

An IPA: Orthodox Jewish women,
adherence to the laws of family purity
and the marital relationship

Professional Doctorate in
Counselling Psychology

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PREFACE

The preface will introduce the four components included in the Doctoral Thesis Portfolio. The portfolio focuses on four different areas related to the practice of counselling psychology. First an exploratory piece of research will be presented focusing on orthodox Jewish women and their experience of observing the laws of family purity and how this impacts their marital relationships. The Jewish laws of family purity govern the sexual relationship between husband and wife, instructing that throughout female menstruation, husband and wife have no physical contact. Following on from this, a reflective essay is presented that considers the development of my clinical and professional identity as a counselling psychologist. A theoretical essay will then be introduced, exploring group therapy as a suitable and effective treatment approach through the evaluation of two distinct treatment models offered in group therapy. Finally a process report will be presented that sheds light on my clinical practice with a client presenting with anger management difficulties.

The reader will notice that there is an emphasis throughout each component on the importance of lived experience and the subjective nature of human experience. The experiential and the subjective are central to me, both philosophically and in my practice of counselling psychology. I place paramount importance on the subjective experience of the individual, always placing the client before the model instead of adopting a one size fits all approach. Throughout this preface I will illustrate how this theme ties into my practice and research.

A synopsis of each component of the portfolio will now be presented, introducing the piece of work and how it ties into the theme of valuing the subjective experience of the individual.

Section A - Empirical research

An original piece of research was conducted exploring the experiences of orthodox Jewish women adhering to the laws of family purity and how this impacts their marital relationships. This qualitative study adopted a semi structured interview technique to glean the in-depth lived experience of a sample of six women who observe these laws. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was the chosen methodology. In this a double hermeneutic between the researcher and the participant exists: the researcher aims to make sense of how the participant makes sense of his or her world, taking an active role in trying to access the personal world of the participant. Hence the construction of an interpretative account is a product of the interaction between the researcher and participant, as the researchers own conceptions, beliefs, expectations and experiences are present and necessary (Smith et al., 1999) in order that they can make sense of the participant making sense of their world (Smith, 2007). This method of enquiry therefore appreciates the crucial role subjectivity and lived experience play in the analysis.

This study seeks to contribute to the limited multicultural counselling psychology literature relating to minority groups in the UK and to the goal of “understanding the worldview of the culturally different client” (Sue et al., 1992, p. 481). It highlights the importance of understanding the subjective experience in context, consistent with counselling psychology’s humanistic underpinnings. It also emphasises the potential disservice counselling psychologists can do to clients when they do not take into account a client’s beliefs and values and simply apply treatment approaches across distinct cultures. As Kareem notes “A psychotherapeutic process that does not take into account the person’s whole life experience, or that denies consideration of their race, culture, gender or social values, can only fragment the person” (1992 p.16). Therefore, in IPA the role of the meaning and sense-making process that individuals embark upon are considered along with the contextual factors (Smith, 1996). The findings are explored in light of previous research and theoretical insights are offered. Whilst the findings are not generalisable beyond the sample of women included in this study, important transcultural implications are offered for marital therapy for couples observing similar cultural marital practices. This study highlights the importance of understanding cultural marital practices and incorporating them into

marital treatment interventions, as clearly for this group of women, adhering to the laws of family purity has a large impact on the individual and their marital relationship.

Section B - Reflective essay

In this section I reflect on the development of my personal identity as a counselling psychologist. Identity for me is a dynamic and ever evolving process and is underpinned by the values and philosophy of counselling psychology:

To know empathically and to respect first person accounts as valid in their own terms; to elucidate, interpret and negotiate between perceptions and world views but not to assume the automatic superiority of any one way of experiencing, feeling, valuing and knowing (BPS, 2005, p.1-2).

Therefore my approach respects the uniqueness of each individual, valuing subjective experience as paramount. This allows me as a counselling psychologist to maintain Rogers' (1957) core conditions of empathy, acceptance and authenticity, placing central focus on the therapeutic relationship.

In this essay I present my preferred theoretical approach: cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and how this fits with my client work. I also explicate the limitations I have come across using CBT and how I go about integrating other approaches, such as the psychodynamic approach into my treatment plans. I elaborate on the importance of placing the subjective experience of the client before the model and how I adopt alternative treatment approaches when the CBT model does not compliment the client's needs, explicating the rationale and theoretical framework for the choices I have made in treatment. I then reflect on the subjective process I have gone through in developing my identity as a counselling psychologist.

