furnish the room.   |
| 35. | To such an extent, that later on, they actually outfitted the place, we would hide in another room and they actually put in double decker beds in order to fit more people in.  | They tried to fit the maximum number of people into this room to hide.  |
| 36. | Every room had an overseer, a Jewish mother who was there with her child, girls were in one room, boys were in another. We were fed, we were never allowed to step outside, the blinds were always pulled down.   | A Jewish woman was made in charge of the room and there were strict guidelines that they were forced to follow in hiding.   |
| 37. | The only time that we ever looked out was at night. We were blacked out actually, so that no one could see that anyone, which was during the war, that  | They were only allowed to look out of their room at night for fear of   |

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|     | wasn't anything unusual, but it ostensibly there was no one living there and because it was out of town, we could only see when we looked out the window at night, we could see a monastery and nuns coming in and out but there were not other houses around.   | exposing their hiding place.  |
| 38. | Sometimes parents sent in food if they could, with messengers, not themselves.   | Parents sent supplies through messengers, not directly.   |
| 39. | To my recollection, the only visitor that ever that was of a father, was my father. He used to come, he was happy to see we were well.   | D's father was an exception to this situation and he used to visit regularly in person.   |
| 40. | He once came and we were having lunch and he said "oh you're lucky, you have hulka" and I knew that that's a pork sausage, I didn't know what the white stuff was, I ate everything that they ever, I was given, but when I heard that it was that, so I went out and I was sick and he happily finished my portion because at that stage he was already very hungry.  | During her period of hiding, the Jewish rituals were always very important to D and bolstered her strength in continuing to hide.   |
| 41. | Once he came and he was totally white, a bomb fell not far from him and he still made it, he still walked because he was determined to come and see us.  | The danger of her father coming to visit was always felt very acutely, during her hiding.   |
| 42. | Once my mother sent in a parcel to us, and she wrote a letter with the parcel but it got wet and my German wasn't very good, so I didn't really understand what she wrote, only parts of it.   | D's mother also used to send parcels in with letters and supplies.  |
| 43. | We were very happy with what she sent, but one of the things that she sent us some papers with my name, this photos is one of those papers and the other thing was my school certificate in Hungary, that's why I was so excited you know. Every year they put into the same little book, your marks, so as I knew what my marks were, I put that aside, and we enjoyed whatever she sent in.  | NROH  |
| 44. | In the meantime, we were busy, my girlfriend and I, because Chanukah was upon us, and we decided that we're going to make something for Chanukah for everyone who was in our room. There was quite a big undertaking, because we really had nothing. There was a lamp, a standing lamp that someone sent it, but the lampshade was torn, so it was really of no use to anybody, so we decided to cut this up and make little bags with drawstrings and save things, and eventually we will put something in every bag. So, if we got biscuits, well you could save that because they would last. I had, my mother sent in cough lollies, well that was lollies, it was marvelous, then because we were all supposed to be all girls, we made, we cut out these are the things that I recall, we cut out paper dolls and we made dresses for them that you just hooked on, colored them and I used to draw nice things. Whatever we thought would last, we kept it all in a big box, to be divided when it comes closer to the date.  | Even while hiding in fairly inhospitable circumstances, D maintained some interest in celebrating the Jewish festivals in a celebratory fashion, trying to include other children in the activities.                    |
| 45. | We also prepared a play that we were going to do. Unfortunately, the woman who was the overseer in our room was a terrible lady. Instead of being happy that she had her daughter with her and we didn't have our mothers, she was a truly cruel person. She took delight in keeping the room very clean, I mean she didn't clean, we did the cleaning. We had to make sure that everything was clean. We actually had to take in a boy to our room because that was a relative of hers. At every opportunity she used to shame us, and she used to set her daughter above us, although we were the older, she was younger. Our only pleasure out of it was that the daughter in turn very nasty and cruel to her, you don't realise how much manners mattered in Europe, and we would never have thought of talking like this to our parents. So when she was nasty back to her mother, we thought, well at least we're not like that, we're never going to be like that. To such an extent that she used to, the daughter was able to coerce the younger girls, I didn't find that out till later, to go and wipe her bottom in the toilet. I mean, she would never dare to do that to us, because we were older and we would have not stood for it. | NROH  |
| 46. | So it was a very unhappy period in my life, because we were very good children, you will find that with all hidden children, you were exceptionally good, you had to keep everything tidy and you had to be good and we were happy to be good because we were safe there and we rather occupied ourselves with good things than bad things. And this was the only sour note.   | There seemed to be an emphasis on being 'good' in two senses for D; firstly to be compliant and obedient and secondly there was an internal wish by D to be 'good' and associated with good deeds rather than bad ones. |

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| 47. | The night before Chanukah, we yes, another thing that she used to do from the time that she was there, she hung on our double Decker bed a bag, a net bag, people used to do their shopping with that, so she could always unhook one of the handles and whatever anybody sent in, for their own children, which was a very, very difficult thing to do, she said that this is common and it belongs in that bag. And it was hanging in full view of everybody. Her daughter was allowed to go to that bag and take out whatever she wanted at any time, and we had to wait until she decided to divide it up. So the person whose parents' sent it, had real heartache about this. | NROH   |
| 48. | Into that bag somebody sent in tiny little crabapples and they were put in there and they fell out, so I saved a couple of these crabapples.  | NROH   |
| 49. | I wasn't wise enough for all this politicking by her, so subsequently when we made up these bags, I put more things in my sisters' bag. I was entitled to this; I didn't even make a bag for myself. I should have put more in her daughter's bag as well perhaps because this really got her ire up. She became so incensed about this, that she went, and another thing happened also, that my sister was looking at her, at the things that were in her bag, and she confiscated my sister's bag.  | NROH   |
| 50. | And the I got really upset, and I said "you can't do that". So she said "not only that I can do it, but you are going to stand in the corner here, while we are all going to in for the Chanukah play". And I was a central part of that play, so she left me in the dark in that room standing against the wall in the corner. And it was December; it was already cold against the wall.  | NROH   |
| 51. | When they came back they couldn't price me off the wall. I was stuck to the wall, had a very high temperature, and I just remember that I was completely stiff and they had to pull me off the wall.  | NROH   |
| 52. | By that stage we had an infirmary, which was downstairs, an office was already set up, so they took me to the infirmary and I was left there.   | D was sent to the infirmary.   |
| 53. | So I was fretting very much for my sister as well, and they were telling me that there are certain things you can do, when they put in the thermometer, how you can do things so it won't show a high temperature any more, and I really didn't feel well, and I was not cunning. I must say I wasn't cunning in those days and I wouldn't do anything that was not true either. I had a very high sense of right and wrong and not to tell lies and things like that, so that really wasn't for me.  | D was very anxious about being separated from her sister but felt too sick to actually do anything about it.                                       |
| 54. | I think I spent a week there in the infirmary, and one night they came, we were discovered and the Hungarian army came with the SS and the doctor, the Jewish and the non-Jewish doctor were there, who owned this place, they called them and they were in the office right next to the infirmary, the infirmary had a glass door so we could see their outlines, and we heard what went on in the office.   | While lying in the infirmary, D heard the SS come in to interrogate the owners.  |
| 55. | First they tried to get them drunk and they quite succeeded and they bribed them and they said, "it's not true, you can see all the rubble, nothing is ready, nobody is here" and at first they went along with it, but when they came to themselves, more or less, towards the morning, they insisted on an inspection and hey of course they discovered us all.   | Although at first they tried to distract them, they were eventually discovered.  |
| 56. | So I went to my sister and we gathered up a few things.   | So D collected her sister and they gathered together a few things.   |
| 57. | But I had a problem that in the meantime some older children came in here as well, and they borrowed a pair of my shoes and when I went to ask back for those shoes, she wouldn't give them back to me. So I only had this pair of sandals that I came in with originally, but in the meantime it was winter. This was 1944 December 13, when they cleared us out of there.   | NROH   |
| 58. | They said they're only taking us for a walk, but young as I was, I knew that this is not it.  | D was aware that the authorities were poised to threaten them even though they were encouraged to believe their evacuation was simply a mere walk. |

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| 59. | Some of the older children went into the kitchen and took some food but I was so busy trying to get these shoes back with no success, that I didn't have time for that.   | D in her hurried exit from this hiding place focused on getting her shoes back as she knew instinctively that these were essential for her survival.         |
| 60. | Anyway, they gathered us outside very early in the morning and after not being outside at all, it was an absolutely dreadful day for us, morning for us.  | The contrast of the outside world after being in hiding, presented as a harsh and stark reality for D and the other children.                                |
| 61. | It took a long time of waiting till everyone was gathered together and unfortunately in that convent they also discovered three or four Jewish children, who were also pegged on to us.   | NROH   |
| 62. | And I remember a little girl and she was carrying these big galoshes, like rubber boots, and I said, they were much too big for her, and I said "don't take those, you won't need them". She says, "but they're my mummies, I have to look after them, they're my mummies" and no matter how hard I tried I couldn't convince her to leave them and I feared for her, I had immediately this terrible fear that she's not going to survive.   | D was very aware and felt protective towards other vulnerable children, whom she realized were very close to dying because of their lack of survival skills. |
| 63. | By the way, they told us, those in the infirmary, that we can stay there if we want, they won't take us, we can stay in the hospital. But because I had my sister there, I wouldn't stay there.   | Although D was able to stay in the infirmary she did not want to leave her sister unprotected, so opted to go with them.                                     |
| 64. | Anyway we started our march. In those days, Jews were being marched, not on the footpath; you were never allowed on the footpath, you were marching where the traffic was going. I don't know if you're aware of that, so dodging traffic, and we were marched in a column the whole day.   | They were then marched out of their hiding place.  |
| 65. | During this day boys on bicycles that used to carry goods from shop to shop, I don't know if you realise, they were delivery people like that, used to come along and say, "if your luggage is too heavy for you, we'll take it on ahead for you." They came a time when I could no longer carry my rucksack, I actually think my rucksack, I still carried but I had a little suitcase as well, and the suitcase with my diary which I really feel sorry about that went. But at least kept my hands, both hands free. | NROH   |
| 66. | And I had both my sister and I had a straw shoulder bag, a very fashionable thing, that an aunt who was hiding with us bought us, and that had, it was an open bag on top.  | NROH   |
| 67. | A girl in front of me managed to get some biscuits out of the storeroom and she had them in a scarf. Because she only had one hand free, one of those corners was loose, and every now and then a biscuit was going to fall on the road. So I used to put my hand under and pop it in my bag. We couldn't really help each other very much, but that's how it somehow worked out.   | NROH   |
| 68. | Very late in the afternoon, we came to the ghetto. We were taken to a big square and then it was decided that we were taken to this big market hall.  | They were taken from their hiding place into a ghetto.   |
| 69. | When we arrived there, there was this big yelling and screaming all your valuables had to be thrown into this big crate. There was a big wooden crate with wooden steps leading up to it, and any valuables you had to throw in there.  | They arrived to a situation of great chaos and commotion in the ghetto.  |
| 70. | So whatever I had including my gold chain, and I had, I always wore corals to ward off the evil eye, so I threw that in, that was just one thing.   | They had to give up all their valuables.   |
| 71. | And then they told us that we can go upstairs and stay in this room. So we did that, and at least we were together with some people that we knew, and some strangers.   | They were then forced into a room with many other people.  |
| 72. | But what was astonishing that before we were allowed to go upstairs, there was this very old lady, we were sitting on the ground and she took one look at my sister, and she had such rachmonos on her, she looked so skinny, and she gave her a roll. Well, you know, that was really an ultimate act of kindness. My sister at that stage was only six and a half years old.  | NROH   |

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| 73. | So we went up to this room and we settled ourselves as best as we could, and I discovered in my pocket some loose change, and I threw it out the window, because, you know, they made a tzimmes if, you life depended on giving away everything that you had. I'm sure the next morning someone in the ghetto was very happy picking it up.  | NROH   |
| 74. | Some of the older kids who were there longer pointed to something that they said that that's where all the bombs were mined, and we would all be blown up. Anyway, so we didn't have any great illusions.  | They realized they were in the middle of a war zone.   |
| 75. | The older children opened up some cans that they took from the storeroom and they were meat, meat cans, and my sister was hungry so she wanted to eat, and fortunately because I was kosher I wouldn't let her take any of it, and I said "you have your roll, you can eat your roll."   | The rituals of the Jewish religion seemed to be a protective device for D and her sister, and provided a discipline and framework, which appeared to strengthen her resolve in hiding. |
| 76. | I developed something amazing. I developed mind over matter right from then on. I'm not hungry, I'm not hungry and I'm not hungry. I was the plump one in the family, and this was a very great thing that I was able to do.   | D developed a survival technique that she carried with her whilst in hiding, in that she convinced herself she was not hungry.   |
| 77. | In the night and during the next morning, everybody was sick, whoever ate the meat, because this had to be cooked for a while. In the tin, but it had to be cooked. So we were very fortunate, we were really the only two except for another two children.  | NROH   |
| 78. | Imagine our luck, that when we arrived in the ghetto, in this big market hall, that if you have relatives you can go to them in the ghetto, but we were not from Budapest originally, so I had no relatives, so that's where we stayed.  | NROH   |
| 79. | Two girls from where we were went to look for their relatives and they couldn't find them.   | NROH   |
| 80. | After the war, this lady friend of my father's who originally placed us into that house, told us the story that she's walking in the ghetto and she sees these two girls with tears, tears run from their faces, from their eyes and their noses, so she asked them "where are you from children" and they told them the story that they were cleaned out from this hospital and they were brought into the ghetto here. So she said then "the Deutsche children were with you" and they said "yes, sure. So she said "what are you doing on the street, it's dark, it's cold", and they told her the name of their relatives, so she said to them "look to back to that market hall where you were taken. In the meantime, I will find your relatives and tomorrow at 3 o'clock you come to this address on the third floor is a soup kitchen and I will meet you there". | NROH   |
| 81. | So they came back and in the morning, first and foremost they gave me a job to cut people's hair, don't ask me why they did that. The only good thing I got out of that was that we both got lice out of it you see. Up till then we were at least clean.  | NROH   |
| 82. | And uh, they said that we are to go to this place, but by the morning the situation was different. They wouldn't let us out of there. They had other agenda for us.  | NROH   |
| 83. | So we were determined that we were going to go and meet her, and we waited and while there was a commotion, arresting somebody else, at the door, the four little kids we smuggled ourselves out the door. But we did it in the morning and so we walked there. We arrived it was still before lunch, and we were too early, she wasn't there yet.   | NROH   |
| 84. | But we were at the soup kitchen and elderly people were coming and getting soup, and we begged them "please let us inside". No they can't. We hid behind a door. They wouldn't let us stay inside. "Could we have some soup?" "Out of the question this is for old people".  | NROH   |
| 85. | So, we had nothing to do but to stand again outside, you know how it is in Europe, you have a walkway right around, we plastered ourselves against the wall and we waited.   | NROH   |

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| 86. | At one stage, we had to ask somebody because my sister had to go to the toilet, so we knocked on the door, there were two old people living there, we went to the toilet, he was reading a newspaper, we said "could we stay in here?" "No". So we went. We didn't question anything, we just tried to help ourselves, but to no avail.   | NROH   |
| 87. | So we stood there and I was feeding my sister these biscuits. You have no idea into how many pieces you can break a biscuit and how every crumb is the start of another meal.   | NROH   |
| 88. | Anyway, then we're standing again, and suddenly I see this man, this man that my father gave the money to in the Jewish Centre. And he was a tall lanky guy, so I grabbed hold of his sleeve, his jacket sleeve and I pulled it and I said "mister, I know you" and he said to me, "and who are you?" and I said "I'm Deutsch Nando's daughter and this is my sister". So without a word he picked me up in one arm, my sister up in another arm, and the other two girls just followed straight into the soup kitchen.   | NROH   |
| 89. | He sat us down, he went to get us all soups, and he gave us two rolls each. Two Kaiser rolls each. This particular time the soup was a very strong Hungarian cabbage soup, and on our empty stomachs it was very difficult to eat it, but it was hot and yummy, and I ate it with one of my rolls, but I wouldn't give up the second roll. Not for anything, you know, that was for later. For who knows what will eventuate. So I couldn't actually finish the soup.   | NROH   |
| 90. | This gentleman knew the lady we were to meet because they were networking, they knew each other. So he waited with us until she came.   | NROH   |
| 91. | When she saw how tremendously exhausted we were, she said, she's going to put us through, this was only three thirty in the afternoon, she had the address of the other two girls relatives, so she sent them off happily to them and the two of us, she simply requisitioned somebody's place.   | NROH   |
| 92. | This was in the ghetto, she went in, she knew this man apparently, and she told us that we can go to sleep in this bed.   | NROH   |
| 93. | I only know that we were saying our prayer, because I always Krishma Leined with my sister, when someone burst into the room and started to yell and when he saw us praying like this, he backed out of the room together with this lady and we were left sleep.  | NROH   |
| 94. | After the war I found out he wanted to throw us out, what a chutzpah to put us in his room but when he was what we were doing, he didn't have the heart to do it. I'm telling you this because you are religious and because this will mean something to you, that twice something amazing like this happened to us because I was a believer.   | NROH   |
| 95. | So these two darling people concocted a plan for us. If you would read it in a book, you wouldn't believe it. What was this man doing in the ghetto? He was still in Arbeits Lager, still requisitioned by the Germans to work for them. He was stationed in SS headquarters, one of the headquarters, which was the Garret Hotel in Budapest. They gave him flour which he had to bring to the ghetto to be baked into this rolls and then in the morning, he'd spend the night and in the morning he would take fresh rolls there, and then he had another job as well. | NROH   |
| 96. | These people who worked for the SS there in the headquarter, were allowed to keep their families in one room. His family didn't exist any longer so they decided that he will smuggle us out in two sacks of flour in the truck out of the ghetto and he will say that we are his family.   | D and her sister were then hidden by a man who had lost his own family, who managed to smuggle them out of the ghetto in sacks of flour. |
| 97. | And this is exactly what happened. We again went into a room, we drove in from a side entrance, and we went up to this room, it was at night, it was still dark, it was early morning, but it was winter, it was very dark. And we went into this room, and we never stepped out of there again.  | He managed to hide them in a room right in the midst of the SS headquarters, until the end of the war.                                   |
| 98. | The reason that I know the exact date of this is because the only full day that I spent in the ghetto was my 11 <sup>th</sup> birthday, 14 <sup>th</sup> December.  | NROH   |



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| 99.  | We got into that room; we were again the only two children without a mother. The men slept elsewhere but all the children who were there were all with mothers, and it wasn't easy.  | There were other children in this room, but they were all hiding with their mothers, which made it acutely painful to D and her sister that they were on their own.                    |
| 100. | For some reason, everybody was supplied with a black cup of coffee and a piece of carrot and either a piece of kohlrabi or something green like a pepper, but just a slice, in the morning and nothing else, that was it. Presumably the husbands were bringing for the wives to cook for the children, but because my mentor had two jobs and if he came in the morning bringing the rolls, he saw that we were getting this coffee, so he presumed I think that we were getting other food as well. You would think so. But in fact, we didn't and on the very rare occasions that I saw him I didn't presume to ask him for anything. I think he used to leave us a couple of rolls if he could, but it was a very rare time. | D and her sister were given some scant supplies in hiding, but they didn't complain and she didn't dare presume to ask the person hiding her for anything extra.                       |
| 101. | And to tell you the truth, I have no idea how we even survived, because we could smell the food that they were cooking and I don't ever remember anybody giving us any and I certainly wouldn't have asked for it.   | It was extremely difficult for D and her sister to manage their hunger during this time.   |
| 102. | It was, from every aspect, it was terrible, but I can tell you that we didn't allow ourselves to feel terribly much. I can categorically tell you that I never cried, I never allowed myself the luxury to think if I had my Mummy here, or something like that, we totally accepted, we were happy with everything, we thought...   | Despite the horrors of the situation, D suppressed and repressed any longing for her parents and reigned herself to this situation quite passively as a way of coping with the trauma. |
| 103. | I only remember thinking that I've got to keep my sister alive or my parents will kill me, but if I would have been dead anyway they could have killed me, but that sort of reasoning, I couldn't get that far.  | D's feelings of protectiveness towards her younger sister sustained her throughout her hiding.   |
| 104. | I remember a funny incident like speaking to another girl who was a little bit older who was there with her mother, and her mother asked her to ask me whether I have my period, because I was very grown up for my age, and fully developed and you knew, they could see me wash myself. And she said, "do you have it?" and I didn't know what she was talking about, so I wanted to pretend that I'm very worldly and I know. I said "which one?" (laughs).   | NROH   |
| 105. | So that's you know little things like that and I remember an incident you see, we had mattresses on the floor. They were only mattresses on the floor, this room and no windows and at one end we had some cooking facility, some Primus, and then there were two buckets, one with water and one to use as a toilet. And I got into terrible trouble one night because I made a mistake with the buckets.   | NROH   |
| 106. | And then there was once when they noticed I was scratching, I had these long plaits and I was scratching myself, my hair, and about that time everyone was scratching themselves, but they decided to cut off my hair and to me you could do anything, you could beat me, you could be nasty to me, you could do anything, I didn't care. But my hair, I promised my father, my hair won't be cut until I'm 17, 18 years old. And I made such a big fuss, that they said "all right, we'll cut off your plaits, but you can keep your plaits". So they just took one shoulder length the other one, and that was it and my hair never grows any longer than that. It was such a traumatic experience for me.                     | NROH   |
| 107. | And another little incident that I remember, that the mattresses were pushed toward, next to each other, and one day somebody pulled out a bra from between the two mattresses. Obviously someone else had slept on that before. There were two sister-in-laws, one was pulling the bra and the other one was pulling it by the other end and one said "it's mine" and the other one said "no, it's mine" and then, one of them said to one who was flat chested, she said, "and what will you put in it?" So I thought that was a very funny thing.   | NROH   |
| 108. | And this made me think of doing something. Because at this stage someone was coming every day at the same time into this room with a tray of vanilla slices which they obviously pinched from a bakery. And the people were buying these vanilla slices every day, you had an opportunity to buy the vanilla slices but I had no money, so imagine our distress, particularly my sister, because she didn't like the cake, but she only like vanilla slices. And I had no way of and the smell, nothing smells like vanilla slices. So I thought if those people found that bra between, maybe I'll find something among my  | NROH   |

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|      | things. I took out everything that I owned and I shook each piece individually, I shook it. Clothes, books, whatever I had. And when I took out that book of my marks from school, I shook it out and 100 panders fell out. And from that day on, we lived on vanilla slices.   |   |
| 109. | The story doesn't end there, my parents reunited somewhere in a very dangerous place and only my father could have devised it, he sent some nuns for us. Possibly we would have been better off where we were, but in fact we joined my parents. My parents didn't recognise me. They hugged and kissed my sister and they didn't know who I was at that stage. I was totally emaciated.  | NROH  |
| 110. | That was one of the most terrible, I actually told this to Paul Valent, because Paul to that moment thought that when you are reunited with your parents, you live happily ever after type of thing. And we had a lot of other problems.  |   |
| 111. | But the most traumatic feeling I had, and my mother can't believe this, she said, "it must have been only for a minute, we knew it was the two of you coming". But I had to say "I'm D...." to my own parents. Because I wanted a hug too.  |   |
| 112. | And that was it. The war hadn't finished, we were still hiding. We were actually hiding in the worst possible place. It was a disused building on the banks of the Danube, at that stage there was shooting across the Danube constantly, and we had bombs fly right through that building. There were tanks on the vacant block on this side and the river on the other side. But actually 500 Jews survived there and we were freed there by the Russians.  | D's family continued to hide even after the war had finished. |
| 114. | It was incredible situations.   | NROH  |
| 115. | To the last minute Betar was running raids out of there and saving people. And, my mother used to cook on a tin and you'd open a can and then you cut a little hole on one side and you fed bits into it. You could cook a huge pot on that. We survived there.   | NROH  |
| 116. | It was incredible, not many any more, because just before the end they cleared people out to burn the ghetto, but my father was always very innovative, we were standing in the street, my mother rummaging in the rubbish can while we were standing and no one was allowed to go back into the house and they announced that if anyone will re-enter the house they will be shot, and my sister asked, "does it hurt more to be shot or to be hit by an axe" because she didn't know what it is to be shot. So my father in desperation because he didn't want to go to the, to where they were taking him, would have been for the third time, he picked her up in his hand and said "small pox, small pox" and we were all marched back with him into the house, so we were actually saved that way. But that was like the last two weeks already.  | NROH  |
| 117. | And I found my room, the room I was hiding in the Garrett Hotel, by a sheer coincidence. You know when we went back to Budapest now with my husband after the war, we went to the Garret Hotel, because everyone goes to the Garret Hotel, it's very famous and at that stage I didn't know where I was hiding. Because when we went out of our hiding place, these nuns came, my father found out again from that lady, because she was always there, everywhere in the kingpin, where we are now, and he wanted us to be together, and he implored two nuns to come and get us. When they came to get us, we went out not through the front of the building but through the driveway on the side. And by coincidence, when we now went after the war to visit the Garret Hotel, we wanted to see the baths and they were already closed, but they said if we go in through the side entrance, you can still catch a lift and go up and see it. One day, I'm showing my photos album, showing off with my first grandchild, here in Melbourne to somebody, and there's also a photo of me in front of the Garret Hotel and this Polish guy, a Jewish guy, who was hiding in Hungary at the time and he says "don't show me the Garret Hotel, that's where I was interrogated and beaten up". That was SS headquarters. And I said to him, "that's funny, I was hiding in SS headquarters". So it didn't leave my mind, because when he told me that it was like my heart would have stopped and I said "that's the entry where we went in and that's the exit where I left!" There was not a shadow of doubt in my mind that this is the building, because if I've been somewhere once, I don't need to know the address, I will find it again. That's how I found our original flat in Hungary too. So, I thought, that's it, that's 100% that's it. I went back to a child survivors' meeting in Budapest only about six years ago | NROH  |

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|  | <p>and at the same time there was a holocaust exhibition in the town hall and I went through that whole exhibition and it didn't say anything that the Garret was SS headquarters. They did the headquarter of other...But I was convinced that this is it. So I undertook to go there and find that room. Now, I must tell you it was an incredible experience. Just when you enter the Garret it is a most beautiful lobby, there is a mezzanine floor with like a semi-balcony and as soon as I walked in I knew that the room I was in was right in the centre of this mezzanine thing. But I thought it's impossible, that we could have actually been in that room, and if you step out the door of that, you see underneath you the whole lobby. And that day when I went there was this seminar going on, and when I walked up the steps, they kept asking me "would you like a drink, which group do you belong to" trying to give me food and it was like a surrealist thing and I just wanted to go to that room. I opened the door and sure enough there was this long, long room with no windows, only this one door and the hall at the end of it and I still tried to convince myself it couldn't have been, I mean people are walking outside this door constantly, this is a busy hotel, and it was a busy headquarters then, could we have been quiet and cowering inside this room so that nobody, nobody ever came in there and we were never stood up. So I went to the lifts and I went up every floor and there's only rooms, hotel rooms there and this is the room. It was incredible, for two little children of six and a half and eleven to manage this. Yes, my mother when they asked her for comments, she says, "I can only say that people came and visited me, even people I didn't know after the war, for a family to survive with four people.. All to survive." Very unusual.</p> |  |
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**SUBJECT 4:**

|    | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR R.  | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.   |
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|    | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden.)  |  |
| 1  | The hidden part was in 1940...around 1942 we went into the first hiding of course, that was when the Germans invaded the Russian part of Poland, and we went into hiding in a cupboard where we spent 13 months, in a cupboard which was behind the wall.   | R was initially hidden in a physically confined space behind a wall for a period of thirteen months.   |
| 2  | It was like a divided wall, it was an arrangement, a commercial arrangement, and we were renting the cupboard for a very high price.  | The hiding place was not offered to their family on compassionate grounds, but rather it was an outright commercial transaction.                                       |
| 3  | And it was behind the wall, and the cupboard would have been about two metre across the full length of it, about a metre high, because I had no problem walking. My head started touching after a year so...but I didn't stay long enough to get uncomfortable and I could walk between his parents, and that would have been about...also a metre wide, because my parents, most of the time lay or sat. They couldn't stand up because it wasn't high enough. | The space was big enough for R to stand in comfortably, however his parents who were there together with him, were very cramped.                                       |
| 4  | My father, my mother and I were in that cupboard for over a year.   | R was there with both his parents, for over a year.  |
| 5  | We were in complete darkness right through because we never left the cupboard until we got kicked out.  | NROH   |
| 6  | So that was behind the wall and food was given to us at night.  | NROH   |
| 7  | We never actually saw the faces of the farmers that were helping us, because it was an arrangement, as I explained and my father gave all his gold and so on which he had accumulated over the years.   | There was no relationship between the 'hosts' and their family behind the wall, it was purely a commercial arrangement.  |
| 8  | Gold coins was the only currency that was really worth something in those days and to cover it for a year's rent, because he had worked it out somehow that the war would only last a year and the Russians would send the Germans back and they would be liberated because they were on the Russian side of Poland.  | His father had calculated the length of the war, and paid in gold currency for his estimate of the war's duration.   |
| 9  | Well the war lasted an extra three years after that, but that was just one of those things.   | Although the war extended considerably beyond this estimate, R simply accepted this.   |
| 10 | And in that cupboard for me life was quite normal.  | R describes the extraordinary circumstances in which he was hidden, as an ordinary time.   |
| 11 | Because there were many things. There were quite a few advantages for me in that cupboard.  | There were secondary gains to being hidden in the cupboard for R.  |
| 12 | First of all I spent much more time with my father than I had ever before. My father was always a busy doctor who would occasionally come to give me a whack because I misbehaved. (If) I got my socks dirty or something.  | His father, who was largely absent in his pre-war existence, other than metering out the occasional discipline, was a constant presence during their period of hiding. |
| 13 | Well, I am talking about Poland. Poland in the thirties, which is different to today, so that was a figure of a person that would deal with me in a manner and occasionally I would see him at weekends but very rarely. He was just too busy for that sort of thing...for me.  | They (Father and Son) had a somewhat minimalist relationship prior to the war.   |

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| 14 | But in the cupboard, he just wasn't going anywhere, and we spent a lot of time together.   | However, their hiding, forced and forged their relationship, in a very real way.  |
| 15 | He taught him to read and write on the palm of my hand, numbers and um, not to write but to read, and numbers....  | R learnt from his Father, the fundamentals of education during this period.   |
| 16 | That was my first year at school because I was already then about seven years old.   | NROH  |
| 17 | So my first year at school was quietly whispering into my ear because they had to be in complete silence in all time, because no-one in the house, in that farm, knew that they were hidden.   | There was a constant vigilance about being heard throughout this time, because of the dangerous nature of their hiding.                               |
| 18 | Because well people would come and go and hiding Jews in Poland in 1942 was not something that one would take very lightly.  | There was an awareness of the serious nature of being hidden, and the dangerous implications of it.   |
| 19 | The food would come every night, no problem, about two or three in the morning, two buckets would always come. I remember that clearly, one bucket was water that they used for drinking, and the other bucket was what they used for toileting, and so they had that bucket that had a cover on, the other one didn't.  | Their food supply was regular and reliable.   |
| 20 | They would get a meal, it was always cold, but occasionally they would get something in addition to..it was mainly vegetables. I remember eating a lot of bread, we were never hungry, plenty of bread, plenty of potatoes, cold potatoes, all sorts of things, carrots, onions, which I hate since that day. I have never eaten an onion after the war, and those sorts of things, cheaper types of vegetables that were growing in the farm. Occasionally some sort of meat or something that tasted like meat, but very little of that. Soup, yes, yes, we often would get soup. Cold of course, always, but it was less trouble so we ate every day, there was no problem with this. | The food was meagre, but acceptable, although R has been left with an aversion to these foods today.  |
| 21 | My father devised some sort of itinerary for me to attend to.  | His father developed a structured programme for R to follow while in hiding.  |
| 22 | And that was, we would wash regularly because I didn't undress for 13, er 13 months, we just stayed as we were in that cupboard just in the same, but we would wash with a rag every morning whenever it was required to wash and so on. Exercise, I would exercise for about half an hour every morning, exercise.  | The routine involved washing and exercising.  |
| 23 | We tried to get my mother to do exercise as well but she was always very upset, she wasn't happy at all in the cupboard.   | R's mother refused to participate in these exercises and separated herself quite distinctly for the other two in the cupboard.                        |
| 24 | She cried nearly all the time, she just kept to herself, she hardly spoke, she was very, very upset, she just didn't think that...my father was quite cheerful about it.   | His mother's sadness during hiding, contrasted to his father's cheery demeanour.  |
| 25 | Now that I look at it retrospectively, I wonder what I had to be happy about, but I was okay, I had a ball, I mean, I exercised, I had reading and schooling, and all the stories that I was told. I still remember some of the stories. I think my father invented half of them but they were stories he was telling me and whispering into my ear...and life was good. Life was normal.  | In retrospect, R is surprised at his positive attitude, but at the time he was more than content with life.   |
| 26 | One got used to being in the dark, it's well, it was dark. We just went ahead and did everything in the dark, it was no problem, we did it by feeling, we didn't do it by seeing.  | Even the constant darkness did not pose any problems for R's everyday life, he learnt to compensate for the lack of sight, through the tactile sense. |
| 27 | And there were good moments there.   | NROH  |

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| 28 | But the money ran out and his father begged for a bit more so they took his shoes, he had good leather shoes which he bought from France, I think where he studied and he (F) had a good watch too, an Omega watch. I still remember the watch because it meant a lot in Poland, an Omega watch and a good pair of French shoes and an Omega watch, you really made it.  | The practical circumstances of their hiddenness involved his father buying extra time for his family though the trading of his own personal belongings.  |
| 29 | And I promised myself that the day would come when I would have an Omega watch and a good pair of shoes and I kept my promise. I have an Omega watch and a good pair of shoes.   | The objects that constituted the price that was paid by R's father, became highly valued and longed for throughout R's life.   |
| 30 | So he (F) gave that for an extra month, he got an extra month out of it, and then we were kicked out and that was another episode.   | The extra possession bought their family a bit of extra time, but they were eventually thrown out from their place of hiding.  |
|    | (What about your mother, you said she was upset?)  |  |
| 31 | No, I didn't worry about it, too much about it, no at the time I didn't sort of worry. She was upset and that was fine, people get upset, it's okay.   | At the time, R had no concern for his mother's constant melancholia, but just accepted it as a part of life. R seemed to have a wish to normalise his mother's pain, he made a place for it, in which it became 'normal'.                              |
| 32 | I did my crying too, when I used to get wet every now and then, not in the cupboard, but before the war. It was just a part of life. If somebody is not happy, that's part of living.  | R was familiar with his own pockets of sadness in his pre-hiding life, as experienced in a very physical non-emotional manner and simply accepted sadness as a part of life.   |
| 33 | Honestly, I didn't (get upset), at that point of time, it did not worry me.  | But while hidden, R did not feel upset.  |
| 34 | Afterwards I realised, of course, you know how much she suffered and to spend your days in a cupboard it's not the most desirable place for ...coming from a very comfortable existence, of a doctor's wife in Poland, they had all the necessary comforts, to be locked up in a cupboard somewhere, in a farm and darkness, it would not be all that exciting. It was for him, but not for them (his parents).  | Only later in life did R understand his mother's melancholia and he appreciated the losses his mother suffered and although R might have experienced the hiding as an adventure, he realises that this was not his parent's experience of this period. |
| 35 | It was okay, it became normal. It became normal, see that was the whole thing, people ask me how it can be normal, I said it was normal because if you spend a quarter of your life doing something, it becomes normal. If you spend 10 years of your life doing whatever, doing research as I am doing, that is a normal way of life for you, bringing up children or whatever, it becomes normal if it is a ratio of the time.   | R said the whole experience became normalised, as it was a significant part of his life.   |
| 36 | For me it was a quarter of my life that I spent, or a fifth of my life that he spent in the cupboard, the first fifth, so it became quite normal, yes sure, not just one day, if you go for five or ten minutes then...as in hide and seek, you know you are in and out, and that is a different thing altogether, but this was my home, I mean that I lived there, I got up every morning, I studied or ate, I slept, I walked, that all became normal, yes to me this was normal, no reservation about that.     | R said the hiding enveloped his whole experience in a very literal sense, it was not just an occasional fragment of his life.  |
| 37 | Fun? Perhaps he would have preferred to run in the park, and I had friends before the war of course, I remember that, there were other things that I would have preferred to do. I wasn't kicking the ball, I had a little tricycle before the war, in fact there were only two of them in my town, they were also brought in from Europe from friends. And they were enjoyable times, sure I remember the times from before the war which were not available in the cupboard, but I adjusted to a different life. | Although R acknowledges that he probably missed out on some pleasurable aspects of life, he adapted quite comfortably to his new environment.  |
| 38 | For me schooling was very important, my father made it sound like such an important thing, that I think I got my own back with my own children, and I made sure that my sons finished university by hook or by crook, they had to graduate.  | R developed a strong sense of the importance of schooling during this period, which he believes he has transmitted to his own children.  |

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| 39 | School is very important to me, I mean he (F) made it really very important. To him it was important, one doesn't become a doctor in Poland without applying oneself, so education was important to my father and to me and it helped me a lot.  | R attributes this high value of schooling to his father's own determination and conscientiousness.   |
| 40 | I must attribute it and I have considered it as a good fortune, that I was able to get that sort of visual schooling, because over the years I have had the good fortune of representing his State in chess on many occasions, 25 years in A Grade as a chess player then he had the good fortune of representing Australia in bridge in world championships and in the Olympics overseas and here and I think the reason...well it must be something to do with my memory and the fact that is that my memory is something which having learned the alphabet and counting in the darkness it must, it must have done something for my memory and I don't know ... the reason that my one year in the cupboard has improved a lot of my memory.  | R also values the nature and method of his schooling during his hiddenness and believes it sharpened his memory which has served him positively in his subsequent life. Further there is a feeling in R's description, that he had a tendency to reveal and overemphasise the positive elements of his experience, rather than focus on the tragedy or deprivations of his hiding. |
| 41 | I would not suggest that this is a prerequisite for being an international bridge player, I mean, that I don't believe that if you want to become a grand master in bridge, you should spend a year in the cupboard when you are six. No, it might not be, it's not something I would recommend, there must be other ways, but it certainly hasn't done me any harm.   | R re-emphasises that the experience of hiddenness enhanced his capacities and skills in his subsequent life and although it may have been a situation imposed upon him without choice, it had some benefits.   |
| 42 | It sharpened my memory. Definitely, because it's all so visual and all had to work in the head, it was in the darkness, so it wasn't something that you could read and read again, like you would memorise a poem or something, it was something that you had to visually see from the feeling of the hand without seeing, because I had never seen a letter, I had seen letters, but I had never been to school so 'A' was like that. Today, any number or any letters, he actually can visually feel the letter and the number, I know what the numbers feel like before I can see what it looks like because I couldn't see the visual form, but I could feel it in the darkness. I close my eyes and see the '3' which is like that (draws it in space) and the 'C' on the palm of my hands still, because it went on every day. I said I had a fair few lessons every day, you know, that went on for a year, I learnt something and so, yes, I think it has done me some good, but I don't recommend it. | The visualisations and tactile nature of his learning experience as well as the repetitiveness of it all had a positive effect on R's subsequent life.   |
| 43 | I didn't like the idea of always having to whisper and whisper in the ear, I would have liked to be able to just sneeze without covering my face, and knowing I wasn't allowed to, for everything. I couldn't even yawn because someone might hear, especially during the day, and it was 'shhhh' always, always.  | However the constant need for quietness and repression of natural and ordinary routines, was onerous for R.  |
| 44 | Even if one ever raised their voice, it was always, 'shhh' especially my mother always used to say. That was one of her contributions, was to make sure they were quiet, because my father and I had a lot to say to each other in whispers.   | His mother became the 'silencing monitor' towards R and his Father, who R had formed a talking sad.  |
| 45 | I think that maybe she felt like she was missing out, who knows...it was a man's business, male chauvinistic pig.  | R reflects that perhaps his mother felt marginalised from the father-son dyad which was forged during their hiding and that only the males counted in their hiding.  |
| 46 | So this was a bit annoying, to think that you couldn't think like normal.  | The continual repression became a source of irritation for R.  |
| 47 | I remember everything from before the war, so it was completely different. It was normal (then) and it was okay, but it was different there were other things and of course...   | While hiding R still had memories of life before hiding with which he contrasted his experience.   |
| 48 | Although I took seriously exercising, walking between my parents and all those things, but walking in the park was more fun really and doing other things, in some ways there were some things I was missing.  | R acknowledged this although it was somewhat 'fun in hiding', the lack of openness and freedom was experienced.  |
| 49 | I had no concern about worries, about survival or anything like that, that sort  | However the more global issue of survival did not impinge on R's   |

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|    | of thing didn't occupy my mind.   | thinking while hiding.  |
| 50 | I was too busy trying to remember my lesson from one to the next, because I always have been a very single minded person and very...  | R was very focused on his learning while in hiding.   |
| 51 | I think I started my ambitions in the cupboard with some degree of success. I guess the ambition was to remember the way that letter felt, and so on, because father would suddenly draw a 'V' and I had to say what it was. Once I got up to the initial lessons, I had to remember, so it was going through. I was working on it, oh very conscientiously, this was serious, this was serious.  | R believes the seeds of ambition were sown for him whilst in hiding as he applied himself very conscientiously to all tasks.  |
| 52 | Mind you there were some limitations in the cupboard so you had to treat something seriously perhaps, and that was yes, yes, I used to take that very seriously, learning, yes, it was okay.  | The nature of the confinement resulted in R applying himself conscientiously to his learning.   |
| 53 | There were certain things missing, I didn't worry about the food either, that was coming. I was never hungry in the cupboard What I was eating was not what he ate before the war, or after, but I think it was okay.   | Although there was some level of deprivation in hiding, R felt his physical needs were being met adequately.  |
| 54 | It was probably the most peaceful period of the 4½ years of the war that I had. Far less exciting than some of the episodes that followed of course, but too much excitement is also not too good.  | R experienced the stimulus deprivation of his time hidden in the cupboard as a positive and peaceful space for himself during the war years.  |
| 55 | After we were thrown out of the cupboard, we started wandering, we were only given the bundle of clothing which we had come in. We took just about everything else which we had with us, naturally all possessions, except for what was on our backs. They gave us a bundle of food and wandering in the forest at night time, just not knowing where they just would let you out and so we just went... just went.   | NROH  |
| 56 | Probably the most fascinating thing that ever happened to me, as a few exciting things did happen in my life, but I think the most exciting thing was that during the night, when the sunrise, the sunrise, we were in the forest and there was something like a crack somewhere, I don't know, if you are somewhere in eh darkness and you can just see a little crack, just a little bit of...if you have ever witnessed sunrise on a very dark night, in winter, when it is extremely dark and somehow the light arrives from somewhere, far, far, through the trees, you can see something. I got very excited and my father explained to me that I should keep my eyes shut because the sun comes up reasonably fast, and I would become blind, not having seen the light for a year or so, it could have some effect, the sunrise. I didn't know the medical implication of this and didn't really care but by then I had already established a character of my own, that I wasn't going to be straight. I decided that one has to have one's own identity and my identity was that I was going to start cheating from then on and he hasn't stopped, yet only now I do it legally. So I covered my eyes but of course left two fingers in-between so that I could still see it, you see and I thought I was fooling my father, but what I didn't realize was that I was finding it so exciting, the sun, that I started jumping up and down, not subconsciously, and of course I got such a whack on the hand from my father, I didn't fool him after all. | The deprivation (of sunlight here) experienced by R during hiding, created a wondrous and intense appreciation of re-experiencing what he had been deprived of, in this instance, the sunrise. What prior to the war was an everyday occurrence, without exclamation, became an intense and miraculous experience for R after his hiding. |
| 57 | Okay, if I was going to be a crook, then I would be a crook that is a good crook, so from then on I never got caught.   | NROH  |
| 58 | So I did close my eyes of course, and finally the sun came up slowly and he told me to do it afterwards, slowly, but not to get the direct impact of the light. So it was very exciting. It seems odd, that I spend five minutes talking to you about the sunrise, but different people find different things exciting.   | R acknowledges that the time he had spent talking to me about the sunrise was extraordinarily lengthy which highlighted for him the wondrous experience that it was for him at the time.  |
| 59 | It was nothing. There was... it was quite exciting to see Mona Lisa for the first time at Louvre also but....   | R realises that to be deprived of something and then to experience it again, is even beyond the great works of art in our culture.  |
| 60 | However, we were caught the very same day, just wandering, by the guards. It only lasted a few hours maybe six or eight hours or whatever. We were caught   | NROH  |



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|    | by some guards and taken for interrogation.   |  |
| 61 | Then there was more excitement. First of all we were taken in some cart to some sort of town, the nearest town. For the first time I came close to a German officer and he was fascinating to me. I had a lot of fascinating times happening in those 24 hours.   | NROH   |
| 62 | Now I was already 7 or 8 years of age. The war started when I was 5, at 6 we escaped, and the beginning of 1943 I was nearly 8, 7 and a bit.  | NROH   |
| 63 | I saw the German officer who stood there and there was a room full of people, that they had brought in, the guards brought them in, and something about they were arguing in Polish. They were translating because we couldn't speak to the German with a translator, because he said 'Juden', 'Juden', 'Juden'....this I understand now, I remember then, I didn't know what it meant.   | NROH   |
| 64 | And father denied that he was Jewish. He deliberately, all the papers and everything were destroyed because we didn't want to be caught as Jews. They thought they would just be caught as wandering people, because people were wandering, not just Jews were wandering, everybody was wandering, but the worst was a wandering Jew. The proverbial wandering Jew, yes they were.  | NROH   |
| 65 | So that is what we were. But that came to an end very quickly, because we were asked to remove our pants, took them to another room, my mother and I. There were other people there too, they weren't the only ones. There were other people that were caught and that were being caught, and were being taken, so their pants came down and in Poland, although I don't have to tell you this, but someone might hear this one day, only Jews were circumcised in Poland, unlike here, where you have a 50/50 chance of being circumcised and not Jewish. But then if you were circumcised you were a Jew and there is no argument, they didn't ask for your passports.  | NROH   |
| 66 | So that was that. In the meantime, the excitement was the officer, he had tall boots, boots that would nearly come up to my chest, because he stood there and he stood there very straight, very tall, he looked like... the nearest that I can describe him some forty years later, when I was in Florence, at the Statue of David, I found that quite impressive. You know it's a monument, it a monumental statue, something which is significant. Now to me, alright, it is hard to compare an SS soldier to Michael Angelo's David, but is something that impresses visually, you know, he stood there, gold buttons. I nearly went to touch them but mother was quick and he looked not even a smile, nothing. I just wondered because I thought I had seen something nice, it looked like a gold button, brass button, he was really good looking. | Because R had been living for an extensive period of time in a restricted sensory deprived space, when he emerged and was confronted by a soldier, he was overcome by the majestic appearance of this soldier. Instead of feeling scared by the threatening presence or the soldier R felt totally awed by his splendid and handsome appearance. |
| 67 | Most of the peasants, Ukrainian and so on, they all looked like peasants, like they still look today. I presume there is no love lost, but we of course were in rags, and my mother and father were hunchback. My mother never recovered, she stayed on from the cupboard, my father too, was the worst hunchback after that experience and in rags of course.  | R contrasted the majestic appearance of the soldier to the rags which he and his parents were wearing after emerging from hiding and the hunched posture and stature of his family after living in confinement.  |
| 68 | He (the soldier) looked so majestic, it was really a wonder that such a cruel animal could look so good, what a breed, how did G-d let these people live. Okay that's another chapter.  | R notes the paradox between the handsome appearance of the soldier and the cruelty that he represented.  |
| 69 | And after that we were taken away to what you call it, those trucks and trained to some camp which was not camp actually, it was a ghetto, which I only found out after discussion that they were in Lublin, in the Lublin ghetto, which is not the city where I came from, I came from Radom, but we escaped from Raddom before the ghetto was established, and we spent there 6 months in the ghetto. And the reality of war suddenly came to me in full, in its full aspects, everything about it.   | The family was taken to a ghetto where the full realities of war began to emerge for R.  |
| 70 | In the way, you know, what everybody knows about.   | NROH   |
| 71 | First of all we came to a situation where from the very first day, or first night, because as it was winter then, bodies were being taken out in the morning early. I wasn't supposed to go to the window but I did, and when I got caught I got pulled back again, but fortunately my parents were asleep and when they used to come with trolleys in the morning and all the bodies were put outside, usually they were the very old and the children that had frozen and   | R secretly and surreptitiously observed many of the comings and goings of the ghetto and the gruesome sights of bodies being taken out, elderly and children, who were dying   |

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|    | died during the night.   | at a regular rate.   |
| 72 | Always naked because in those days already in 1943, in those days clothing was currency which they changed clothing for food over the fence and so on, so the bodies were always naked and there was no burial, no Jewish burial, not any more, in the beginning yes, but there were just too many of them so the cart would just fill up and the bodies would be lined up, and this happened. | R observed these people were stripped of all clothes and were not even accorded the final dignity of a Jewish burial.  |
| 73 | And that was regular, and you already could understand what if and death meant.  | This was constant and the meaning of death had a very real presence.   |
| 74 | And also they were not allowed to go out, and I did go out once because his parents went to work and I was supposed to stay in hiding in the building.   | Although R was restricted to staying in the building, and hiding while his parents were at work, he rebelled from this on an occasion.   |
| 75 | Maybe it was 4 or 5 rooms, double storey, whatever it was some, ghetto. Might be 40 people who knows what because they were all coming and going, and new people were coming and others were going, and being taken out for extermination or whatever.   | NROH   |
| 76 | It was a feeding camp, ghetto for Treblinka, so people would come and go, come and go, and those that were there were in far worse condition than what we were.  | The ghetto was a feeding camp for the concentration camp, so the population was highly transitory, with the continual exterminations.  |
| 77 | They were reasonably well fed and looked reasonably good but they gradually more and more like starting looking like them after a few months of hunger.  | Although they arrived in reasonable physical condition, they started to deteriorate after a few months of deprivation there.   |
| 78 | My parents would only get a little bit of food for working manually, I would get no food so they brought me a little bit whatever they could because I wasn't supposed to exist.   | As R was in hiding, his existence was not acknowledged and he had to live off whatever food his parents were allocated.  |
| 79 | I didn't go out at once, there was another boy, a taller boy, a bigger boy than me in the house. I can't remember any other children, they came and went, the children disappeared.  | R noted that there was an absence of children in general, with the exception of one other boy. He believes the children were all taken off to be killed.                           |
| 80 | I don't think we lived there for long enough to get to know them.  | As the ghetto was very transitory, no real relationships were established.   |
| 81 | The original inhabitants, after two years in the ghetto, got pretty thin, if you didn't freeze oh well....   | NROH   |
| 82 | It was with that boy that we went out once. I remember we were chased by some dogs. They used to send dogs and we ducked into a place and hid under the stairs, but I learnt my lesson and never went there.   | During this phase of hiddenness there was an initial sense of playfulness that was lost during the course of his experiences and R came to accept the seriousness of his position. |
| 83 | I never told my parents that I went for an experiment. I kept this as a private little thing.  | R never revealed to his parents that he left his hiding spot in the ghetto.  |
| 84 | I was glad that I didn't feed the dogs, the dogs looked very hungry, but I moved pretty quickly.   | R realised that he could have lost his life on the occasion when he snuck out of the ghetto.   |
| 85 | I wasn't supposed to exist in this house. The children they had already got rid of them, they were just either dying or they were sending them for extermination.  | R was hidden in a context where children were being exterminated and his presence as a child was a highly unusual feature of the time they were experiencing.                      |

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| 86  | It came our turn as well of course to be deported to Treblinka, but in the meantime, we were just there, there was no use for them, it was only for people who worked.  | R and his family were there presumably in transition before being sent for extermination.   |
| 87  | I mean by saying we didn't exist, we were supposed to be in hiding, if they would come and catch them or catch some children, they would straight away send them to the gas chambers, they were not going to ask for the permission of the parents, if it would please them or not, and it was not the sort of thing.   | The children had no place in the ghetto as non-workers and if their hiding place was revealed they would have been sent for gassing immediately.                          |
| 88  | They only wanted people to work in those places, working, a working ghetto.   | The ghetto was only a safe place for those that worked.   |
| 89  | I did very little there during the day, manned the stairs, near the curtains to see what was happening, outgoing and so on. I would read a little to myself.  | R had very little to do whilst in hiding but was able to busy himself.  |
| 90  | I would remember a story, I would try and relate. Father would come at night and I would show him what I had remembered from his hand schooling, his palm schooling, to put it into practice.   | R would sustain himself by storing bits of information and practicing his schooling all of which he would relate to his father in the evening.                            |
| 91  | And that other boy that I had, a friend, taller boy, he disappeared too, he went somewhere.   | The one connection R had to another boy, dissipated quite quickly, as the boy vanished.   |
| 92  | There weren't any other children, I was just sitting.   | R was mostly alone, isolated from others.   |
| 93  | Mainly behind a couch, or some old wreck or something, between the curtain and the couch. I would just sit there, and would wait for my parents to come, spending all of the time in hiding.  | R spent his hiding times waiting for his parents to return in the evening. This became his focus.   |
| 94  | I was told to hide. I am not sure why I had to hide, but that was the reason, he thinks, because I found out after that if I didn't hide, I would get extinguished.   | R was told to hide in the house and although at the time he did not appreciate why this was so, he later found out that if he were not hidden, he would have been killed. |
| 95  | And then came our turn to go to Treblinka, which after about six months there. It was very hot, it was summer, and I remember it was very hot.  | However, eventually the hiding in the ghetto ended as their turn for transportation came up.  |
| 96  | We all assembled and we were taken in a cattle train, and that was my first experience in the cattle train, and it was, we were just squeezed into a train that was carrying other people, it wasn't just an empty train, it obviously had to come from somewhere, and there was room for a few more and so we were taken to Treblinka.   | NROH  |
| 97  | And now it is looking towards the end of 1943, well summer, July, August, September, whatever, before winter and...   | NROH  |
| 98  | We were fortunate in that luck, we had a bit of luck of course, as well, is that when we were taken to Treblinka, we were held in a holding camp. I had no idea of the name, I wish I could find out where it was and apparently it was only a few kilometres from the extermination camp itself. But at that stage no matter how fast they were killing Jews and I believe it was 2000 a day that they were able to gas and cremate, they had a backlog. | NROH  |
| 99  | It was end of 1943, it was really, the final solution was really going well and they were getting so many customers from everywhere that they couldn't keep it up.  | NROH  |
| 100 | So we were in the holding camp and while we were there someone approached father and told him that they needed doctors in the forest. The Polish partisans needed doctors and would he be interested and of course he was and the condition was that his mother and I would come with him. And if he couldn't prove that he was a doctor which he didn't look like one after,   | NROH  |

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|     | well, they are talking about nearly two years of wandering and that, he would be shot, killed on the spot and that was the condition. So he would know that he is not going to waste anybody's time.  |   |
| 101 | And we were taken to the partisans by Ukrainian guards once again, similar guards, and it was all arranged, and I remember that was good fun actually, it was enjoyable, if it can be enjoyable.  | NROH  |
| 102 | We were put in a cart with lots of clothing and other things and we were underneath, covered up with things and it was all arranged so the guards had to prod with their forks, but they knew were to prod, because where we weren't, none of them got touched. There were three of us lying underneath, and it was all 'a take', because the guards were on 'the take', the guards on the gate were on the take, the guards at the gate were on 'the take' and the Germans didn't worry about it either, they had no business at all, because all those things were done by Ukrainians and other auxiliaries, the Germans were just the officers going around in there in the ghetto.  | The family were able to smuggle out of the holding camp through an arrangement made with the guards who hid them in a cart.                         |
| 103 | Occasionally, they would walk around sometimes with dogs, Alsatian dogs, that usually belonged to the officers. German people but others, were just walking around.   | NROH  |
| 104 | And we were taken to the partisans, and I have got, I should have, but have not applied to the Guinness Book of Records, because I believe that I should be in it, because my life was actually worth four bottles of vodka, as against most people who survived, perhaps two, because the Ukrainian guards were given two bottles of vodka for catching them in the forest and taking them for interrogation and they were given another two bottles of vodka for taking them out and giving them to the partisans. So to get four bottles of vodka, that is, now you are talking to someone who is quite important you know. My life was worth four bottles of vodka. Well, I have done well since, it's worth more now, I paid off this house. | NROH  |
| 105 | And many things happened then, because I was getting old already. Now I was getting to be eight no, I was eight and I remember even more lots of things.  | NROH  |
| 106 | It became quite eventful because, during the night there were arrangements made that I wasn't privy to, and the arrangement was that I was going to go with my mother once my father proved that he was a doctor, and he remembered something. I suppose after practising surgery for eight years, he must have remembered something and that was okay.   | R was excluded from the arrangements his parents made about their hiding, which eventuated in he and his mother going into the village as non-Jews. |
| 107 | And we were taken by the same people who were waiting for them, the Ukrainians who were two way agents, one for the other side, for money they did everything, and my mother and I were taken to the village.   | NROH  |
| 108 | But at the same time arrangements were made for me to dress up as a girl and luckily enough I had long hair by then. In 1943 it wasn't fashionable that today I would get away with it, sort of long hair, and my mother told me after the war that I was quite a pretty girl. Do look like a pretty girls?   | R's hiddenness consisted of him disguising as a non-Jewish girl.  |
| 109 | I was a pretty girl. But there was a problem there, so when we went to the village to live in, there were sympathisers for the partisans in the village and my mother was supposed to be a relative of one of the farmers, whose husband was a Polish officer, who was killed in Catin, so many officers were...non-Jewish, and his mother spoke a very good Polish, because she was fortunate to go to a Polish high school in Radin, which was not all that easy because most Jews went to a Jewish high school, so she couldn't speak Yiddish, but she could speak a very good Polish.   | His mother was supposed to be a Polish non-Jew.   |
| 110 | My father stayed with the partisans.  | His father stayed with the Polish partisans.  |
| 111 | And I and my mother were non-Jews. As non-Jews and Christians and my name was Maritia Oletsky and mother was Rosa Oletsky, and I remember the name, and my mothers.   | R and his mother adopted false Polish names.  |
| 112 | But there was a problem, I don't know if I am aware of it, that in Polish they have a gender, in other words girls speak differently to boys. They don't use,   | Although the disguise posed many challenges for R, he said they were  |

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|     | when you say a boy, you say "....." and a girl says "....." so they changed one letter, but that goes for everything. So I had to, you couldn't learn in three hours to speak like a girl, after eight years of speaking like a boy, so there was a problem, but all those things were to be taken care of.  | always able to adapt to them.  |
| 113 | I sort of had good luck, people were always able to think for him and I have done a bit of thinking since.   | R believes his fortune lay in having people around him who had integrity and had an ability to adapt and adjust to new circumstances.  |
| 114 | I was retarded, I was a retarded girl, this is why I was awkward, I wore a skirt, and it all looked funny, and I tried to walk like a girl or what was my perception of a girl and all boys make a lot of noise and girls are much slower, but that was the prerequisite, and I was a retarded girl, which I played the part extremely well.   | To surmount some of these difficulties, R took on the role of a retarded girl, which enabled him to restrict his verbal interactions, which if he slipped with this, his true identity would have been discovered. It seemed R was able to adapt to this role very satisfactorily. |
| 115 | And so my only obligation was to go to church on Sunday with everybody, everybody went to church on Sunday.  | This role had very few obligations for R.  |
| 116 | But I didn't have to go to school, because in school I would have been discovered. But I was retarded so it was okay.  | He did not have to attend school in his new persona.   |
| 117 | Kids used to tease me, but I might have been retarded but I wasn't stupid so I worked out a device that I would actually, defensive because they would tease, anyone who is not normal who is a bit odd.   | Although R was subjected to some teasing by other kids in his new role, R managed to fend this off quite successfully and adapted well to his new personality.   |
| 118 | And I was playing the part and looking pretty silly sort of thing, so I was really overdoing it as a kid, so well if I was going to be retarded R decided, I might as well be properly retarded, so I was making noises, things like that, he never spoke to anyone "woo, woo, woo.." I was just making noises, frightening kids, and I would spit at them, throw things at them, and I felt quite defensive, instead of attacking me they felt that I was too stupid to worry about and they left me alone. | R got a bit of enjoyment in 'playing his part' and turned his new situation towards his favour.  |
| 119 | I was going pretty well, so every time I went around somewhere, I wouldn't go out of my way to disturb them, but they were pointing fingers and talking but they stopped that because I was quite aggressive, defensive about the handicap. And that lasted for six months.  | This disguise lasted for six months and R adapted well to his new role   |
| 120 | And then it was back to winter now, and in winter became dangerous, winter of beginning of 1944, became dangerous to be there because more and more Jews were being caught and they were still looking for them and there was some talk about or something or other.   | But their external environment during this time became increasingly dangerous.   |
| 121 | I am not quite sure what it was, I have never been told the full story because my mother never spoke about the war, never, never spoke, never any reference to anything that happened from 1939-1945, never, never.  | R is not sure of any of the details of this time, because even after the war, his Mother repressed the whole experience and never discussed it with R.   |
| 122 | So I only know what I remember and what I heard and some of it I might be adding to it but I know it was dangerous.  | So R's knowledge of this time came purely from his own memory as a small boy and he remembers the sense of danger felt at that time.   |
| 123 | For some reason, I was taken back to the forest, as a boy and had my hair cut too, my first hair cut for 2½ years.   | R is unsure why, but he was taken back to the forest at this time, as a boy, to hide with the Polish partisans.  |
| 124 | And then I spent the rest, the last 18 months, year and a half, that winter and another one, the winters I remember well in the forest, because it got cold and the temperature dropped below 30 degrees, minus 30 degrees, it was pretty cold in the open.  | He spent 18 months there, out in the open, in very cold weather.   |

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| 125 | And most of the time was spent on trees, inside trees, on trees, under water in summer in marshes in hiding, but mainly in winter, on trees, on top of trees and you sort of covered up. If you got far enough covered with the snow, they couldn't see you, because the soldiers and other people would come over.   | Most of the time was spent in hiding in trees, covered with snow, to hide from invasive soldiers.  |
| 126 | Occasionally I would see my father. Not all that often because he was in the hospital and I was with the partisans.   | R had some contact with his Father during this time, who was with another group of partisans in the forest.  |
| 127 | So I was an active partisan sort of and my commander, who was actually a proper officer in the Polish army, he had part of his uniform, what was left of it after a couple of years in the forest, they all got looking a bit tattered. Urik, I don't know his surname, but I only remember that. I have been interviewed and asked the identity of him or something (but) I have no idea, just Urik, we knew him as Urik. That was his name and we referred to him as Captain Urik, and he decided that he was going to find something useful for me to do because I was too young. I couldn't shoot, I couldn't do much but and I was always in hiding and he decided to take me with him, see he had a sense of humour, he must have had a few good drinks of vodka which he shared with me occasionally. I only got a sniff, very little, and he made me, he gave me a function, and I became known in that particular division, well 30 or 40 soldier in that group, there were lots of groups like that all over the place, that were guarding the hospital from a distance, and so on. | R developed a sense of identity and belonging with the partisans which was a very important experience impacting on his later life. Further it seemed that there was something unique about R's personality which made other people want to include and protect him as evidenced by his inclusion with the partisans, even though he was a mere child. |
| 128 | And he made me a feather boy. He gave me a feather off a bird and he called me a feather boy. I thought this was quite an honour, because I now became a fully fledged partisan, they went with guns, swords and knives and I was going with my feather.  | R was given a particular task amongst the partisan unit, which gave him a sense of value and respect in the unit.  |
| 129 | In retrospect this seems a little odd, a partisan with a feather, but I had a function, which I thought I did very well.  | Looking back, R views his role in the partisans as quite bizarre, but at the time he felt valued as he had been assigned a particular role.  |
| 130 | I considered myself a good chance person, even from my younger days, and my function was when they ambushed soldiers, mainly Germans or course, they would, I was never involved in a shoot out, it was always done, they would bayonet them or cut their throats with knives but there was not shooting because you would bring some, they would catch there maybe a group, a whole group or regiment of Germans going through and two would wander away for whatever reason. They would grab them and cut their throats quietly, and when they were done, I had to put the feather under the nose of the victims that were bayoneted and count up to 100 and if the feather didn't move they were dead, and they would start removing things of course which were necessary, the pistols... and I would carry round in this things, tie them up and carry them round my neck. I was given the spoils to carry.  | R had a sense of confidence in his capacity to survive and to create opportunities for himself in a variety of situations.   |
| 131 | And so anything like belts or things like that were taken away because they were good currency in those days.   | He was able to develop a sense of 'street-smartness' about the war.  |
| 132 | But occasionally some of them would move, and even, I learnt my first few words of German then, because he even recalled in one particular instance one was able to pull out something from his pocket, he was only half killed, and he was trying to show me photographs of his, I remembered words something in, what sounded to me like, 'Frau' and 'kinder', he showed me his wife and children and of course we had no time for sentiments so all I had to do was to call them over like that, with the finger and they would come up and finish off another couple of, another couple of cuts, and he would stop talking about his wife and children.   | This developed into a sense of toughness, as any sentiment or compassion expressed by R, was worked out of him through the course of his experiences during hiding with the partisans. This 'hardness' became a necessary tool in his function to survive.   |
| 133 | And I questioned that a little bit about something or other to the reference of that one, and they explained to me very nicely, and I had no further problems with that, and they said for everyone of them that dies one of them survives, so don't feel sorry for their children and their wives, because they kill them, they don't worry about their children and their wives, so they live or they die, and it's better to live than to die, so you kill them before they kill you.  | At one point R felt some compassion to those he was killing, and he questioned their actions, however he was hastily brought back to reality and made to realise the immense gravity of their precarious and dangerous situation, with the very real threat of being killed, pervading their everyday life.  |

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| 134 | So living and dying became an integrated arrangement, so to kill was normal to me now, because for once now we are the side that could actually kill, where before we were being killed, and so on and carried away and other things, but here I was with a group of people, that could actually decide their own destiny.   | So life had very little value for R during this time and he became quite immured towards death.  |
| 135 | Well many of them died of course so that was good.   | NROH   |
| 136 | I had not seen my mother for 18 months during this time. She heard about them and we heard about her, but she stayed in the village. She spent the rest of the war in the village.   | R had no contact with his mother throughout this whole period.   |
| 137 | I once said to my father the last time I saw him, about a year after the time we were talking about, that big boys don't cry and I couldn't understand why he cried. But then he said, oh well he is a doctor, not a partisan, that was his way of working it out.   | R was perplexed when he saw his father crying because he had been hardened not to give in to his emotions, but dealt with this by saying that his father was not a trained partisan.   |
| 138 | So before I became a partisan, I was really getting trying towards the fact that big boys don't cry, he didn't sort of, it was something that you don't worry about because it becomes normal.   | His experiences with the partisans hardened R against all sentiment and emotions.  |
| 139 | When we took our son to school for the first time to Moriah college, when he was about 4½ years in Dickens St, he cried, and my mother cried, and everybody cried, because I was divorced and my mother was looking after my son, and so I said look at the donkey, he cries when he goes to school, and I thought he had no chance, he wouldn't have survived.  | Even when later in life R was taking his own child to school for the first time during a particularly tumultuous time of his life, he looked down upon his mother and son who were both tearful and noted that they did not have inherent survival skills as he did. He perceived their sentimentality as a sense of weakness. |
| 140 | We were very conditioned. I am a regimented sort of a person, who accepts things as they go.   | R said their training as partisans was very regimented, and he accepted this.  |
| 141 | I question, yes, but in a different way to in a positive way, in other ways. I seek out knowledge and I seek to find the reasons and other things, but I don't sort of say, 'I don't like that, and I would prefer to stay on the farm' or so forth.   | R does not believe this resignation was a reflection of his simplemindedness, but rather he accepted the parameters of the reality within which he had to exist, in order to survive.  |
| 142 | We were told, certain things you have got to do and we just did them. We didn't have too many options in that sort of situation, our options were limited, as you realise, it's hard to explain, but we didn't have the option of deciding yes or deciding no, be happy or unhappy or think about it, or so on.  | But during this period, they were given very few choices, choice was considered an unobtainable luxury for these times.  |
| 143 | We talked about whether you live or you die, that sort of situation, which we are not facing today, but that's the sort of life and death, it was so intermingled, so we didn't ask too many questions, we just stayed alive.  | They were more concerned with the issue of life and death and became very focused on survival.   |
| 144 | Once we accepted the fact that it's better to stay alive than to die, we just went ahead and did everything according to what we had been told, and if you used your imagination a little bit as well, without deviating from the main aspect of staying alive, and going to the forests was just told to me, 'you have to go to the forest because it is dangerous for you to be here'. Dangerous meant no good, we understood what danger meant. They were killing Jews and they knew we were Jews, and I have seen them being killed, it was nothing new, come on, so we just went to the forest and we didn't worry about it being separated or not, it just became part of our lives. | Survival became the main focus and everything else was considered secondary to this focus.   |
| 145 | I hadn't seen my father for about six months until then, and it didn't worry me too much, I knew that he was alive in the forest because we got the news.  | R sustained his link with his father through hearing news from him even if he was unable to physically see him.  |
| 146 | But in the forest, life was in some ways interesting and in some ways very difficult, very difficult, very difficult.  | Although hiding in the forest was adventuresome, R also acknowledged   |

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|     |  | the difficulties involved.   |
| 147 | There was this permanent hiding of fear of being killed.   | There was a continual fear of being killed while in hiding.  |
| 148 | Some moments were alright, like hiding under water and pretending to be a fish, they taught me to breathe. We weren't hiding in the water, most of us were hidden elsewhere because they were armed and other things, but they put me in the water. In summer it was okay, it was good fun, and if I heard someone I sort of submerged myself.   | R said some moments in hiding were quite adventurous and he learnt new skills during this time.  |
| 149 | At times there was too much excitement, it's a bit like that sunrise, you get too excited and start jumping up and down from that excitement when, you just manage not to get killed, every now and then shots were being taken at us. Germans would shoot around and then come over and they knew that the partisans were there although they couldn't see us.  | R believes that at times the excitement of hiding in the forest became too overwhelming and too much for him to process.   |
| 150 | They were in the forest for two winters.   | NROH   |
| 151 | I was with the partisans, I was always in company.   | R was always in the company of the partisans while in hiding.  |
| 152 | I saw my father occasionally, I think I would have seen him maybe half a dozen times in eight months because it was dangerous for us to, we were guarding, we were supposed to guard the camp from a few kilometres away, and we didn't want to be guarding the medical camp where he worked.  | R saw his father several times during this period of hiding, but these meetings had to be kept to a minimum and were fraught with danger as he did not want to expose his father's hiding place. |
| 153 | But I would see him occasionally every now and then.   | So R only saw his father occasionally.   |
| 154 | The most memorable one was probably the last time when I saw my father which was close to liberation because it was a culmination of many, many things, and...   | R remembers vividly the last occasion he saw his father shortly before liberation.   |
| 155 | We were getting more and more visits from the German visitors in the forest, because now we were already in 1944 and they were retreating from the Russian front, the Germans, so they were wandering into the forest, and they got lost, and if the Russians didn't kill them, and we didn't kill them they finished up somewhere else. They were all on the way to Germany of course, they were retreating so we kept away, we would try not to engage them, but every now and then one would stray, or two would stray, and we would just cut their throats.          | The forest was becoming increasingly busy with German intrusions as the soldiers were beginning to run from the Russian front.   |
| 156 | The partisans just wanted to keep their, not to lose their ability to kill, you know if you don't do something for a while you get worse, like not riding a bicycle for a year or two, it's hard to start again, but you remember nevertheless. They sort of kept in training, I think they killed just for the fun of it at that stage, they were retreating Germans, because we all knew, everybody knew that the war was lost, once the Russians would chase them through Poland, there was no going back, but nevertheless, it was nice for them to kill a few more. | NROH   |
| 157 | They were bombing often, they had the Russians were bombing the forest right through and everywhere because they knew the Germans were retreating and it was the Russians who bombed a lot of the forest, Russian planes were chasing the Germans, because by then the Germans did not have any. I don't want to go into the history, but most of the bombing was done by the Russians on the retreating German armies.  | NROH   |
| 158 | One particular night it was very clear to me, because that night was hardly a night. There with such heavy bombing that it was virtually daylight right through the night. They just bombed that particular area, where we were, bombed the hell out of the retreating German soldiers.  | R remembers vividly the heavy bombing during this time.  |
| 159 | Unfortunately the bombs didn't distinguish between the partisans and the German soldiers, so some of them got hit. I was okay, but in the morning, when I came down in daylight there were a lot of bodies and we lost a lot of bodies, and I think about seven or a quarter of our division were wiped out during the night just by getting hit on the trees that they were on, it just   | Many of R's unit got killed through the bombings.  |



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|     | depended on which tree they were on.  |   |
| 160 | I remember looking around me and everyone was very upset, very very upset. I didn't know what to do and the Captain had survived and he was there too, and he didn't have any time for me, and everyone was upset, and there were some wounded as well, which were being taken to the hospital.   | The loss of men in the unit, affected the team very harshly.  |
| 161 | They had already been taken to the hospital and I could see a trail where they were being taken and I was just left there, all those able people were just carrying the wounded.  | While they were attending to the wounded, R was left alone with no task to perform.   |
| 162 | And then suddenly I came across a leg which was the same height as me, about as high as me, the leg was just sort of coming up to my eyesight, a full leg, a perfectly good one boot and all, that someone had lost, and I thought it would be a good idea to take that leg to my father, because with all the wounded, I thought perhaps one of them might want a leg and that he was fixing people up, and so I said, well look, my schooling was a bit primitive and I hadn't gone through biology, in those days, I didn't think that they could attach a frozen leg to anybody but I didn't know that then.  | And then R found a way to make himself useful and contribute to the war effort, by taking a severed limb to his father, to use in the hospital. There was an element of identification with his father as the 'healer' in this incident, in contrast to R's image of himself as the 'killer'.   |
| 163 | So I took the leg, but the trouble was that it took me about three or four hours to get to that, where my father was in the hospital. I followed the trail but the snow was soft and I would dig in and dig out and I pulled the leg up and the leg pulled me down, and somehow or other I worked out a system that I was able to somehow get myself to the hospital. And I took that leg in there, it would have been about lunchtime and it took about two hours to cover some two or three kilometres. I took that leg and waited for a while and my father came, and I still remember, he took quite some time to come, because they were very busy, a lot of people to fix at that time.             | With immense determination R trudged through severe weather conditions, to reach his father in the hospital, with the severed limb. R was deeply invested in the leg as a gift to his father, as a concrete evidence of his love for his father, and this determination and intense focus sustained him even through the adverse and challenging conditions.  |
| 164 | And he came over to me and he kissed me and said he was glad that I was happy and so on, and so on. I was very happy because I had brought a leg, and I was showing my father, 'oh good boy, good boy' I remember him telling me.   | Their reunion was a happy one with R proudly presenting his father with the leg he had brought. R was able to express his happiness through his concrete gift of the 'leg'.   |
| 165 | And then he started crying and he mumbled something to the effect which is the last thing I heard him say, something to the effect about what sort of world do they live in, or what has happened.  | But the bizarre nature of the severe circumstances impacted on R's father who broke down crying.  |
| 166 | I think he was displeased that his son would be carrying a leg, well he had other ambitions for me I guess. So I don't think, I would like to believe that my father thought I was stupid to carry a leg, but I didn't know any better, so, and he thought perhaps that his son should know better than to pick up a frozen leg, and carry it half a day, waste of an exercise, it's not what he envisaged for him, so he was sad, and he was crying and I kept on saying to myself, crying? But when I worked it out in my own brain that doctors are allowed to cry but partisans don't, none of them cried, they were in great agony and pain, they moaned and they groaned, but partisans didn't cry. | R tried to make some sense of his father's distress and in his adult mind believed that his father must have been mourning his loss of childhood. Further, R's hiddenness and the experiences that went with it, apparently didn't allow him the to access the full spectrum of emotions that his father had. R was reduced to a very practical concern for achievement and acceptance by his father. |
| 167 | So while we were talking we put the leg against one of the posts, the hospital was like tents, large tents, and the leg was just standing, we put it there and we were talking and he cuddled me and so on and then I said that he had better go back to his division.  | As they put the leg aside they had their last conversation together.  |
| 168 | And so I left and I turned around and his father had gone, and he left the leg still standing there, so I said 'huh?'   | But when they parted R observed that his father had left his 'gift' of the leg behind. R's whole focus was on the leg and not his parting or separation from his father.  |
| 169 | I said hang on, so I went back and called my father and he said 'oh sorry! Oh sorry!' And he took the leg, and that was the last time that I saw him of course and he carried the leg with him and I was happy because it would give someone a leg that would need a leg, because so many people had one leg missing, some two. At least I had done the right thing, that was my contribution, somebody got a good leg. It was a perfectly good leg and I was   | R in his connection to his father as a 'life giver' or 'healer' for a brief moment in his 'killing career' was devastated when he saw the casual manner his father treated his gift. There seems to have been a lot of R  |

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|     | really happy to have found a perfect leg out of all the bits and pieces that were blown up.   | invested in this 'leg' perhaps as a way of appeasing his own conscience as well as a present for his father during extenuating circumstances that made R very focused.  |
| 170 | And that was the last time that I saw my father. So there were some sad moments in the war too, that was not fun. But I would like to relate to you one other thing that preceded that moment because about two months later they were liberated. But my father shortly after that, retreating Germans got into the hospital, they executed everyone and took the six doctors with them, and we don't know what happened but somehow they took them with them for their own use, because they also had wounded. I hope he didn't give them my leg. I would have hated to worked for four hours for a German, that would have upset me.  | R relates here his sadness at his separation from his father, in an oblique and matter-of-fact way, using humour to lighten and distract from the potential pain of his experience.                                   |
| 171 | But for my ninth birthday, in 1944 in April, I got what was the most precious gift that I had ever received and I have been lucky (in gifts) that has to include his little button that he got not long ago from Queen Elizabeth II, it's only a small button, but it's a nice little gift, and there were many other things, many gifts were received. I have had a good life, lots of gifts, but nothing that will ever, ever surpass that, nothing, there is just one gift that I received for my ninth birthday, that nothing in the world could equal it, even if I were given the Eiffel Tower it would not equal it, it would be impressive to be able to put that in my back yard, bit small for it, but still. | Towards the end of the war R was given a gift by his partisan unit which he values far beyond any of his possessions or gifts he has received in his subsequent life (and some of these have been quite significant). |
| 172 | For my ninth birthday, the partisans gave me a bread, the Ukrainian bread, which is more sawdust than wheat anyhow. It's a bread, which I had, because it was my own possession, it was something that belonged to me, it was my birthday cake and I put that bread inside my shirt because we were all covered in rags. April was still cold, and I scratched on it, right until we were liberated, about August, for about three or four months I scratched on that bread.  | He was given a 'mere' loaf of bread for his birthday, however because it was uniquely his, and no one else's, it was extremely valued and precious for R.   |
| 173 | We ate whenever we could, whatever we could. There was a sort of understanding if it was small you catch it and eat it, and if it was big, you run away from it because it will eat you, so we ran away from bears and things like that, we didn't start eating them. But rabbits, mice and rats and so on, they were fair game in the forest, it was part of life, it was more enjoyable than eating grass, or bark when you are hungry.   | Their food usually consisted of whatever they were able to forage for in their place of hiding.   |
| 174 | But we had our moments, but that bread was the most precious possession. I scratched on it for three or four months, it got hard, it was hard to scratch, my fingernails were bleeding, getting some crumbs out of it slowly.   | So the gift of the bread loaf was an extraordinarily precious object and R scratched on it, eating from it for several months, relishing every crumb.   |
| 175 | It was just something that I had that belonged to me, and no one else, I didn't have to share it with anyone. Food, whatever was available was always shared.   | Its value was that it belonged uniquely to him.   |
| 176 | But from then on, it has become an obsession. Never a slice of bread, uneaten gets thrown out, the birds get all the bread, and so on. You have seen this morning, this is the first thing I have shown you. Now, you can see the importance of it.   | Since the war, bread has taken on a special value for R, and he is unable to waste any crumb of bread.  |
| 177 | It takes time, I talk in riddles sometimes, but you can pick the important things from the bullshit, you will probably get the essence of it.   | NROH  |
| 178 | That was great. Yes that was great, and then we were liberated.   | NROH  |
| 179 | Shortly after that, I think I had finished the bread by the time we were liberated, all sort of in-between, good timing, good timing.   | NROH  |
| 180 | I was reunited with my mother and I remember the first time I saw her, just like today, because I was already nine years of age and I was a big boy then, in 1945, nearly 10.   | NROH  |
| 181 | And she was worried about my appearance. I hadn't worn shoes for a couple of years. In the forest you just had rags on their feet with oil or whatever they   | NROH  |