Section C - Theoretical essay

The aim of this section is to present a theoretical essay exploring the role of groups in therapy. Groups are made up of individuals, who in some way are connected, either

physically, being in the same place at the same time, or in their minds, sharing a common aim, purpose or function (Barnes, Ernst & Keith, 1999). Individuals in a group context, sharing their experiences with similar others, often helps them quickly move beyond isolation and a sense of self-separateness, to connect intimately with others (Yalom, 1995). Therefore in some cases this might meet the subjective needs of a client more effectively or quicker than in one to one therapy. Hence the subjective experience of the individual is paramount in the treatment of the group. By examining group processes, an alternative approach for meeting individual needs is highlighted.

This essay compares and contrasts the Psychodynamic and the Cognitive Behavioural models of group therapy. I present the theory underpinning each model, analyse their therapeutic approaches, followed by an exploration of how each model applies to the group process and to specific problems, focusing on the process and content of these interventions.

Section D - Process report

This final section focuses primarily on the subjective experience of the individual. It includes a process report of my clinical work with my client Jason (pseudonym). He presented with depression and anger management difficulties linked to his previous history of childhood abuse. This therapeutic encounter reflects the presence of counselling psychology's philosophical and theoretical underpinning in my practice. I elaborate on the idiosyncratic treatment approach devised to treat Jason and highlight the importance of the therapeutic relationship (Gonzalez-Prendes, 2007). Throughout the therapy I aimed to continually provide Jason with unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957), valuing his subjective experiences, without assuming objective 'truths'. I believe this was paramount in the improvements Jason made during the course of the therapy. I also critically reflect on my experience of treating Jason and the therapeutic areas in which I might improve in order to enhance my skills and practice as a counselling psychologist.

SECTION A – Empirical research

ABSTRACT

Counselling psychology promotes the importance of developing multicultural counselling competencies in order that treatment interventions meet the needs of culturally diverse clients, acknowledging their unique experiences. However, minority groups have been somewhat neglected by the counselling psychology literature. The Jewish population appears to be a case in point. This qualitative study explores orthodox Jewish women's experiences of observing the laws of family purity (which govern sexual behavior between husband and wife) and how such observance impacts their marital relationships. Interpretative phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed to access the lived experiences of these women. Analysis of the results highlighted the women's experience of physical separation from their spouse as paramount. This was reflected in their experiences of distancing in their marital relationships, sexual relationship renewal upon reuniting with their spouse and valuing the personal space and protection gained as a result of separation. The participants' mikvah (ritual bath) experiences encompassed feelings of rebirth and renewal as well as contrasting feelings of shame and exposedness, which seemed to impact their adjustment back to intimacy with their spouses. The psychological messages conveyed suggested that fear seemed to motivate the participants' adherence, which in turn offered them a sense of safety and containment. Participants also displayed ambiguous and ambivalent perceptions concerning whether the laws were oppressive to them. Responses throughout offered a sophisticated weave of complex and contrasting experiences. The participants' unrelenting commitment to the laws was emphasised, suggesting the importance of incorporating clients' values and beliefs within treatment in order to ensure that it is both effective and enduring. Clinical applications for marital therapy are highlighted, carrying with them transcultural implications for other cultures that adhere to similar practices during menstruation.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades there has been increasing interest in the links between religion and family life (Edgell, 2005; Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar & Swank, 2001). The influential role religion plays in shaping marital attitudes, values, practices and quality has been a particular focus of research (e.g., Booth, Johnson, Branaman & Sica, 1995; Myers, 2006; Shehan, Bock, & Lee, 1990).

Outline

The purpose of this investigation is to explore orthodox Jewish women's experiences of adhering to the Jewish laws of family purity and how such experiences influence their marital relationships.

I view research as essentially co-constructed, with the researcher actively involved in constructing, collecting, selecting and interpreting the data in order to account for the subjective and inter-subjective elements that impact the research (Finlay, 2002). Reflexivity has become a defining feature of qualitative research (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994). I therefore begin by commenting on my own personal interest in this topic and exploring my positioning within the research, so that my assumptions, beliefs and experiences can be considered in terms of their interaction with the data (Elliot, Fischer & Rennie, 1999).