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|     | put on it, a bit of fur, and the same clothes as I wore when she last saw me with an extra layer on top of what I wore, and dirty like anything. I hadn't had a shower for a few years.  |      |
| 182 | I would wash in the water in summer, especially when we were submerged but we didn't take all our clothes off because we might get caught, we didn't want to run away full monty those days, so we washed wherever we could.   | NROH |
| 183 | And my mother, her first remark was something like, dirty nose or something she mumbled to me. Once again she cried from excitement this time and she said something about, don't you have a handkerchief or something and I looked at her, and shook my head. I had eaten my handkerchief about two years ago, the last handkerchief, those sort of things, it was soft, it was good to eat when you are hungry, it was good. I ate all the corners of my shirt. We just ate little things, when we were hungry, it was not very nourishing, but the fact that you were chewing something is okay when you are hungry.  | NROH |
| 184 | Someone at a function yesterday asked me if I ever knew hunger, because she was eating like a pig. At a banquet an honoured lady of the Order of Australia, asked me if I knew hunger, and I said 'oh yes'. And she said, 'where?' 'Oh during the war in Europe'. 'Oh yes, her brother went there, he was in the air force and he said there were a lot of hungry people there.' And I answered 'yes'. I didn't say any more or explain anything else, but I thought it was quite ironic that out of all the people there she had to sit next to me and ask me if I knew hunger. I said, poor lady, she is lucky that she got the Order Of Australia, but it was not her lucky day. I told my wife about it, and she said that I wasn't the right person to ask, but it was alright. | NROH |
| 185 | The war was not that bad, there were lots of exciting things to do.  | NROH |
| 186 | I wouldn't like to go through it again, because I don't think the odds would be in my favour to survive. I believe the odds against surviving in that sort of arrangement which I had are decreasing as the years go on, so I wouldn't like to try my luck again, but it was okay.   | NROH |
| 187 | I guess I must have missed something in the war, I didn't play football, ride bicycles, but then I caught up with all that after the war, and I made up for it when I came to Australia.   | NROH |

**SUBJECT 5:**

|     | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR M.E.  | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.  |
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|     | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden.)  |   |
| 1.  | I was born in 1937 so I was about 4, 4½ years old, when I went into hiding.   | NROH  |
| 2.  | My father had already disappeared in the sense that he was in England when the war broke out and he couldn't get back across the Channel. All communication and transport was closed, so he was stuck in England and eventually joined up there with a Dutch contingent and didn't come back for seven years. Like, he didn't come back till the end of 1946, and because they wouldn't mobilize him, so I lost sight of him altogether when he came back I was about 8 or 9 years old, and I didn't know him at all. I didn't recognize him.   | During the entire period of hiding, ME didn't see her father until the war was over.  |
| 3.  | My mother then went into, to live with her mother-in-law, my grandmother, in Amsterdam, and she went into the Resistance, finding safe houses for people and she walked around as if she wasn't Jewish. It was very interesting. She went into a kind of hiding that was more profound than physical hiding. She hid emotionally. Changed her name, you know, kind of acquired identity papers and she just persuaded herself that she was this person and behaved as if she wasn't Jewish. I don't know how she got away with it. She had a few close shaves, but she actually got away with doing that and helping other people to stay hidden as well.                     | Her mother hid her Jewish identity and posed as a non-Jew. She was actively involved in helping people hide during the war.                       |
| 4.  | She told me that she visited the Anne Frank house during the war, she was actually in touch with those people.  | Her mother was in contact with many people and hiding.  |
| 5.  | So, I was born in Amsterdam and my mother took my sister and me to now, I'm just trying to work out how, this is her story then, she found people to hide us through my uncle who was a teacher, and they were sort of friends of friends. So they actually developed quite a large network and they made a plan for all of us to go under.   | Her mother took her and her sister to hide at a person who was unknown to them directly, but was known through their network.                     |
| 6.  | Except for a couple of people they felt they couldn't trust, and those people actually perished, but the rest of us survived, so my immediate family survived. We all came together again after the war.  | All of their immediate family survived the war, in their various hiding places.   |
| 7.  | Now, she took us to some people who took us to some people so to speak, what I remember, and I'll verify this with her, that she told us we were going on a picnic, we were going to have fun. And we were taken into the countryside, a very small town which is now almost a suburb of a larger town called Utrecht, the town is called Zeist, and there's a small house with a garden and a cellar and fairly basic facilities. So that was I think about May or June in 1942. I can get more accurate details from my mother exactly what month it was and we remained there for three years until my mother came back to pick us up very shortly after the war finished. | ME was not informed that they were going into hiding, instead the atmosphere was contrived to resemble a family outing in the countryside.        |
| 8.  | Now the people that hid us, I think he was a postal worker, and they had two children, so I had two foster sisters, one was 6 months older than me and one was 9 months younger. So I squeezed in-between those two, and of course that was kind of a biological impossibility.   | ME was hidden in a 'foster home' who had two children of their own, which meant chronologically ME could not fit into the family's constellation. |
| 9.  | Now, so I remained there for three years. Occasionally we managed a few days of school but usually the school was inhabited by refugees and so we would be sent home.   | ME remained hidden in this home for three years, only attending school on a sporadic basis.   |
| 10. | And I wasn't allowed out at all the first couple of months.   | Initially she was not allowed out of the house at all.  |
| 11. | They had manufactured a name, I was, my mother actually practiced me using that name so that I was supposed to be Klincarmar not Kleerkoper, because that wasn't a Jewish name and Kleerkoper was. Who are you? Detta, Detatta  | ME had a false name given to her and a story was fabricated to explain her  |

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|     | that was my nickname that I used for myself because I couldn't say Marietta. Detta Klincarmer, Klincarmer, Klincarmer, so I was supposed to be a relative of theirs who had been evacuated because of the flood, because you know the dykes had been cut, the country people had cut the dykes of Zeilant to stop the Germans invading and flooded all their crops and everything rather than let the Germans have them. And I was supposed to have come from there, and you know, from the flood.   | presence with this family.  |
| 12. | But I wasn't allowed out the first couple of, I don't know how long, you know it seems a long time when you're a kid, so I wasn't allowed out to play and if the Germans came by, you know, there'd be a little network that would say, you know, they're on their way, and then I would be put into the cellar.   | If there was any sense of impending danger, ME was hidden further in the depths of the house, into the cellar.  |
| 13. | Now I've got very strong memories of the cellar because I was told, basically and I talked about this to my foster parents later, that I was naughty and had to go into the cellar. You know, I used to sit in there screaming, saying "I'll be good now, let me out, let me out" and of course if they'd heard me, that would have been the end of me. But nobody, fortunately, or unfortunately, no one heard me. But of course I didn't understand that.  | But ME had no understanding of why she was sent to the cellar, and interpreted this as a punishment for bad behaviour.  |
| 14. | And then if the air raid siren sounded we would also sometimes go all into the cellar, but what I have more memories of is going into the air raid shelter as I was quite terrified of that cause the, you know, there were all these catacombs and a couple of times I got lost in there, and couldn't find the other people in there, and so cobwebs and so on.  | ME found the cellar experience quite frightening even when the whole family was down there with her.  |
| 15. | So yes, so I remained there for three years until the war was over, and I remember quite vividly the end of the war where the collaborators were rounded up and then also and there was a Nazi who had lived next to where my sister was hidden.   | NROH  |
| 16. | I should say that my sister was hidden in a house a few streets away which belonged to relatives of the people I was hidden with. They were slightly better off because she had a newsagency which is still there. I don't think the family still owns it though. And she was much younger than the couple's other children. They were much older, so she was kind of like the little pet, whereas I was, you know, I was kind of not very well placed in terms of birth order, if you can see that I'm getting at.  | ME's sister was hidden with a different family and ME perceived her to be better treated than she was.  |
| 17. | So, and I remember very vividly when the Americans, oh, British American and Canadian soldiers came to liberate us, and they were throwing around well, whatever they had, this is in the poem as well, but cigarettes, pencil stubs, lifebuoy soap, you know, we were sent out to beg for smokes for my family. So one day we brought an English soldier home, we couldn't speak to him, he didn't know a word of Dutch and we didn't know a word of English, but we actually grabbed him by the hands, the three of us, and took him all the way home, and then we didn't know what to do with him, so uh, and then everyone planting orange flowers in their gardens, because orange had been a color forbidden by the Nazis. | NROH  |
| 18. | So what I remember most of all, yeah, is I suppose just a lot of fear.   | ME recall a pervading sense of fear throughout this time.   |
| 19. | They were very different to my own parents, because first of all my parents were city people, they were very urbanized and now they weren't particularly religious. But they had rebelled from their own Jewish background and they were, not exactly atheists, but they were agnostics, so I wasn't brought up with any particular religious background, whereas my foster parents were very, very strict Dutch Reform Church, so it was you know, well I wasn't always allowed to go out to Church because I wasn't supposed to be seen in public, it wasn't very safe. But there were prayers, there were you know the daily prayers, and bible readings and this kind of thing. So I wasn't used to it at all.               | ME found her foster parents to be very different from her own family of origin, particularly in that they were very religious.  |
| 20. | And the other thing is that my, particularly my foster father, was very very strict, and he had a fear of Jews as infidels, and he thought it was his duty to convert me to Christianity and he used to frighten me with thoughts of when you know, when the world ended, unless you were a pious Christian, you were going to be in a great deal of trouble. And even years later, he, when we visited him, he gave thanks, for the return of the Infidel, so we were still to him, we were still in then, we were still Infidels, then.  | The foster family saw ME as an opportunity to 'save a soul' and convert her to Christianity and this persisted even beyond the war, as evidenced in subsequent visits ME had to their home. |

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| 21. | Discipline wise, they were incredibly strict. There again, I think my mother was much more, my father wasn't around much because he'd been away since 1940, but then we were with my Grandmother, so there was more or less the extended family, but they were extremely strict.   | The foster family was very strict and rigid in their discipline of ME.  |
| 22. | At the same time, they didn't want to physically abuse me, so whereas they used to devise ingenious punishments for me.  | While at no stage did the foster family physically abuse ME; their punishments towards her were harsh.  |
| 23. | One of the things that we fought about and I was always quite rebellious. Well, I am still, I was never a conformist, I was always somebody who would kick over the traces, who would you know, just not conform and even then I just was angry to conform. And one of the things that we were fighting about was food. And the food, we used to get slop from the soup kitchens, and we used to get a bit of veggies from the garden. I remember the broad beans. I just could not swallow them, and my foster father used to sort of slaughter some chooks and then one day there was no more food for the rabbits so he slaughtered the rabbits and I had to, he put my own rabbit in front of me to eat and I just could not eat it, and I sat there for many hours and they kept putting it in front of me, but I just gagged whenever I thought to eat it. I cannot remember, but I don't think I ever ate it because... Well their idea was that you must eat because you don't know whether food is going to, you know where your next meal is coming from. And I can still remember the boiled sugar beets I think is the worst thing I've ever eaten. We used to have to go and get the slop from the soup kitchen in a pail, well, it's a bucket but it's a pail because that kind of bucket, an enamel bucket, I can still see it, and they would just throw this slop and it would be cold, and we didn't always have gas to heat things up, and it was just...I can still, I gag when I think of it, so food was a big thing to, you know that we fought over. | Food was a highly charged issue between her host family, and ME and was an example of their continual clashes. ME admits to being an oppositional child in general, as evidenced in her attitudes towards food in hiding.   |
| 24. | And the other thing was I still remember, once you were in bed at a very early hour, you were not supposed to get up even to go to the toilet, and I've always had quite an iffy bladder, and the thought that I was not allowed to get up to go to the loo was just dreadful. I remember that I would get out the potty, I'd be very careful, because the potty was already full with other urine, I'd lift it down and I'd scrape, sometimes I'd spilt a bit, and then they would hear me. So they would say, "OK bring the potty downstairs" and because we were sleeping up in the loft, "bring the potty downstairs" and they might have people, they might have some people there, so I had to sit on the potty in front of them, to demonstrate how urgent my need was. But of course, when you're in that situation, you can't pee, so I'd be in this situation where I just could not pee to save my life.  | In her experience of being hidden, ME describes an incident around going to the toilet which was characterized by humiliation and lack of respect by her host family towards ME and her physical and bodily needs.  |
| 25. | And so, and I always felt, and this was unjust, I'll go into this later, but I always felt with the child's anger that two things, that my mother had abandoned me...  | ME felt during her hiddenness that she had been totally abandoned by her mother.  |
| 26. | And that they were only taking me in because of their eternal soul, right, because it was the Christian thing to do. Not because they had any feeling for me, because I was a complete stranger to them and you know, why should they care for me in any way.  | ME did not feel valued as an individual by her foster family, but felt they were religious zealots wanting to save her soul.  |
| 27. | And also I felt threatened by the fact that I really biologically didn't fit into the family. And apart from that, not being allowed out to play, you know having to sit inside while watching my...I didn't understand why I wasn't allowed out to play and so I didn't, you know, I resented the fact that I was being treated differently from the other children. (STOP)   | ME expresses in her hiddenness a strong feeling of being unable to fit into her 'foster family' in the everyday, and seemed to harbour a responsibility towards her mother for this. Further the differential treatment she received contrasted to the biological children of this family, served to exacerbate these feelings. |
| 28. | I looked different, they were very blond, very Dutch, and well I just didn't belong. I didn't belong in that society, I didn't belong to that family, and I guess I probably had a lot of anger and resentment about being dumped there by my mother.  | ME was very conscious of feeling different to her host family, both physically and emotionally and harboured a deep resentment towards her mother for leaving her there.  |
| 29. | And my sister used to call her foster parents Mum and Dad. I think she...apparently she cried for three months and then she was kind of over it. She sat and cried...younger, not much, 19 months, but she was just young  | ME contrasted her situation to that of their younger sister, who although traumatized by the initial separation,  |

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|     | <p>enough to kind of become to reattach, whereas I always used to call my foster parents aunt and uncle. So I never lost the knowledge or the feeling that they were not, they were in no way substitute parents to me.</p>  | <p>seemed able to adjust and reattach to her foster parents, whereas ME always felt an estrangement from them.</p>   |
| 30. | <p>Now I remember, one time my mother actually came, no I didn't know it was her, but I remember wondering. There was an arrangement that, it may have been someone's birthday, because it was summer, that we were brought to a certain park somewhere, and that my mother actually came and observed us from the distance, and I remember that I wondered who this person was, and I had some inkling, maybe, it could have been my mother, but I didn't dare to question.</p>   | <p>There is a sense in ME's experience of hiding that she didn't really belong in her foster environment and there was a real "Mother" hovering in the background of her life, even though this was never made overt.</p>                            |
| 31. | <p>So, there was a feeling, that there was another life somewhere else, that I was kind of on hold there, and that they were not, I mean I was probably quite a , they were not you know, mine, in a sense.</p>  | <p>ME was aware on the periphery of her consciousness that there was another life outside of her hiding, and had some sense that the family she was with was not her own.</p>  |
| 32. | <p>I was probably very difficult to them you know, when I think of it now, and I feel sad about that now, because there's a story I'll give you, will say that when I went to visit them in 1993, we had been in touch but in this story we hadn't, because it sounds stronger if we haven't been in touch. But I realised that I had done them a grave injustice, and in a sense had done my mother also a grave injustice.</p>   | <p>In retrospect, ME felt she was quite harsh in her judgement of her host family and her mother and realizes that she was a difficult child at the time.</p>  |
| 33. | <p>But it's only now, it's only in the last few years, that I've come to realise how unjust those childhood perceptions were, the first thing is that she'd abandoned me well she had handed me over to the care of people and shed some to pick me up again. So and she had stayed in touch with those people, and had got regular reports from them about me, so she had never stayed out of touch. But I didn't feel this.</p>  | <p>Although ME has come to these realizations as an adult, she does not deny that these were her true feelings as a child, of being abandoned by her mother.</p>   |
| 34. | <p>So that was the first injustice in a way. And as I say, it's taken me, I mean abandonment. I guess we'll go on to that next, is what I think I've been left with. So that was one thing. That my childhood innocence, I know intellectually now that she didn't abandon me, but in a way, you know, I mean I was four years old, the emotional effect of that, I don't think ever going away. You can understand it, you know, with your intellect, but emotionally it never goes away.</p>   | <p>ME believe this feeling of abandonment has remained with her as a legacy of her years in hiding, and although she understands why she was hidden intellectually, she has not been able to resolve her feelings of abandonment in hiding.</p>      |
| 35. | <p>Now the second thing that I think I was unjust was in the way I regarded my foster parents. In '93 when we talked now, my foster mother had meanwhile dies as had my father, but my foster father is now in his late eighties, as is my mother, and they still correspond. His mind is going a little bit, but he's still quite strong. Anyway, when I came back to see him, and I hadn't seen him probably for about 25 years, 20 plus years, yes, and the way that he greeted me, with such emotion, you know he said something like, and this is in the story as well, "oh I can't believe how good G-d is to me to allow me once more to see you". He was very aware that maybe I'd never see him again although I do plan to go either later this year or next year, and he's still alive, so maybe I can get to see him again. And he embraced me and he was just so overcome with emotion.</p> | <p>In retrospect, ME believes she has been unjust in her feelings towards her foster family who she now realizes cared for her in a way she never appreciated at the time.</p>   |
| 36. | <p>And we'd never talked about the war before. When I'd previously visited them, they, well they were giving prayers and so on, but we never, and I had my Australian husband with me, and they don't speak any English and he doesn't speak any Dutch, and so it was the soldier all over again.</p>  | <p>NROH</p>  |
| 37. | <p>But this time I was alone and we started to talk about the war, and he told me that he'd had to hide because it was not safe for him to come home, so I just realized that they risked their necks every day for three years, every day, not only their own necks, but their children's necks, and I was just overcome. I was just appalled that how could I have thought you could do something like that, risk your family's life every day for three years, just for the sake of your immortal soul, like you know, that's not possible for someone to just do it for that. So I realized they really cared for me.</p>  | <p>ME notes that even though during her hiding she did not experience feeling loved or cared for by her foster family, she later came to realise the value of what they did for her and how they put their own lives at risk through hiding her.</p> |
| 38. | <p>Maybe I was a stranger when I got there, but they really came to care for me. In fact, you know, we spent holidays with them regularly after the war, went to see them, so I realized how those childhood perceptions, how wrong they</p>   | <p>In adulthood ME came to realise her lack of gratitude during her hiddenness as she came to a deeper understanding of what was involved in their part of</p>   |

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|     | were, and I was quite humbled.  | hiding her. |
| 39. | And that 's why I wrote the story. Because it was a way of working through those emotions, and trying to put the whole thing now, at last, into some kind of perspective.   | NROH        |
| 40. | And also to try and be fair to my mother, because you know...you know the Anne Frank story has sunk into the Psyche of the world to such an extent, and my mother's comment was "well, they were fools, they should have split up. How could they imagine they would all survive staying together like that". She was quite scornful of them and I realized what a decision she had to make you know. I don't know if I could have done it. Just handed my children over to complete strangers who were going to hand them over to complete strangers, like that. She just had to walk away; she couldn't even say Good-bye. She didn't say good-bye to us, like as I say, after I wrote the story I showed it to her and so she and I are starting to work, and I will go into that a bit more later, but she and I worked through a lot of stuff in relation to that in the last few years and we are still doing it in a way.                            | NROH        |
| 41. | She is now over 90 and I am very fortunate to have the opportunity to communicate with her about it and then she started telling me things I had never known before, like the way it happened. I had thought that she had handed us over to those people but no, she had to leave us on the roadside and walk away and look from a distance to make sure that they picked us up. She couldn't kiss us or say goodbye or anything of that nature, she just had to leave us and walk off and she did it.  | NROH        |
| 42. | And I thought to myself, I don't know that I, I mean my daughter lives um six doors away you know and my son lives five minutes away, the way that I am, in a way, I mean I was living in the country for a while and came back in order to be close to my family but my mother she could just walk away, she could say I don't know if I will ever see my children but they have a better chance if I let them go than if I hang on to them and you know we kind of glorify the Anne Frank's story whereas she said "you stayed in Amsterdam you were locked in the same place, for god's sake what did you think was going to happen" that was her.   | NROH        |
| 43. | And due to her courage and I mean the stories that she tells you know are quite amazing, the way that she just bluffed her way through, escaped, escape, discovery by just- she said she always thought there was some guardian angel looking after her but the way that she describes the, you know, when she was questioned by German soldiers for example, but you're Jewish, you know they really, they hammered her and she just stood there, their questioning and told them they were ridiculous and she even said, she had false identity papers and they said you know, what's the date of birth or the date of something, and she thought "My G-d" you know "What is the date" and she just said something, maybe she had sort of seen it, I don't know, but she just, she couldn't hesitate and she just went and said such and such and by some miracle the such and such was the thing and if she hadn't said such and such she would be dead. | NROH        |
| 44. | So I guess we come to what I have been left with and that's very hard to assess because I have panic attacks. I will never know whether I would have had panic attacks anyway but I do and I have had a lot of therapy and you know, people say, well yes, you know that probably was the contributing factor, um abandonment is an issue for me that is a theme right through my life and I know about it now but I very quickly feel abandoned, not just by you know husbands and lovers but by all kinds of, you know I feel very quickly abandoned. That is a feeling that just hits me when, I don't know, when somebody doesn't agree with me or, do you know what I mean, so abandonment has always been a very big issue for me.  | NROH        |
| 45. | You know you can analyze yourself. I think, I try, I am just saying I am drawing themes, I am drawing links, but you know you know you can't, it's like Pundit, in the Incredible Likeness of Being. I mean he stands there in front of the window and there are two paths but he has to choose one and he cannot ever know what the other path would have been. So I don't know what I would have been like without it, so I can't say.  | NROH        |
| 46. | But yes, I mean the intensity of it, I think that's it, maybe I would have had some of those things anyway, but I think the intensity of it and as you can see I get quite emotional when I talk about it, even though, it is very precious, I  | NROH        |



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|     | mean I'm in touch with another person who's the child of survivors who is a writer, who is actually doing a book on called, "The Silence" about how mothers and daughters communicate about those experiences, so I think that's, it's not out yet, but I think, when it's out it's going to be a very interesting book. She and I are emailing each other about that, because she is writing and I am writing and I have sent her some stuff and sent her my story, so I am in touch more with actually with second generation people.  |      |
| 47. | Because as a child survivor I fit uncomfortably between the first and second generation and that makes it sometimes quite hard, because in some ways you are like the second generation and I don't envy the second generation by the way.   | NROH |
| 48. | I don't envy them because in some ways I think it's harder for you because at least my experiences are mine, but yours, you've been left with a legacy which, I have thought a lot about this, you have been left with a legacy which, you don't even, it's like me not understanding what war was about that you are really, I suppose not only do you not understand but you are always getting accused of not understanding it.   | NROH |
| 49. | Yes. I think that is a tough situation. I think it's devilish.   | NROH |
| 50. | Now my daughter I think is well, maybe mercifully free of it she hasn't even looked at my tape. She is more interested in my mothers' experiences than mine, because my mother is a kind of tough person who came through.   | NROH |
| 51. | Yes, I am often told, well of course you would hardly remember anything anyway, you were only a child, and yes. So much more of your life that being in the sense that very shortly after my father returned so at the end of 1948, we immigrated so there was another, see upheaval. So what happened was by the, and I don't know how I reacted to it which is also in the story, but my mother came and picked me up in '45, she managed to get a flat and all the members of the family came back from everywhere. Some of them had been in concentration camps; some had been in hiding. They all came back and we all lived in the flat together, 13 of us in a 3 bedroom flat, one bed was being slept in day and night. I mean I loved it, the extended family, it was just, it was Xmas, really I loved it, suddenly I had all this family, but it didn't last very long, because suddenly I was ripped out of that, and we were alone again and very shortly after that my father went off travelling. | NROH |
| 52. | My father was really couldn't settle down and he and a job, he was a commercial traveler, so he was away for months at a time, so there we were again, just with my mother. Oh for a while we lived with my aunt and uncle who had also been in hiding and then their children were born just after the war. In Amsterdam.   | NROH |
| 53. | For a while we lived all together with them in Armadale. Now and then they went off, and then of course, you know, and I suppose but that time I was in my teens but you know, so it's hard to say where the war stops you know because I think immigration so shortly after the war was terrible trauma straight after.   | NROH |
| 54. | Now I can understand why they did it, but it wasn't very good for us and then we shifted to Adelaide, back to Melbourne, to New Zealand, back to Melbourne, we just kept moving.   | NROH |
| 55. | My aunt and uncle stayed put in Melbourne. Oh, my uncle was also a commercial traveller ironically so he disappeared for months at a time as well, but well my uncle was never in the army, my father as I say, he was wandering around the world during the war and I think he found it very difficult to settle down and my parents nearly divorced which is one of the reasons I think when they decided instead to begin a new life and...   | NROH |
| 56. | Why I am telling you this I think is to see in context of what was war and what wasn't war. I think the upheavals of the war continued to work their force, I was going to say their magic, but their evil magic, quite long time into the after the war and I mean....  | NROH |
| 57. | I have read other books, on this so if you have read 'Heddi and Me' or 'Sister, Sister' or even well Arnold Zable, Jules...the first 10 years or so they were so preoccupied with material, you know the advancement about the emotional   | NROH |

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|     | side, the emotional love was really much neglected and I think my father was also not the kind of person who and my mother wasn't either, they weren't the kind of people who let their feelings out, they never were.  |      |
| 58. | My mother's one of these people who always look on the bright side, you know, looks on the bright side that's what she's like.  | NROH |
| 59. | My father is intensely shy and private man, who also because he was in business I think had to develop kind of veneer of joviality. I knew it was false, but I could never get behind it.   | NROH |
| 60. | Funnily enough now that he has been dead for 6 years, I have got his diaries and I am actually writing a collection of poems based on his diaries as a resource and I am only now getting to know him as he was then, a man of 30 years old.  | NROH |
| 61. | And so all this stuff is fairly close to the surface because I am writing about it and I am writing about some of my own experiences during the war as compared to his, and so a lot of it is very much on the surface and I mean no doubt and I wrote to Ruth, about this about the unreliability of one's early memories and how one constructs these and I guess that's up to you but I said to Ruth just a few days ago that I am concerned when I am telling these stories and I guess it was partly because you were coming I was thinking about this, worrying about it, what my memories, you know, whether they're specially as a researcher myself, you know, whether they are valid and reliable enough you know, what can you base on them and how much is constructed you know, and of course I can't say unless you talk to my mother. Well why should her memories be any better, well she was an adult. | NROH |
| 62. | That was the memory of the experience, and I don't know, that's never going to go away, and I mean I guess it has affected me for the rest of my life. It has affected my relationships with people probably, I mean it would be a very interesting study and I don't know if Ruth's going to touch on it, but I would be very interested to know how people like myself, what sort of parents we have really made I don't think I made, I don't think I made a bad parent, but I don't think I made a very good parent especially not to my son, and I think that some of it has had to have been you know had to wash over them and that's sad I think, because how this just keep going, it's like ripples in the water, it just never goes away and I don't know to what extent my children would be aware you know. I don't think they think about it a lot.   | NROH |
| 63. | But maybe you know when I think of my own marriage for example, my fear of abandonment definitely I think had you know had bad effect on my relationships with men, definitely. I was always afraid they would leave me and eventually they did, that was self-fulfilling prophecy, they left you know and eventually I learned to cope on my own.  | NROH |
| 64. | I have been on my own now for a very long time, since about 1985 basically. Both the partners I have had really I think abandonment was an issue. I chose people who were going to abandon me eventually which is extraordinary really when I think about it. That may not have just been the war, I mean I think my father was absent for a lot of my life as well you know, so it's hard to pinpoint you know what is what, maybe we can stop there for a minute.   | NROH |
| 65. | In many ways now I think what the war is for me now is that I, the things it provides me with a kind of intensity that nothing else provides and I find, it's only late in life that I have begun to write. I guess it's the last 12 years or so.   | NROH |
| 66. | Now the first, I guess the, I couldn't write about the war for many years, and I couldn't write about it because happened in Dutch and I found it very hard to tab those feelings in English and I don't write in Dutch. I want to try and I hope to try and maybe to translate these poems back into Dutch and use my father's diary in the original because I have translated a lot of it so I am using it in its' translated form at the moment and writing in English, but eventually I would like to try and put the volume together bilingually and use both languages, but many years I couldn't write at all because I couldn't write it in Dutch and I couldn't write it in English.   | NROH |
| 67. | I remember the first piece I wrote about it and it was just a cellar, I was just in the cellar, it was very vivid and I took myself there.  | NROH |

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| 68. | <p>And using my father's diary has been very powerful too, and it's I am able to access a lot of stuff and as I say, a lot of the poems are about the war, some of them are about other aspects of my life, but I think that experience you know, you can use it, artistically and I know of a you have read a lot of the books and also I have known an artist who is a child, now Daniel actually was born I think in '46 no was it '40, no I can't I am not sure if he was actually born. He's an artist, and he, he's painted some extraordinary pictures. I have written some poems to his pictures about the Holocaust because it won't let him alone either, you know he's using it as a form of inspirational and he paints flowers as well so it's not the only thing he uses and certainly it's not the only thing I write about but more and more I am drawn to it as I say as a source of an intensity that, that very few other experiences have ever provided. I know that sounds sick in a way.</p>  | NROH |
| 69. | <p>But when you are in there, I think creativity is part of that, those immediate feelings which when you are an adult you can overlay with intellect and put them in perspective and reason them away, because that's what we plan to do but there are very few experiences where you can actually, even if you don't remember the events accurately, you remember the emotions, you can immediately recall those emotions in a very immediate way, so you can feel despair, you can feel anger.</p>   | NROH |
| 70. | <p>It's like almost like it's if you were an actor, I have never said this before, and it is interesting hearing myself say this because I, as if you were an actor and you are trying to call on some experience of your own that will let you express emotions or if you cry, you know you think of something that you, that sort of thing. I think that's what it is to me now and that may be sort of exploitation in a way.</p>  | NROH |
| 71. | <p>Now the first part of this is my father's diary and he has been punished for it coming back on board late, and he writes in his diary:</p> <p><i>Which is the greater crime,</i></p> <p><i>To return on board 2 1/2 hours late after 6 weeks at sea,</i></p> <p><i>Or to sit in a cell for 2 days and then to be free of everything.</i></p> <p>And this is my response to that:</p> <p><i>Sit on this stool they said, and don't get down till we tell you. I can see the other children playing in the garden. They got a slap now they are free. It's dark and cold in here, where is my own mother? Why can't I have a slap? When can I get down and then to be free of everything?</i></p> <p>And here's another one and this is my father on the ship on board ship and he says:</p> <p><i>You can learn to get used to mortal danger even if it is hanging over your head and you know there is no escape.</i></p> <p>And this is my response:</p> <p><i>You are on a ship waiting for the bombs. At 5 I am lost in the catacombs of the air raid shelter among cobwebs and rats or in a cellar their gun butts searching for the trapdoor. You don't know a danger is mortal until it is past. Even now every day a clammy hand on my neck. Your death was to be far worse than you could imagine a slow death of the mind from the inside.</i></p> <p>So ironically whatever he feared then you know the eventual truth was far worse because he went, he had Alzheimer's, he died a very slow, I am just trying to think, here's one from after the war, which I think may, may be a bit relevant in terms of my relationship with my father, I don't know if that's...I have just got to, one behind the other, he writes:</p> <p><i>Anyway, no one can ever understand anything about our marriage, what we meant to each other, the cheerfulness which dominated every deed and every thought, the happiness our children brought us, the feeling of togetherness, of our little family, that belongs to us alone.</i></p> <p>And I write:</p> <p><i>A small man tired green eyes, gaunt face, rain coat too long, kiss you daddy dear. Too tall to hide behind mother's skirt. You are home from the war after 7 years. We have been waiting a long time. Our hair freshly washed. New coats from America.</i></p> | NROH |

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|     | <p><i>You want to punish me. I hide in the toilet. You broke the door down. You come in holding it like a shield. We both smile, then you beat me.</i></p> <p><i>I saw you holding hands with mother once. I opened your bedroom door and you call out 'not now'. I didn't know you still did it. Many years later I hear you are almost divorce.</i></p> <p><i>I am catching a train to Adelaide. You're returning home from a business trip. I wait as long as long as I can. But you don't come. As the train pulls out of the station I see you running up the platform.</i></p> <p>So you can see that my relationship with him in a way was quite awkward. And some of that was because, well really I didn't know him and I guess I never really.... Not a proper relationship with him, so and I guess that is related to what happened to us. It's sat in a way because I don't think he has spent enough time with his children. He had this...</p> |      |
| 72. | That was the irony you know, when I read his diary I burst into tears when I read that bit because I thought, oh, and I was also quite angry. I thought oh, you know that ideal of yours, you know, was nothing like when you came home, you couldn't even...you couldn't even cope, to I don't think he could stay put...  | NROH |
| 73. | So we were all racing around you know, roaring about keeping moving and he dragged us all around the place. I mean some of that was due to you know trying to set up businesses or you know, but on the other hand, I think some of it was, he was just too restless to settle down after the war.  | NROH |
| 74. | I am sure that happened to many, many people. I think my mother had some of that too. After the war she went and joined my father in Indonesia for some quite months. I can't remember how long and left us in the care of Grandparents.  | NROH |
| 75. | This was in Amsterdam still, before. See my father hadn't been demobilized and he came back briefly for a visit and then my mother decided she would go off and join him in Indonesia for whatever, however long it was, I can't remember. So we were left in the care of the extended family again so once again you know there was that feeling they are off again.   | NROH |
| 76. | Well actually my father's mother actually migrated to Israel. A lot of my family went to Israel and my mother's mother was, she was married to a man, her second husband, much much older than she, he wouldn't have been up to migrating, and no, they stayed in Holland. Many of my family migrated to America, Israel, South Africa, they just scattered, the West Indies, they just scattered all over the world. And stayed put a lot in Israel, they didn't, so we lost them as well.   | NROH |
| 77. | Yeah, my father's sister and her husband and their babies they came a year after we arrived. They are here.   | NROH |

**SUBJECT 6:**

|    | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR E.   | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.  |
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|    | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description is an example of being hidden.)  |   |
| 1  | At the time of the war I was actually a few months old, when I and my mum were hidden. I was only a few months old.  | E was only several months old when her Mum hid her.   |
| 2  | My mother may have been about 40 and I was about three months old.   | NROH  |
| 3  | I cannot remember things, which happened at this stage, it was not possible.   | NROH  |
| 4  | I only know what my mum told me and she is sort of...that's why I said that if you wanted to have this story sort of, confirmed, my mum is the person who can confirm, because all information I have at this stage is actually from my mother.  | NROH  |
| 5  | So I will tell you what my mum told me, that's the only thing I can help.  | E is able to relate her mother's memories of being hidden.  |
| 6  | After the war, I was big enough to remember.   | E's memories begin again after the war.   |
| 7  | And after the war, the situation was no longer wartime, but post-war was also very difficult for Jewish children. Very, very difficult.  | NROH  |
| 8  | So this was the time when I very well remember.  | NROH.   |
| 9  | Alright, so I will tell you what mum told me, because it has to be at the beginning.   | E begins with her mother's memories.  |
| 10 | Mum told me that I was born in April 1943, and this was the time when ghetto was burning and was actually burned by Germans with people in Poland in Warsaw.   | E was born while the ghetto where she lived was being burnt.                                      |
| 11 | I came from Warsaw. I should have said this in the beginning, I was born in Warsaw, in Warsaw ghetto actually was very close to them, the ghetto, my mother already left when I was born and at this time in 1943, in April, there was a big fire, and this night when I was born (as her mother described) there was so much light as daylight from the burning Warsaw ghetto, from the burning ghetto Warsaw ghetto, and it was almost a daylight light. I was born in a moment like that. | E vividly describes the night in which she was born as related to her by her mother.              |
| 12 | My mum was actually terribly exhausted, terribly frightened and extremely miserable.   | NROH  |
| 13 | It wasn't a normal situation, and to give birth to a child under circumstances which you have a war going on, in its worst, people dying in the space of seconds, many of them, and it was just horrible.  | E was born amidst abnormal times.   |
| 14 | I was there, but don't remember.   | E has no direct memories of those times.  |
| 15 | I wasn't there with my memories, but I just, where my mother told me all of this, I could imagine.   | However her mother has managed to impart the details so that E can visualise the scene very well. |
| 16 | I have seen those places after, and my mother told me this is where I was born and this is where she was walking, this is where my father died, this was this, and this was that, and I could see the places and could, when my mother told me those things, her expression and her feelings were so obvious, that I sort of got this in...  | E felt that her mother had a capacity to draw E into her memories, very ably.                     |

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| 17 | I got it in and felt for her what she went through as if it were myself, and in a sense I was too little to know, but I felt part of it.   | This osmosis of information made E feel an intricate part of being hidden although she was too little to have direct memories herself. |
| 18 | My mother transmitted it so well that I could feel it.   | The transmission was so successful that E believes she feels as if she can remember the experience.                                    |
| 19 | And I felt even at first when mum took me there.   | Even the first time her mother took her back to these places she had a sense that she was already familiar with them.                  |
| 20 | I was still a little girl but I could see her crying so much and so much pain that she was crying and we were so connected.  | E was enmeshed in her mother's pain from when she was very little, through her constant witnessing of her mother's grief.              |
| 21 | And mum said this was happening when I was born and this was happening and this was the place and this was the place where I was born.   | E's mother described to E all the details of her birth.  |
| 22 | And the bombs were sort of coming down from the sky and the fire was burning and the people were dying and nobody knew what would happen the next minute, and I think that everything was in the hands of God, whoever could live and whoever could die.   | E described it as a chaotic time, when everything was in the hands of God and no one had any control over events.                      |
| 23 | And all this was a very, very tragic moment, just to give birth to a child.  | In this tragic time, E was born.   |
| 24 | I can understand this, I have had a son myself, so I know to even give birth to the child is difficult and even much more difficult under very terrible circumstances and that's the beginning.  | NROH   |
| 25 | And then from this moment I went back to my parents who lived outside the ghetto at this time...we already took it out... my father organised it.  | NROH   |
| 26 | My mother went out to have me outside because there was no chance inside; there was just a crazy ...   | NROH   |
| 27 | There were lots of fights and in this moment he (my father) managed to get people out, mum's family and mum pregnant very much pregnant, in the last moment.   | NROH   |
| 28 | So she (mum) got to live with her parents and for a few months she lived there.  | NROH   |
| 29 | I also, I also had a brother and they were minding my brother, while she was giving birth to me.   | NROH   |
| 30 | This is what she told me.  | NROH   |
| 31 | And she lived with them for a few months.  | NROH   |
| 32 | There was a shortage of food, of course, especially milk but she wanted to have milk for me, so she was going to a lady and sort of getting it every day...a little glass of milk, a very small amount, but this was something.  | NROH   |
| 33 | And she went one day as usual with me in her arms to get the milk and when she came back, and on her way back, she witnessed that her parents and brothers and my little brother were taken away by Germans and she witnessed horrible things of losing her son at this stage, little, four years old, and then later on, parents and brother. | NROH   |
| 34 | And she fainted on the street. Shocking. And she was picked up in passing, by a kind person. Who for some reason, God knows why, and how, was a physician, a lady physician.   | NROH   |

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| 35 | And she took my mum from all this and brought her to her home. And she took care of me and gave my mum whatever she could to help me.   | NROH.  |
| 36 | And she knew my mum would not be able to go back anyway because if she went near this place she would be shot on the spot and she couldn't go back.   | NROH   |
| 37 | So she hid her, and this was the time that mum and I were hidden.   | The doctor hid E and her mother.   |
| 38 | She couldn't hide my mum in her place in the rooms where she was having lots of patients and people coming, she couldn't do this.   | The doctor was unable to hide them in the house or surgery for fear of detection.  |
| 39 | And she had two boys herself, twins, two boys.  | She also had her own family to protect.  |
| 40 | But there was a lady who did all the washing for the surgery and for her and this lady had a little house on the back. A sort of bungalow, and next to this was a potato pit where they stored the potatoes for winter,. The people in Poland had this sort of, very often, they store coal and potatoes and everything for winter and this was a deep hole in the ground with lots of potatoes but because they got cold, the potatoes themselves got cold when it's cold and frost, and they would be ruined, so they cover them with sand and straw or something like that my mum explained to me. | E and her mother were hidden in a potato pit at the rear of the house which had a deep hole, covered with sand and straw.  |
| 41 | I have never actually seen the potato pit because I wasn't able to see it that day and after that day I have never seen it.   | E has never sighted the pit itself.  |
| 42 | I have seen the place where it was, but no longer potato pit and there was sort of sand above this and some wood and very well camouflaged for the purpose of keeping the potatoes good throughout the winter, store them and deep down in the mound of potatoes and things like that they made a place for me and my mum, and some mattress and some things.   | E has seen the site of the pit and believes it was camouflaged very well.  |
| 43 | There wasn't much room but she could move around.   | Although the pit was cramped, they were able to move around.   |
| 44 | We were both in there although I don't even count myself because I was too little, and I don't remember this, she doesn't remember this at all. I have no idea how it was, I have no recollection. I was only a baby.   | E has no direct recollection of this time, although she was hidden there, as she was only a baby.  |
| 45 | But my mother described it so literally and so many times to me probably from the time when I could understand to today this day, today, she always repeats those things, she can never forget them, and never can live without them, with those memories they are always there.  | However E's mother has repeatedly described the pit to E, from that time until today, as the memories were an integral part of her mothers' life without which she could not live.   |
| 46 | In one way or another, my mother explains those memories so many times so I have built them up in my system so strongly that actually they have become part of my life, and I fully understand my mum's troubles and I fully supports her, and I reckon I can almost visually imagine all of this.  | Consequently, E has integrated them (the memories) as part of her own system, and <i>own</i> life, to the point where E believes she <i>can</i> actually visualise all that went on. |
| 47 | Almost visually, she created such a picture that I could see it.  | The memories were transformed into a vivid visualisation.  |
| 48 | And then I was there, hidden with all this stuff and I was sort of, it was quite cold, it was terribly cold, and I had lots of stuff to warm myself up and lots of things, whatever they were, blankets or maybe other things.  | E was hidden in this pit with some material possessions, but it was always cold.   |
| 49 | I never even asked what they were, but this wasn't important, it was too little a matter to be discussed.   | E never questioned what the actual material objects were in the pit with them, as this was a trivial detail in light of the whole experience.  |
| 50 | I had some other things to be able to go to the toilet, and things like that..  | There were some toileting facilities.  |
| 51 | On a string they sort of dropped the milk and things, whatever they could,  | Meagre supplies were dropped into  |

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|    | there was not much food anyway.   | the pit on a semi-regular basis.   |
| 52 | Mum said she warmed me up from her own body heat.   | E was mostly warmed by her mother's body heat.   |
| 53 | Mum said she was feeling very sick all the time and very frightened and she told me this was actually the end of everything and at any minute someone would come and kill her anyway.   | Her mother felt very sickly and was always scared that she could be found and killed at any moment.  |
| 54 | The sense of surviving was so strong that she kept on, but she kept on, but she lived in the fear of every minute being killed.   | In spite of this continual fear, there was a strong sense of survival, which persisted throughout.   |
| 55 | They could find us very easily with the dogs, they usually came, came with the dogs because the surgery was, somehow the doctors and nurse had these obligations to go and help people so maybe because of this nobody ever found us there.   | Their hiding place was very vulnerable in terms of its position, but perhaps because it was in such an obvious location, E believes that they were not found.  |
| 56 | Because so many people came and went that nobody probably suspected that someone would actually be encouraged to be there.  | As it was a busy place, it would not be thought to be a safe hiding place.   |
| 57 | Or whatever the reasons were nobody actually found my mum, never.   | No one ever found their hiding spot.   |
| 58 | But my mum felt that any minute she might be found, and her fear, as she described it, there was no one moment unless she was dreaming or sleeping or whatever, from exhaustion, and all these horrible things, there was no one moment when she could actually feel safe or relaxed or anything for all this time, when she was there she felt extremely frightened. | However E's mother, lived very precariously in hiding, believing at any minute she could be discovered and being fearful of this possibility.  |
| 59 | And of course I was breastfed but poorly, so she had to have extra milk, because she was herself very thin, and there was no food, not much.  | E was physically nurtured in a very minimal way as supplies were very scarce.  |
| 60 | We were there more than a year, no one could imagine.   | Unbelievably, they were hidden in this way for more than a year.   |
| 61 | And then the lady who took care of my mum had to go some other place in Eastern Poland, or somewhere to organise her parents to be transported somewhere else, she was always worried about them and my mum just lost her nerve and one day she just came out..   | The lady who hid them had to leave for a couple of weeks and E's mum felt vulnerable and unprotected and simply came out of hiding with E. Without the woman carrying out her role in making E's mother feel safe, E's mother was unable to contain her anxiety and gave up. |
| 62 | My mum was told not to come out because this was the time when nobody would look after her, her safety.   | This was even though E's mum was told to be more stringent in her concealment during this time.  |
| 63 | The lady who took care of her, the lady doctor, she was not there for some time and the lady who did the washing she was busy somewhere else and mum was told at this time...she would have to be careful twice but my mum simply didn't have the nerve to be there when this other lady wasn't watching. The lady doctor.  | Her mother felt very insecure without someone on the outside watching over them, as if this person on the outside was the umbilical cord that sustained their lives while hiding.  |
| 64 | The lady doctor went to Eastern Poland to transport her parents somewhere else, and there was a story behind it, very important reasons.  | NROH   |
| 65 | She only went for a very short time and she took the children with her. But my mum was told this was the time they had to be careful twice and my mum was just too frightened that she wasn't there, so no-one was looking for her safety and then be careful twice. What do you mean be careful twice my mum asked.  | Even though the Dr who hid them was only leaving for a brief time, E's mum could not comprehend hiding in her absence.   |
| 66 | There was no one watching, it wasn't safe anymore, so she just lost her nerve and she simply walked out of this and walked onto the streets and then she was picked up and taken to Auschwitz with me.  | She felt very vulnerable at this time and lost her nerve so she came out of hiding and was immediately arrested  |



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|    |   | together with E.  |
| 67 | But this was almost the end of the war and the Germans were very nervous. They still gassed people, they still were perfectly organised, and they were still able to do all this damage. They still put them to concentration camps and they actually wanted to burn them but in the end they actually burned the whole camp but they did burn the Camp, but they started to burn the camp and my mum was at this moment there.   | NROH  |
| 68 | But they couldn't do a lot of killing any more because they had to sort of take care of their own skin, and everything was coming too close.  | NROH  |
| 69 | So the people from Auschwitz started wandering around and she wandered around with me and I was then maybe a year and a half or something.  | NROH  |
| 70 | They were in the Auschwitz area, there was a little village there.  | NROH  |
| 71 | And my Mum wandered around with every other people there and then they sort of created a small group and they decided that somehow they would get back to Warsaw, but this was later.   | NROH  |
| 72 | (Cries) I am sorry about this, it is quite awkward, because although I know this all my life, it still gets me.   | NROH  |
| 73 | It is traumatic for me especially when I think of mum, because I can't remember, but I think of my mum's way of living and whoever would be the person.   | NROH.   |
| 74 | I am talking about my own mum, but even if this were another person it would be extremely hard not to be sensitive about it because it is just the way the people couldn't leave, it was so humiliating and so dangerous and so unreal in the most negative way, that it is even hard to describe.  | NROH  |
| 75 | My mum described it to me so well and I am trying to describe it to you, but it is unreal.  | NROH  |
| 76 | For me it is not possible to come to terms with this because how could you imagine that the army or so called civilised people, they were absolutely uncivilised, barbarians, can actually come and do things like that or sort of think, how could this be, how could you sort this out, there is no way of working this out.  | NROH  |
| 77 | I was trying to, herself, to do something with it, put this into right sort of shelves in my mind, but I found it was not possible, it doesn't make sense at all, at all.   | E has tried to process the events in her mind but finds this is beyond her.   |
| 78 | What could happen, is they were sick those people, who did this or what came to their minds to be so vicious, so hateful and so inhuman, what could happen with their minds.  | E cannot fathom the type of person who would be able to carry out these acts. |
| 79 | It is just impossible to understand. I still can't understand after all these years. Absolutely impossible.   | NROH  |
| 80 | Then after the war, I still continued to live with her friend and with her two boys, and she was extremely courageous lady, her mother-in-law, so I married one of the boys.  | NROH  |
| 81 | There were two of them, identical, identical twins and at first she was told that they were her bothers and they had a really good time. Of course there were horrible times, because after the war I was still little (crying).  | NROH  |
| 82 | I had this, what you call it, cradle, and I was quite big, I was maybe 18 months old or something already, and I was quite a big girl, but when I was sleeping, or when I was not sleeping, they were four years older, so they could do lots of things that I couldn't do, but when I was not sleeping, then 18 months old, I could do lots of screaming and don't let them do things to me, but when I was sleeping, they used to cuddle me so hard, when my mum was not looking, so I fell over, fell out of the cradle, and they got there and they | NROH  |

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|    | slept there.  |       |
| 83 | So this was something for me, and anytime my husband said, oh E doesn't do this for me or she doesn't do that for me, he complained to my mum and mum said look when she was little do you remember what you did to her, (laughs) and they had a little fun with this.  | NROH  |
| 84 | On top of the whole tragedy, and everything, we still sort of had a little bit sense of humour after what has happened, but only because maybe they, allowed us to live.  | NROH. |
| 85 | If you could imagine from all this disaster, someone came out alive, is something also unbelievable, for me it is.  | NROH. |
| 86 | So I continued to live with A's mum (the Polish lady) and it was a good time, we had good times together and good fun with my eight year old brothers.  | NROH  |
| 87 | But when I was a little bit older, and I could be taught, my mum told me that they were not my brothers, and she tried to explain to me how this was and at first I was a little bit, a little bit, not shocked, but I didn't understand what to do with this. They were not my brother, what could I do, but we still played, and we went to school and I was six years old.   | NROH  |
| 88 | We were in Poland after the war, and I lived with my mum and A's mum but A's mum worked at the surgery and she also worked at the ambulance station. She actually had two jobs because it was a hard time for her too, her husband was in France, and she had to manage all of this, and she brought her mum and dad too, and altogether with my mum and her three children, three small children .. and all this together ... and after the war was hard too with living and housing and everything. | NROH  |
| 89 | The other mum, was working almost, one would say 24 hours a day, and my mum (E's mum) was looking after the children.   | NROH  |
| 90 | Of course when they had to go to school, she prepared everything, the boys went there and I went to my school.  | NROH  |
| 91 | But, we lived in such an area where, well, every area was the same. The people knew that my mum was Jewish and they knew that I was Jewish and there were lots of people who for one reason unknown to me were continually hateful.   | NROH. |
| 92 | I don't know why, I really don't. I ask how one could hurt a little child for not being the same as they are, it's the same human being, looks the same. What is wrong, I still don't know.   | NROH  |
| 93 | There was a lot of hatred.  | NROH  |
| 94 | I had a terribly difficult time walking from home to school. I was only little and quite tiny, it was scary for me to go knowing that people would throw glass at her and they broke the beer bottles which were thick green glass and just throw it at me, the women, and with lots of ugly things they said, altogether it was hard.  | NROH  |
| 95 | Then when I went to school there were nuns who conduct, the Catholic nuns conducted the school, that was the only form of schooling there was at that time after the war.   | NROH  |
| 96 | I usually came with bruises and things like that, or with my hair messed up or whatever they did, pulled my hair, or they threw the glass or they, whatever they did, I was all messed up.  | NROH  |
| 97 | When I left home, I was all right, my mum did everything she could to make me look nice, and neat and clean. When she came to school and it was only 25 minutes distance, I came all messed up and cut with blood and all this and the nuns asked me why I was so clumsy, that I could not come to school looking like all the other children. What is wrong with me, there must be something wrong with me and for this I was punished.  | NROH  |

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| 98  | I was put into the corner and had to on my knees, I had to stay there for half of the time, with my face turned to the wall because of being clumsy and coming to school all messed up.   | NROH  |
| 99  | But then while I was there in those horrible corners, almost not every day, but almost every day, then I could listen to all the great talks and lectures that were given to the children. Most of those lectures were about the saints and martyrs and the beautiful stories how martyrs did all these sacrifices and they were tortured and I was very familiar with this, very familiar. | NROH  |
| 100 | So for some reason or another I didn't fight myself with a martyr, and this made me feel better, because then I was a martyr and I had to go through all the tortures because I was a martyr.   | NROH. |
| 101 | This gave me a lot of strength, lots of strength.   | NROH  |
| 102 | After some years the communist system was so strongly organised that the nuns were kicked out. Not that it was...it didn't make any difference to me but at times I said that the life is so complicated that we couldn't understand sometimes what is going on.  | NROH  |
| 103 | The school became a government school, not that it was any better, but I was much bigger then and there were so many new faces.   | NROH  |
| 104 | There were incidents, there were always incidents, as long as I was living in Poland, I was always exposed to some incidents.   | NROH  |
| 105 | So I asked myself a question so many times. There was a war, then there were lots of reasons to blame the war, but after the war, what were the reasons? I ask, there's normal people who know so well how ugly those things are, why they continue in their little ways thinking the same way? I cannot understand this until now.   | NROH  |
| 106 | Still probably my head is just war.   | NROH  |
| 107 | If I understand all of this probably, because I would like to ask people how they could explain this to me.   | NROH  |
| 108 | If it is because there is such a big difference between some people and another people or because of some other reasons.  | NROH  |
| 109 | The fact is that these sort of things, they just not going away, anyway they stay.  | NROH  |
| 110 | So we left Poland because really what was there was so full blood of innocent people and ongoing hatred.  | NROH  |
| 111 | My mother and I and my husband then, and I had a little boy, a son.   | NROH  |
| 112 | I was about 22 when we left.  | NROH  |
| 113 | And then I married my husband there. At about 15, 13 years old, very early.   | NROH  |
| 114 | We used to be together so much that their mums decided that this was alright, and   | NROH  |
| 115 | My mum was so grateful to A's mum for saving their lives and all this she doesn't even have any opinion about anything. A's mum was the boss...was totally the boss and if she decided something and if her son wanted to marry me ...this was going to happen.   | NROH  |
| 116 | It worked out quite well and we have made it for 40 years, and we are very good friends, and my husband is probably the most understanding, beautiful genuine soul I ever met.  | NROH  |
| 117 | So somehow looking at everything what's happened and everything with my sort of luck with having such a friend out of all this it makes the whole   | NROH  |

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|     | situation different because this one...man is a much stronger proposition than all that's happened. He is the one who gives me a sense of believing in people after all of this.  |      |
| 118 | So I left Poland with A (my husband), my mother and my son. My son was born there in Poland.  | NROH |
| 119 | And we went to Israel first.  | NROH |
| 120 | Israel was where I wanted to be actually after all of this and understandably I wanted to be in the, where no one do things like that, but A was not comfortable with that. A was from non-Jewish background and although there is some connection but it sounded fickle to explain that, nobody even talked about it. A is from non-Jewish background and he is, there were some difficulties, and A felt uncomfortable with it, so he said maybe they had better go somewhere else. | NROH |
| 121 | I visits and things. And I say that maybe when there will be no other difficulties, and once and for all we will be able to organise our lives.   | NROH |
| 122 | But somehow we stayed here (in Australia).  | NROH |
| 123 | Supposedly this was a mistake because I am not happy here.  | NROH |
| 124 | (Crying continues) For me the holocaust continues in a miniature form.  | NROH |
| 125 | I lost my son.  | NROH |
| 126 | It was in an accident but who knows. I don't really know.   | NROH |
| 127 | He was 34 years old, 34.  | NROH |
| 128 | Then I had problems with being able to help his children (two boys) my grandsons. I have big problems just to be able to help them, just to pay my obligation to my son even if not anything else. I have a problem with this. Who could imagine that I would be prohibited from helping my grandsons.  | NROH |
| 129 | My grandsons, one is now approaching 14 years old and the other one is a little bit more than 12, yes 12 years old.   | NROH |
| 130 | One of those boys was already living with them and my son in our house, and my son's defacto, she moved out. She was also living with them at first for many years but when my grandson was born, the older one, she left after a few months. She decided she would leave, and have life reorganised, and she left my son and she left her little boy with him (E's son).   | NROH |
| 131 | So from then on, they had to take care of the child.  | NROH |
| 132 | (Cries) Well, I always thought this wouldn't happen again, this wouldn't happen again, I always believed.   | NROH |
| 133 | And this boy, she didn't, at first she was so young she probably didn't want to have an extra child, she already had another child from another man, a little girl, so we helped her with this little girl, but then she left to take care of her.  | NROH |
| 134 | Because my son was working and he usually worked two jobs and he wanted to do something, he was a very hard working man. They had to take care of their little grandson, with my mum's help of course.  | NROH |
| 135 | The mother (of the grandson) left and my son tried to contact her and bring her back and outside of the house they had some sort of relationship, on and off for some time and there was another boy from this relationship.  | NROH |
| 136 | She had another man's son with her, and she came to visit them several times.   | NROH |
| 137 | They were able to see there was another child, but then for many years they completely disappeared from the picture completely and they actually brought  | NROH |

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|     | this boy up (the first child) and he never knew his mother until he was nine years old.   |      |
| 138 | But I was a little bit worried about it, so I looked for her always. I looked for her and I didn't. I thought it was absolutely impossible for the child to grow up knowing that he had a mother but she is not there, and I believed this could be very damaging, to his whole idea of living. So I looked for her, searched for her, I looked everywhere and finally I found her. | NROH |
| 139 | I don't know, this was probably, because it was suddenly before my son died and maybe because this was the fate like that that he had to meet the other little boy (his second son).<br>He had never met his other son when he was at an age where they were able to communicate.   | NROH |
| 140 | Once she left with the other boy he was too little.   | NROH |
| 141 | So in a sense when I found her, and brought her back here, she met her older son and my son met his younger son and I was very... for me this seemed to be extremely important.   | NROH |
| 142 | I think that this is probably my mistake because shortly after my son died. She came with police and took the older boy.  | NROH |
| 143 | I couldn't understand why she was doing this but people suggested that probably because there is an accident payout and if she had the children then she would be in charge of all of this, and she wanted to be in charge.   | NROH |
| 144 | She is a heroine addict, and I didn't know this then, because if I knew this, then, I would have been much more careful with making such an arrangement.  | NROH |
| 145 | But, I never, I mean, she was on drugs, she smoked marijuana and she drank heavily, but I didn't know she was already so badly on drugs.  | NROH |
| 146 | It never crossed my mind the idea of bringing a mother to this son was more important and I just didn't think about this.   | NROH |
| 147 | I looked purely from the moral grounds, and there were other things.  | NROH |
| 148 | I didn't know about them but now I know and I am not in a condition to be actually terribly responsible for her actions but she is doing lots of bad actions.   | NROH |
| 149 | The father of the daughter, whom she had before, was in jail for 15 years for armed robbery. He's a very heavy criminal and he unfortunately came back into her life 6 months before I got into trouble for helping her grandson with his runaway plan.   | NROH |
| 150 | He ran away from them.... It wasn't his home, never because he grew up here (with E).   | NROH |
| 151 | He ran away from his mother because she had herself a boyfriend who was terrorising him.  | NROH |
| 152 | He stood up for himself, he was big enough to stand up for himself, and the confrontations were very, very dangerous.   | NROH |
| 153 | He was kicked, he was threatened and he may even have been a molester, because the man was sort of known as having all sorts of activities inside the jail.   | NROH |
| 154 | Also, this man was a drug addict and a drug dealer and is an extremely heavy criminal.  | NROH |
| 155 | The child was terrified and he wanted to run away from all of that.   | NROH |

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| 156 | So one day he called me up from the bus stop and he said are you coming to help me or I am going anyway.  | NROH |
| 157 | And then we hid him there, we ...   | NROH |
| 158 | Well we didn't really hide him, he only hid when the police came.   | NROH |
| 159 | He hid in the room where we stored things, paintings and valuables when we went overseas or something so he just used this room just, to sort of hide him, so when they searched for him (he is there) and when they left, he came out and played and just lived in this house.   | NROH |
| 160 | He knew the house and the surroundings so well, like nobody else, it was his home.  | NROH |
| 161 | But for this I went to jail. I was sentenced to jail. I was in jail for four months.  | NROH |
| 162 | Well finally, I took him outside. I wanted to talk to him about doing something realistic because he couldn't be in hiding all his life like that.  | NROH |
| 163 | I said this is terrible, you can't live like that, you have to go to school, you have to live a normal life. I said you have to live a normal life and we have to talk about it, and he said, not now! Not now! And each time I started he started to cry.  | NROH |
| 164 | It's time, now with the police so heavily on our back, if we don't do something, we will all have to go to jail, and I didn't know what would happen to them, it was terrible and we have to talk..   | NROH |
| 165 | So I said, what do you want me to do and he, he wanted to go for holidays.  | NROH |
| 166 | So I said, alright she would go on holidays with him, she asked where he wanted to go for holidays. He said he wanted to sail, he wanted to have the holiday of his life. Alright. I bought him all the gear and I took him to the best surfing beach in Australia, South Australia and I wanted to talk to him, and each time I wanted to talk, he wanted to play with the dog. They took the dog with them, he wanted the dog and he wanted to play.      | NROH |
| 167 | He was avoiding this, he didn't want anything to do with all these horrible things, he wanted to live normal life, and who could understand this better...the boy.  | NROH |
| 168 | I told him that it is a very dangerous situation, it would probably end terribly, because he was opposed to any communication and any suggestion of doing anything, like going back or something.   | NROH |
| 169 | But still, I couldn't go on like that so I rang up the place where I hired the car and I said that I would like to hire the car to Melbourne and go back to .. look we were going back to Melbourne and we were going back to, whatever we did we would have to go to court, we had to go to the media, we would go anywhere and would do something but we couldn't do this what we were doing was totally out of the question, we couldn't do such things. | NROH |
| 170 | And when they came to the place where we were supposed to exchange the car because they told me I could not drive this car to Melbourne and I had to drive another one, for some reason they explained, but I did not know there was a trap already, so when they came to exchange the cars they arrested us, they caught the boy and they didn't actually arrest me straight away, because they knew who I was.  | NROH |
| 171 | And because I had a dog with me, I had the dog under my arm and I was just standing there and I could see B (my grandson) screaming, the two officers were pulling his arms against the wall.   | NROH |
| 172 | Then I had all these visions and he was screaming that he would kill himself, and all sorts of horrible things, but of course he was only a little child and he   | NROH |

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|     | was scared as hell.  |      |
| 173 | I have to use this horrible word because it is the only description.   | NROH |
| 174 | And then I said that I am not going to stand there and I am not going to run away from this.   | NROH |
| 175 | Also I said to them that what they are doing, is maybe this is the wrong boy. I tried to save him and all this conversation and finally I said alright, I was going with him, and the poor little dog, they arrested the dog too, and put him to the RSPCA and put me into jail and took B somewhere and from then on, I have another tragedy. | NROH |
| 176 | I went through the whole process and I didn't help him anyway but I did the best I could.  | NROH |
| 177 | The poor child was scared, was terrorised and was manipulated, as he has to now do whatever they want as he is double scared now.  | NROH |
| 178 | I didn't know, this is a little holocaust.   | NROH |
| 179 | I don't know but assumes he (her grandson) is back with his mother, that is the law.   | NROH |
| 180 | The law as the police told me is a vicious circle, it will go back again to the same point.  | NROH |
| 181 | I asked if there was any alternative to help the child, I discussed this with them.  | NROH |
| 182 | They knew that I knew there wasn't any secret that I had something to do with this. I didn't really cover up for this or anything, I just tried to find a way to help him  | NROH |
| 183 | But there was no way, but because I knew about another so called civilised people, somewhere else who did a lot of barbaric things, I was not surprised, I was not surprised.  | NROH |
| 184 | I am only sorry that again, the same child is exposed to all this danger and no one can actually help.   | NROH |
| 185 | This is something again unbelievable, but I have a few unbelievable things that I still don't understand in my life.   | NROH |
| 186 | So I have no contact with him, it is quite prohibited.   | NROH |
| 187 | Maybe there are some legal ways of trying to get him to contact, but they can't afford to explore any other possibilities.   | NROH |
| 188 | We don't know where he is living now. The worst part of this is not that I couldn't see him, but this is only temporary problem, because he will grow up. The worst part is that he is in an environment, which is absolutely dangerous. It's so horrible that nobody wants to have any child living like that.                                | NROH |
| 189 | It's not only this children, any children shouldn't live like that.  | NROH |
| 190 | And this is what worries me not that I won't see him. I will not see him for some time and then I would see him, because no one can stop him growing up. It's impossible.  | NROH |
| 191 | I will see him in a couple of years, he will be alright, he will come probably or I will see him whenever I see.   | NROH |
| 192 | This is if he will survive in this environment but just being exposed to such a danger and nobody can possibly bother to help these children.  | NROH |

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| 193 | And nobody bothers that these children (should) have better situation, better option, this is all I can't understand.  | NROH  |
| 194 | Because I couldn't understand what's happened in the war and I couldn't understand why people continue to be bad after the war.  | NROH  |
| 195 | I can now think that this is another thing that I don't understand and that's it.  | NROH  |
| 196 | I was put in prison for this. Because it was illegal to take a child.  | NROH  |
| 197 | I mean, he came to me as he was honestly too big to be taken.  | NROH  |
| 198 | He came and asked for help and I say don't people could imagine that I could say no I can't help him. How people could imagine that I would be able to do this.  | NROH. |
| 199 | So obviously I had to break some sort of rules.  | NROH  |
| 200 | And then when I already had him there (at home) he felt good and relaxed and relieved and safe and I could see this, I could see that he is still happy again.   | NROH  |
| 201 | But there is something in him which made me believe he is alright.   | NROH  |
| 202 | Then they called us up to the Family Court and made us make a statement that we know where he is or if we don't know where he is, and I looked at this Judges' eyes and he stared at me for two minutes at least and I stared at him for two minutes at least because what I wanted to tell him and couldn't was no court in the world and no judge in the world have the right to put this little boy in such a terrible unsafe situation. They have no right and no matter what they called themselves, they have no right to put this little child into something that this child cannot live in. | NROH  |
| 203 | He is so traumatised and he only lost his father not a long time ago. He was in deep grief. See, his father meant everything to him.   | NROH  |
| 204 | How could they do this to such a child, it's quite unbelievable.   | NROH  |
| 205 | So when he stared at me, and asked me, you know where this boy is and I said no I don't because this was a little boy they were talking about.   | NROH  |
| 206 | The one, he wants to expose to the same thing again. At least he should have a little break from all of this.  | NROH  |
| 207 | And I could see he was happy and comfortable and relaxed and relieved and safe.  | NROH  |
| 208 | When I could see him like that and some old man asked me ridiculous thing knowing very well that I couldn't say I knew.  | NROH  |
| 209 | And I was in prison for five months, but this was sort of divided on two parts. First I was on remand for two months, in Deer Park. This was remand, actually it was, I was on remand but it was not official, I think is my opinion it was not an official remand centre because all the prisoners were mixed up. The ones already sentenced and maybe serving ten years and those who nobody knows if they ever would be sentenced.  | NROH  |
| 210 | So from this point of view I may only say I was on remand, but I was not in a remand centre, but I would believe this is a remand centre.  | NROH  |
| 211 | The place was on another hand, was described extraordinary, because you would believe and expect the prison itself would be something horrible. It was horrible in the sense that you meet people whom you wouldn't like to associate with any other circumstances and you are unable to know what they can do to you and how to deal with this, but the jail itself, the prison itself was quite civilized in a way.  | NROH  |



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| 212 | I mean, in comparison, with Auschwitz it's probably more civilised proportionally more civilised the prison itself is more civilised than the whole system outside, which is absolutely cruel. compared with...  | NROH |
| 213 | So at least there is some sort of law and order inside this prison.  | NROH |
| 214 | Oh not really, but more closer, more closer. All depended on the people who dealt with this.   | NROH |
| 215 | I mean it is management, like the prison has good management, then of course it is easier.   | NROH |
| 216 | Someone cares how to help people, how to give them a little bit of education, little bit of support. Good things are actually happening in this place. I can't say any other way because that is how it is.  | NROH |
| 217 | When I was on bail, I was released for nine months and it was said that it was not likely that I would not go back, because it was pretty obvious what was happening, but because this pretty obvious situation was not very obvious described in court, I got another three months to spend there.  | NROH |
| 218 | I don't know. If I were a solicitor, and maybe I am wrong because I am only a painter, I would probably shout to the court the reasons. I would probably expect the court to take a view when the law is broken, there is a form of punishment and I would be prepared that this may happen, but I would present to the court the view of the reasons. The reasons were not presented and also the situation where children are living and environment, was not described. | NROH |
| 219 | So the judge could only see one thing. These people actually broke the law and there is actually nothing they have to say about it so obviously they have to be punished and that's it. And they plead guilty.   | NROH |
| 220 | I was the principal figure, and this is probably, because I could not say no to my Grandson, and my husband also couldn't say no.  | NROH |
| 221 | I say he would not be whom he is an especially fair person, an especially fair person, if he said that oh, no, no, they can't help him. He wouldn't feel who he is if he said no. If I would have said I would have doubts, he would still say yes, and this is how he is. He would not leave a little boy begging him and he would not say no.  | NROH |
| 222 | I think any family would do this.  | NROH |
| 223 | So putting them into such an exercise knowing that they would do what they would do, it was quite cynical and quite horrible because everybody who did this whole thing they knew exactly the outcome.   | NROH |
| 224 | I think this was, in my view, this was much more horrible to what went with it.  | NROH |
| 225 | We only did normal human things, normal human reactions, to human circumstances.   | NROH |
| 226 | The other people they treated them, they treated the circumstances in extreme cruelty, for the children and for them.  | NROH |
| 227 | So it doesn't make sense to me again. It didn't make sense then and it doesn't make sense now.   | NROH |
| 228 | Is there is any place or any situation or any people where there's things that make sense?   | NROH |
| 229 | It doesn't, the people were not able to achieve a standard with things, obvious things could be solved in the humane way, humane way. They didn't achieve such a standard.   | NROH |

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| 230 | After all these lessons, I say they were unable to achieve it this much more and I don't feel comfortable with this any more.  | NROH |
| 231 | This is my home and this is where I live. In the country.  | NROH |
| 232 | (E begins to talk about her artwork) I had this piece in T's house for a while. I think this painting may go to a Holocaust museum or something, when the building is fixed. | NROH |

**SUBJECT 7:**

|     | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR S.   | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.   |
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|     | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden.)   |  |
| 1.  | I don't quite understand what you mean by the experience of being hidden.  |  |
| 2.  | It was fearsome, in that we were prepared for it. What it means prepared is that we had different identity papers. Every member of the family. My mother took the two sons and I went with two aunties and a cousin to a flat in a different area. In Hungary. | S felt scared although she was prepared for it. The preparation it seems, was only in terms of practical considerations. S seems to describe in a very practical way that she was separated from her mother and went with two family members to a separate location. |
| 3.  | I was six years of age and had to have different papers, different identities. I was called by a different name and was Catholic, or maybe Reform. Not Jewish, it was a sect of Catholicism, I think.  | The experience occurred to S when she was 6 years old, when her name and religious identity were changed- her recollection seems to indicate a certain vagueness about the specifics of her new religious identity.  |
| 4.  | I had to learn the prayers, I wasn't allowed to say I was Jewish, it had to be completely wiped out. I was drilled and trained, in strong language, I was threatened.  | In S's hiddenness, she was very forcefully brought to a position of obliterating her Jewishness, and encouraged to learn certain rituals of her new identity.  |
| 5.  | I knew it was very critical I should know who I was. I had to know my new name, my age was the same.   | S was powerfully aware how important it was and was very sure of her new identity.   |
| 6.  | My father was in the army and I can't remember where my mother was supposed to be.   | S had a sense of where one of her parents were (in the story) but not the other.   |
| 7.  | It was a complete new identity.  | S thought it was a completely new identity.  |
| 8.  | I was with two of my aunts. We were in a flat in K, in one of the outlying suburbs.  | S was with her aunts in a new and different location.  |
| 9.  | Two months later, I was taken into a nunnery.  | S was taken from her aunt two months later and put into a non-Jewish institution on her own.   |
| 10. | I don't remember if I was Jewish there or not. I believe I wasn't.   | S is confused about her alleged religious identity whilst in the convent. She thinks she was not Jewish there.   |
| 11. | I don't recall who took me there, but remember it was serious.   | What stands out in S's memory was the gravity of what was happening although she doesn't recall who took her there.  |
| 12. | I didn't feel sorry for myself because I had no time to do so.   | The pressure of hiddenness for S reduced her capacity to be in touch with painful feelings.  |
| 13. | I knew I had to get on with life and was not allowed to make a slip, and the less I talked the better.   | S had to keep constantly vigilant in a constricted way of being in the world, constantly aware she had to conceal. There was a 'brushing aside' of the complexity of what had to be endured in order for survival.   |
| 14. | I was at that convent for maybe two or three months.   | This phase of S's hiddenness in this religious institution was for two-three months.   |
| 15. | It was difficult because I didn't know anyone there.   | S found it difficult because she was not familiar with anyone around her.  |

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| 16. | I was attached to a family and I had to go to the nunnery services, the nuns took me.   | S was connected to a family in the convent and was forced to attend their ritual services together with the nuns.   |
| 17. | They were all in black.   | The fact that the nuns were in black seemed to stand out for S.   |
| 18. | I remember about three months later the Gestapo came and arrested the whole group. We were taken to another institution surrounded by the Gestapo. It was very fearful.   | S and her group were arrested in the convent by the Gestapo and were relocated to another place surrounded by the enemy which was very frightening.   |
| 19. | I think this was in Hungary or it could have been already in the ghetto. I am not sure.   | S is unsure where they were relocated.  |
| 20. | I was with other people but completely away from family members.  | S was amongst other people but completely away from all family members.   |
| 21. | It was very fearful, because they were all in white these nuns.   | It seems that external signs such as the color of the nuns clothes seemed to be frightening to S.   |
| 22. | I think it was a convent, that is what I remember. I remember the transition from black to white.   | Again the color of people's clothing seems to form an impression on S as marked by the transition from black to white.  |
| 23. | I knew we were in danger because when I looked out the window there was barbed wire everywhere and there were soldiers guarding. Soldiers of Nazis or Gestapo, I don't know what they were called. But they had guns or swords and for a little child this was very frightening | There was a sense of being hidden in a place where there was forboding and danger outside, represented by armed soldiers.   |
| 24. | I was there for a while and then my Auntie came and took me out.  | S remained there for some period until her Aunt rescued her.  |
| 25. | I returned to her flat.   | NROH.   |
| 26. | No . . . this was a different aunt, the first time I went with one aunt, now it was a second aunt. She used to live in Melbourne.   | S clarifies that it was a different Aunt that collected her from the first one she was with.  |
| 27. | I then went to live with this aunt and her brothers, with two aunts, but then one aunt went to Switzerland and the other aunt, came to take me out from the nunnery.  | S then lived with this aunt as the other Aunt had gone to Switzerland.  |
| 28. | When the aunt went to Switzerland, I was taken into the convent. I was there for a few months and the Gestapo came and my aunt took me out.   | When separated from her Aunt S was taken into the convent where she stayed for a few months until she was relocated by the Gestapo and then rescued by her Aunt.  |
| 29. | I joined (unsure) joined my Uncle's wife, who I was with originally with their baby. I was there a few months and then my mother and Aunt and two brothers joined us.   | S is confused with whom she hid with subsequent to her release from the religious institution, but recalls there was a period of separation from her family members for a few months until she was reunited with her Mother and brothers who joined them in their hiding place. |
| 30. | They joined because they had to escape from where they were.  | Her mother and brothers were forced to flee from their place of hiding and joined S where she was hidden.   |
| 31. | So everyone was together.   | Everyone in the family was reunited again.  |
| 32. | We had to resume our identity papers, I still had a false name and wasn't allowed to say anything.  | Everyone continued with their false identities and S had to continue with her false persona and not disclose anything in their hiding place.  |
| 33. | We were living openly – well we went out as little as possible,   | S said they lived openly albeit in a very restrictive sense.  |
| 34. | and when we did we were non-Jews.   | Whenever they ventured out it was under the persona of being non-Jews.  |

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| 35. | To their neighbours we were non-Jews.   | Even to their own neighbours they had to hide their real identities.  |
| 36. | It was very fearful because we were scared we could be identified on the street.  | They were forever scared of the potential of their real identities being identified on the streets.   |
| 37. | We had a code, we had to press the button, four or five times, so that family members knew it was a family member and open the door for them.   | The family developed a secret code within its members so that they would be able to identify one another upon entering their hidden residence.                                |
| 38. | The whole situation was very fearful.   | The situation was very tense.   |
| 39. | When father came home we had to hide him because he was not officially in the house.  | Their father was not part of their official 'new family' and when he arrived he had to be hidden completely within the family itself.   |
| 40. | If a stranger came into the house, we were petrified.   | There was extreme tension if a stranger entered the house.  |
| 41. | What on earth are they coming for . . . we didn't trust anyone.   | They were very suspicious of everyone.  |
| 42. | When we went to get bread or whatever, we were petrified that no-one saw us going into the house, no-one saw us going into the bakery.  | Even when they carried out mundane tasks they were very wary that no one watched their movements.   |
| 43. | Because my mother was identified in her previous location, that's why she escaped from there.   | This wariness increased after their mother was identified in her previous hidden location.  |
| 44. | What happened is that apparently someone in our normal Budapest dwelling, there was someone who recognised my mother. So this particular person told the owner of the house that my mother could be Jewish. | NROH  |
| 45. | When my mother was confronted with it, she accused the person, how dare they say that she was Jewish. It was a terrible insult to my mother.  | NROH  |
| 46. | But within the hour she packed her bag and she left. She went to join the rest of the family.   | NROH  |
| 47. | Just reflecting, the whole months were very, very fearsome. Not fearsome ... even afraid to walk on the street.   | S remembers that the tension during these months was great and they were scared to even venture out on the streets.   |
| 48. | I calculate that we left our residence about May 1944, until we were liberated in January – about eight or nine months.   | This period of tension extended over 8 or 9 months.   |
| 49. | I remember that even when we went there was bombing, so we had to go into shelter together with all the neighbours and we had to be very careful with our identities.                                       | S recalls that when the bombing began the family moved to the shelter with their neighbours and their false identities continued in this new situation, even as co-residents. |
| 50. | We weren't allowed to say a Jewish word, we weren't allowed to have Jewish customs, we were always afraid of what we were doing.  | The tension grew and extended to an ever-vigilant awareness of every minor spoken word and movement so as not to reveal their Jewishness.                                     |
| 51. | ...as a kid of six. I wasn't the oldest L (brother) was.  | S was six at the time and had an older brother.   |
| 52. | We understood, that it..that we had to be careful not to reveal that we were Jewish or t hat we had Jewish habits of family members.  | S said it was implicit and understood that they were to be inhibitory in their mannerisms and identification.   |
| 53. | When we came down to shelter I wasn't allowed to say that that was my mother, she had a different name. I think I had to say that she was an aunt.  | In the shelter S was prohibited from identifying her Mother as her Mother, instead relating to her as a different relative with a pseudonym                                   |
| 54. | She (mother) officially only had two children, they were her two boys, so I was just attached to her.   | The whole family constellation was altered as members assumed different identities and relationships.   |
| 55. | G. (Sister) was in a different home altogether. She had false papers, but she   | Unlike her sister who was pre-verbal,   |