I move on to explore the importance of researching minority groups and their cultural practices for counselling psychologists aiming to develop multicultural competencies. I discuss the significance of exploring marital practices in distinct cultures in order to develop treatment interventions aimed at enhancing marital satisfaction and resultant wellbeing. I next look at the importance of attachment theory, communication and sex in the marital relationship in order to highlight pathways influencing marital satisfaction. I then explore religious approaches to menstruation and resultant practices, highlighting the possible transcultural relevance of this study. This is followed by a detailed review of the Jewish approach to menstruation and the laws of family purity. Finally, I critically review the literature on women's experiences of family purity, and identify the major research gap that this study seeks to address.

Personal reflexivity

My choice of research topic evolved through my interest in marital relationships. I was at a stage in my life where I was engaged and planning my own wedding, following several years in which I had been thinking a lot about what marriage meant to me. I had also started working in a Jewish marriage counselling service and was becoming more aware of the potential difficulties couples may face during their marriage. I was intrigued to understand more about such relationships for both personal development and to better equip myself when working with this client group.

It was clear from my preliminary investigations of the literature that the Jewish community was a minority group that was under-researched and could be said to be in need of modernised therapeutic interventions. As I started to sift through the research regarding difficulties experienced by Jewish couples, it became apparent that the laws of family purity were an area of possible strife. There had been few scientific studies investigating the impact of observing these laws. And the topic appeared to have been untouched by counselling psychology.

The research on marital satisfaction in the general population indicates that following the honeymoon period sexual frequency rapidly decreases due to habituation and predictability (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Doddridge, Schumm, & Berger, 1987). I wondered whether adhering to the Jewish laws of family purity, which are designed to enforce a routine of intimacy and separation, might produce a different picture. I felt that understanding this area was relevant not only for a counselling psychologist working with the orthodox Jewish community but also for counselling psychologists working with minority groups and cultures where couples adhere to similar practices of separation during menstruation. I had become aware that similar practices existed in other major religions including Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. An understanding of such practices appeared relevant to counselling psychologists both in their quest to develop multicultural competencies and in their interactions with minority groups, given the importance of ensuring that interventions do not interfere with clients' cultural values.

In order to remain critical of my own “subjectivity, vested interests, predilections and assumptions and to be conscious of how these might impact on the research process and findings” (Finlay, 2008a, p.17), I will briefly elaborate on my religious stance and the personal transitions I went through as I began the research.

As a modern orthodox Jew, I maintain my Jewish traditions whilst flexibly integrating into Western society. My plan to adhere to the laws of family purity was an opportunity to integrate spirituality into my daily life. It offered me a pathway that I would follow in the pursuit of a successful marriage, as I was perhaps grappling with my own fears concerning marital discord and breakdown. I believed that having a framework ordained by God, which had been observed for thousands of years, would provide my relationship with a positive sexual structure. However, I was also aware that my knowledge and expectations of this marital practice were somewhat naïve and undeveloped and suspected that observance might present challenges and difficulties.

Since I was planning to begin my adherence to the laws while I was still conducting the project, I recognised that there would be a strong element of personal involvement in the research process, the data obtained and the presentation of findings. I had to be mindful of my potential inclination to see only the positive aspects of the practice, but I was also hesitant not to overcompensate for this and focus unduly on the negative. I was also aware that I might come to experience my own issues with the observance. To account for these factors, I kept a reflective journal throughout the research process. I also had regular peer and supervision sessions where I was able to document and discuss the influence my personal expectations, beliefs, values, and experiences might be having on the research process.

Counselling psychology and multicultural competencies

Over the past three decades the challenge of developing multicultural counselling competencies has obtained a prominent place in psychological literature, with the development of such competencies recognised as a key foundation for effective and ethical therapeutic practice (Arredondo & Toporek, 2004; Marsella & Pedersen, 2004). This is reflected in the increase in graduate programmes that provide training in this arena (Sue, Arredondo, McDavis, 1992). Counselling psychologists have the

duty to identify and develop personal levels of multicultural competence regarding their attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and skills. The importance lies not in gaining specific competencies but rather in their application across diverse contexts and clients (Collins & Arthur, 2010).