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|     | was a baby, so she wasn't really vulnerable, as there was no fear that she could reveal, but the fear was on me that I should not reveal.   | the pressure and tension for S was immense that she would not slip up in her new identity, and disclose incriminating information.   |
| 56. | I remember L singing <i>Zmiros</i> (Jewish songs), you know songs, and my mother was so upset, my mother was worried that someone would recognise the song, and he just sub-consciously   | S remembered a tension and fear related to one of S's brothers when he inadvertently lapsed into a Jewish song which created enormous tension for their mother who was terrified of the potential consequences of this indiscretion. |
| 57. | ... we had to be very careful.  | They had to be ever vigilant throughout all situations.  |
| 58. | If I saw my father I couldn't call him Dad. I had to call him Mr H, that was his name.  | Even close family members had to be treated as acquaintances.  |
| 59. | So that fear was constantly with us.  | This was a fearful imperative that was always with them.   |
| 60. | I remember in the convent when we were given food, as a kid of six, I knew not to take pork, I think I ate the vegetables   | S was aware of being different in the convent and refusing non-Kosher food and only eating vegetables.   |
| 61. | and I don't know how come, thinking back, how I knew not to have pork, how many six year olds would know that?  | S is surprised at her own attention to this fact at the age of six.  |
| 62. | I remember distinctly as a kid I didn't eat it, but I was told I should eat.  | S recalls her refusal of this food was an act of her own initiative as she was instructed she should eat.  |
| 63. | My mother said good-bye to me, I don't know if my mother took me in or my auntie  | S is unclear who took her to the convent.  |
| 64. | She said you just have to do as you are told, but don't ever say you are Jewish or don't ever say you know about Pesach (Jewish festival) or things like that.  | S recalls being instructed to be obedient in the convent and not to disclose her Jewish identity or her knowledge about Judaism.   |
| 65. | We had to be sort of suppressed, our whole past had to be ... we were told to speak as little as possible.  | Their whole past had to be suppressed and they were told to disclose as little as possible.  |
|     | (And you went with this false name into the convent?)   | NROH   |
| 66. | I think so, I am pretty sure I was under false identity papers. I think this is so.   | S believes she had a false identity in the convent.  |
| 67. | I believe we were sent there because it was thought to be a safe place. When Auntie I. left, Auntie S was there with the baby, so they probably thought it was the best place. Who knew what the best place was. I am sure this was the reason. | S believes her family saw the convent as a haven and therefore decided to send her there. Various family members came to the hiding place at different times and they seemed to perceive the convent as being the optimum place.     |
|     | (Were the nuns happy to take in kids?)  | NROH   |
| 68. | I believe they were. They must have been under the Swedish or Swiss government protection. I think there were adults there too. Not sure.   | It appeared to S that the nuns were happy to take children in and speculates that the convent may have had a neutral status.   |
| 69. | Not sure whether I was supposed to be Jewish or not. Don't know.  | S is unsure of her supposed identity in the convent (i.e. Jewish or Gentile).  |
| 70. | I remember I had to go to their services.   | S remembers attending the services at the convent.   |
| 71. | But don't remember if this was for me or for them.  | S is confused about the movements in the convent and whether some of her actions were for her own benefit or served as part of the false story.  |
| 72. | In the flat definitely had to be ... (hidden) ... so don't know why I was...don't know why...whether they knew I was Jewish or not.   | Although S is definite she assumed a false identity in the flat, she is unsure whether this continued in the convent or whether there they knew there she  |

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|     |  | was Jewish.  |
| 73. | I was in the flat from May, with aunt, till June, July, maybe more. So looking back ... I am trying to calculate.  | S tried to quantify the length of time she was in the flat with her Aunt.  |
| 74. | It was very strange. There was little to do. I was six years old, what could I do in a flat? I don't know if we even took games.   | S recalls it was an unnatural situation in the flat with very little to do there and no playing at all.  |
| 75. | Later on when L. joined us, I was already playing cards with him, or sort of had, made up board games or things like that,   | When her brother joined her, S recalls more playful times.   |
| 76. | but as a six year old...it was very...it was an unnatural situation, very fearful...   | For a young child the unnaturalness of this situation was very frightening.  |
| 77. | But you couldn't sit around and feel sorry for yourself, we were always optimistic, everything is going to be OK and we had to go on with living.  | But there was no self-pity amongst them, only optimism and a feeling that everything would be OK and that they had to keep going.  |
| 78. | There was a sort of ... we didn't sort of think oh what a shame we are here ... we just had to go on with living.  | There was no self-pity about their whereabouts, they just pressed forward with daily living  |
| 79. | I recall we were then taken back to our original flat, not to our own home, to the one that I left before I went to the convent, in K, and Aunt S. was still there with the baby and I was probably there for a week or two, till my mother joined.  | S returned to her first place of hiding (after the convent) and was there for one-two weeks until her mother joined her.   |
| 80. | Mother was not meant to join, but because she had to escape, she had nowhere to go, so she joined us.  | Her mother's arrival was not a planned event but an abrupt and sudden decision as she fled from her original hiding place where she had been found out .   |
| 81. | There was always commun ... (communication)...actually our mother organized the flat so of course she knew where we were and   | S's mother knew of their location, as she was the one who had arranged the hiding place for them.  |
| 82. | we were there until the bombing started and we had to go down into the shelter. For two weeks.. The whole block was there.   | They stayed in this hiding place until the bombing began, which then forced them to go down into the shelter together with their neighbours.   |
| 83. | And again it was fearful, because again we were not supposed to reveal who we were and   | Their true identities could not be disclosed even while they were in the shelter.  |
| 84. | when my father came down at the very end, because he was hiding above with Rabbi B's brother, we had to pretend we never met him.  | When S's father come down to the shelter at a later stage, they were not allowed to acknowledge him as their father in keeping with their new identities.  |
| 85. | It was very, very hard, seeing my father but I couldn't go to him. And even if I did, I had to call him Mr H and not father, I had to be careful that it didn't slip the tongue.   |  |
| 86. | In the shelter there was the whole block..   | In the shelter there was a mix of both Jews and non-Jews.  |
| 87. | There must have been Jews there, like them, but we didn't know who or what, and we were scared, very scared who we were going to sit next to.  | S speculates that although there must have been Jews there with false identity papers like them there was no way of establishing this, creating further tensions.  |
| 88. | They could ask questions and what did we answer. My mother said to speak as little as possible but we had to be friendly, and we couldn't be. If we didn't say anything, they again suspected them why they weren't talking, so their mother tried to tell them that they had to speak but not to reveal anything that they didn't have to, just speak to the point. | A careful balance had to be maintained between being friendly to their co-residents in the shelter so as not to arouse suspicions, but at the same time not being over friendly in case damaging information might slip out. |
| 89. | What our name was, what school we went to, we had to fabricate some name that was also drilled into us.  | Basic mundane details were fabricated and learned, to enable conversation.   |
| 90. | Looking back it seems amazing, but when a person is in a situation, they just go on with life. (Breaks for a phone call)   | S said upon reflection she is impressed by what they achieved  |

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|      |  | through their ordeal, however at the time they were simply focused on living.   |
|      | (So back to you, what else can you tell me about the experience?)  | NROH  |
| 91.  | We took it because we had to take it, there were no questions asked.   | They accepted the situation because they were forced to do so.  |
| 92.  | We didn't delve on it in the sense that we didn't get sympathy, we just had to go on with living.  | There was no self-reflection or self pity at the time, the focus was simply on living.  |
| 93.  | That is all I can remember.  | NROH  |
| 94.  | It was traumatic in the sense we had to be careful, we had an existence I wouldn't wish on anyone, but at the time, I had to accept it. No questions asked.  | S said the continued tension of always being on guard was traumatic but at the time she was completely resigned to it without any questioning.            |
| 95.  | S questions if I know what she means?  | NROH  |
| 96.  | (Continues) Nowadays...we couldn't escape from it.   | In contrast to today, there was no escape possible from the situation.  |
| 97.  | There was no alternative, so we accepted it.   | Having no choices available, they were resigned to the situation  |
| 98.  | After liberation...the fact that we said nothing is still within me now  | The repression of information and reluctance to disclose remained with S even after liberation.   |
| 99.  | That is permanent, it changes your personality, which I believe I still suffer from.   | This inhibitive character has left an indelible impression on S, which persists, in her current life.   |
| 100. | After liberation, it took us a long time to settle, because we went from place to place, we didn't get back our residence. The communists took it over and wouldn't give it back.  | After liberation, there was a period of unsettledness as the communists had confiscated their residence and they were forced to look for other dwellings. |
| 101. | We had to share it with three other families, but my mother wouldn't hear of it. A three room flat to share with three families, one room for each family, this was not their scene.   | NROH  |
| 102. | So we went to Romania, we were there over Pesach, must have been about four months, then we went to Schools, we were there for about three months, then we went to Debrezin. We stayed there for a year and a half, and then we went to Prague and stayed there for a year and a half. Then we came to Melbourne, we lived in Carlton for two months, then we went to Collingwood. We stayed for three years, and then we went to St Kilda. At the end of '48.                               | The period of transience and temporary residency continued in Europe and then in Australia until the end of 1948.   |
| 103. | We resumed our normal papers straight after liberation. After liberation we were Jews and that part of the scenario was finished.  | Normal identities were resumed immediately after liberation and the mantle of Judaism was resumed.  |
| 104. | Then we became a family, my mother was my mother, my father was my father, my brothers were my brothers, straight after the Germans were out of Hungary, we resumed (their identities). That was the easy part.  | The family became a family unit again after liberation.   |
| 105. | Then we travelled as a family, our Aunt came with us, so there was no problems then.   | Even the extended family was able to travel with them- there was no longer an issue with this.  |
| 106. | But it was unsettled, nothing was permanent.   | NROH  |
| 107. | We had no schooling, I didn't start school till I went to Sokoslow, about '45, must have been August, so we missed about a year and a half, or two years of schooling and then my mother got us a tutor and we did a crash course, me and my brother. I think in a month we did the whole of Grade 1 syllabus, no Grade 2 syllabus. My mother paid a precious duck for the tuition. Imagine, for a duck, tuition fee? And I went straight to Grade 3 so I skipped Grade 2. And half Grade 1. | There was no opportunity for regular schooling, so their mother paid a premium to hire a private tutor to compensate for the gaps in their schooling.     |
| 108. | And then we went to Debezin, and there was more or less normal school in Debrezin. I went to a school, a Jewish school that was happy times, sort of happy school times.   | NROH  |



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| 109. | But again, not permanent residence, we knew we were there temporarily.  | There was always a sense of instability and lack of permanence about their situation.   |
| 110. | We lived away from the community because we were unable to get residence there.   | NROH  |
| 111. | <i>Parnosah</i> wise (financially) it was very hard, everything was new. Imagine your kids going to a new school.   | NROH  |
| 112. | Everything was new.   | All aspects of life were new and alien.   |
| 113. | New friends, new relationships, no family there.  | NROH  |
| 114. | From there we went to Prague. We lived in a hotel. Like many Jewish people lived in a hotel.  | NROH  |
| 115. | There was nothing to do all day, because there were no schools, the boys had <i>Cheder</i> (Hebrew school).   | NROH  |
| 116. | Thinking again, I don't know where the <i>Parnosah</i> (livelihood) came from, I really don't know. I think my parents were involved in a bit of the business on the quiet.   | NROH  |
| 117. | And they knew we had to leave to go somewhere, and they had to wait until they got papers to get here.  | NROH  |
| 118. | The story is probably similar to your parents?  | NROH  |
| 119. | My brother just wrote ... he wants to write a book for the family ... so he faxed to me about 30 pages, very similar to mine. I had to correct him because my recollection is a bit different to his, but only in the technicality, but it is more or less the same.                  | NROH  |
| 120. | We were together before the event and we were together at the end, and in between, now I know what we did, and he knows what I did, so more or less I know his, because we talked about it. And the end was the same, so just the three months when he was away with my mother and... | NROH  |
| 121. | My mother wanted the boys with her because boys were harder (to hide) than girls. Because they pull down the pants and see that they were Jewish. The girls had it safer. So she (mother) wanted the boys. And it worked out.   | S's mother felt very protective of all her children, especially her more vulnerable children, who could easily be identified as Jewish (physically) in her eyes. This method proved to be successful. |
| 122. | And maybe ... I was just petrified and wasn't speaking, so I was quite safe in that sense, I didn't need as much supervision as my brothers did.  | S wonders if she was too scared to talk and therefore not as much of a security risk as her brothers might have been.   |
| 123. | My brothers, L was a year older, and A.L. was only a baby so there was no fear in that. And G (sister) couldn't speak so she was relatively safe.   | NROH  |
| 124. | But in the end she did not reveal, but someone recognized her. And they said that this particular...it wasn't an orphanage, it was a <i>Kinderheim</i> .  | NROH  |
| 125. | It's like a boarding school for infants, busy mothers put their children in there. They were meant to be very posh, because it cost a lot of money.   | NROH  |
| 126. | And apparently someone told the Gestapo there were Jewish children there so all the children were arrested.   | NROH  |
| 127. | But the non-Jewish people came to collect the children and the Jewish people were scared to come and collect because not only the child was arrested but also the one who came to get the child.  | NROH  |
| 128. | So all the Jewish children were taken into the Gestapo and G. was one of them.  | NROH  |
| 129. | And then my Aunt went and I do not remember to this day how she got her out.  | NROH  |
| 130. | It was sort of very fearful episodes right through.   | This whole period was marked by numerous fearful incidents and there was great tension.   |
| 131. | We hear of that, and we hear how, their father used to come back from the ghetto and tell his story, this one was arrested, that one was arrested, and they heard all that, so naturally we were petrified. Every move was scary.   | Their life was peppered with hearing stories of various arrests and they lived in constant tension, with every  |

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|      |   | movement being frightening.  |
| 132. | But we still went on living.  | However, they endured everything and kept on with their survival.  |
| 133. | I remember this now and value it now, how normal we all were. None of us were hysterical, none of us were clinging and none of us had tantrums, nowadays anyone can have a tantrum. I thanked G-d that none of us were sick and we didn't have to look for medical assistance, which was a very big <i>Nes</i> (miracle). A whole year and no one had sore throats.   | S marvels at how smoothly life ran for them at that time, there were none of the normal childhood upsets or illnesses, which was quite miraculous considering.       |
| 134. | I think when I look back and had we had a sore throat who would we have turned to? How much could you not reveal to the doctor. Who could we trust?   | This was fortunate, as had they been ill they wouldn't have been able to consult or confide in a Doctor as they didn't know who to trust.                            |
| 135. | It was <i>Nissim Mummush</i> (absolute miracles), really.   | It was miraculous times.   |
| 136. | This what I am talking about is being emotional and not how the technical was.  | NROH   |
| 137. | (No, how you remember that experience...)   |  |
| 138. | Just thinking how I remember. Little details I remember quite a bit. Our relationship with the neighbours, how we went shopping.  | S recalls mundane details of her life at that time.  |
| 139. | It was all done with a <i>chesbon</i> (calculation), it wasn't a casual thing. How one goes down to the Milk Bar, and chat to the Milk Bar, how are you or whatever, or one goes and gets bread or whatever, every word we said had to be prepared beforehand. What we are allowed to say and what we aren't allowed to say, what if they are going to ask me, what am I to say to him. It's a whole <i>spiel</i> . | Every movement whilst hiding in open, was calculated, and strained until it became a major ordeal. There was no casualness even with the most minor tasks or errand. |
| 140. | Or if they met a stranger on the street and we look each time back, is he watching where I am going.  | A stranger on the street was always met with suspicion.  |
| 141. | My Auntie said no-one would dream of going by taxi. Because that taxi driver, they didn't trust him. He picked them up from one address and taking them to another, he may be an informant and tell Gestapo.  | They were unable to access the taxi service as they could not trust the detail of their residence or movements to a stranger.  |
| 142. | That was in them, that fear.  | This fear was internalized in them all.  |
| 143. | We wouldn't trust the janitor, we didn't trust anyone.  | They were suspicious of even the most insignificant of people, their distrust extended to everyone.  |
| 144. | This is still with me in many ways.   | This distrust has remained with S in many respects.  |
| 145. | I remember when I was turning seven already, I was six, (when I had) the survival kit.  | This drive for survival began when she was 6, nearly 7 years of age.   |
| 146. | But at the time I accepted it, that was it. I wouldn't turn around to my mother and say Mummy I am not doing it, or that I don't want to do it, or can't do it...no such terms. We were given the task and that was it, no questions asked.   | S was resigned to this way of living and did not question it at all, but accepted it absolutely.   |
| 147. | I believe probably everyone in my generation would be doing the same.   | S believed this attitude was the norm for her generation and does not believe she was unique in this obedience and conformity.                                       |
| 148. | (Reflects), thank G-d that I am here. For example I really admire (my) Uncle C. and I tell people about him.  | S is simply grateful that she survived this time and mentions others who she admires who also survived this ordeal.  |
| 149. | Looking back I could have had such a lovely childhood. It was beautiful. We went on holidays every summer, we had a flat, we had a <i>Tante</i> who took us for walks, it was beautiful. We had a normal school, we had teachers, we had children, it was lovely.   | S wistfully reminisces that she could have had an ideal childhood as she had a taste of this before the war.   |
| 150. | All our personalities have changed. Asked if I feel this too?   | But the war changed all their personalities.   |
| 151. | It was terrible times. There are many stories written. Asks if I have read <i>The Scent of the Snowflakes</i> and comments that they could have written that book. My Auntie could have written that book. My auntie would have played the role...asks if I remember the book. There was a family, two sisters, one married with children and the other one was not. My auntie would have the                       | NROH   |

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|      | role of the one who's not married because she ran all the errands. My mother would stay home and my auntie would make the errands because she looked non-Jewish and she didn't have to have a hair covering, like my mother would always have something on, and she wouldn't have had any...there was no suspicion on a young girl like there is with a mother with children.   |   |
| 152. | It was fearful. Someone would come and knock on the door and my father would hide, the boys would sort of run around, not run around but um.... Be out of focus, low key, the children would be very quiet, my mother would do all the talking.   | S said it was a very tense time and when someone would knock on the door a flurry would occur in the family, with each member assuming their places in the 'new family' and her mother doing all the talking.   |
| 153. | Very fearful. A neighbour would knock on the door, what on earth the neighbour wants. You know that kind of situation?  | It was very frightening and even the closest of neighbours would fall under suspicion.  |
| 154. | It's not like being on a farm, and isolated and no-one know you are there. People knew we were there. But we tried to go out as little as possible to avoid them.   | Unlike being hidden on an isolated farm where hiding would be more concealed, they were hiding in the open, that is, people were aware they were there but they had to hide their identities and were actually very withdrawn from society.   |
| 155. | It wasn't pleasant, but thank G-d we are here. Thank G-d we are here and they can't ask any questions.  | S comments that although it was uncomfortable, she is grateful to be here and because of this deep gratitude she is unable to query any aspect of the experience.   |
| 156. | We learnt to take it as it comes, every day as it comes.  | They took the matter in their stride, as the situation unfolded.  |
| 157. | Obedience by then was very important.   | A tremendous sense of the value of obedience had been instilled by this stage.  |
| 158. | And just remembering the facts and not saying too much.   | Their new identities were learned by rote and they were cautioned to be discreet.   |
| 159. | It was a horrible feeling but we had to accept it .   | Although this assumed life felt ghastly, they were resigned to it.  |
| 160. | This is still within us still.  | S believes these feelings have sustained the war years, and still exist for her.  |
| 161. | She asks if I have met people from the war that have got all those hang-ups.  | Queries if I have encountered others from the war, with similar hang-ups, as if looking for reassurance.  |
| 162. | (S relates me a story about her son M.) He was going to get married two weeks before <i>Purim</i> , 7 years ago. And we were going to bring him back two weeks before the wedding. Because it was going to be the <i>offru</i> and then two weeks is enough. But then the Gulf War broke out. So I said to my husband that M. had to come home. My husband disagreed and said they had plenty of time, why should we bring him home. He is all right. It was safe enough for everybody, so it was safe for him too. I said that if he didn't come home and G-d forbid the war is going to break out how would he get home? How would he communicate? He wouldn't be able to get on the plane. The plane would be reserved for the more important VIP's who would have to travel. And he would not be considered a VIP as far as they were concerned. But my husband said he was not going to bring him home, he had plenty of time, and he didn't want him to feel he was deserting the country, or that they were bringing him home because they didn't trust him there and so forth, but I insisted that I wanted him home, saying there could be no wedding without the <i>choson</i> (groom). My husband cannot, as he wasn't in the war, understand, what the war situation was, unless a person has been in it, as I have. There would be no communication, no telephones, no normal transport, no postal service, and no shops open, just nothing. | For S, the experience of hiding seems to have left her being abandoned or unreachable during a war situation. This situation seems to have heightened her sensitivity to being left and not being connected to others as she experienced with her own children at the time of the Gulf War, when one of her children was in Israel. |
| 163. | This mentality is still with us all, which normal people don't have.  | S notes this mentality is not the norm and believes this is a legacy that the war left on her.  |
| 164. | Anyway he came home, which was a good thing, because L. wanted to come to the wedding and there was a bomb scare at the time in Heathrow...one  | S strongly believes in these sentiments, and confirms them in her   |

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|      | never knows what is going on. What is going to be the next step. And the communication at the time was not very easy, they said please don't travel if you didn't have to.   | everyday life.   |
| 165. | But my son came home, only a week earlier than scheduled, but at least he was home for the <i>offru</i> .  | NROH   |
| 166. | I believe that people who have gone through it have this mentality And it's not healthy. It's not a healthy situation. It's constantly...  | S acknowledged that this mentality of almost quiet desperation is not a healthy one although it is persistent.   |
| 167. | My children probably feel it too, I don't know. I don't have that sort of nice relationship, easygoing, because one still had those hang-ups.  | S wonders if she has passed this tension on to her children and certainly acknowledges that the relationship is not a relaxed one.   |
| 168. | But I remember that as I said at the time, no one asked for sympathy, they just went...  | But at the time living through the event, they received no special considerations.   |
| 169. | Even after the war I recall my mother never talked about the war. Have you ever queried why that generation and your father never talked about the war? People just wanted to go on with life and they didn't want to delve on it. They wanted to be normal and go on with it and that was it. | Further, after the war, there was no discussion or reflection of the time but rather there was a sense that to talk about it would jeopardize the thrust of living and the two could not be reconciled with one another. |
| 170. | And all the hang-ups were suppressed. Have you noticed this, or does your mother-in-law ever talked about it?  | All issues were suppressed and S queries whether others are aware of this suppression in her.  |
| 171. | People were hurt. I mean if you trust a janitor for everything, or we trusted a cleaning lady or whatever, and then they turn, not only are they not helping you, but they turn against you, how could we trust another person again? That trust is then gone forever.                         | S believes the damage inflicted by the betrayal of people around them was profound and everlasting on their sense of trust.  |
| 172. | I find it hard to trust people. It's very hard. Because it is ingrained, we were disappointed once. Logically, there was no reason you shouldn't trust anyone (today) but somehow emotionally it's very difficult. Once you are disappointed, once you are hurt, it is very hard.              | S feels this distrust has become an impenetrable part of her personality which although intellectually she might be able to justify - emotionally she has not been able to resolve in her present life.                  |
| 173. | There were a lot of things, nothing was permanent, we could only plan from one to the next. It was ingrained that nothing was permanent. Everything would do.  | The unpredictability and instability of the times was ingrained in them all.   |
| 174. | In many ways I am thankful, thank G-d that we are all safe and don't have to worry where we are going to get their bread from, or where we are going to get lodgings, or who is knocking at the door...  | S expressed gratitude that her present life is not fraught with all the dangers and uncertainties of war time.   |
| 175. | I thank G-d that we live in a ....   | NROH   |
| 176. | Logically everyone is accepting and happy, but somehow people still have hang-ups. I believe this is really understandable.  | S acknowledges that while superficially their current life is content and happy, she believes the war has left a marked legacy of negativity on all their lives.   |
| 177. | A lot of people write books and I believe that they survived because they had the hope. It's terrific, and I marvel at ourselves - how we survived. It's beautiful.  | S believes 'hope' was what empowered people to survive through terrible times which was remarkable.  |
| 178. | Thank G-d that the Jewish people are even growing now, which is how it should be. I believe this is because we are disillusioned with the modern world, although I do not want to philosophize about this.   | NROH   |
| 179. | So many people are looking for something. Most importantly, family structures. So many people come from broken families or no family structure. And that is what they are missing, someone to care for them.   | NROH.  |
| 180. | I believe that this is what I found, that family always meant a lot to us.   | S comments that family was always of great importance to them all.   |
| 181. | When I came back to the ...when my mother joined me in the flat, it felt secure, I was with people I trusted and my auntie lived with our family later on. And my father, we couldn't go to him, but we felt our family was becoming more complete. It gave me a good security.                | At various points the family was frightened but their reunions were always valued and imbued a sense of security in them.  |
| 182. | Even in immigration, we were in Debresin and in Prague, and the family was   | Even when they were migrating the  |

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|      | together.   | family remained as one unit.  |
| 183. | No matter where you are if you are happy, you are fine. | The experiences of war created a sense of appreciating that if you can at least capture happiness when it occurs, irrespective of its context, then you are well off. |

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|     | <b>SECOND INTERVIEW FOR S. TO CLARIFY AND EXTEND SOME OF THE THOUGHTS IN THE FIRST INTERVIEW:</b>  |   |
|     | (Can you tell me more about what it felt like to have a different identity?)   |   |
| 184 | We didn't analyze it, as we knew it was temporary, only superficial and we didn't go into it.  | S said there was no analysis of their new situation, as they knew it was not a permanent state of affairs.  |
| 185 | I didn't internalize the religion, we did not question it, but we did not internalize the religion, of this I am 100% sure. We did not take Catholicism as a religion, we knew it was there as an aid. Although I was only a child of six, I understood that we had to save our lives by being Catholics, but it was only my name and that it was not going to be there forever. | S at no stage internalized the new religion, but simply saw it as a means to an end, a tool to help her with survival and did not integrate it beyond this.         |
| 186 | I felt that we had to defend ourselves and that was it.  | It was a defensive tool.  |
| 187 | I didn't analyze it, we didn't have time, we didn't think about it. I was given a name and we had to save our lives and that was it. We were told to do it. We simply accepted it without delving into it.   | There was no consideration or reflection about the situation, they simply assumed their new identities to save their lives.   |
| 188 | When you are a child and you go on a tram ride, and you get on a tram and then get off because that is where you are going. The child does what he is told and there is no query (about this).   | S reflects that her total acceptance of her situation was probably characteristic of her personality as a child who followed parental instructions absolutely.      |
| 189 | We were brought up to be obedient and had to do as we were told.   | Their upbringing was a very disciplined one.  |
| 190 | We understood there was trouble for some years.  | They were aware of the dangers for some years.  |
| 191 | We were told to follow instructions and that was part of the instruction, but we did not internalize it.   | They followed the instructions without integrating it into their lives. It seems this new identity was compartmentalized.   |
| 192 | I recall that although we were afraid of the future we had a positive outlook and (understood) that this was one of the ways we were going to be saved.  | Apprehensive of the future they remained optimistic and realized this was a tool to save them.  |
| 193 | I believe, looking back that this must have been their reasoning.  | Thinking retrospectively, S believes this must have been their thought at the time.   |
| 194 | We had no time to feel sorry for ourselves. It just didn't come into the picture.  | There was no opportunity for self-pity during this time.  |
| 195 | Looking back would I do the same thing now? I am not sure how I would feel or if I would subject my kids to that,  | S wonders with the knowledge of hindsight if she could have done the same thing today or whether she would have made the same decisions regarding her own children. |
| 196 | but at the time I had no option. We did it and that was it.  | At the time there was no analysis of the situation but they simply followed the routine without any thought.  |
|     | (Could you describe to me more about the time you were taken to the convent with the Gestapo surrounding?)   |   |
| 197 | This was fearful. I felt this was a nightmare and knew we were in great trouble.   | The transfer to the convent surrounded by the Gestapo was very frightening for S and they felt extremely endangered.  |
| 198 | We were still optimistic and hoped we would be saved, although we didn't know how or why...  | A sense of optimism pervaded throughout although there was no apparent basis for this.  |
| 199 | But I remember just to see those nuns and the guns, that was really fearful. But I don't know what to say more about this.   | The sight of the nuns and the weapons provoked a great sense of fear.   |
|     | (How was this different to the first convent you were at?)   |   |

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| 200 | I was prepared for the first one.   | In contrast to the second convent, S felt prepared and willing to accept her original stay at the first convent.  |
| 201 | I don't remember if my mother or aunty took me, but I was led there when I had to be there. I accepted it and it was normal. In that the people that went around were normal. Although I wasn't used to seeing nuns, I understood this was part of the package, and we were taken to this nunnery.                                  | Although S cannot remember specifically who took her to the first convent she remembers that it was a planned event and felt quite prepared to deal with her new situation. |
| 202 | But in the second nunnery, we were taken at gun point, so that was more fearful, more tense, it was like an arrest.   | However the transfer to the second convent was sudden and felt like an arrest which made it more frightening.   |
| 203 | It was all white, although I admit that maybe it was normal for these nuns to be in white, but I didn't look at it this way.  | The fact that these nuns were all white seemed peculiar to S and impressed her as more frightening.   |
| 204 | I only saw the wires outside the door and windows and saw people with guns and knew there was trouble.  | She had the feeling they were under siege.  |
| 205 | But I repeat there was nothing we could do about it, so we did what we did.   | As S had little options open available to her she became resigned to the situation.   |
| 206 | I don't recall other children there and remember we were told to speak as little as possible.   | S recalls a feeling of restraint and does not remember the presence of other children.  |
| 207 | Again, there was nothing that we could do, we couldn't escape, we couldn't ring up, there were no phones and if there were we wouldn't be able to ring up anyway.   | S repeats that there was a sense of no alternatives being available to them, there was a feeling of being isolated and cut off from any form of communication.              |
| 208 | So we just had to accept it, what could we do? We weren't given opportunities for alternatives so we just accepted it.  | Given their lack of alternatives they became resigned to the situation as it was.   |
| 209 | We couldn't escape, and if we cried no-one would listen to us, anyway. It was a no-win situation, that is what we accepted and we just had to wait and see what happened.   | Even if they cried there was a feeling that no-one would listen to them, so they were in a no-win situation, where they resigned themselves to a wait and see attitude.     |
| 210 | I recall that if we had a tantrum we knew it would do no good. That is how we were conditioned, just as with the nunnery, the black clad one, we just had to accept it.   | Having a tantrum would have had no effect, they were strongly disciplined to comply just as in the time spent in the first convent.   |
| 211 | What were we to do we want money, we were not going to get any money. There were no alternatives.   | They were restricted in anything they wanted and were forced to accept this.  |
| 212 | I remember telling my kids when I came to Melbourne as a kid, I couldn't speak English, I didn't even know the value of money, but we had to go on public transport and had to go and do the shopping because we had to. I didn't even know Melbourne at the time, but we had to explore it.  | NROH  |
| 213 | (Contrasts this to.) My R. she was born here and speaks the language or M, right? They know the currency, but I have been taking them to the orthodontist year in and year out, so I said to them go on your own, but they said, that they couldn't. They had options while I had no options. That was the way we were conditioned. | NROH  |
| 214 | Had the war not been on, we probably would have had the same options as R (daughter), we would have had a normal life, we would have had options, but we didn't, we just had to be like that.   | S reflects that had there not been a war, she too would have had a normal life, with options, but this was not the case.  |
| 215 | Nowadays one asks a child kindly whether they would like to do this or that, would they like to be driven or can they go on their own, but then we didn't (have these choices) and that was it.   | NROH  |
| 216 | My parents had no options, they knew they were not to be blamed, because we (the children) knew that was the only course they had. It was not like saying, Mummy why did you put me there or I don't want to go there, because there was no alternative, so I don't blame my parents.   | S recognized that her parents had no choices and does not blame them for the choices they made.   |

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| 217 | I know a lady who blames her father for sending her away. We didn't feel like that.  | S describes herself as having no access to any harsh feelings towards her parents, as does a friend of hers, who went through a similar experience.   |
| 218 | There was no psychology involved, we just accepted that was it. I feel that at the time we simply accepted this.   | S says that there was not any psychological analysis of feelings involved at the time, but rather they accepted the situation.  |
|     | (And what did it feel like when your aunty came to take you out?)  |   |
| 219 | I felt tremendously relieved.  | When her Auntie rescued her, S experienced a tremendous sense of relief.  |
| 220 | It was a relief to get out of there, although it wasn't miserable in the sense it wasn't dirty, or it wasn't a miserable place, physically, although I admit that maybe it was and I do not remember this. Just to go away from the atmosphere of the place was a delight. | S claims that although the physical conditions were adequate, the atmosphere of the place was oppressive and it was a relief to be away from this.  |
| 221 | Again I am trying to remember the physical side, and whether we were given food.   | S remembers very little about the physical conditions of the place.   |
| 222 | I remember I was given a bed because I remember falling asleep after a long time and remember feeling afraid.  | S remembers having a bed as she has a memory of lying in bed and being scared while she was falling asleep.   |
| 223 | I remember looking around and everything was bare, but there were beds there, although I do not remember the other facilities.   | S remembers the place as being very bare and although there were other beds, she cannot recall any other facilities.  |
| 224 | This didn't bother me, the lack of facilities, or whatever didn't bother me. I don't remember the facilities at all.   | S reflects that this lack of facilities did not seem to worry her at the time and she has difficulty in visualising the place as it was then.   |
| 225 | But I remember the fact that I saw my aunty and that she took me out and the feeling was delightful, yes.  | However the delight she experienced when her Aunt took her out was a sharp contrast to this.  |
| 226 | Firstly because it was just to get away from there and anyone could have taken me out, it would have felt like that. I would have been very happy to go because it was a very fearful situation.   | S says the place was very frightening for her and to be rescued from there, irrespective of who came to take her out, was wonderful.  |
| 227 | It was not like Auschwitz, I did not even think of that, but it was just being somewhere where... the barbed wire and the guns...it gave you something to worry about...even though it was never pointed directly at me, just the whole group.                             | S acknowledges that it was not the same conditions as a concentration camp might have had, however there was a constant feeling of being under siege, surrounded by wires and guns, even though this was never felt in a personal or direct way, but more in a general sense. |
| 228 | I feel there was some comfort in this, that it wasn't a direct threat.   | S took some comfort in that the threat was general rather than specific.  |
| 229 | I didn't feel as if it were going to happen that night or whatever, but there was a feeling that there was a problem.  | Although S didn't feel that the threat was immediate, there was a constant feeling of trouble.  |
|     | (Could you tell me more about the time your mother was accused of being Jewish)  |   |
| 230 | My mother was petrified. Of course she was petrified, she just grabbed the kids and came to where we were.   | S recalls her mother was terrified when accused of being Jewish and grabbed her kids and moved hiding places immediately.   |
| 231 | This proved to us all that in fact we had to be very careful and we had to be even ...we were careful until then, but we had to be even more so.   | This confirmed to them all that they had to be even more vigilant than they had been until then.  |
| 232 | The less we spoke, the less we walked on the streets, there was a lot of tension.  | They tried to maintain an even lower profile than they had until then, which  |



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|     |   | subsequently caused more tensions.   |
| 233 | If we heard a knock on the door we were petrified, we had a code, how many times to (knock) and we rang the bell (in code) so we knew it was a familiar person coming in.   | The family had a code to enter their home and all other knocks were met with fear.   |
|     | (And in the shelter?)   |  |
| 234 | We had to be careful what we said, I wasn't even able to recognize my father, I wasn't allowed to go up to him.   | In the shelter, S was very careful in what she said and had to maintain anonymity with her own father.   |
| 235 | Besides this, there was fear, because the bombs were coming all over, we were in the middle of a battle that alone was fearful.   | Aside from this internal fear of being discovered amongst people, there was an overriding fear of the external threat of war and the battlefield.  |
| 236 | But there was nothing we could do about it, so we had to accept it, we just had to wait, to wait for the time, we couldn't run out of there, there was no alternative.  | However once again S said she was simply resigned to the situation as she had no alternative.  |
| 237 | We just had to sit and wait for things to happen to us. We had no power, we had nothing to hang on to.  | There was an immense feeling of passivity and helplessness.  |
| 238 | We still had to be careful because we did not know who the next door neighbour was.   | They maintained vigilance throughout, as they never knew who their neighbors were.   |
| 239 | We assumed they were all <i>Goyim</i> (non-Jews) and the slip of the tongue, they could have called the Nazis. That is what they usually did.   | They worked with the assumption that they were among Gentiles all the time and that any slip could incite them to the Nazis.   |
| 240 | It was fearful.   | S said this was a terrifying time.   |
| 241 | The physical conditions were dreadful. What else have I to say about the bomb shelter?  | The physical conditions of the bomb shelter were dreadful.   |
| 242 | I remember how my father came down because he was hiding in a flat upstairs, but then shrapnel hit the building.  | S's father joined them in the shelter after a bomb hit his hiding place above ground.  |
| 243 | We actually thought my father went with the building, as there was a tremendous noise in the bunker, but he came down the next day with Mr H. the Bobover Rebbe's brother.  | Initially they thought their father had died in the blast, but he appeared the next day together with a friend he had been hiding with.  |
| 244 | I remember being relieved to see him, as that night we thought he was gone. We thought the whole building was gone, but apparently only one apartment of the building was gone, and that was directly under theirs, so it was a miracle that he was saved but we were not allowed to recognise him. | In spite of the tremendous relief they experienced when they found he had survived the blast, they were forced to contain and conceal their emotions while feigning a polite distance in their assumed personas. |
| 245 | We were living in ... our building could have gone any time. Even the bomb shelter could have gone, if it were badly hit.   | Both their building and shelter were in continual risk of being bombed and destroyed.  |
| 246 | I remember how my Aunt went from there when there was a quiet period to get some food and we were petrified when she was away. We didn't know will she come back, how will she come back, it was scary and we felt it.  | When her Aunt left the shelter for food, they were petrified for her safety and did not know if she would return.  |
| 247 | Every minute was precious to us but there was nothing we could do.  | They treasured each minute together.   |
| 248 | In the situation, there was nothing we could do, there was no alternative, we just had to wait and see.   | There was nothing they could do in their situation except to wait resignedly.  |
|     | (Could you tell me more about the time you were in the convent and you said you refused the pork. How did you feel?)  |  |
| 249 | Back in the convent I felt different but didn't make an issue of it. I just refused the pork, I don't even remember if I told them why I did this, I don't remember.  | In the convent S felt 'different' but didn't make an issue of it. She refused to eat pork, but did not tell them her reason for the refusal, not wanting to be noticed as being different.                       |
| 250 | I don't remember if I was meant to be Jewish there or not, I don't remember, but I do remember not eating the pork, that was clear.   | Although S did not remember whether she maintained a Jewish or Gentile identity in the convent, she vividly  |