The specific competencies for multicultural counselling practice (Sue et al., 1992; Sue et al., 1982; Sue et al., 1998) have been published widely: for example, in the *Counselling Psychologist*, the *Journal for Multicultural Counseling and Development*, the *Journal for Counseling and Development*, and by the American Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development and the American Counseling Association (Sue et al., 1992; see Collins & Arthur, 2010, for a detailed elaboration of multicultural competencies). There are three main dimensions: (a) “Counsellor awareness of own assumptions, values, and biases;” (b) “Understanding the worldview of the culturally different client;” and (c) “Developing appropriate intervention strategies and techniques” (Sue et al., 1992, p. 481). It can be argued that there is no distinction between professional competence and multicultural competence, since every client-therapist interaction involves a multicultural encounter: the therapist has to take into account the factors that influence the client’s experience and worldview (Collins & Arthur, 2005, 2010).

Much of the multicultural counselling literature originates in America (USA), and can be argued to have minimal relevance to cultures outside the Euro-American context (Sue, Ivey, & Pedersen, 1996; Sue & Sue, 1999). Largely, it focuses on mainstream culture, with little attention paid to minority groups. As Nelson-Jones (2002, p.133) notes: “Advocates of multicultural counselling and therapy assert that the Euro-American bias of mainstream therapy approaches causes Western-oriented therapists to fail many of their actual and potential minority group clients”. One aim of this study is to contribute to a broadening of multicultural counselling psychology literature in the United Kingdom (UK). This is an urgent need given that counselling psychologists working in the UK, especially in London, are surrounded by diversity.

Marital relationships and treatment interventions

The study of marital relationships has been prevalent across a variety of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, public policy, anthropology, history, and even neuroscience. The quality of marriage has been shown to have a powerful impact on adult functioning as well as child development (Cox et al., 2008). Findings have documented the health-buffering effects of marital satisfaction and its link with longevity (Lillard & Panis, 1996; Murray, 2000), contrasting the negative health outcomes associated with conflictual marital relationships (Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001). Marital conflict has also been implicated in predicting lower psychological wellbeing (Cox et al., 2008). Despite this impressive cross-disciplinary attention, less appears to be known about the marital relationships and marital cultural practices of minority populations.

Research identifies attachment, communication and sexual satisfaction (Hollist & Miller, 2005; Litzinger & Gordon, 2005) as crucial components of marital satisfaction. The child's internal working models of the self and others, dependent on their first caregiver relationships, act as a template for future relationships (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1982). Research also points to a significant relationship between attachment styles and marital quality (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Gallo & Smith, 2001; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994). Hazan and Shaver (1987) suggest that securely attached couples have greater marital satisfaction; they feel comfortable with emotional intimacy and experience satisfaction from close relationships. These researchers found that avoidant couples were fearful of intimacy and uncomfortable at being close to others and that ambivalent couples, fearful of the relationship ending, were reluctant to get close, often resorting to aggressive behaviour to push the other away.

Communication is also considered a central component of marital satisfaction (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Gottman & Levenson, 1988; Noller, 1988; Rogge & Bradbury, 1999; Spanier & Lewis, 1980). Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies have consistently highlighted the relationship between communication and satisfaction (Carrere & Gottman, 1999; Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Markman, 1979, 1981; Rogge & Bradbury, 1999). Unhappy couples

appear to have a deficit in their communication skills, displaying demand-withdrawal, partner avoidance, psychological distance and more conflict than non-distressed couples (Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Christensen & Shenk, 1991).

Sexual satisfaction is also recognised as an important component of marital satisfaction (Apt, Hurlburt & Clark, 1994; Laumann, Paik, & Rosen, 1999; Young, Denny, Luquis & Young, 1998; 2000). Some research has indicated that as many as 50% of couples experience high rates of sexual dysfunction (Masters & Johnson, 1970), with serious consequences for marital wellbeing (McCarthy, 1997; 2001; 2003).

Much of the above research on the links between attachment, communication, sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction is quantitative and whilst it tells us that these effects occur, it does not indicate how. Qualitative research adds a key dimension by showing how these various factors influence the quality of marital relationships. It arguably has greater potential to inform marital treatment approaches (Willig, 2001).

Meta-analyses have verified the positive impact that marital therapy has on reducing a number of mental health issues. These include: relationship distress (Shadish & Baldwin, 2005); depression (Beach & Gupta, 2003); and drug and alcohol abuse (Stanton & Shadish, 1997). Such interventions have also been shown to enhance physical health (Osterman et al., 2003). Premarital education has also been shown to enhance couple communication and relationship satisfaction (Carroll & Doherty, 2003).

These findings emphasise the potential of marital therapy to make a real difference. However, they need to be taken with caution, as meta-analyses may be subject to such problems as publication bias: the preference of publishers to present studies with positive outcomes (Sutton, Song, Gilbody & Abrams, 2000).

Current research on correlates of marital satisfaction and stability focuses primarily on middle-class European-Americans (Cox et al., 2008). It is unfortunate that the research has not extended sufficiently to minority groups, as their marital relationships and subsequent satisfaction are likely to be affected by their cultural

practices. This apparent lack of focus means that marital treatment interventions offered may not adequately target minority groups and therefore could be argued not to meet their therapeutic needs. For example, Western culture encourages marriage based on love, preceded by a period of being in a relationship and often cohabitation. However within Islam, for example, some families arrange marriages for their children (Quadr, De Silva, Martin, & Murad, 2005), and the gender regime tends to be male-centred, with sexual behavior oriented towards reproduction (Laumann et al., 2006). Such factors need to be taken into account when treating observant Islamic couples in therapy.

Sue (1988) critiques mental health services for failing adequately to serve ethnic minority groups, arguing that they lack resources such as bilingual counsellors, counsellors who are members of the minority group, and therapists able to understand clients' values, lifestyles and backgrounds. Indeed, some counsellors may reveal discrimination or prejudice in their practice. Sue and Zane (1987) argue that the major cause of these inadequacies is the therapist's lack of ability to deliver culturally responsive forms of treatment. Whilst the claims Sue makes are relevant and have paved the way for the growing multicultural counselling literature, his research was conducted more than 20 years ago, primarily among Asian Americans, and requires re-evaluation, updating and broadening.

For multicultural counselling psychology, it is clearly vital to explore the ways in which different cultural groups and social contexts impact on marital relationships as seen in the above example. Understanding what contributes to marital satisfaction and stability on the one hand and to marital dissolution on the other, is of critical importance because the maintenance of happy and stable unions has been linked to increased wellbeing (Bryant & Conger, 2002; Simon & Marcussen, 1999). Given this correlation, there is a need to systematically examine specific cultures, taking into consideration their unique circumstances and cultural norms.

Intimate relationships anchored by sacred religious beliefs have in general received little research attention (Ribner, 2003). Mead (1954) highlights the significant influence that cultural norms hold over the beliefs of each ethnic group's view of appropriate sexual behaviour. This cultural dimension seems to have been lost

amongst the wealth of research exploring the changing nature of practices and attitudes to sexual behavior. Bhugra argues that:

Relationships and sexual therapies have to be seen and delivered in the context of an individual's culture and society as well as of prevalent norms when the therapies are being offered. Furthermore, the clinician must be aware of specific cultural and ethnic patterns of relationship behaviours and social mores (Bhugra, 2002, p. 99).

Working with clients who adhere to different practices and belief systems often requires the therapeutic plan to be adapted to the individual's needs, so as to ensure the therapy does not conflict with their value system (Simpson & Ramberg, 1992).

Religious approaches to menstruation

Menstruation has become a topic of international interest, studied across psychological, sociological, anthropological and comparative religious perspectives. It has also been a focal point of feminist analysis, which in general has presented religious practices around menstruation in an oppressive light; religious patriarchies are seen as having demonized and regulated women's bodies, depicting them in a negative way (Douglas, 1966). Religious regulations have been seen as amplifying these attitudes by imposing restrictive norms on menstruating women, thereby silencing them (Hartman & Marmon, 2004). The menstrual customs of various cultures will now be explored in order to develop our understanding of the menstrual practices many religions promote and their transcultural implications.

In many contemporary monotheistic faiths spiritual and physical purity is of central importance. Menstrual blood is associated with impurity and water is seen as a symbolic tool for purification, with the ability to cleanse perceived pollutions. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism all consider menstruation as having an influence over the women's status of purity, resulting in various prohibitions for the menstruating women (Guterman, Mehta & Gibbs, 2008).

Today, most Christian denominations do not follow any specific rituals or rules related to menstruation (Barnes, 2006). However a small number still follow the

ancient Eastern Orthodox Church rulings which prohibit relations with menstruates and bar them from church access and communion (Barnes, 2006).

In Islam, the Qur'an states: "For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (Qur'an 2:222). Menstruating women are therefore viewed as "impure" in relation to religious functions: they are prohibited from entering a place of worship (Bennett, 2005; Engineer, 1987), praying or fasting during Ramadan, and touching or reciting the Qur'an (Fischer, 1978; Maghen, 1999; Whelan, 1975). A menstruating woman is also prohibited from sexual intercourse for the period of her menstrual cycle: seven full days, at the end of which she engages in a process of ritual washing before she becomes pure again (Bennett, 2005; Fischer, 1978; Whelan, 1975).