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|     |  | recalls refusing to eat pork.  |
| 251 | I remember going into their service, because I had to, and I don't know why I had to. I think I should have asked my mother about this, but I don't really know...                         | S recalls going to the ritual services of the convent as she was expected to do so, but she is somewhat unsure of the details of this.   |
| 252 | I remember that they did not make me eat the pork, I don't know why because everything else I seemed to do what they asked me to do.   | S recalls she was not forced to eat the pork and is confused as to why she was exempted from this, as she was expected to conform to other things.   |
| 253 | I was attached to a family, and I don't know why I was attached to them, whether I was meant to, or I just felt comfortable with them, or if they adopted me.                              | S recalls being attached to a particular family in the convent although she is unsure whether this was an official arrangement or whether she herself attached herself to a family.  |
| 254 | I recall they had a girl of similar age to me, who was perhaps a bit younger, and a bit more juvenile, and a bit more spoiled because she was an only child.                               | NROH   |
| 255 | Then perhaps she appeared to be an only child to me at the time, but maybe she was one of five, who were somewhere else, but this was how it appeared at the time that is what I remember. | NROH   |
| 256 | I recall that they (the family she was attached to) were intellectual people, that is how it appeared to me at the time. That was all I can remember.                                      | NROH   |
|     | (Could you tell me how you felt when your mother/aunt came and took you there and said Good-bye?)  |  |
| 257 | I remember somebody taking me there, but can't remember who it was, who said good-bye.   | S cannot recall who took her to the convent and who she parted from.   |
| 258 | I was probably sorry to see them go but had to accept it.  | Although S assumes she might have been sorry to see them go at the time she simply accepted the situation.   |
| 259 | I recall that we always had an open house, in our own home, and there were Jews coming and going, so we accepted the fact that people had to go.   | As there was always coming and goings in their household, S was accustomed to the concept of people leaving to hiding places.  |
| 260 | First the aunt went to the flat then I was taken later. My uncle went with papers, he also had to go, so we were broken up anyway. This was part of our lifestyle.                         | Their family had been experiencing fragmentation in various stages, so S assumed this as part of her normal lifestyle.   |
| 261 | We all had to rescue ourselves, and that was why I had to go.  | S accepted she had to leave in order to survive.   |
| 262 | G. (Sister) went to another home. It wasn't queried. We just had to accept it.   | Her sister went into a different home but this too was not questioned, but simply accepted.  |
| 263 | I remember feeling lonely and strange, never having been to a convent before ... feeling isolated.   | S recalls feeling lonely and alienated in the convent and being in an unfamiliar environment.  |
| 264 | I say this looking back now, but believe at the time I never analyzed it, it is only because you question me about it I am thinking how I must have felt.                                  | S believes she did not experience these feelings at the time, but claims that with hindsight she is imagining that this must have been how she felt.   |
| 265 | I believe the nuns at the convent must have known I was Jewish, but I really didn't know. I recall going to their services, but am not sure, and believe I couldn't even find this out.    | S thinks the nuns must have known she was Jewish, but she is unsure of this. S is vague and confused about her status in the convent as she recalls going to their services in spite of her feeling that the nuns knew she was Jewish. |
| 266 | But we were always optimistic, no one ever thought of the worst. We were conditioned to expect the worst, but our parents never talked about it.   | S claims she was always optimistic in her attitude and never feared the worst although they were conditioned to expect the worst, it was never articulated as such by her parents.   |
| 267 | They just said we had to be careful and the atmosphere was such that we understood this, but no one said to us if you don't go there you will be killed.                                   | Although no one overtly explained the situation to S, the necessary caution  |

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|     | It wasn't spelled out, so we just thought this was the way we were going to be saved, and that was it.   | was implicit in all their movements and there was a deep understanding that this was crucial to their survival.   |
| 268 | There were no negative announcements made, only positive. It had to be so, otherwise we would give up before we even started.  | The message given was always a positive one, no negativity was expressed which enabled them to continue with hope.  |
| 269 | I recall we were conditioned, for this, and we had no alternative.   | This attitude was deeply embedded in them through continual conditioning and they felt they had no alternative.   |
| 270 | It was as if, as someone said yesterday, if you are in a bad situation, you have to work yourself out of it. If one is not in that position then everything is easy going.   | NROH  |
| 271 | My daughter had an option, she wanted her mother to take her to the orthodontist, but she had the option. I had no option so what could I do? I had to go there, I had to be in that convent, I accepted it, and that was the way I took it.   | Unlike her own daughter who has options, S had no options or choices in her movements and she was forced to accept whatever choices were made for her.  |
| 272 | The less I said the better. It was because I might reveal something that I was not supposed to, so the less I said, the better.  | S learnt to restrict her speech to the minimum, so that she would not allow something to slip inadvertently.  |
| 273 | I believe this is somehow still within me. I believe it is personal, I can't come out with personal details. I attribute this feeling to those times, although it might not have anything to do with it.   | S believes this attitude has become integrated into her personality in that she is not open about herself with others. S believes this repression stems from those times when she was hidden.         |
| 274 | I believe I cannot reveal, because I do not remember who I said to what and that maybe, they were going to use this against me at sometime, or they might pick me up on something. And this is still with me.  | S believes she is closed because she is very conscious that she might reveal something to someone who might use it against her at a later stage, as might have happened during the war years.         |
| 275 | I attribute this feeling to that (time) because we had to be very careful. Just as now what I said to you (interviewer) last week, I am now picking up on, that could have happened in 1944, who knows what was said the day before. It might not be picked up then, but it could have been, the next day, or whatever, by the interrogator, or whoever, so you were scared of that. | S believes her excessive caution and inhibition is a result of those years, when there was great uncertainty where information revealed might end up and be used against them.                        |
| 276 | We were told to say as little as possible, because I never knew who is what and in some ways, I still believe this is with me.   | The constrained and restricted speech was a survival tool against suspicious outsiders and S believes this attitude has remained with her.  |
| 277 | I do not know whether I was born this way or conditioned, but I believe I was conditioned because I don't think many people are like that. I don't know.   | S reflects that this attitude may have always been a part of her personality, before the war, however it seems to her unnatural, and she believes she learned this behaviour as a defence in the war. |
|     | (Could you tell me more how you felt that the boys went with your mother and you went somewhere else?)   |   |
| 278 | I didn't make an issue of it.  | S did not make an issue of the fact that her mother took the two boys and she was sent somewhere else.  |
| 279 | I don't recall why my mother kept the two boys and the girls were sent somewhere else. At the time I didn't query this.  | S is unsure why her mother did this and at the time she certainly did not query the decision at all.  |
| 280 | I never queried why my uncle had to go here and why my aunty had to go there, that was what was suitable, that was right, my parents thought about it and that was it.   | S never queried any of the family's movements, but simply assumed that her parents' decisions were correct.   |
| 281 | I don't know about other families but in my family we did what our parents said. Remember, I was only a kid of six...  | S said she was unaware of other family routines but their family were very disciplined and obeyed their parents completely at the time she was 6 years old.   |

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| 282 | In school too, if the teacher told us to do .. I remember it was like sitting in a straight jacket, in school, that was the norm and we accepted it and  | This discipline extended to the school as well, where they were all very obedient of their teachers.   |
| 283 | I think we felt secure that way.   | She believes this obedience and discipline provided her with a sense of security.  |
| 284 | I remember we had tremendous confidence in our parents, and whatever they said, we thought that was right and that was the way we were brought up, till this day.  | S had immense confidence in her parents and their decision making, which has continued till this day.  |
| 285 | We were little, and we felt they (their parents) knew more than us, it was not as if they felt we knew more, this is a new concept, at the time she came to Melbourne things were different.   | Unlike today's times, S pointed out as children then, they had great faith in their parents and they believed that their parents had the ultimate authority.   |
| 286 | My brother went with my parents, I didn't query why he was chosen to go with our parents. I went with the aunties. I might have logically thought that it was all the ladies who went together, I don't know. I didn't think about it.   | For this reason, S didn't query why the family was split up as it was between her mother and aunt, she didn't think about the process at all.  |
| 287 | I went with my aunties first, and then I went into this home, so quickly , I just accepted it, and my aunty took me. I never thought.  | Events moved and changed at a fast pace, so she had no time to think about it.   |
| 288 | I had a nice relationship with my aunty because she used to take me out, she was a late teenager, or early twenties at the time. I think she was a teenager, so she went with friends and would take me along, so we had a nice relationship, so that when she went into the flat, she took me with her. I didn't think too much about it.   | S had a pleasant relationship with her Aunt who was in her early twenties and included her in many of her outings, so it was natural for S to go and live with her in the first place of hiding and her separation from her mother was not an issue. |
| 289 | But there was this awful feeling of nothing being permanent. Until we came to Melbourne, to Westbury Grove, I think I moved more times than a person would in a whole lifetime, in those few years. We lived in Kaliford, that was temporary, then Budapest, that was temporary, then we went to Novatayer, also temporary, then we came to D. and we were there for three or four months, also temporary and then we went to C. also temporary. They were all temporary dwellings.  | However, pervading this period throughout, was a heavy and dreadful feeling of instability, which continued until they finally moved to Melbourne. In a short period of time she had moved more times than most people would move in a lifetime.     |
| 290 | And in the war nothing was sure.   | During the war, everything was uncertain.  |
| 291 | We were hoping that we would pull through in that particular flat, we were hoping that the war was going to be over soon, and we believed we would go back to our own home.  | There was always a hope that they would overcome a particular hurdle and then be able to return to their original home.  |
| 292 | Then after the war we did not return to our own home, so we went to N. We were there for a few months, we knew we would only be there for a few months and that if things got better in Hungary we would come back. Then we went to H., but we still didn't go back to Budapest, because we knew we couldn't get our home back, and then we went to Debresin, when we knew we weren't going to get our home back, as the communists were coming and we went to Prague. Then we lived in an apartment, no hotel, but we did not know how long the hotel would put up with a family with four kids. Then we went to Collingwood and stayed there for a while and then we went to St Kilda. | However, when the war ended and they were not able to return to their original home, they began a series of temporary moves in Europe before eventually migrating to Australia.  |
| 293 | Looking back, I admire how we pulled through. Looking back, I recall when we came to Melbourne we had nothing. No language, very little education, because we missed out in the war year, and we couldn't orient ourselves to the ways of Melbourne living, not physically, not emotionally or psychologically and I believe, looking back that most of us did a good job of it.   | NROH   |
| 294 | Looking at this family or that family, I think we did a terrific job.  | NROH   |
| 295 | We didn't dwell on our bad past, we looked back to before the war and tried to model our lives on that.  | NROH   |
| 296 | I think this was the secret to it all. We tried to block out, the war years.   | S believes this denial helped in their adaptation to their new life.   |
| 297 | And are more appreciative. To this day I will not throw out food. I appreciate every bit.  | S believes she is more appreciative of things as a result of the war experiences. For example, she will  |

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|     |   | not waste any food.   |
| 298 | I believe I sort of appreciate things more, now.  | S appreciates other things more now too.  |
| 299 | People when they came to Melbourne, the people just wanted to go ahead.   | But initially when they migrated they simply wanted to get on with life.  |
| 230 | I can't remember my mother ever sort of going back and saying oh we are not going to do this because we are depressed, or we are not going to do that because we can't, they tried to go ahead and get as much done as possible.  | S cannot recall her mother ever hesitating to do something because she was depressed about their situation, rather they applied themselves to a task and simply got on with it. |
| 231 | I think that <i>Adass people</i> were phenomenal, they built their <i>shul</i> (synagogue) before they had their home. Education was important Kashrus was important. They wanted to build as they had before the war. It was very important to them.<br><br>Can you turn that off? | NROH  |

**SUBJECT 8:**

|     | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR MRS P:  | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.  |
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|     | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description is an example of being hidden.)   |   |
| 1.  | Description of my experiences begins in 1941, when the Russians left the part of Poland from where I came, the city of Lvov, a big Polish city on the Russian side. At the beginning of the war we had Russians there and then the Russians left and the Germans came in and the business started with them, they started being nasty. They started being nastier and nastier and more horrible.  | NROH  |
| 2.  | And it came to the point that my father who worked for the Jewish community then at the time and my sister who he used to take to practically...to work to the building of the Jewish community there, because he was afraid because the kids were caught to hard work, and all the other unpleasant situation could arise so he used to take her with him.   | NROH  |
| 3.  | And one day the Germans surrounded the Jewish community. There were a few hundred people working, they were sort of linked to...they used to the Germans, used to tell these people what they want, how many people they wanted to send here to take there, and how much money they wanted and one day they surrounded the whole Jewish community and they took them away. And that was in the year 1942. Right.  | NROH  |
| 4.  | In the meantime of course, we all had to give our houses and leave everything and things started being very, very, hard and unpleasant.   | NROH  |
| 5.  | Anyway, the moment my father was taken away, and the sister, I and my mother, who were left, the two of us alone, were pushed and well, then I was about twelve, and we were pushed into some area of Lvov. I mean with the others the people who had still survived, because...  | Mrs. P was separated from her father and other sibling and forced into a sectioned off area with her mother.                              |
| 6.  | In the meantime, there were a lot of, they used to call them <i>actions</i> , but not actions that you do now, <i>autziens</i> in German, they used to catch people and take them away, and they never knew where to. There were rumours, but nobody really knew what was going on, only the people who were never coming back.   | Many people at this time were seized upon and deported to unknown whereabouts, never to return.   |
| 7.  | Then when they surrounded the Jewish community, they took all of them away and they were all pushed into an obscure part of Lvov, which we knew was going to be a ghetto.   | NROH  |
| 8.  | It was very crowded there already, and they stayed, like 10 people in one room.   | NROH  |
| 9.  | And we knew things were bad and the food started being very scarce, we were getting something on the, um, everyone had a number, and people were getting something, but it was getting less and less and more and more sicknesses around them, you know because they crowded the people in a very small area, but the ghetto was not enclosed yet, it was opened for a short while, still they were sort of organizing the whole thing, like organized, like cattle, they used to push them in. | There was a sense that life was deteriorating in this area, food was rationed, and people became ill through the cramped conditions.      |
| 10. | And one day, of course everyone wore an arm band, but that was going on since, since the Germans came, that was a well known story, everyone knew the procedure.  | NROH  |
| 11. | One day one of my mother's and her parents' neighbours, came, because it was sort of like open the place, and offered to my mother.... A Christian neighbour with his wife, who we, my mother hardly knew, but we knew they, because her father was running a Jewish orphanage, the biggest in, he was also teaching high school but he was running the Jewish orphanage, so he was like well known around, and so the people knew them, but we didn't know the                                 | One day a Christian neighbour offered Mrs. P and her mother a place to hide in their home because of the respect they had for her father. |

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|     | people, and he came this young man came and said he and his new wife would like to hide me and my mother.   |   |
| 12. | I think there may have been a reason, though, they thought there would be a lot of payment, but I didn't want to think that way because it was very incredible of these people who wanted to do it, for no matter what they know, because later on we found that any Pole who was hiding Jews was hanging in the streets on the poles in the morning, you know whole families were being hanged for hiding Jews, that was the worst they could do, they could do. | Although Mrs. P realizes this must have been a commercial arrangement, she nevertheless was grateful for the risk these people took on their behalf in hiding them, and does not want to think of it as purely a financial arrangement. |
| 13. | So we somehow, it wasn't easy already, because they closed in the meantime the place and we were not allowed to go out.   | They were very restricted in their movements, which made it difficult to get to their hiding place.   |
| 14. | Every step was life endangering and we somehow got there, it was quite far to walk and me and my mother....   | Every step they took was potentially life endangering.  |
| 15. | My mother was already in a terrible state, she lost her husband, she lost her daughter, she lost the rest of her family, who, nobody was, we were just like the two of us practically left.   | Her mother was very distressed at being separated from the rest of her family, of whom she was unsure, if they would meet with again, and felt a profound sense of loss and abandonment.  |
| 16. | And we went there and we stayed there for about 20 or 23 months.  | And they stayed in their hiding place for nearly two years.   |
| 17. | And we stayed, in a small, actually a flat. It was a room and a kitchen, one room and we used to walk in through the kitchen. We used to walk in through the kitchen and then it was like a bedroom, a double bed, a big wardrobe, it was a very important thing, double bed and a big three part wardrobe and that was practically, and bedside tables, and that was practically it.   | The hiding place was a very small sparsely furnished flat, in which they had restricted movements.  |
| 18. | So whenever anybody from then on, anybody walked into the house, because no one was supposed to know that we existed. He had three brothers and a sister and no one knew, because the minute anybody knew in this part of the world at this time, that was it, that was a death sentence.   | In this flat they had to hide from any incoming visitors, as only the immediate family in the flat were aware of their existence.   |
| 19. | If anybody would know and would go and say, so we stayed there.   | They were never sure who might 'turn them in' so it was extremely important to hide their existence from everyone.  |
| 20. | We were under the roof and we slept in one of the beds, which was incredible, because the house lady was sleeping in one bed, and me and my mother in the other bed, and he slept on the floor, there was no other way. He was arranging it all, he was the one, she was reluctant, but he was the one who was trying to do the right thing.  | In her experience of hiding, Mrs. P felt there was somebody protecting her who was prepared to face the adversities of the situation he was in, and even give up his own comforts for the sake of hiding them                           |
| 21. | In the meantime, we found out, as my mother had always said, if she would have known, we would have never gone there, that she was pregnant, the lady, and then she gave birth after a few months to a baby.  | NROH  |
| 22. | The birth took place in the kitchen, while we were sitting in the wardrobe, because anybody who walked into this house. Me and my mother used to sit in the wardrobe for days, for hours.   | NROH  |
| 23. | And that was still not the worst compared to what afterwards I heard what people went through.  | NROH  |
| 24. | But we were in that wardrobe and she gave birth to that child, it was a lovely little girl, born, but after a few months, it was impossible, because she was running after my mother and myself, and we were playing with her, and she used to call Auntie L., my name, banging at the door.  | Mrs. P and her mother formed an attachment to the little girl who lived with them, however this girl had to be taken away from them as she became a security risk, to their hiding place.   |
| 25. | This is just a short story you know, there is much more to it.  | NROH  |

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| 26. | And he took us, so we had to go to the country, the mother, with the baby and we stayed in there, and he used to come a few days, every few days, and bring us a little bit of food.  | The family then moved to the country leaving Mrs. P and her mother alone in the flat, bringing them supplies every few days.  |
| 27. | It started being a bit unpleasant, the whole thing, but we were there.  | Conditions then deteriorated in hiding.   |
| 28. | The other great problem was there was no toilet in the place and he had to...it was a bucket and he was getting rid of that bucket every...when he was there, in the middle of the night, so the neighbours, because it was a common toilet for all the neighbours, it was like a , not balcony, you know those houses, with the ...it was on the floor, and we used to walk I to the place through the, not the like a balcony thing, this European sort of balcony. It was a common thing, it is here in Australia too, and there were doors, one led another door and another place, so the neighbours, it was a ...the toilet was a common thing for all the neighbours and it was very dangerous.  | There was an ever-present threat to their security, even at the mundane level of their basic bodily functions, being looked after.  |
| 29. | We saw the neighbours actually, me and my mother, through thick curtains during the day, we saw the neighbours calling, they had a young girl and young boy, from other part of Poland. I knew because the other lady used to tell us, we lived for a while there, they were very non-Jewish looking. And this woman who they hired the room from and paid her for it told Gestapo and we saw, we saw them being taken away. That was normal procedure, they were her tenants who were paying her.  | The capriciousness of their world of hiding was exemplified as they saw their neighbours hiding other Jewish children, who were turned in, and presumably killed.   |
| 30. | I am just telling you for the record how it was then with the people there so they weren't much help to anybody.  | NROH  |
| 31. | And then it started being towards the end, we stayed there for about, 23 or 24 months and then the war, the riots broke out between the Russians and the Germans in the city, practically underneath our window and our angels (him and her) came to us and said we can't stay.   | NROH  |
| 32. | She was very neurotic and she was afraid because they were bombing, they were bombing the city constantly, they were there. Russians were approaching, Germans were in the city and, there was bombing going on all the time, and she couldn't take it and a lot of the Poles couldn't take it, and they sort of went with the Germans.   | NROH  |
| 33. | So the Germans were getting away from the fighting places and these people, these public, used to go with them towards Germany.   | NROH  |
| 34. | And there were still fights in the street and we lived very close to the main railway station, that is why it was very bombed this story.   | NROH  |
| 35. | People used to go to bunkers but of course me and my mother were staying there and my mother used to say that it was the best music for her ears the bombs, that was the pleasure of their life at that moment.   | Mrs. P and her mother remained in their hiding place amidst the chaos surrounding them. The level of fear of being found by the Germans was far greater than their fear of being killed by the bombing.   |
| 36. | But everything was trembling, and we weren't sure if we would be there in five minutes.   | Their existence was extremely precarious in this situation.   |
| 37. | But my mother decided as our people went away, just left us, they said they couldn't look after us any more and they had to go. They took the child and they went with the Germans. We were sort of like in the locked place, it was closed but the caretaker and the neighbours started looking in, sort of we would see curtains, we couldn't and we knew there was going to be looting very, very soon... And my mother said that, we couldn't stay there, that would be the end of them... If anybody would walk in... And we had a few incidents that somebody thought someone was in there, and their people they were very smart that way and they said it's somebody from underground hiding, you know and things were...so that they understood the Polish underground, we understood that and had seen them. Anyway, then we just walked out. My mother said, whatever would happen would happen to them, in the bright day we just walked out. | Eventually, their 'host' family abandoned them in hiding to go and join the Germans. And the family realised that their hiding place could not be secured once their 'protector' had left. It seemed as if her mother lost the capacity to keep up the fight once this person left them, and simply submitted the family to their fate, whatever it might hold. They left their hiding place after a series of close encounters, when they decided it was no longer secure. |



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| 38. | They were all standing you know, like people used to stand, in front of the houses, they were still fighting, and they looked at them, you know you could see if you are two years without fresh air and you know, and we were looking pale and frightened and unhappy and the first thing they heard was 'look at them, they came like mushrooms after the rain'.   | When they emerged, they experienced a strong sense of 'exposure' to the daylight, which was observed by the outsiders who looked on them as 'different'. There was a sense of nakedness about their exposure reflected by their sense of vulnerability. |
| 39. | That was the first... I was a child then, it was all the sounds of the, the music of the war, including all the other things.  | On emerging, paradoxically, Mrs. P describes the sounds of the war as 'music of war', reflective of the experienced positive and comforting nature the sounds of the war machinery meant to Mrs. P in hiding.   |
| 40. | Even the lady who saved our lives, used to tell me that I was not a Jewish child because she said something went wrong, you can't be a Jewish child because I was so pretty and clean and all Jewish children were ugly and dirty, that's what I heard.  | Mrs. P grew up in an environment where she was told to be Jewish meant being dirty and unclean. Mrs. P felt almost complimented by this notion that her protector perceived her as 'not being very Jewish' and did not see her as dirty or unclean.     |
| 41. | That was the Poles, and then we had the Germans, anyway we just walked out.  | NROH  |
| 42. | Also we were told if ever we were to survive we were never to tell anyone that they hid them, that she the woman hid them, because to hide a Jew was worse than to kill your own mother.   | It was inculcated into them that should they ever be caught they were never to expose the people who hid them. Their survival depended on this.   |
| 43. | I am telling this from the point of view as a child, these were the beautiful sounds we had, but they saved our lives and we survived somehow.   | NROH  |
| 44. | We went into the street and there was still a lot of trouble with the Poles and Ukrainians, if they ever saw a Jew there were Ukrainians sitting in the windows shooting, you know, fights were still going on in other streets, but whoever walked, was shot. The Ukrainians, they were shooting Jews they were shooting Poles, and the Poles were shooting Jews too and that is how it was going, this was the fun of that.  | NROH  |
| 45. | And somehow we got out of it, and we survived and that was it.   | NROH  |
| 46. | And then the Russians came and my mother got herself a job at kinder, Kindergarten. Well really she was running the kindergarten.  | NROH  |
| 47. | I went back to school for a year and then...the Russians allowed us to leave if we wanted.   | NROH  |
| 48. | We still weren't sure with the Russians, we never knew either if they were going, if we decided to leave or if they were going to send us to Siberia, or if they would really let us leave the other way, but they asked where we wanted to go and my mother said we wanted to go to Palestine, so they gave us a piece of paper which was ridiculous, then there was this stamp, a big round stamp, that they were going to Israel, and that's how we left that part of the world. That's it. | NROH  |
| 49. | They stayed in one room with the people. Just their bedroom.   | Their movements in hiding were restricted to only one room.   |
| 50. | They sometimes moved to the kitchen too. The kitchen had a door with a bit of glass in it but there were heavy curtains put there like very gathered heavy curtains that you could not see from outside, but we could see from the inside. We moved between the kitchen, and when it was safe and the rooms.   | Occasionally they were able to walk to the other rooms, with deliberate caution..   |
| 51. | But whenever anyone was nearing the place, right into the wardrobe, we spent a lot of time in the wardrobe.  | But also on occasions they had to hide in the wardrobe if anyone came into  |

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|     |   | the house.  |
| 52. | I was a child, but for my father, and mother, she was really suffering sitting there, it was hot and no air, and just sitting there. But that was okay, it saved our lives.   | Mrs. P reflects that it was probably harder for her parents to live in hiding than it was for her, but it was essential for survival. It seemed there was a wish for Mrs. P to minimize the suffering and oppression she experienced in view of the fact that this saved their lives. |
| 53. | We couldn't sneeze in there, we couldn't breathe, we couldn't...sometimes you needed to cough or to sneeze, or to, you know...it was a very unpleasant feeling, but we did it to save our own lives, you do things like that.   | Every minute sound they made had to be stifled and suppressed, which in spite of being very uncomfortable was nonetheless essential for their survival.   |
| 54. | And that's how we survived, and then we came out and then we met all these people from the concentration camps and from a horrible...we thought that was the worst, it was bad, it was really bad, it was few times, it was near, it was few times that somebody knew us there, and it was so bad that my mother didn't want to endanger these people.  | Mrs. P feels she has no capacity to experience the full or tragic impact of her own experiences of hiding in relation to the concentration camp survivors' experiences and the greater horrors of the war which occurred to others.   |
| 55. | And I said to them we had better go because for us it was nothing, and if we were found there, they would suffer. We wanted to let them be clear.   | They decided to leave the house in which they were hidden to protect the owners of the house who hid them, even at the expense of their own safety and very lives.  |
| 56. | But somehow he wouldn't let us go and we survived.  | NROH  |
| 57. | Then I went to Germany. Does this interest you?.  | NROH  |
| 58. | From there was only one way as we wanted to go to Palestine, and that we told the Russians, and they really, if they could have, but at that time it was impossible and the only way out was through Germany.   | NROH  |
| 59. | So we travelled through Germany, on you know this cattle train and stuff, I mean free, but we travelled and Germany was very destroyed.   | NROH  |
| 60. | It was a lovely sight to see, there was stone on stone, it was nothing, like nothing left on the way and my mother asked somebody on the train 'is there a place that's not...if there is a place that is not so destroyed.   | NROH  |
| 61. | You know just to be able to walk out, we didn't know where we were going, and we said we were going to pass by a city called Marburg, underline, and that a city of clinics, hospitals and universities. University city, full of universities and hospitals, very famous something like Heidelberg, you know one of these German university cities. They said they didn't bomb it because there were only hospitals and universities.                        | NROH  |
| 62. | So when we got there we walked and in the meantime, my mother found a girlfriend in Lvovstade, and she was alone so we took her with us and from then on we were the three of us together.  | NROH  |
| 63. | So we all got out of that train and went to Marburg and I enrolled in the university there and they stayed there until I met H and we got married there. I met him at the university but he didn't stay long, he got bored, he was, he had to...earn some money, we had nothing, but absolutely nothing, you know, nothing to wear and nothing to eat and nothing...nothing.  | NROH  |
| 64. | So we walked out in this lovely city of Marburg and we walked down the street, my mother and her girlfriend and myself with some kind of old suitcase we had, whatever we had in it, was near to nothing and we were walking down, and there was a man walking the street, who came up to us, and said where are you going? And my mother said she didn't know. And she said it was incredible he said to them, look don't worry, I am the uncle and Marburg, | NROH  |

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|     | which is the city is the 'mamma' and we waited there, with him.   |   |
| 65. | And his brother was at the time in this Marburg with the president of the Jewish community there all of 26 years of age, and he was about 24, and it was a new beginning there.   | NROH  |
| 66. | Because a lot of Jewish students gathered there, they were all lacking education, some ... something like between 15 and 25-30 years of age, 25, I would say, and there were quite a few of them enrolled. The ones who could pass exams and nobody had any papers or documents, you know.  | NROH  |
| 67. | I matriculated in that Russian school and we had that one year when Russians were there and they gathered all us children who had no, who had interrupted education and they gave us a crash course for a year. They worked us like slaves, but we were good with schooling. They really, we made it, they taught you and they made it a pleasure to be at school, and they matriculated them, or most of them anyway.  | NROH  |
| 68. | So I enrolled to university there and there were about...how many kids? Maybe 150 Jews and they were kids with no families.   | NROH  |
| 69. | My mother was the only mother there in the whole town.  | NROH  |
| 70. | (Mrs. P became emotional and said) it was incredible, my mother was then, she was altogether about 40. No she was not 40 she was near to 40 she could have been 38, 39. She was like my own daughter's age, and she was the only mother in the whole community.   | NROH  |
| 71. | No one was married, people started getting married. They all got married so terribly young there because nobody and then I was hardly 17, you know.   | NROH  |
| 72. | So we stayed there for a few years and H opened the business with his brother and I went to university and we had a lot of plans and it was like a new beginning in Germany.  | NROH  |
| 73. | But we couldn't stay there so the first opportunity we had we migrated to Australia.  | NROH  |
| 74. | It is very hard to imagine, because there was always that fear....You know, you couldn't walk in shoes, we walked constantly barefooted and they constantly told us, my mother, was a bit heavier, she was not a ballerina exactly, and they used to tell her that they could hear her walk. So if they weren't at home we were even afraid to walk in...we moved between the kitchen and the room but we were afraid to exist. With fear...you know...it's something you can't.... |   |
| 75. | And we were in a sort of better position than like the other people were. We had a roof over our head, we had some food and we weren't cold or anything like that, but it was very difficult.   | Mrs. P perhaps retrospectively realizes that her experience was more fortunate than other horrors that occurred, but remembers that at the time it was very difficult for her.      |
| 76. | I understood what was going on, I was not a dumb child, of course I understood.   | Mrs. P remarks that she was very aware as a child and understood the serious nature of their situation, while hiding.   |
| 77. | But it was very hard for a child coming from normal circumstances, I had a very beautiful childhood, good parents, who were, you know who were providing very nicely for me and my sisters and we had family and friends and good schools, everything.... And all of a sudden we were taken out. If one thinks of your own children, you were just taken away from all that, and into this fear and horrible thing that was going on. It was bad, very bad.                         | The contrast between pre-war life, which was beautiful, and the hidden experience was very sharp and made the hiddenness hard to bear.  |
| 78. | I suppose it would influence the rest of our lives. There was no way that you can ... you don't feel it ... we feel we live here a normal and good life so called but our daughters, both of them say whatever happens, they say, what do you expect, we are holocaust survivors children, second generation, and they feel they are affected by it and I am sure they are.   | Mrs. P expresses here that even though she could not fully articulate the consciousness of her experience to her children, nevertheless it was transmitted to them and they in turn |

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|     |  | were able to talk about it and realize its' impact on their lives. |
| 79. | Even my daughter who is a clinical psychologist, she said that it probably rubs off on you somehow, but necessary... I think both daughters are affected by it.  | NROH   |
| 80. | I made a big mistake, because we never, we didn't talk about it, and a lot of other people... that was...  | NROH   |
| 81. | My daughter now, her children, since they could speak heard about the holocaust and they know, my granddaughter, M. says to my daughter, you are obsessed with the holocaust. They talk about it freely.   | NROH   |
| 82. | But with us it was different, we couldn't, we didn't want to, and we just thought why should we burden them with things like that. Why shouldn't they grow up like all other children. So we didn't, but it was not right, basically it was not right.   | NROH   |
| 83. | But they were not stupid children, they knew. It's not that we told them that we were living on the moon, then you would be near to what it really was. H's number on his arm, they used to ask when they were little, and never forget it, what is that, what is that? They loved it and H used to say that's my first girlfriends telephone number. So.... | NROH   |

**SUBJECT 9:**

|     | <b>NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR P:</b>  | <b>TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.</b>   |
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|     | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden.)   |   |
| 1.  | I hope you are not on a wild goose chase because I don't know what the word 'hidden' means. I have a friend who spent 3 years walled up in a store space in Berlin...that is hidden.   | P clarifies for himself the meaning of hidden and perceives it as being physically confined in a space.   |
| 2.  | My story is a little different.  | His own experience was different.   |
| 3.  | I remember very little of my early years because amongst other things I was left for dead from a head wound, I presume it to be a rifle shot...  | NROH  |
| 4.  | But before then I was a little kid and we lived in a little...in an apartment in Budapest.   | NROH  |
| 5.  | I remember going to a kindergarten, which I presume to be Jewish, because I remember learning, coloring in the 'Aleph' as part of the 'Aleph Bet', but the Aleph I recall very clearly and   | P's early years were spent as Jewish and he recalls attending a Jewish kindergarten.  |
| 6.  | Then we became Christians.   | Then they became Christians.  |
| 7.  | The real part or the big part of my being hidden is that I was supposed to be a Christian.   | The 'hiddenness' in P's experience is that they pretended to be Christians, their identity was changed.   |
| 8.  | The family split up....  |   |
| 9.  | My grandfather died from.... Both my grandfathers died from natural causes. My father was swept off to forced labour camp and my mother did go into hiding, dyed her hair blonde and got a job as a nurse with the Red Cross and I was farmed out to some peasants in the country. | P was separated from his parents during the war and was placed with some peasants in the countryside. There was no extended family.                                   |
| 10. | My name was changed.   | P's name was changed.   |
| 11. | I forget my name now, I remember my father's changed name, it was Holizych Izchuan, Steven Holizych, but, yes I do...it was Sedlate Peter, that was him, Sedlate, I think that was it.   | P tries to remember his assumed name and although he remembers his father's pseudonym, he is somewhat vague about his own.  |
| 12. | Anyway, I was living in the country and running around barefoot, when after some weeks or months I was recognized and I was put in jail.   | P lived in a carefree manner in the countryside until he was recognized as being Jewish and was jailed.   |
| 13. | I remember being in jail.  |   |
| 14. | and my mother got to hear of this presumably from the peasants or somehow, and went and got me out of jail by bribing my jail keepers.   | P's mother managed to secure his release from jail by bribing the jail keepers.   |
| 15. | Then I went to a Red Cross protected house and stayed there for a bit.   | P then spent some time in a Red Cross home.   |
| 16. | The Red Cross ran these houses where somehow they were protected but I don't know how and the house lost its protection.   | He stayed until the Home lost its' protected status.  |
| 17. | The kids were taken away to a ghetto and I spent, I think a day in the ghetto when my mother marched in, in full nurses regalia and marched me out saying to the guards, 'how can you put and obviously Aryan charge....er....child into such a place?'                            | He was then placed with other children in a Ghetto for a day when his mother came in and claimed his was a case of mistaken identity as he was really an Aryan child. |

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| 18. | Then she put me in the charge of my nanny or the nanny that I had before the trouble started in Budapest  | A nanny who was familiar to him from before the war then cared for P.   |
| 19. | That's when my memories sort of fade.   | His memory then fades.  |
| 20. | I remember going for a walk, I remember...(as he was talking to me)...I remember somebody having their legs blown off in front of us.... This was obviously when Budapest was under siege or under bombing or something.  | However P vividly remembers the bombing and shooting incident, during which he received a head wound.   |
| 21. | Anyway I received a head wound and I was left for dead and my nanny nursed me back.   | He was left as dead, but was nursed back by his nanny.  |
| 22. | It was obviously a grazing shot otherwise I wouldn't be here but I was terribly unwell and for many years into my teens even, I couldn't turn around, I had difficulty learning to dance because I always got dizzy and that was a little after effect of this episode.   | Although the shot was not lethal, its effects extended into P's teen-age years, incapacitating him to some small degree.  |
| 23. | And then the war was over.  | NROH  |
| 24. | And so that's, that's really the story of the actual holocaust but it didn't really end there for me because its effects were extensive and ongoing for my parents and myself...I found out only after my parents died that my mother was in fact...er...pregnant with my sibling but had an abortion so that Hitler would have one less child to kill. | However the effects of the Holocaust continued extensively for P and his family. The experience of hiddenness extended until the death of his parents when P discovered intimate details of his parents life such as that his mother had aborted a pregnancy during the war as a protest against the persecution. |
| 25. | My father's sister and my mother's brother and my mother's mother were all lost in the camps so I haven't got any cousins and therefore my closest relative is a second cousin.   | P was left bereft of all close family.  |
| 26. | Then my parents rebuilt their lives and I was sent of to a school where I learnt English which is fortunate. That's why I haven't got that typical Hungarian accent and I can pronounce my 'th's'.  | NROH  |
| 27. | And my parents rebuilt their lives and they became wealthy again until the communists came and took my father's business away, or he was about to lose it. I don't think they actually came and took it away but I think he was tipped off that the day after tomorrow it would be his turn.  | NROH  |
| 28. | So we escaped from Hungary on...er.. Easter, 1949, I was born in 1937 so he was 11½ and somehow we got to Vienna.   | NROH  |
| 29. | We couldn't get to Vienna via the Austria border because that was already mined but we got there via Czechoslovakia and from there to Vienna.   | NROH  |
| 30. | And after about nine or ten months in Vienna we got aboard a ship in Holland and arrived in Melbourne.  | NROH  |
| 31. | The typical...er...migrant family situation, subtenanted house in East Brunswick, two jobs, I was farmed out to a boarding school.  | Their arrival to Australia followed that of most migrant families with P being sent to a boarding school.   |
| 32. | Eventually my parents had a rented house, then they bought a house in Highett and I went back home and grew up.   | NROH  |
| 33. | More or less a reasonable childhood...  | NROH  |
| 34. | Not, not really, it was a troubled childhood in Australia in 1950, 51, 52 to be in a boarding school, not speaking English well, was not a pleasant experience.   | P felt extremely alienated during his childhood, in boarding school, his lack of English made it difficult for him to integrate into the school milieu..  |