Traditional Hindu culture requires that menstruating women leave the main house and live in a small hut outside the village (Apffel-Marglin, 1994; Phipps, 1980). This is because they are seen as impure (Chawla, 1992). During this time women must rest and are prohibited from accessing water, meaning that they cannot bathe (Apffel-Marglin, 1994) or cook (Joshi & Fawcett, 2001). In addition women cannot enter places of worship (Chawla, 1992; Ferro-Luzzi, 1980; Phipps, 1980; Sharma, Vaid, & Manhas, 2006), mount horses or drive vehicles (Whelan, 1975). There is also a strong taboo against menstruation being publicly acknowledged and it is encouraged to be an entirely private event (Apffel-Marglin, 1994).

While Buddhist culture tends to view menstruation as a natural occurrence (Buddha Dharma Education Association, 2004), Taiwanese and Japanese Buddhists view menstruation as polluting (Furth & Shu-Yueh, 1992; Jnanavira, 2006). Women are thought to lose their spiritual energy during menstruation and are banned from participating in folk rituals, temple worship, and ceremonies such as weddings (Furth & Shu-Yueh, 1992). Some followers even view menstruates as threatening, attracting the attention of blood-eating ghosts (Lhamo, 2003).

The Jewish religion also views menstrual blood as ritually unclean as it signals the death of potential life. The Torah (Jewish bible) states "You shall not approach a woman in her time of unclean separation, to uncover her nakedness" (Leviticus

18:19). Since the wording expresses 'approach' only and does not explicitly say 'intercourse', the sages devised numerous laws preventing physical contact generally (Eider, 1999). These are the laws of family purity governing sexual behaviour between husband and wife (known in Hebrew as the laws of Taharat Hamishpacha). The laws instruct that a husband and wife abstain from sexual and physical contact for the duration of a woman's 'niddah' (literal meaning 'separation') time. This time is the length of her menstrual cycle, which the Torah dictates to be the days of her menstrual bleeding plus an additional seven 'clean' days. According to this ritual an orthodox Jewish married woman is required to check herself internally twice daily (morning and afternoon) after her menstrual bleeding has stopped, using a white linen cloth to ensure she is no longer menstruating. This practice occurs until she has been 'clean' for seven continual days (Burt & Rudolf, 2000; Eider, 1999).

During menstruation and the subsequent seven 'clean' days, a series of restrictions is placed upon physical contact to prevent physical intimacy (Eider, 1999). A husband and wife are not allowed to engage in any physical contact; they are required to sleep in separate beds and take great caution when passing each other objects, putting the item down for the other to take rather than passing it directly. No distinction is made between sexual and non-sexual touching.

Following these seven 'clean' days the woman is required to immerse herself on the seventh night in a mikvah (ritual bath), which takes her from being in niddah (ritually unclean state) to a state of taharah (a state of purity). A mikvah is a large body of natural rainwater that is collected in a bath-like pool. The preparation for the mikvah involves a woman bathing and removing all separations between her body and the mikvah water. This includes removing all unwanted bodily hair, cutting her nails, and removing nail varnish and any makeup.

After the woman has immersed herself in the mikvah, the couple is permitted to resume physical and sexual contact. The two-week on and off pattern of contact lasts throughout marital life except when a woman becomes pregnant and no longer has her period, or when she regulates her periods by being on the pill, or when she reaches menopause (Eider, 1999; Ribner, 2003). Adhering to these laws represents an integral part of the orthodox Jewish identity (Donin, 1972; Wasserfall, 1992).

Research gap

Research regarding the Jewish population is noticeably absent from multicultural counselling literature (Fischer & Moradi, 2001). There is a significant knowledge gap in counselling psychology research regarding Jewish individuals, their practices and how interventions can be adapted to suit their needs. It is necessary to develop this research base, so that counselling psychologists develop multicultural competencies enabling them to offer Jewish individuals treatment interventions that respect their practices and beliefs and do not oppose them.

With regard to psychotherapy and counselling, it has been proposed that religion is almost as integral to the religious client as are their family structures and relationships (Payne, Bergin, & Loftus, 1992). Research suggests that if the therapist does not integrate therapeutic solutions that take into account religious values, then effective outcomes may be temporary and benefits restricted (Bergin, 1980; Cunningham, 1983; Gass, 1984; Kuyken, Brewin, Power, & Furnham, 1992).

There are few scientific accounts of the psychological experiences of religious women living within these structures, despite the plethora of anthropological, sociological and feminist studies surrounding the topic of menstruation. This gap in the psychological research not only reflects the lack of attention given to women adhering to these practices, but also indicates that treatment interventions may be failing to take account of clients' cultural values, beliefs and practices.

Previous research exploring Jewish women and their observance of family purity laws will now be critically examined.

Family purity in Judaism: a literature review

The laws of family purity ordained upon orthodox Jews have remained a constant tradition amongst Jewish women over many centuries. However, the rationale and justifications for such practices have varied greatly over time (Yanay & Rapoport, 1997). Despite the volumes of religious literature devoted to the laws of family purity, the scientific research exploring the impact of adherence on observant couples and the

possible relationship between adherence to the laws, marital happiness or unhappiness and sexual satisfaction is limited (Labinsky, Schmeidler, Yehuda, Friedman, & Rosenbaum, 2009).

Hartman and Marmon (2004) explored how women living under a system of family purity experience the observance of such rules. They conducted interviews with 30 orthodox Jewish women living in Jerusalem during 2001. The women ranged in age from 25 to 57, with lengths of marriage of between four months and 35 years. During interviews the researchers focused on: niddah, mikvah immersion, and the significance of women's observance for themselves, their spouse, the community and God. They analysed the data using both grounded theory development (Charmatz 1983, 1995) and parts of Gilligan et al.'s (1988) voice centred analysis. On the basis of their interviews they identified a number of themes, which will be summarized briefly.

The women in their study grappled with the concept of oppression and its relevance to their lives, struggling with feminist claims regarding the oppressive patriarchal religious roles imposed on women. They shared experiences of finding their adherence to niddah difficult, due to its inconvenience and the imposed cycles of closeness and separation which conflicted with their physical and emotional health. They expressed their aversion to asking a Rabbi about their niddah status¹ as it left them feeling demoralized and powerless; indeed, their responses indicated a degree of disobedience and individual rebellion. However, they also shared positive experiences. All showed commitment to the laws despite the difficulties, finding that their adherence added value, empowerment and beauty to their lives. They appreciated the religious life and its communal aspects, and viewed their observance of niddah as a part of their religious being, leaving them feeling valued, respected and sexually powerful.

Hartman and Marmon's (2004) research set out to determine how women themselves live and experience their niddah observance. The analysis, however, seems in the

¹ If a woman sees a bloodstain on the cloth she uses for her internal checks during the clean days following menstruation, or on her underwear when she is not menstruating, she is required to ask a rabbi whether this stain makes her ritually unclean.

main to be examining gendered processes, challenging the structural analysis of the regimen of ritual purity, and further developing the feminist position regarding women living under religious systems. The authors adopt a staunch feminist perspective, reflected by the publication of their research in the *Journal of Gender and Society*. It could be argued that this powerful standpoint has diverted the authors from focusing, on the women's actual experiences and instead, there is perhaps a tendency to emphasize the women's experience of oppression or empowerment when living within such systems. Moreover, their study does not highlight the potential impact such findings might have on the couple and their level of marital satisfaction. Neither does it explore any clinical implications of significant interest to counselling psychologists.

An argument can therefore be made for the need to develop and enhance our understanding of women living within these systems, their lived experience of *niddah*, and specifically how their religious observance of cycles of separation followed by periods of intimacy affects their marital relationship. In this way the present investigation endeavors to explore orthodox Jewish women's experiences of observing the laws of family purity and the marital impacts of such practices, so that they can be offered supportive treatment interventions that are bespoke and culturally sensitive.

A further criticism of Hartman and Marmon's (2004) study is that while some participants were interviewed in both Hebrew and English, most were interviewed in Hebrew and their responses then translated into English during transcription. Barnes (1996) contends that when conducting grounded theory with distinct cultures, data analysis must be conducted in the language of the respondents, as this facilitates a rich, inductively derived grounded theory. As qualitative research aims to capture the subjective meaning of phenomena for participants in specific social and cultural contexts, translating and interpreting qualitative cross-language cultural data is subject to difficulties. It tends to result in researchers improvising procedures and changing meanings conveyed by participants, as there are limited guidelines available to support qualitative researchers' translation efforts (Esposito, 2001). Hartman and Marmon (2004) do not reference the methods used in their translation or how they dealt with cultural idioms and meanings that are not understood easily in the English

language (Temple & Young, 2004). This raises questions about the accuracy of their translations and the cross-cultural relevance of the accounts they produced. This suggests that further research conducted in the native language of the participants is necessary.