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| 35. | The kids picked on me, the parents..The teachers... er...ruthless.  | Both his peers and teachers regularly persecuted him.  |
| 36. | I couldn't speak English yet they tried to teach me French, so I didn't really feature well.  | His lack of English was very distressing, reinforcing his feelings of 'foreignness'.   |
| 37. | And my parents got their lives together and built a little factory and that blossomed.  | NROH   |
|     | But the real reason that I am telling you this, is that throughout all of this, they raised me as a Catholic.   | But the primary feature during all this time was that his Jewish identity was completely obliterated and he was raised as a Catholic.  |
| 38. | <i>(They maintained?...)</i>  |  |
| 39. | They didn't really, until 1956 they had no identity.  | Until 1956 they had no particular identity.  |
| 40. | They just were drudgers, they worked and worked and worked, and his parents had no social life, the house was barely, sparsely furnished and uncarpeted.  | Initially when they migrated, his parents were workaholics and had no social life.   |
| 41  | In 54 the business that my father started here started taking off and things got better and then the 1956 revolution in Hungary happened and lots of people came and my parents began to have a social life and strangely, all their friends were Jewish.   | There was a big influx in 1956 of Hungarian Jews to Australia and his parents began to socialize with Jews which appeared odd to P.  |
| 42. | But myself, they were notionally Catholics and they kept suggesting to me that I go to church and I did ask them once, 'you know, we are not Jewish because I knew we were Jewish or we were born.... That I was born Jewish and said that they were born Jewish and so on and ...er..they, they said that religion is not a coat you put on when the sun, when it rains and take off when the sun comes out. | Nevertheless, they were notionally Catholic and his parents persisted in encouraging P to go to Church and kept reinforcing that although they were <i>born</i> Jewish they actually practiced Catholicism and this was not open to discussion in their lives. |
| 43. | And it's only after they died in 1971 and 1972 and by then I was into my 30's that I realized just what was going on.   | It was only after his parent's death when P was in his 30s that he began to understand the farce that went on.   |
| 44. | The fact was that they could never talk about the war.  | There was a resistance by his parents to talk of the war.  |
| 45. | They could never talk about the family,   | Nor could they talk about their family.  |
| 46. | And I grew up and was raised not knowing what a cousin was, not knowing what it was like to have siblings and not hearing anything from my parents about their backgrounds.   | P felt he grew up in a vacuum, completely bereft of family and information about his family.   |
| 47. | My mother did have cousins and she corresponded with them and she kept the correspondence a secret from me.   | Even the correspondence between his mother and her relatives was concealed from P and great secrecy was maintained about this.   |
| 48. | They just couldn't talk about anything with their backgrounds.  | There was a tremendous resistance to talking about their backgrounds.  |
| 49. | And of course when they died, I found some correspondence, I followed that up, I went to Brazil to meet my uncles, my mothers' cousins, I discovered that they had children so I have second cousin in Brazil, I have second cousins in Hungary.  | After the death of his parents, P discovered some correspondence and it revealed relatives in various parts of the world, whom P had not know of their existence.  |
| 50. | And gradually this realization has crept into me that there was a wall between my parents and me and that is where the hidden child, the story really comes into significance.  | And P has come to realize over time since his parents death, that there was a great barrier between himself and his parents as they maintained and   |

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|     |   | continued with his 'hiddenness'.   |
| 51. | Because the war, that was just a scramble to stay alive.  | The war itself was simply a scramble to stay alive.  |
| 52. | And my memories of that are very dim and vague.   | P's memories of the war time period remain vague and dim.  |
|     | And I don't think that they were hard times that were harmful to me. The harm really came during my teen-age years together with my parents as an only child living in the country and not knowing the gap.   | P believes it was not the war years that effected his development but the suppression of his Jewish identity <i>after</i> the war that his parents persisted with, in continuing to hide his true identity in a foreign country. |
| 53. | <i>(V: It sounds like you were still hidden after the war?)</i>   |  |
| 54. | Yes I was.  | P continued to be hidden after the war (in a psychological sense).   |
| 55. | B is my second wife.  | NROH   |
| 56. | My first wife was a Catholic and my parents were quite content to stand next to me in church and watch me get married to this Catholic lady.  | P's parents were more than happy to witness his first marriage to a Catholic woman.  |
|     | Um..I think they were wrong..um..but then, who the hell am I to judge.  | HROH   |
| 57. | <i>(V: That's right.)</i>   |  |
| 58. | They had their reasons.   | NROH   |
| 59. | They went through generation upon generation of anti-Semitism and in their background, in their mind set all they could ever see was centuries of anti-Semitism and they wanted a non-Jewish grandchild, that's what they really wanted and they said so.   | His parents saw intermarriage as a means to salvage them from the threat of anti-Semitism and to completely 'hide' their Jewish identity.  |
| 60. | So there were all kinds of stupidity emerging from all of this.   | NROH   |
| 61. | In 1961 my parents gave me this huge bible illuminated, it's called "A Catholic Action Bible" and it says "To P.K. in Easter 1961, from his loving parents. (P remarks that he will show it to me later).   | P mentioned how he was given a significant Bible by his parents for his birthday, indicative of their determination to impart Catholicism to their son.  |
| 62. | In 1967 my father gave to Israel until it hurt...   | Simultaneously, P's father was strongly supportive of Israel, revealing his commitment to Judaism.   |
| 63. | So their lives were going in all kinds of directions and I am not sure that they stopped to ponder it or whether they just lived it.  | There were much paradoxical behaviour occurring and P doubts whether the attitude of hiding taken by his parents, was actually thought out and considered.   |
| 64. | I know my Dad could not speak about the Holocaust, just couldn't. If he was in company and there were six or eight people and the Holocaust came up as a topic, he would say please let's not talk about this. If the company was larger and it would not be appropriate for him to single-handedly try to change the subject, he would stand up and leave. | His father showed a great resistance to talking about the Holocaust.   |
| 65. | So I know that was one effect upon him, and that sort of spilled over into their lives.   | This resistance to involve themselves with the post Holocaust era, spilled over to all their lives.  |
| 66. | I never saw them in a synagogue.  | P never witnessed his parents attending synagogue.   |



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| 67. | My mother came with me to church seldom, on small occasions particularly when I was a teen-teenager, I suppose to try and keep me practicing Catholicism, which was quite successful that.   | In contrast, his mother did accompany him to church, as a means of encouraging his religious commitment (to Catholicism).  |
|     | (P loses his track)...I am sorry. Oh yes!  |  |
| 68. | The only time I saw anything religious about either of my parents was in August 1971, by which time my mother was having...it may have been September...my mother was dying from liver cancer and she wanted to fast on Yom Kippur.  | The only indication of his mothers' Jewishness was revealed in her last dying months where she attempted to participate in an act highly symbolic of being Jewish.   |
| 69. | I didn't know from Yom Kippur, but I knew that the Jewish people have this fasting day and that my mother wanted to fast.  | Although P was not familiar with the details of this act, he was aware of its significance for Jewish people and was bewildered by her wish to do this.  |
| 70. | And then when they died, I found my father's Kippah and my mother's prayer book, a Hungarian prayer book, written in Hebrew and Hungarian and dated August 4, 1912, the day she was born. And the significance of these objects is that they had to have been amongst the two little suitcases that they carried as they escaped across the border.  | After their deaths he found various Jewish religious items belonging to both his parents. P realised that these items must have been important to his parents, as they must have carried them out of Europe in their limited possessions that they were able to salvage. |
| 71. | So there was a bit that they just couldn't let go  | So there was a part of their identity that they could not let go.  |
| 72. | and there was a big bit where they wanted to completely let go and they lived that bit through their son.  | Simultaneously there was a significant part that they tried to deny, and they did this through their son.  |
| 73. | So that's really the story.  |  |
|     | <i>(V: So when you came to Melbourne they brought you up in Christian schools?)</i>  |  |
| 74. | Yep, I was sent to Mentone Grammar School, Church of England   | P's ongoing hiddenness away from his Jewish identity was extending by his parents sending him away to board in an Anglican school.   |
| 75. | I was....it was difficult, there was a housing shortage in those days and all they could get was a sub-tenanted or sub-tenanted little thing in a weatherboard house in Brunswick where we rented a room, and there were three of us in a room, this was 1950, and my father was 48 years old, my mother was 38 so I presume they must have had an active sex life and that would have been very difficult when they have a 12 year old son in the same room and in any case, it's not, not a way to live, so they found the only compromise was to send me to boarding school, which was the only one they found that would accept me, was Mentone Grammar. | NROH   |
| 76. | We were not anything else but Jewish..er..   | NROH   |
| 77. | We were taken by everybody to be Jewish except ourselves and we considered ourselves as ex-Jews.   | P commented that everyone except for themselves considered his parents Jewish.   |
| 78. | My father could barely speak anything, he talked with the help of a dictionary.  | NROH   |
| 79. | The schools weren't very keen to accept, the Xaviers and the Scotch Colleges were not keen for kids from such backgrounds so Mentone Grammar it was and it was a real horrible experience, but, you know, you survive these things.  | P was sent to Mentone Grammar because of his parents' migrant background and his experience at school was alienating and unpleasant.   |
|     | <i>(V: So what about back to the war years, you said you were first sent to a</i>  |  |

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|     | <i>farm, were you on your own then?)</i>  |  |
| 80. | Yes.  |  |
|     | <i>(V: Your parents?)</i>   |  |
| 81. | No, no, no, no.   |  |
| 82. | My mother's persona was that she had a husband...she had false papers and the, according to her false papers her husband was a soldier in the Hungarian army fighting for the country, i.e. for the Nazis and she was blonde and a nurse and I didn't belong there and I didn't fit in with her assumed identity.   | The nature of the hidden situation made P feel that he didn't even belong within his own family unit as he was given no role in the new 'false' constellation of his family. |
| 83. | My father escaped from forced labour camp and a day or two days before it was liquidated went back and lived with her as her lover and the whole house (Budapest is made up of large apartment houses) the whole house was completely shocked by this arrangement so they left them alone which was their savings and that's what save them because they were ostracized. | NROH   |
| 84. | And I certainly didn't fit in there.  | P was given no role in the new situation of his family.  |
| 85. | So I was sent away to hiding in the country which was thought to be safe and then when it was unsafe and I was discovered I had to be relocated elsewhere.  | P subsequently was sent to hide in the countryside until that was not considered safe, when he was moved again.  |
|     | <i>(V: Do you remember being sent there, how it felt?)</i>  |  |
| 86. | Well do you remember as a young girl of 8 what your memories were. I put it to you that one has memories of happenings and things of one's life perhaps. One has a memory of one's room or, of going to school but one doesn't have the memories of course, only fact. Things happen to people and at people, and that's exactly how it was with me.                      | P seems to imply that his memories of his early years are restricted more to factual details, rather than emotions.  |
| 87. | I was sent here, I was put there, and that's where I stayed and I didn't question these things.   | P simply accepted his placement without question.  |
|     | <i>(V: Do you remember, did you know, experience it as a happy time, lonely time or any of those?)</i>  |  |
| 88. | Yeah, the bit in the country was a happy time...um...   | The time in the country was pleasant for P.  |
| 89. | I enjoyed it, I..er...I remember running free and smelling the smells of the farm...  | He remembers enjoying the country atmosphere.  |
| 90. | um...and the stay in jail I also remember, I was with two criminals and I remember the song that they sang.   | P also has memories of his time in jail, where he was incarcerated for some time with two criminals.   |
| 91. | So there's this melody that if I rack my brain I can recall two or three phrases from it but it wasn't frightening, it was just something that I accepted and I really didn't think that there was anything threatening.  | P remembers fragments of this time but did not experience fear at all, but simply accepted the situation as it was.  |
| 92. | I never felt any threat, there's not any threat at all that I could remember.   | P did not feel in any way threatened.  |
| 93. | It was like being, in retrospect, it's like being in the pictures, so if one was to ask me, (which I suppose you are) whether there was anything horrible or frightening or upsetting, I say there was none of that, it's just going through life and letting it happen to you.   | P felt the experience was somewhat surreal and he does not believe he was traumatized by these events, at the time, he simply let them happen to him.                        |
| 94. | Today one feels threatened, business doesn't go well, you are worried about going broke, business goes well and one is happy because you have made a killings, these things are adult emotions, kids don't have those, the kids have  | P believes that as a child he did not experience emotions, and muses that perhaps emotions belong to adults and  |

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|      | moment to moment joys.  | not children.  |
| 95.  | So there was none of that.  | There was an absence of affect.  |
| 96.  | The frightening bits were when, there was a frightening bit, I was...er.. Recovering from the head wound and it was the dying days of the Nazi occupation and there was dog fights and bullets flying all over, and I was taken back across Budapest to my parents and the only was that could be achieved was for me to lie down on a..a board which was strapped to a sled and it was being pulled and it was cold and there was this constant gun fire and I was shivering and shaking and I remember that very clearly. That was frightening. | The time when P was recovering from a physical injury was traumatic for him as his disability left him feeling very vulnerable and incapacitated.  |
| 97.  | And everyone kept telling me, don't worry that's nothing, that's ... it's all finished anyway, that's just, that's just playing now and, of course, they were live bullets.   | During this period, no reassurances were of comfort to P.  |
| 98.  | That was the only time that I remember being scared and it could have had a lot to do with the shock of the...of being ill, otherwise I would have walked and I wouldn't have been strapped and so on.  | P identifies this as the most frightening experience of the war and acknowledges that his physical disability may have heightened this vulnerability in him.   |
| 99.  | So there you are.   | NROH   |
|      | <i>(V: And what about some separations from your parents, were you anxious that you wouldn't see them or....?)</i>  |  |
| 100. | It didn't enter my head.  | P had no thoughts about separating from his parents, he simply followed their instructions absolutely.   |
| 101. | No, they said this is a good place for you and they told me what my name was and I just adopted it.   | P accepted his new identity from his parents without querying it.  |
| 102. | I have a very very dear friend who is exactly the same. He and his mother were hiding in....and his mother told me that he was given a false name and then the Nazis came or the Gestapo came and the kid was being grilled and...er...he just fell into the persona that they gave him and it was the same with me.  | P identifies a friend of his who was also hidden and talks of his experience matter-of-factly, as if to illustrate that the experience for all of them was less complicated than one might imagine it to be. |
| 103. | One doesn't question these things, one is told that this is what you do and that is what we did.  | P repeats that this was all carried out without questioning.   |
| 104. | Children don't know fear really... um..unless you know it's a boogie man thing that... er... you are taken down into a dark place that you are afraid of them, you are... I suppose there is such a thing as fear and   | P said that children did not inherently know fear, and perhaps this was because they were not exposed to frightening things.   |
| 105. | then don't forget we didn't have the benefit of horror movies and pictures in those days. We weren't taught fear, the children today are taught fear.   | P attempts retrospectively to create some sort of cognitive framework to explain why this apparent 'la belle indifférence' existed.  |
|      | <i>(V: But I imagine a child might be anxious of being separated or leaving, or being told to live with strangers?)</i>   |  |
| 106. | No, it didn't occur to me, I was not... anxiety was not an emotion I felt. This is an interesting question and I never pondered that.   | P reiterates that he had no emotional responses at the time, he simply accepted the situation as it was.   |
| 107. | Perhaps there was a degree of acclimatization in all of this.   | P wonders if there was a gradual acclimatization process occurring.  |
| 108. | I am sure that my parents would have told me, warned me and yes, I do remember wearing a yellow star and being spat upon. That was before they became Christians.   | P recalls various incidents of anti-Semitism increasing before they assumed their identities as Catholics.   |

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| 109. | This Christian thing was something else... er... there was a window of opportunity, Jews were forced to wear yellow stars and were discriminated against, and tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews adopted Catholicism, maybe its only a thousand and I believe it ... er ... because there was this, this gap in time where you were Jewish if you had a Jewish religion, and then this was changed, or so I believe that being an Aryan was defined as a person having three or more non-Jewish born Grandparents, that fixed that. (Laughs). | NROH   |
| 110. | One couldn't play around with that anymore.  | NROH   |
| 111. | But until then, if you practiced the Jewish religion you were Jewish, if you practiced the Catholic religion you were Catholic and so a great number of Hungarians became Catholic.  | NROH   |
| 112. | There was a man two or three weeks ago who was getting married, he only discovered a few days prior that he is a Jew.  | NROH   |
| 113. | So that really is the story.   | NROH   |
| 114. | The story is not so much, the effect of being hidden, it's that the hiding continued and went on right through life.   | The 'hiddenness' for P went beyond the war years and continued through his life.                                       |
| 115. | And that's why I wanted you to read his Testimonial, because it was quite interesting the reaction of the, of the attendees of the Holocaust commemoration. It was the Commemoration Service, Yom Hashoah.   | NROH   |
| 116. | Okay, now if one goes along to that one is used to what is now the traditional story of the ageing survivor, who survived Auschwitz and who have got these terrible memories of the chimney and all the horrors that were there. And there is any number of variations on this theme and I am not belittling that because it's, it's ghastly and then I stood up and I told my story which had nothing to do with that and it brought the Holocaust into today and the effect of it.   | P's story brought the Holocaust into today's time, for an audience in the Holocaust Memorial Service.                  |
| 117. | So that's what it was.   | NROH   |
| 118. | Strange reactions all through my life.   | NROH   |
| 119. | When I wanted to marry B, Rabbi L. wouldn't marry them because he of all people knew my background.  | When P wanted to marry his current Jewish wife, he was met with resistance from his Rabbi.                             |
|      | <i>(V: Is B. Jewish?)</i>  |  |
| 120. | P: B is Jewish yes. But the progressive movement doesn't practice the.. what the Jews or the orthodox mainstream Jews practice, the descent of the handing down of Judaism.  | NROH   |
| 121. | Rabbi L felt that given my background, although halachikally I was Jewish, as a progressive Rabbi he had to satisfy himself that as a consequence of the marriage he was about to perform, there was going to be a real Jewish family and kids would be brought up Jewishly and how could he satisfy himself to that effect when three years prior I had stood in front of an alter and married as a Catholic, or four years prior.  | Although technically P was Jewish he was not brought up Jewish and his identity was a vexed issue for the Rabbi.       |
| 122. | So I saw his point.  | NROH   |
| 123. | So I had to learn Judaism all over again and then the kids started coming along, and I asked him you know, how do I find out more about Judaism and he suggested that I go along to the conversion programme, the Introduction to Judaism and that again was a 'meshugas' if one thinks about it.  | Bizarrely P then joined a conversion programme to relearn his identity, which had been hidden from him so extensively. |
| 124. | By this time P was an accepted member of the Temple, everyone knew he was Jewish, nobody questioned his Jewishness.  | He did this even though his identity was confirmed in the eyes of everyone around him.                                 |

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| 125. | Somebody asked me why is this and I said .. well I told them why and the next thing I was invited to join the board of the Temple, the President of the day assumed that anyone whose got, whose sufficiently stupid to do this, must be a good board member and some short years later, I was President of the Temple, all these things happened ...   | P actually attained status within his synagogue board at this stage, so while external recognition of his commitment to Judaism was increasing, P was only beginning to discover his new identity.  |
| 126. | The book was actually written because I do not have conversation like this with my children, and why I do not have these conversations, because they don't know the questions to ask and I am not really a good storyteller. I don't say to them now, sit down kids, let's talk about things in the past, although there are a few good storytellers.   | NROH  |
| 127. | If one's kids will know about your background it is not so much because of what you tell them but because they are sitting at a dinner table where one is sitting where your mother and father and siblings are talking and they, they absorb your background by osmosis, it sort of gradually sinks into them  | P felt bereft of any relatives, with whom he could share his past, which would allow his children to hear his story.  |
| 128. | Okay, one might occasionally take them and show them that this is the school I went to and this is this and that is that, but one doesn't sit down purposely and talk to them.  | Although he might have passed on incidental knowledge he did not share with them his more detailed story.   |
| 129. | I have anyone to talk with. Okay. I am an orphan. I have no brother, I have no sisters, mother, father, I have no uncles, I have no living relative in Melbourne and so I don't talk about it, this with anybody.   | P has an intense feeling of isolation, of being bereft of family and not being able to communicate his past with the next generation.   |
| 130. | I realised this and I decided I wanted to give them some idea of my background.   | P acknowledged this in himself and decided to communicate in a different manner.  |
| 131. | So I went back to Hungary, I unearthed my grandparent's graves, and I am caring for them even today. I went back to Romania where my father was born, Moradia, visited his birth house and looked at some graves in Romania where the name 'K' features and gradually I established some sort of almost by miracle, the four branches of my family. I traced back my mother's father and mother and my father's mother and father and their family trees. | P travelled extensively to Europe to reveal his hidden past.  |
| 132. | Then I told the stories of my parents and I wrote this down in a small book, I have twenty copies, or I had twenty copies of it. Three copies are beautifully hand tooled and leather bound, one for each of my sons and one for myself, in their favourite colours, N's is blue and A's is red, and ...  | P then recorded his story in a book, which revealed his hidden past, and presented it to his two sons, and he took great pride in this presentation.  |
| 133. | I did this for N's Bar-Mitzvah, and of course I say I am 'Johnny One Note'. I have only one song to sing, so it was a bit of a worry and I couldn't do anything like this for A's Bar-Mitzvah, so it was not their Bar-Mitzvah present, but I said, that dear children, on the occasion of the Bar-Mitzvah of N, I have decided to tell you my story.   | P's presentation took place on the occasion of his elder son's Bar Mitzvah.   |
| 134. | So it was a story written for my two sons, on the occasion of the first Bar Mitzvah in the K family since 1915.   | NROH  |
| 135. | If my father had a Bar Mitzvah, he would have had it in 1915, given he was born in 1902, and the next Bar Mitzvah was N's in 1987. So there was this huge gap.  | The Bar-Mitzvah was of great significance to P as it was the first Bar-Mitzvah in his family since his own father had one in 1915 as in-between was an extensive period of hiding.                  |
| 136. | In fact, my son and my own Bar Mitzvah occurred at the same time. That was special, because I was President of the Temple at the same time and I had not had a Bar Mitzvah so I learned a segment of the Parsha of the day and my son and I did our Bar-Mitzvahs together. It was really special.   | P therefore celebrated his own Bar Mitzvah together with his son, as if to mark his period of being hidden had finished and how meaningful and valuable this 'returning home' experience was for P. |
| 137. | That's really it.   |   |

**SUBJECT 10:**

|    | NATURAL MEANING UNITS FOR DR. M.   | TRANSFORMED MEANING UNITS.   |
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|    | (Expressed in the subject's language as far as possible and based upon the perspective that the description was an example of being hidden.)   |  |
| 1  | Well, as I was just briefly telling you, I was born in 1936 and the Germans came to Poland in 1939, and we were living in a little village called Bochnia, which is about 30 kilometres from Cracow, the main centre, which was not unusual for Jews in those days to live in small villages in Poland I believe.  | NROH   |
| 2  | I am the only child and my earliest recollections of childhood I suppose, were, well the things I traumatically remember, much more so than things that are pleasant.  | M recalls vividly the traumatic memories of his early years, more than the pleasant ones.  |
| 3  | The first thing I do remember, was that previously we had lived in I suppose a substantial sort of house and then suddenly we found ourselves in one room, myself and my parents crammed into this one space, with lots of other people living all around us. Including a girl, I remember who must have been at that stage about 17 who didn't have any parents with her, together with us.   | M's first memory is of the sharp contrast in his living circumstances from that of a spacious house, to a small room, which their family had to share with other people.   |
| 4  | And then I remember the fences around this, what I assumed was part of this little village, and how my father said how he used to get some food by the Poles on the other side of the fence throwing chickens over the wire. I remember that throwing chickens over the fence so that they could survive.  | M remembers being 'enclosed' in this living space,   |
| 5  | My father used to go out to work every day, so they would...soldiers would come and pick him up and take him out and then he would come back and he, what I assume what he told me later was he was working in some sort of factory or something.  | His father used to work outside of the house under military supervision.   |
| 6  | The hidden part...the hiding part of all this was that he had constructed a ...in the ...It was like I think about a two storey building and in the kitchen downstairs, was a stove, and it had a sort of false bottom and every so often in the middle of the night or in the middle of the day, we would be herded down into this cellar thing and there were a lot of other children...and children as well and we were told not to...obviously not to cry. Not supposed to cry this was sort of told to us very...I remember this very distinctly, that it would be dark there, it would be cold, or whatever it was, and we were not supposed to make any sound whatsoever. | They were hidden in a false bottom of the kitchen stove, together with other children and M remembers it as a terrifying experience in its abruptness; being woken from his sleep and thrust in this small enclosed space while all the time being suppressed from speaking or crying. |
| 7  | And this would...you know you would be asleep and the next thing, you would know your parents would bundle you down into this dark cellar where you would stay for sometimes for hours.  | Sometimes the children would be woken from their sleep to go into hiding where they would stay for hours.  |
| 8  | I think this was because what they used to do they, and I have seen this subsequently in many movies, the Germans used to come in and indiscriminately walk through any place, whoever was there they used to take and they were shipped out then to Auschwitz, or a concentration camp, and this was done as sort of, you never knew when, randomly.  | This happened in a random fashion.   |
| 9  | (They) didn't really care, because they didn't have to look too hard because apparently this was done whenever they felt like it, and there were plenty of people to take. As I said, it was indiscriminate, so that it could happen at any time.  | It was apparently easy for the Germans to capture Jews in this way. It happened in a random and indiscriminate fashion, at any moment of time.   |
| 10 | This was one of my absolute nightmarish scenarios, that this could happen, and this was on apparently, I suppose one got used to it for about four years, because we escaped in 1943 to Hungary, but this must have gone on for four years.  | For M, the anticipation of being captured was absolutely frightening and this fear continued for four years.   |
| 11 | We lived in this room for four years, with lots of other people, lack of food and constantly hiding. No school of course.  | They were confined to a cramped and shared room, deprived of food and continually hiding for four years.   |

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| 12 | I don't know how we amused ourselves. I don't have any childhood memories of any games or ...I think my mother taught me how to read perhaps, but there was no recreation, no going out, it was all sort of indoors.  | M reflects on the lack of any childhood recreation during this time and wonders how they were able to sustain this.   |
| 13 | But the main thing was this constant fear of being awakened from a deep sleep and rushed into this place.   | There was a pervasive and continual fear that they would be woken from their sleep and wrenched into their hiding place.  |
| 14 | I asked my father, because this was such a vivid memory, how he knew when to do this, and apparently...see because he was quite a prominent man in the Village, so he knew a lot of non-Jews, like I suppose you know in Melbourne, or in Sydney, and there must have been some sort of network or spies, or I think it was mainly for money, they did it, that they used to give information there so food and information, they used to pay them, the Poles used to do this for money.  | M has since discovered that his father used to obtain information through money and contacts so that he would be aware of the forthcoming raids.  |
| 15 | I think he said his friends, the non-Jewish friends, were no longer his friends, because I suppose they were willing to help if he gave them a lot of money because they were envious, because I suppose the Jews like they are in Australia, these days, were better off financially than some of the Poles, and the currency was mostly in American dollars. The Jews had...we had a lot of American dollars, they used to keep dollars rather than zlotos for some reason, cause I suppose it was the currency that...I suppose they all wanted to go to America you know. | There was a sense that previous friendships with non-Jews were all obliterated in this environment and the only dealings were in terms of money trading for information.                                    |
| 16 | So there was this sort of network of information where they could...they could pay somehow or other and now it's a shame I haven't asked my parents all these question, and now they've passed away it's all gone. It's all lost.   | It appeared there was a network of information exchange.  |
| 17 | So this is how my life sort of revolved between the ages I was three and when we escaped to Hungary in 1943, when I was six.  | This period of hiding lasted for about three years, while M was between 3 and 6 years of age.   |
|    | (So you're only interested in the hiding part?)   |   |
| 18 | How we escaped was, there was myself and my parents, and there was another young boy my age and his parents, and another couple without any children. And they must have banded together and organised the escape.  | Several families united together in planning an escape from this home.  |
| 19 | The escape was a very...in those days, they used to have these mail vans which had actually...was a car, like a motor bike car. It had one wheel in the front and one at the back, and the driver used to sit in the front of this bike and had like a ...I remember like it was yesterday, the picture of this car, and it was like this high...where they used to put all the mail.   | They all escaped in the back of a mail van.   |
| 20 | Now I don't know how we got out of there but I know it was a hot day, and my mother dressed me in the very hot clothing, and we walked out from some part of the gate and I was sweating like crazy, because it was hot, and I had like, she put two or three jumpers or any clothes she could find underneath, what just looked like a shirt.  | M vividly remembers that although it was a hot day, his mother dressed him in layers of clothing for their escape.  |
| 21 | And they herded us, they put us into this van, one on top of the other, so the two boys were right on top, my father was below and everybody stacked up like that, and we drove to the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia.  | They were stacked one on top of each other in the back of the van for their escape from Poland to Czechoslovakia.   |
| 22 | Now apparently its not very far, because I drove when I was a student in England, I went back to have a look at this village, and I drove along the road, and it wasn't that far, I mean compared to Australian standards. In those days it seemed like a long way.   | M is aware that the actual distance they travelled wasn't that far, however it appeared lengthy at the time of their escape.  |
| 23 | This was a common way of escaping apparently, because there was a truck in front of us, and they stopped the truck and they stopped the cars, and I heard...my father said to keep quiet, and I heard them, there were people screaming and there were shots, and apparently they had found three Jews in the truck...  | M heard whilst hiding himself with his family in the truck, a shooting of Jews who were trying to escape as they were in a truck before theirs. Whilst hearing this gruesome slaughter, M was very aware of |

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|    |   | remaining quiet at all costs.  |
| 24 | (Broke down crying) I'm sorry if I get emotional....so if you want to stop.... (stopped the tape)   |  |
| 25 | So we came to this border, and there were these guards, no these guides actually, that met us, so our crowd was not, because it was such an unusual thing I suppose to have so many people in such a small thing, and this was passed on you see, they thought we were bloomin mad. And we came, it was nighttime before we came to the Polish Alps, actually the mountains, and we started walking.  | NROH   |
| 26 | And we had three guides, and it was pitch dark, it was a very dark night. I am... because I was only seven, I lagged behind, because I was tired, I suppose and I got lost in the darkness. I couldn't see anybody.   | NROH   |
| 27 | And I couldn't cry, because I remember my father always used to tell me about the gunshot, but somehow or other, one of the guide's came and found me.  | M seemed frozen in fear, knowing he was not allowed to cry but terrified by the happenings.  |
| 28 | And it must have seemed like hours, but probably wasn't that long and then we kept going over these mountains, through the night.   | Their trek to escape seemed interminable.  |
| 29 | And finally in the morning, we came to a house next to a waterfall, which was so noisy, this waterfall, it was so noisy, so you couldn't hear yourself speak. So we hid there for a few days I think, before we then went on to the next spot, which we went to Bratislava in Czechoslovakia.   | They hid for several days by the side of a waterfall.  |
| 30 | Now all this must have been organised, because there was this network of escapist, and we arrived...  | It seemed to M that this was an organized escape route.  |
| 31 | And also in Bratislava, it was some house in the town, and had a broken sink, and it was again night time, and we were dirty and dishevelled, so we had to get cleaned up, because we were going to catch the train to Budapest, and I think the Germans were there, or they were just about to be in Czechoslovakia, or there were a lot of infiltrators, or whatever...   | NROH   |
| 32 | We had to get dressed up cleanly, so I remember, my mother asking me to clean my shoes, polish my shoes so that they would be really clean, and I cut my hand on the sink that was there, it was a broken sink for some reason.   | It seemed incongruous to M that a great emphasis was place on his cleanliness at this crucial time as it was part of their disguise.   |
| 33 | Anyway, the next morning we were all sort of, what looked like nicely cleaned and dressed up, we went to the station, and we had to separate, so I with my mother.  | However, with limited resources, they managed to attain a passable level of cleanliness and they separated to go on the train, to escape once again.                                       |
| 34 | My father went somewhere else, so that, on the train, in case someone took us out, they wouldn't take all of us.  | They split the family unit, so as to be less conspicuous on the train ride.  |
| 35 | This is what my father said, you go with your mother and stay with her, and we had false paper, so we were supposed to be Polish Aryans. We changed our name from Muller to Multela, so we were actually escaping, not escaping, travelling as Poles and not Jews, which is difficult because Poles and Czech's recognise a Jew from across the street you know.  | M travelled with his mother as Polish Aryans, and although this seemed unlikely to M that they could pass in these false identities, it seemed to be successfully hidden.                  |
| 36 | But somehow we made it on the train; none of us were picked up. We arrived in Hungary at the station and there was a.... This is the first time I'd ever seen a city which had not...it was the first time I'd ever seen a city as a child, because I had only, my only recollections were little rooms in the ghetto. I had never seen a city with cars, I suppose they had cars, or whatever, we just had a "Fiake" which was like a horse drawn thing which was not unusual in those days. And people and shops and things like that, I had never seen this before. It was most unusual, it was like a ... I just couldn't believe it. And I thought I had arrived in paradise. It was never seen. | So miraculously they all arrived in Hungary which impressed M as a mighty city with shops and transport, all of which were magnified in their presentation in view of M's years of hiding. |
| 37 | And apparently they had not come, the Germans had not invaded Hungary until 1944, so that. I don't know, how long we were in Budapest, but my next recollection was living in this little, again a little village, in the middle of a   | They stayed in the city briefly before moving to a vineyard in the countryside where they became   |



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|    | wine growing area, somewhere in Hungary, called Shikesh, and we lived in a room which had an earthen floor, there was no planks on it and I used to spend my time going out with the famers picking grapes and trampling them.  | involved in some of the farm activities.  |
| 38 | There was us and this other family, we were all living there, then it wasn't too bad, because at least we had food and there was something to do, and I think, I remember playing with other children and it was all sort of outside although the accommodation wasn't terrific, it was in the middle of the country. For a child it was really quite pleasant. At last it felt really good.  | This farm provided M with a brief oasis from his years of hiding and withdrawing, as here he had the company of other children, and there was a certain level of freedom here that he had not experienced before in hiding. |
|    | (And you were supposed to be non-Jews?)   |   |
| 39 | Yeah, we were there as Poles, I mean how they accepted it I have no idea. It just seems like, seems crazy that they could.  | They pretended to be non-Jews during this time, although, looking back on it, M believes this to be quite outrageous.   |
| 40 | I think they were my father said that there were these infiltrators, there was a Hungarian police force set up. I think what they used to do is that before they invaded the country, they used to have a lot of infiltrators going and then setting up a police force, and they were actually these Hungarians, who were worse than the Germans, because they wanted to make themselves look good in front of the Gestapo, so they used to be even worse to us than the others.  | NROH  |
| 41 | There weren't very many in this little country town, virtual they probably hadn't seen any Jews before, there aren't many Jews who lived in the country in Hungary. I don't know how many. I should have asked them all t0hese question. It's such a shame...   | NROH  |
| 42 | But the next thing that happened, what appeared to be quite a long time in one's memory, was that suddenly things changed again and there was like the school where we were herded into, and they pulled down my pants, and my fathers' pants, and all the other boys and other people and they said, "well you're Jews" so they were going to report you and send you back.  | However their stay on the farm ended quite abruptly when they were confronted in a brutal fashion, as the enemy grabbed them and pulled down their pants, exposing their circumcised penises.                               |
| 43 | So this was the second sort of, so we hid in a silo, now I remember the silo was that we actually, it was full of this wheat and we actually slept on the wheat and it was dusty, but it was comfortable, because it was thing.   | They then went and hid in a wheat silo which although confined and dusty, was relatively comfortable.   |
| 44 | And they had a radio there, and every morning the radio used to announce the prices of vegetables in Budapest(laughs). It was amazing, I used to speak Hungarian by now very well and I used to listen to this...talking about the price of apples and pear. It was bizarre the memories really...  | NROH  |
| 45 | And we hid in this for quite a long time, and the next thing I heard, there was a sort of gun shots, and explosions, and apparently the next thing we were herded out of this   | They stayed in the silo for quite a long time, until they were herded out at the time of a shoot out.   |
| 46 | And there was a Russian soldier standing there, with, next to him was another soldier, and he had this huge alarm clock strapped to his hand with a piece of string, because apparently there was no watches and they used to take everything. Bizarre, this young soldier with this huge alarm clock strapped to his.... He was a soldier, and the captain who was speaking to my father in Polish or Russian, they were conversing, was Jewish. He had a very nice peaked hat and dressed in uniform, so we were liberated by the Russians. | On emerging from being hidden at the point of liberation, M was struck by the impressiveness and grandeur of the soldier's presence after being deprived of this sensory stimulation during hiding.                         |
| 47 | And fortunately, he, the Captain of the Brigade, or battalion, that came to this town, was Jewish, because there was a lot of firing going on the Russians were killing people as well all over the place, and they could have killed, they killed a few Jews there as well because it was so indiscriminate, so he herded us out of there through some sort of protection.   | NROH  |
| 48 | So we were in the silo and it was when this firing was...when there was a lot of noise, usually it was very quiet, and there was a lot of noise, which went on for quite some time. Then that's when, it's all so vague, but I remember that the soldier, I don't know how the sequence of events, it must have been I suppose when they were invading the town, they must have, I don't know...I must have looked out to see what was happening, that was not unusual.   | NROH  |

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| 49 | And then things got better, because we definitely went to Rumania for some reason or other, and we lived there for the first time a normal life. Because we actually had, we stayed in a little flat, and my father tried to sell things to make some money.  | NROH |
| 50 | And then we were Jews again. And we were there for a year.  | NROH |
| 51 | I used to walk with my father and he used to sell playing cards on the street to people and they were quite they used to buy, because there was this little boy walking with his father selling playing cards.  | NROH |
| 52 | I mean, I suppose there is a hell of a lot more, we went from Prague, to Paris and then eventually we got to the United States, because the only relative that we had left was my mother's sister, who had gone to America prior to the war. All the others were killed, she was the only surviving relative, but they didn't want us to stay in the United States, the quota was like seven years for Polish migrants. And they thought well if we went over there and they could maybe appeal to the government, and they did. Actually I still have some of those letters, I kept those. And they wrote to the government there for what, about 18 months, or a year or something, and they still wouldn't let us stay despite the fact that we were refugees and my mother had her sister there and everything, so we ended up in Australia. In those days they used to take migrants.  | NROH |
| 53 | Yes, I was lucky. But it affected my life, it affected my career. Whatever success I've had has been difficult in the sense that I would have been better if I had had a normal childhood. I firmly believe that because even when I was living in Australia, we lived relatively poorly I suppose, we had a one bedroom unit in Bondi Junction up here, my mother went to work, my father went to work. My mother worked for a factory making lingerie, or something. And I went to school. But I couldn't...because I was the only child, I couldn't go home after school because I felt very insecure to stay and wait for my mother, so I used to catch the tram to the city and pick her up from work and come home. I would do this every day and this went on for quite a long time. I must have been about maybe 17 or 18 before I could...which is...I mean all my other friends were going home and studying this and that. I used to catch the tram and wait for my mother, so I was attached like this to her.  | NROH |
| 54 | I remember I used to be afraid of anybody in uniform, cause it's sort of, in spite of all the association with the war, I think it affected my career, because I really should have done, I mean we all should have done things, but I should have done something different. I became a surgeon, but I never made it into the main stream of surgery. I did it the hard way in the sense that although I went away to England to study, I studied, I didn't have, the...I felt isolated always, I always felt alone. I wasn't married and I always felt, how should I put it, I just couldn't do things on my own, you know, I needed someone, I needed someone to have there, not to look after me, but to have someone, I had not found anybody. Most of my friends were married and they went over there with their wives and they did their degrees, and they worked at the hospital and they got the experience, and they came back and got a job in the hospital and worked their way up, and this is the normal thing. But the way I did it was I went over there by myself, I studied and did my degree but instead of then carrying on like that, I wandered around, you know, I couldn't settle down, and I came back to Australia, instead of working my way again up the tree I went into General Practice. And it was only after 4 years of that, that I realised that I had the skill, that I had the knowledge, and that I was doing the wrong thing. And by this time I was 33 years old, which was meant it was too late for me to start, so I had to make it from the outside, so to speak. And my experience...and sort of build up a practice, without the normal way that one channels which everybody else did except me. | NROH |
| 55 | Now maybe it's just me, I'm not sure, but I blame it on that, and I think so, because I was..The fact that I didn't get married till late which was unusual because all the others were married. It was not unusual to marry when you only were twenties, and I was thirty-two before I got married. And um, by that stage it was already too late in a sense. I wanted to back to the academic part of a surgeon. I wanted to get a job, I felt, is this important or shall I stop? I'm not sure whether this helps.... Well I probably feel it's relevant, how this sort of affects you...  | NROH |

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| 56 | I wanted to go back to hospital work, and I couldn't do it here, but I had organised a job in Hong Kong, with a Professor of Surgery. Unfortunately, the woman that I'd married was the wrong person, and she wasn't prepared to sacrifice, wasn't so much a sacrifice because she was teacher, and she would have had to, we had one child, we could have gone and lived there. I was, all she would have had to do was just teach, then it was easy to get...and I would work in the hospital. With one child we could do it, it was only for about like a year. And she wasn't prepared for that. I think she was young, she was twenty when she married me and I was 32. So that fell through as well. | NROH |
| 57 | And then my marriage broke down and the usual things happened...and then I found myself again at the age of 45 alone because she left, but I had my children. My children stayed with me.  | NROH |
| 58 | So I started again. My, I had to start my career all over again, so I had three attempts at this because what happened was that I had built up quite a big practice by this stage, but when I found myself alone again, I had to give it up, a lot of it, because I had to look after three children.  | NROH |
| 59 | So we stayed in the house, and so I had to give up my practice and then I had to, when things settled down again, I got started again. I'm not talking about the financial aspect of it, I'm just talking about the career aspect, because as a surgeon you actually had to be available, you know, and at 4 o'clock I had to be home because I had to pick up my children from Moriah College, you know, and a doctor, look I've got these kids to look after...I can't see the patient now, I've got to go home. So he said well, what an idiot. So my practice died like crazy, which is fair enough.   | NROH |
| 60 | Another thing that a lot of my practice sort of started disappearing because the feedback was that the patients used to come and see me, and they said he's a very nice doctor, but he didn't seem to be interested in what I was saying, because obviously my mind was drifting, preoccupied. I was listening but I was only half listening, and the patients can tell this so I started again.   | NROH |
| 61 | And here I am at the age of 62. I'm still, I still continue, up and down, sort of how should I put it? I'm quietening down now, and I'm not doing any of the major stuff any more. It's not the career that I would have chosen. I think if you're looking for a psychological aspect of this, it sort of all fits in I think. I mean that's my interpretation, but I think it's probably true. The fear and the loneliness and the insecurity, and not being able to follow through and do things and what normally would, you should do.   | NROH |
| 62 | But in essence actually it could have been worse, because I could have had no push to actually go on and do what I did. I could have done the doctors and something else altogether. So at least I managed to do that. Not the way it should have been done.   | NROH |
| 63 | I had a lot of drive, obviously, I must have had a lot of drive to be able to overcome these obstacles which were, not because, I mean the opportunities were here, but it's just that I couldn't grab them properly, you know, and being the only child didn't help. My mother was very dependent on me and the burden was really very hard on a lonely person. My father died and she was a widow and everything sort of happened at the same time. There we are is that enough for you?   | NROH |

## **APPENDIX B: SITUATED STRUCTURES FOR SUBJECTS 2-10:**

### **SUBJECT 2: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR SK:**

SK begins her narrative by explaining how, she became aware, as a child of four years old ,of changes in her social relationships when her playmate turned on her and spat in her face, saying she couldn't play with her anymore because she was Jewish. She was shocked and bewildered at this outburst and ran to her mother who in turn confronted the neighbour who confirmed that indeed the social mores had changed and the children could no longer play together. This incident marked for SK the beginning of the spiralling change of events that were to follow in the subsequent war years.

Slowly restrictions began to filter into their lives and SK felt that their status as people became reduced to being on par with bicycles and dogs, as there were signs everywhere putting them all in the same category of exclusion.

The next event SK recalls with clarity is the events of Krystallnacht. At this stage SK was with her younger brother and her mother, her father and older brother already had left. Her mother then attempted to smuggle the two children out to a safer environment, but was not successful in doing so and SK and her younger brother were pushed on to a train on their own without any papers. This was SK's first experience of 'hiding' as she had to conceal hers and her brothers' true identities from the border police and use her skills to escape without papers. When confronted by the guard for her papers SK was remarkable in her survival abilities and tactics she employed, fabricating a tale for the guard who eventually allowed her to go through unchecked.

They then lived as refugees for a period of eight months, until the Germans invaded and again they were forced to run away. Once again SK was in a situation where she was separated from her parents and was put on a train together with her younger brother, heading to France. The journey took a week, with supplies of food being thrown in by the Red Cross.

Upon arrival in France, they were treated as refugees and offloaded into one of the villages. SK notes with some wry amusement that although she was still a child in actual years, something had altered and she was treated as an adult or even a parent towards her younger sibling. The expectations were that she was able to look after herself and her younger brother and she was allotted supplies including a cooking element to begin a household. SK at age 11 had no prior experience of house management yet the 'grit' of survival seemed to come through as SK managed to secure food from farmers and teach herself a foreign language in order to get by.

Eventually SK managed to explain to the authorities that they were lost and estranged from their parents and she succeeded in getting the Red Cross to send them back to Brussels.

However this welcome back home was not as SK had anticipated. Her father was distraught at their return, aware of the imminent dangers facing them and within a few days of arriving there, her father and older brother were arrested and her mother hospitalized leaving SK once again alone with her younger brother to care for.

The two children filled their days primarily by walking to visit their mother in hospital. Eventually their home was confiscated and SK through her mothers organization, moved into the attic of a local grocery store person who was willing to hide them.

### **SUBJECT 3: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR D:**

D recalls the beginnings of the war by describing how their status as comfortable/middle class family was abruptly changed as they were shunted into restricted housing together with other families and stigmatized as Jews. Her father, who was a well-connected man managed to get his family out of this 'Jewish house' and arranged for them to be hidden by non-Jews. There was a rumour that if Jews converted they would not be persecuted so D and her younger sister enrolled in classes to teach them Christianity, however, after the first class D rejected this option feeling too deeply committed to her own religion to make the change even though her survival might have depended upon the conversion.

Within the home, D befriended another little girl and together they were creative in filling their days as formal schooling was denied to them. However as the dangers increased, D and her younger sister were separated from her parents and placed into another hiding place, which was thought to be safer for them. Having formed a relationship with this child in the first hiding place, D felt reluctant to part from her and demanded of her parents that she too be allowed to join them in their new hiding place. This demand was met and D and her friend moved to the new hiding place together with her younger sister. Many other children also joined them en route to their hiding place. The naivete of D and her friend was quickly shattered as they arrived to this 'hiding place' which they had been keenly anticipating with much excitement as a place to 'set up home' independent of adults, where they could play 'house' as they wished. They had visions of decorating their rooms with curtains and furniture, however their 'new home' for many children consisted of a single bare room. The starkness and bareness of the room as it presented itself in reality with its' meager surroundings, contrasted starkly to their childhood fantasies and this presented a great shock and sense of disappointment for D. Over time, D's parents and other parents sent supplies and furnishings, which softened the initial harshness of their environment, however the room was always cramped and filled with the maximum number of people. A Jewish woman was placed in charge of all the children, who seemed to have no softness about her according to D's perceptions and memories. Very strict guidelines were put in place regarding the restrictions of their hiding and it appeared this woman had a cruel streak so that the environment was far from a happy one.

During this period of hiding, D maintained her self-identity and clung to her religion as best as she could by refusing to eat non-Kosher meat. This was in spite of the fact that she was given permission to eat this food by her Father who sometimes visited them and pointed out that it was essential for their survival, however it seemed this distinction of eating only Kosher was important for D's identity in the hiding. In the same vein, D always made an effort to mark and celebrate the Jewish festivals as best as she could and tried to include the other children in the celebration despite the discouragement of the guardian.

D comments that they were all 'good children' in hiding, and believes this to be a trait shared by all hidden children. Compliance was an essential part of being hidden, crucial to their survival, which was well understood by all the children from a very early age. D maintains that they kept a certain optimistic

spirit about them, even in the gloomiest of times in hiding, by occupying themselves with 'good activities' in the face of what in reality was a time of great anguish and unhappiness for many in hiding.

Eventually this hiding place was raided and they were forced to leave. It seems much of the childhood innocence and naivete with which D entered the hiding place had left her as she recalls observing other children lining up ready to evacuate the hiding, how unprepared they were in their presentation and dress for what was about to happen to them. Although they were told they were going on a picnic, D was fully aware that they were to be evacuated and accordingly made a great effort on her and her sisters' behalf to take sturdy shoes and some supplies unlike others who were caught up in the false façade of the situation. D noted how bright the outside world appeared after being burrowed in hiding for so long and was quite startled by this contrast. They were marched from their hiding place into a ghetto in the middle of the war zone.

Once again, maintaining the Jewish rituals here provided D with a sense of self worth and identity, which seemed to strengthen her resolve in hiding. Eventually D and her sister were smuggled out of the ghetto by a man who had lost his own family and was familiar with their family. He hid them in a room, in the heart of the SS headquarters. In this room there were other children hiding together with their mothers and it became painful for D and her sister to be two children alone, completely estranged from their mother. However D tried to repress these feelings of loneliness and longings for her mother as she got on with the business of survival. She resigned herself to her situation totally and focused on the responsibility of looking after her younger sister and being some sort of 'parent' for her.

D and her sister remained in this hiding place until the end of the war, whereupon it took some time until they were reunited with their parents. D recalled with great pain that upon reunification with her parents, they did not recognize her at all and she was forced to introduce herself to her own parents, because "she wanted a hug too".

#### **SUBJECT 4: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR R:**

R began his description of hiding when he first went into hiding with both his parents, when the Germans invaded the Russian part of Poland. He went into a cupboard with his parents, which was concealed behind a wall and stayed there for a period of 13 months. R explained their hiding was a commercial arrangement, that is they rented the cupboard of people and paid a high rental for the use of their space.

R explained that as he was small he was able to stand in the cupboard, fully erect, unlike his parents who had to crouch or sit. The cupboard was always in complete darkness and they were given food and water covertly, through buckets. Another bucket was provided for toileting.

In some ways R explained there were advantages to being hidden in a cupboard with his parents, as R got to spend much more time with his father than he had ever before (pre-war). Pre-war his father was a busy doctor, who had very little interaction with R as a child, whereas in the cupboard, his father was almost forced into this parental relationship, wherein he taught R to read and write (on the palm of his hand through visual-spatial techniques).

It seems his father developed a routine for R to follow in the cupboard so that there was some sort of structure to his day to which R would adhere. It seemed that his mother was on the periphery of these activities between R and his father, and that she did not involve herself. He recalls her as being very upset always in the background, whereas his father seemed more cheerful and pragmatic. R seemed to be quite acclimatised to this new routine in the cupboard. R believes he learned to value education whilst in the cupboard, and also learned to develop a sense of determination, that he believes has held him in good stead for the rest of his life and enabled him to achieve certain things of his own.

Eventually as R's fathers' money ran out, they were forced out of the cupboard (after he bought a bit more time with giving the landlord a watch and a pair of shoes). When they left the cupboard, they began to wander for some time, without direction. One incident which stands out for R during this period, was the experience of a sunrise, after such a prolonged period of living in deprivation and darkness. This experience appeared wondrous to R against the background of sensory deprivation, which he had had for 13 months. In the same context, after several days they were arrested by a German soldier, and R recalls being awestruck by the majestic appearance of the soldier, and being overcome by his significant stature and beauty, rather than being intimidated by their arrest. Again, the sharp contrast of beauty against the background of the paucity of sensory information was almost overwhelming for R. After this arrest, the family was released into the ghetto, where the realities of war began to make themselves known to R. For the first time, R came into knowing death as he observed bodies being carried out of the ghetto, without any accompanying funeral. His parents were made to work in the ghetto but there was no role for R as a child there, and he spent much of his days hiding behind the curtains of the building they were housed in, looking out to the outside world. After several months of deprivation in the ghetto, their physical state deteriorated considerably.



When their time for transportation came up, their time in the ghetto ended and R and his parents were transferred to Treblinka. They were there for some time, when R's father who was a doctor got offered a position as a doctor for the Polish partisans in the forest. R and his parents were smuggled out of the camp and while his father was taken away to the forest, R and his mother were left to fend themselves.

Here R's hiding experience transformed itself once again as R was hidden this time as a "retarded girl" who spoke no Polish. He and his mother both pretended to be non-Jews. R and his mother went along with this for six months or so until a point where it became dangerous for them to continue in this open hiding.

Although R cannot recall details of how the arrangements were changed, R was transferred to the forest to hide with the Polish Partisans. This period of hiding lasted for some 18 months, with no contact with his mother at all, and occasional contact with his father who was in another part of the forest. Within the partisan unit R was given certain duties, which although only minor, made him feel important and useful. R developed a certain survival edge for himself during this time and became quite adept at hiding and surviving. Any sensitivities R might have had towards death and killing were completely ironed out of him during this phase, as he was taught it was a matter of "killing them before they got you" and simultaneously, their mantra was "partisans don't cry".

R recalled the last time he visited his father and saw him alive, was when he came across a severed leg in the forest, that he thought would be suitable for his father to have as a "gift" to attach to someone else in need. R made the long trip to take this leg to his father in the snow, in spite of the treacherous conditions and the fact that the leg was almost bigger than his whole self. He was quite perplexed when he met his father, that his reactions was one of tears as he exclaimed "this is what the war has come too". R had no capacity to understand why his father was not appreciative of his "gift" and why in fact he was crying when "partisans don't cry"?

One of the more precious gift R has received was a loaf of bread given by his fellow partisans for his eight birthday. R kept this loaf under his shirt for the remainder of his time in hiding, scratching and nibbling on it relishing every crumb. R said its' uniqueness lay in the fact that this loaf was solely his and he did not have to share it with any one. Since then, bread has taken on a symbolic meaning for R and he is reluctant to waste even one crumb.

## **SUBJECT 5: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR M.E:**

ME went into hiding from the age of 4½. She was separated from her father before the war and when reunited with him post-war actually did not recognize him. Her mother 'hid' in open as a non-Jew, with new identity papers and appeared to be an important figure in the placement of Jews to be hidden.

ME was hidden together with her sister with two separate families known through a network within a small town. The family seemed to have pretty basic accommodation and facilities and had two children of their own, of a similar age to ME. It seemed right from the start ME felt she was not able to fit in with the other two children, both chronically and emotionally and felt to be on the 'outer' of the family unit. Initially she was not allowed out of the confines of the physical home, until they developed a story explaining her presence in the home. If there was thought to be a security threat, ME was bundled into the cellar of the home, without an understanding of why she was being hidden away. At the time she recalls being told she was 'naughty' and she experienced this incarceration as being very frightening. There were times when the whole family had to hide down in the cellar, yet even being together with the whole family did not seem to alleviate her fear of the cellar. ME hid with this family for three years.

Her sister was hidden with relatives of the family that ME was with, and ME believed that her sister was in a more fortunate situation than she was in herself. ME described how her sister benefited from being the youngest member of her foster family and seemed to be treated more kindly because of this. Further, being younger of age, she seemed to integrate more fully with her 'temporary' family. ME recalls feeling a sense of unease and a pervading sense of fear throughout this period.

It seemed to ME that her 'foster parents' were very different FROM her own parents in many respects and this felt very foreign to ME. Her true family was virtual atheists in their beliefs, whereas this family were quite devout Catholics, which felt foreign to her. Furthermore, ME sensed an evangelical flavor to their religion and continually felt that they regarded it their mission to 'save her soul'. ME felt her childhood impression of their evangelism was confirmed when she went to visit them post-war as an adult and felt they were intense about their religious commitments.

ME felt the family was very strict in their discipline of her and they were quite harsh in their punishment regime.

ME admits herself to being an oppositional child and resented having to conform to their behaviors. Food often became a focal point for these clashes, with numerous fights focusing around the table. For ME these clashes highlighted the lack of respect the family showed towards ME, continually humiliating her over seemingly trivial events and treating her in an object-like way rather than dealing with her as an individual with feelings.

ME always felt as a child that she had been 'abandoned by her mother in hiding and although she later came to understand that this was an unjust sentiment she does not deny the intensity of that feeling as a child. She did not feel valued at all as a child by her foster family, but rather considered them to be 'religious zealots' on a mission to convert her. She felt she was simply a means to an end for their religious cause.

ME recalls feeling resentful that she was never able to 'fit in' with her foster family and attributes this feeling towards her mother, whom she believes could have chosen a 'better home' for her. She continually felt alienated by this foster family and felt her mother was to blame for 'dumping her' there. In contrast, her younger sister seemed to be able to attach herself to her foster parents with relative ease, whereas ME always experienced a sense of estrangement from them. ME was aware throughout this time, that she had a 'real' mother hovering in the background of her life and although this was never made explicit to her during her hiding, she felt this always held her back from a true sense of belonging with her foster family. Furthermore, she seemed to have some awareness that there was another life beyond her hiding, a life where she truly belonged and her time in hiding was simply a transient period, where life was suspended.

ME believes she has dealt harshly with her foster parents in her thoughts and attributes her attitude to some of the difficulties within the relationship itself. She further acknowledges that her mother didn't 'abandon' her as such but actually hid her with this family in order to protect her. Nevertheless ME believes that even as an adult when she had the capacity to understand all the issues involved in her placement, she has not been able to resolve feelings of abandonment in her life, which have continued to resonate and permeate all her subsequent relationships. Furthermore, ME has had panic attacks in her adult life, which she attributes to the legacy of her feelings of abandonment as a child, although she acknowledges, she will never be able to 'prove' this theory.

ME reports that her experiences as a hidden child were never really acknowledged by her family after she was rescued and even later in life. She was continually told, "you wouldn't remember anything, you were much too young...just a child".

ME reports that her experiences as a hidden child were never really acknowledged by her family after she was rescued and even later in life. She was continually told, "you wouldn't remember anything, you were much too young...just a child". Her experience of being hidden was immediately followed by the experience of migration, which has resulted in the two experiences becoming merged in her memory, both being experiences of trauma, separation and instability. "The upheavals of war continued to work their force..." beyond the war and beyond Europe. ME felt she was in an emotional vacuum post-war, with both her parents preoccupied with the practical issues of migration and the avoidance of any reflective or emotion states. However as ME has grown older, she herself has begun to reflect on these times and wonders about her memories and the emotions she has lingering from these early times. She has also come across her fathers' diaries of that time and is currently working through and translating

them, which has given her a new insight into his mind as an adult during the war and immediately after it, which she had no understanding of previously.

ME believes that she has been indelibly affected by the war and that it has affected all her subsequent relationships in life both as a partner and as a parent. She has never been able to resolve issues of abandonment and believes she actually seeks out at some unconscious level, relationships, which will re-enact these experiences for her.

ME acknowledges that the war years have provided her with a unique opportunity of an intense experience on which she can reflect and build, which has engaged the researcher/writer in herself. She has explored her own reflections through her fathers' writings and comments that the challenges and excitement that seemed to exist for his experiences sharply contrasted with the deadness and numbness of her own experiences as a child. It seems ME has found a 'pathway' to explore her emotions and experiences of her formative years, which appeals to her creativity and allows her to control the intensity of the experience, unlike her experiences as a child where decisions were made without her involvement and beyond her control.

## **SUBJECT 6: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR E:**

E began her story of hiding by stating that she was actually only a few months old, when she was hidden with her mother in a potato pit. Her memory of the hiding, therefore, was not her own direct memory, but rather the memory of the story as it was told to her by her mother. She did have her own memories of the post-war period as she was a little older by that stage, however, she does not remember the potato pit hiding which took place during the first year of her life. However,, E said that her mother had told her the story so often and with great detail, that she almost felt as if the memories were truly her own.

E was born in April 1943, at the time of the burning of the Warsaw ghetto. Her mother left the ghetto in order to give birth. Somehow, E's grandfather who was still living outside the ghetto was able to look after E and her newborn daughter, outside of the ghetto for a few months. However, as there was a terrible shortage of food, her mother had to go and get milk for the baby from a different place. Upon returning from one of these trips with the baby, E's mother fainted in the street and was taken in by a Polish Doctor who nursed her back to health. By this stage it was too dangerous for E's mother to return to her parents, so this doctor offered to hide E and her baby in the potato pit in her back yard. The pit was essentially a deep hole in the ground which was covered with sand and straw. This hole was well camouflaged and became their home for one year. Once again, E reiterated that she could described in detail the physical dimensions of the pit, as these memories were incredibly important to her mother and she transmitted them with great intensity to E.

It was always cold in the pit, and meagre supplies were dropped down to them on a semi-regular basis. E was told that she was kept warm mostly through her mothers' body heat. In spite of the terrible adversities of the situation, there was a strong sense of survival which persisted throughout in her mother. Nevertheless their hiding place was precarious and there was this ever-present sense that they could be discovered at any moment.

However, at one point after a year, the lady who hid them, had to go away for several days, and E's mother felt vulnerable and unprotected in her absence and decided to leave their hiding place. Immediately after leaving the hiding, they were arrested. But fortunately the arrest took place close to the end of the war and the disorganisation of events allowed E and her mother to slip away.

The rest of the description consisted of E talking about her post-war life, up until the present day.

## **SUBJECT 7: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR S:**

S described her experience of being hidden as 'fearsome'. She said that they were prepared for the hiding, in that elaborate steps were taken to change their identities and acquire false papers disguised as Catholics. S was taught catholic prayers and was drilled regularly not to reveal her true Jewish identity. Initially S was separated from her parents and went with two relatives to a flat in a remote part of the city.

But after two months, S was taken into a convent to hide. She doesn't remember many details of this transfer and does not remember if she was supposed to be Jewish or Catholic there as her overriding emotion at the time was that of fear. In spite of this fear, S did not feel sorry for herself, but resigned herself to the situation without emotion almost as if she had to cut herself off from her feelings to tolerate the painful separation and fear that was enveloping her. S felt isolated in the convent and alienated and different from those who were there.

After some months S and the others were arrested in the convent and transferred to a different convent. Once again S experienced fear and severe isolation in her new hiding place and felt there was a sense of foreboding danger about the place. Eventually S was taken out of the convent by a relative and soon thereafter was reunited with her mother and brothers. However, they still assumed their false identities and lived very restricted lives. They maintained this false persona even to those who were closest to them, for fear of being betrayed. There was a sense that there was no one in whom they could trust and everyone could potentially betray them. Even when S's own father came home for a visit, he had to be 'hidden' within the context of the false constellation of the family, as he was not officially accounted for in the household.

However someone recognized her mother as being Jewish and though she vehemently denied this, the family immediately packed up and moved on to another hiding place.

S reflects on the incredible tension of this way of life in hiding and the balance they had to maintain between acting normal in the outside environment yet keeping so much locked up and concealed. S was only six years old at the time yet it was impressed deeply into her the imperative of hiding her Jewish identity. She recalls vividly how her younger brother on one occasion inadvertently lapsed into a Jewish song and the incredible pressure and tension this caused her mother who felt their identity would be revealed through this lapse.

Within the convent, S remembers vividly her feeling of being different from the other children there. Even though she was very young, she maintained a separate identity within the environment and remembers a separate identity within the environment and remembers being very secretive about her food while trying to maintain her Kosher diet. S believes her family considered the convent to be safe refuge for her, although her experience of it was not of a reassuring and comforting place but an alien and foreign environment.

Similarly her experience in the flat under a false persona felt strange to S. Although she was there with an aunt, and later joined by one of her siblings, D experienced this time as devoid of any activities and it felt very unnatural to her. Normality had been suspended and there was little for S to occupy herself with. This suspension of normality and routine concealed a threatening undercurrent in their lives, which although was never overtly articulated to S, seemed to seep through her consciousness at a very early stage as a continual fear, pervading her entire life. Nevertheless it appeared that the moment S begins to reflect on the traumas of those times, she immediately minimized the experience and dismissed it by saying that there was always a sense of optimism about them and they never experienced self-pity. They simply went on with their lives in a matter-of-fact way without questioning any of the decisions being made, they simply accepted their situation and remained resigned to it with little choice. S acknowledges that this inhibition of her character as a young child in her formative years has left an indelible mark on her personality beyond her war years. Even today, S is reluctant to share personal details with others and finds it difficult to obtain trusting relationships.

The instability of the war years continued post-liberation for S and her family as they lived a transitory existence for several years before migrating to Australia, when they faced issues of resettlement and migration.

S recalls how during their years of hiding they lived in a constant tension as they heard continuous stories of various arrests. S believes it was a miracle that life for them was able to proceed as smoothly as it did in spite of these traumas. Yet every movement in hiding was calculated and measured, there was no spontaneity in their movements, they all internalized fear. These were necessary tools in the fight for survival and it appears that emotions and sentimentality became casualties of this lifestyle. S believes her obedience to their parents and lack of questioning of their decisions was standard to children of that era and did not consider her to be unique in this attitude. They had to learn the detail of their new personalities by rote and as disconcerting as this was for her, S accepted this role without questions. Overriding any feelings of resentment was the notion of gratitude and the feeling that S had that they were lucky to be alive irrespective of the traumas of their hiding.

Yet although S claims she has accepted her life without question at the time of her hiding, she does not dismiss the damaging influence of these formative years on her life. In particular she feels anxious about being abandoned and re-experienced this emotion when her son was estranged in Israel during the start of the Gulf War. During this time S felt a sense of panic and fears as she was unable to neither contact him nor arrange for his return to Australia. This emotional response of S' contrasted to her Australian husbands' reaction, which was far calmer, and S believes this is a legacy of her own experiences of being hidden during the war.

Furthermore S believes her personality has been formed by these formative years, where a sense of distrust was instilled in her as a means of survival. Inhibition and the suppression of her personality were essential skills during her hiding but have remained a handicap for the remainder of her life.

A sense of family was an important element during the instability of their years of hiding and S believes this sense of belonging sustained them through their years of tension and separations.

On a positive note, the legacy of the years of hiding has left S with a sense of appreciation of the positive moments of life and relishing these times as they occurred. She has a sense of not taking anything for granted, particularly family.

Upon further reflection of her time in hiding S remarks how she never really integrated her 'false persona' as part of her own identity. She was able to keep separate her assumed identity and religion and simply accepted that she would have to adopt this strategy as a means to an end. Again, S attributes this obedience to the disciplinary ways of her upbringing and seemed to be successful in compartmentalizing of her identity without it contaminating her sense of self.

S recalls there was no analysis of their decisions or opportunity to reflect upon their decisions as they were consumed by their everyday battles for survival, which did not include the luxury of emotions to arise.

S believes the lack of alternatives for them in their hiding encouraged them to simply accept and resign themselves to the status quo. There was no psychological reflection on the situation and S does not question her parent's decision during this time, although she remembers being filled with fear at the time. There is a sense that if S allowed herself to experience the emotions associated with the fear and alienation of this times in hiding, she would have become totally overwhelmed by them and could not allow herself to experience this in her struggle to survive. There was an overriding sense of helplessness and passivity in the face of a situation, which they could do little to control.

Post-war, there has been a continual trend to deny the bad and traumatic times of this hiding and instead s makes a conscious effort to invigorate herself with the happy pre-war memories. It seems that even after the experience, the fragility of the times had to be respected and a veneer had been created around the feelings which are too painful to tackle S is aware of hers' and her family's denial of the trauma and believes it to be a positive and useful way to adapt to post-war life in a new country.



## **SUBJECT 8: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR MRS P:**

Mrs. P began her recollection of being hidden by describing changes in the social environ of Poland as the Germans came in and became hostile towards them. Her father became cautious during this time and used to take Mrs. P to work with him, for fear harm would come her way in his absence.

However in 1942, the Germans rounded all the Jews up and took them away with Mrs. P and her mother being separated from the rest of her family. This was against the context of many Jews disappearing from their homes during raids, whose whereabouts became unknown. Mrs. P and her mother were crowded into a ghetto area, where food became very scarce, sickness was rife and they were treated like cattle.

One day a Christian acquaintance came into the ghetto and offered to hide Mrs. P and her mother. Mrs P speculates that this must have been for commercial reasons, as she doubted anyone would risk their own lives for hiding Jews. However, throughout the interview, Mrs. P preferred to brush this aside and think of the hiding only in positive terms and think only good of her protectors. It seemed she was stuck in an early position of childhood where he could only see things as “all good” or “all bad” and couldn’t tolerate any grey areas. She could not incorporate in her mind that her protector could have any bad within him. Mrs. P and her mother walked to this house where they spent the next 23 months. They stayed within the confines of this small flat throughout this time and if anyone entered the place, they would hide themselves even further in a bedroom in the back of the home, and even if need be, in the wardrobe there.

Mrs. P is incredulous at the generosity of the host protector, who gave up his own bed for Mrs. P and her mother. It seemed he was the more willing of the couple to hide whereas the mistress of the household did not seem as giving and was more hesitant.

Mrs. P is almost apologetic in describing her hiding experience, continually minimizing her experiences in the face of others who suffered a more traumatic ordeal, such as her husband who went thorough the concentration camp. She explains away her feelings of trauma, by saying that at the time she was only aware of what was occurring in the very narrow confines of her flat where she was hidden, and when was not aware of the external war situation with the deportations and concentration camps, until after the war.

It eventuated that when the mistress of the house became pregnant and gave birth in the flat, the situation for hiding there became more precarious and dangerous with Mrs. P and her mother being confined to the wardrobe for many days at a time as people came to visit the family. Once the child was born, a different kind of security risk presented itself as the infant became familiar with them and could expose their hiding place. As the external situation became more dangerous, the family decided to move out to their

country home, with the landlord coming back every few days to provide supplies and provisions for their hiding.

Things then became more difficult for them in hiding; they had to share toilet facilities with neighbors, while remaining invisible to them. They were witnesses to some of their neighbors being deported, which added to the tension, and all pervading fear of hiding.

Eventually this fear extended to their host-hiding family as well who were forced to abandon them in the face of fear, and stopped coming to the flat and providing them with supplies, leaving Mrs. P and her mother feeling very vulnerable and unprotected. It seemed that even though previously the visits from the landlord had been very sporadic they were still important for Mrs. P's mother to have a sense of connection, like an umbilical cord to the outside world through her protector. Without this, Mrs. P's mother felt they would be unable to sustain their hiddenness and they simply walked out of their hiding place.

The outside world presented itself as very bright after nearly two years of hiding and Mrs. P and her mother experienced a strong sense of exposure and vulnerability in their re-entry to the outside world. It seems furthermore that they were conspicuous to others in their coming out, as someone commented on their appearance, which must have been strange in their new surroundings.

In hiding, the landlady used to comment to Mrs. P continually that she was far too pretty to be Jewish, and Mrs. P always took this remark in a complimentary sense, that is to be considered non-Jewish in these negative times was considered an advantage.

In hiding, it was continually hammered into them that if they were caught they were not to reveal the identity of those who hid them. There was to be great secrecy surrounding this.

Mrs. P also commented that the hiding experience was probably more difficult and stressful for her parents, who were more aware of the real situation of the war, than she was as a child. Once again, there was a sense that Mrs. P kept trying to minimize her own experiences of hiding, in the face of the experiences of her husband and others who underwent even more horrific ordeals than she did. Nevertheless, Mrs. P explains that in her own way, the hiding was very traumatic for her as a child. Every sound had to be suppressed, in a very unnatural fashion, crucial for their survival. It was only after the war when they emerged from hiding that Mrs. P and her mother learnt of the horrors of the war that others had gone through and is incredulous at the level of their suffering.

Mrs. P acknowledges that her experiences must have influenced the rest of her life and the way she related to her children and brought them up even though it was never overtly discussed in their family. She does believe that even in the absence of the discussions of her wartime experiences of hiding, the transmission of the traumas was passed on to the next generation.

## **SUBJECT 9: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR P:**

When asked about his experience of being 'hidden' P remarked that he was not hidden in the traditional sense of being physically confined in a restricted space. In contrast his experience was different in that he and his family changed their identities to Christians and 'hid' psychologically in this way. Initially P attended a Jewish kindergarten as he has memories of learning the Hebrew alphabet, but almost immediately after this, their identities were changed to Christian and the family broke up.

P was sent off to a remote farm under a new identity where he spent a carefree few months in the countryside until he was recognized as a Jew, arrested and jailed.

However his mother heard of his whereabouts and managed to secure his release, moving him into a Red Cross' protected house. When the House lost its' protected status, P was moved to live with his Nanny, once again posing as a non-Jew.

During his stay with his Nanny, P was shot, which seems to have affected his memory and his recollection of this time, which remains vague until the end of the war.

However P claims that for him, the experience of being hidden extended beyond the war years and even beyond living in Europe. Post war P was sent to school and his parents rebuilt their lives again until they reestablished their wealth, until the Communists came in and they migrated to Australia.

In Australia, P was sent to a boarding school, once again having to separate from his parents, as there did not seem to be a place for him in their new lives in the migration experience. There was an implicit sense that his parents thought of P as separate to their own family unit and he was compartmentalized in their mind. In the school, too P felt very foreign and different to the Australian culture. His parents had decided upon migration that they would raise him as a Catholic even in Australia and it seems that something of their struggle to assimilate in order to survive spilled over into their new lives in Australia. They acknowledged to P that they were all born Jewish however, they actively encouraged P to attend Church and promoted his involvement in Catholicism. The war situation and the family's original identity were never discussed with P and remained a heavily cloaked secret for all of P's life, even into his adult years. In fact P was only to discover the roots of his identity and culture when his parents died in the 1970's.

Until this time P grew up believing he had no family and felt he lived in both a cultural and familial vacuum, which left him feeling bereft and isolated. It was only after his parents' death in the early 1970's that P discovered that he and his family were Jewish and indeed that he had an extended family scattered throughout the world.

So P has come to realize over time that his 'hiddenness' extended many years after the war, until he was an adult himself and was a creation of his parents' upbringing. P believes that the actual war years themselves were relatively uneventful in their impact on him but rather it was the suppression of his Jewish identity post war, which he feels affected him the most and gave him the experience of being hidden, just as he was psychologically hidden from his own background during this period.

P understands intellectually that his parents saw assimilation as their tool for survival and felt the urgent need to 'hide' their Jewishness even in a non-war situation. They were elated when P married a Catholic in a church as they saw this as a way to salvage them by having a non-Jewish grandchild. Yet paradoxically P notes that his father was very generous in donating to the Zionist cause and believes their whole 'cloak of Catholicism' was not a thought out and considered plan but rather a confused reaction to their traumas of the hiding in the war.

His parents were reluctant to talk about the Holocaust or their Jewishness and never attended synagogue. Yet after they died P discovered parts of their Jewish heritage which they smuggled out of Europe with them, indicating there was a part of their Jewish identity which they could not let go even throughout their denials.

P comments that in Europe, the nature of their hiddenness and the fiction they created around their new identities isolated P, which was why he was sent off to the countryside. P recalls these details with very little affect, quite resigned to the decision made at the time and apparently not traumatized by the separation from his parents. In fact P remarks that he recall very little emotion throughout his childhood and suggests that affect might belong to the adults analyzing the situation and not the children experiencing it. (One can also speculate that P as a child had to cut himself off from his emotions, deny and suppress them, in order to survive the traumas of separating from his parents and being hidden in a remote and unfamiliar environment). P tried to convince me in the interview that this emotional detachment about his time in hiding was not unique to himself but in fact he has a friend whom was hidden and also denies feeling emotive during this period. P reflects that perhaps in their naivete they did not understand the implications of the situation and fear was not a part of their emotional landscape at the time. Furthermore P points out that the meaning of fear built up gradually over time as anti-Semitism gradually crept over Europe and entered their lives in an insidious and slow way giving them time to acclimatize to the new situation and adjust as each change occurred.

For P "hiddenness" acquired its real meaning in the many years after the war when his parents continued to hid his identity from him and brought him up as a Catholic. P feels very strongly about the denial of his heritage and background during this time, which marks a stark contrast to his resignation and ability to accept in a matter-of-fact way what occurred to him during the war. P believes he was a 'hidden child' for 30 years and this has had a profound effect and impact on his entire life.

## **SUBJECT 10: SITUATED STRUCTURE FOR DR M:**

Dr. M began his recollection of being hidden by noting that even though he was merely three years old at the time, he has vivid memories of his experiences. He believes the traumatic nature of the changes in his life etched themselves on his memory far more deeply than the pleasant everyday events and the memories remain sharp in his mind more than 50 years after the event.

His first sense that things were changing was that the family moved from a substantial middle class home into a single room, with other people living with them. The house was fenced in and his father would be escorted to work every day by guards. There was an incredible sense of loss of freedom as they were enclosed in this 'room' and he experienced sharply the lack of personal space as they were in this confined area. During this time, Dr. M remained with both his parents, however his environmental landscape had irretrievably changed.

Within this 'home' they had a hiding place under the false bottom of the kitchen and they were regularly and randomly herded down there when it appeared a German raid was imminent. These incidents were extremely frightening for Dr. M, who recalls being woken from the depths of his slumber suddenly then dragged down to a dark and foreign place, all the while being urged not to make a sound. The extremity of these hidings was horrific for Dr M, yet he was not given the opportunity to express his fear, having to suppress his reactions in an unnatural fashion. The raids and the subsequent hidings went on for a period of four years, yet it seemed Dr. M never acclimatized to them and as a child he felt incredibly frightened by these incidents. Furthermore Dr. M was acutely made aware that to be caught meant a certain death and silence was crucial in all their movements, adding yet another threatening dimension to his fears.

Dr. M does not recollect how they amused themselves during this time; there was a total sense of deprivation and suspension of all the normal activities of life, which was replaced by an all-pervading sense of fear. In retrospect he marvels how they were able to sustain this unnatural way of being for such an extended period of time.

It seemed his father had an established network of non-Jewish friends who for commercial gains advised them of forthcoming Nazi raid. Dr. M noted with sadness that previously these contacts had been friends of the family but all sense of social loyalties had been obliterated with the onset of the war and any exchange of information was done for pure commercial and pecuniary gains.

Eventually they escaped from this home as the danger of remaining there seemed to increase with time. They escaped across the border to what they believed would be a safer hiding place, in the bowels of a mail van, piled one on top of each other. Again Dr. M recalls this trip with both fear and emotion, recalling once more how he was forced to repress any sounds as they traveled along this seemingly interminable trip. In retrospect, Dr. M has realized that the distance they covered was relatively short, however at the time, he remembers experiencing that the van ride would never end and in fact whether

they would arrive at their uncertain destination safely. With emotion in retelling the journey, Dr. M recalls whilst being forced to remain silent in the van they heard a shooting at the border, which he later found out to be a shooting of another mail van filled with hiding Jews, trying to cross the border just as they were. Dr. M realized how precarious was their assurance of safety was in their hiding, and the fact that they were themselves were within a whisper of discovery and death as they escaped to a new hiding place was extremely traumatic for Dr M, even some 50 years later.

Initially when they arrived across the border, Dr. M and his mother were separated from his father and changed their names pretending to be Poles rather than Jews. Although Dr. M felt conspicuous in his disguise of a changed identity they were able to board a train and arrived in the main city which was at this stage free of the German invasion. The city appeared enormous to Dr. M, an impression obviously magnified in contrast to his many years of hiding in confined spaces where he had severe sensory deprivation. However, they remained in the city only briefly before moving to a country farm. Again posing as non-Jews, the time in the country provided Dr. M a brief oasis from his years of confinement and restriction of his physical hiding and they were able to enjoy a greater sense of physical freedom in the open outdoor spaces while remaining psychologically hidden from their Jewish identity. However it was not long until their Jewish identities were exposed in a brutal manner and they were forced to flee once again. This time, the family moved into a wheat silo, which although restrictive was quite comfortable. Nevertheless, Dr. M recalls the bizarre nature of his life during this period of hiding that in the midst of this incredible danger, they were listening on a radio to the local prices of the market. This mundane detail seemed so incongruous against the context of their living conditions and so irrelevant to their life in hiding, yet because of their complete lack of anything to do in hiding these radio reports which they had access to became a focal point of their day.

They remained in the silo until liberation and once again Dr. M was struck by the grandeur of the outside world on emerging from their hiding place. This was personified by the appearance of the soldier who liberated them who seemed so majestic and grand to Dr. M after his years of deprivation in hiding.

Dr. M reflects that although he considers himself lucky that they all survived the war, he feels he was left with a legacy from his years of hiding, that affected the rest of his life. As a child the years of impending danger and lack of stability left Dr. 'M feeling insecure throughout the rest of his childhood and even into his adult life. Although intellectually he has been able to grasp the source of these insecurities, many of these issues remain unresolved for Dr. M until today, which has effected his relationships, his choice of career and his working life. Even as a mature and apparently successful adult, Dr M acknowledges that his whole life has been determined and constrained by these years in hiding.



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