Hartman and Marmon's (2004) study has a sample of 30 women, which is relatively large in comparison with samples used by other qualitative methodologies. Despite this, the observations made by Hartman and Marmon cannot be generalized beyond this specific group of women living in Jerusalem and it is argued here that as this group is from such a specific and distinct Jewish culture, the study's findings may also lack transferability to modern UK orthodox Jews. This suggests the need for further research within the UK Jewish population.

This critique of sample size and lack of transferability to a UK population could also be argued as applying to Marmon's (1999, 2008) unpublished works. Marmon's (2008) PhD thesis is not available online, is not readily accessible to UK counselling psychologists and is as yet unable to inform practice. However, a brief review will be presented here.

The thesis examines the interface of the observance of family purity and identity of modern orthodox couples. Conducting narrative interviews with a sample of 22 women and 24 men (21 couples and 4 individuals) Marmon (2008) used semi-structured interviews to gather extensive data in which both open-ended and closed questions were asked (72 questions in total). The interview data were then analysed using a hermeneutic mode of qualitative analysis.

Marmon's (2008) findings encompass how participants carry out their observance of family purity in practice. She establishes how participants incorporate religious messages, devotion and inherent religious orientations into their lives, highlighting examples of divergence of religiosity between partners and how such partners merge their practice. The PhD also reveals the way niddah influences the development of identity in both males and females, pointing to some of the challenges within a modern religious value system. Marmon focuses on how participants use religion to create meaning, on how the participants interact with gender notions and conceptions

of modernity, and on how this influences their identity formation.

There is therefore a marked sociological and anthropological thrust to Marmon's thesis, which could be argued to have less relevance to the psychological understanding of women's experiences of observance. This is the lacuna that the present investigation seeks to address.

Marmon (1999) has also contributed a chapter to a book concerning menstruation in Jewish life and law. Her interviews focus on 46 women (mostly from Boston, USA) and their perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of their observance of the laws of family purity. Overall the women expressed mixed feelings: they were comfortable with the laws but had negative perspectives, too. Their experiences are described as fluctuating according to the woman's personal needs, the nature of her marital relationship and her life cycle stage.

Marmon's (1999) sample spans the extremes of orthodoxy, from Haredi and Hassidic to modern orthodox and everything in between. This diversity could be argued to call into question the representative nature of these findings. Another problem with this work is that it is not readily available to UK counselling psychologists: it is buried in a Jewish publication alongside hundreds of religious texts providing instructional, theological, inspirational and explanatory information on the practice.

It is therefore argued here that there exists a significant gap in the multicultural counselling psychology literature regarding the experience of this form of observance in a British context, the impact of these experiences on the marital relationship, and the development of culturally sensitive treatment interventions.

In another study, Guterman (2008) measured the observance of the laws of family purity of 267 self-identified modern orthodox Jews. Participants completed online questionnaires that were available worldwide. Results indicated that laws were broken more frequently during the second week of niddah than during the first week (i.e., during actual menstruation). Lenient laws tended to be broken more often than did strict ones. These results were consistent with Guterman's earlier (2006) findings from a sample of 53 synagogue congregants in the USA who completed

questionnaires. In both studies, participants reported transgressing on average three to four behaviours over the two-week niddah period. Interestingly, there was a correlation between age and the reporting of transgressions, perhaps reflecting an increase in transgressions among older age groups or, alternatively, a maturational process whereby older adults felt more comfortable reporting their transgressions.

Guterman's (2008) use of internet-recruitment and surveys could be argued to call the validity of these findings into question. There was no way to determine how honest participants were regarding the reporting of transgressions and whether the sample was representative of modern orthodox Jews. Further research comparing adherence between different Jewish groups therefore appears necessary.

By way of explanation for the lapses in observance uncovered by his 2006 study, Guterman turns to Schachter's (2002) research, which used a narrative approach to explore the identity development and constraints of 30 young Israeli adults (mean age 26.5 years) of modern orthodox persuasion. Schachter (2002) suggests that commitment to Jewish religious law combined with the acceptance of Western values can result in identity conflicts. When discussing matters of modern orthodoxy and sexuality, participants frequently expressed their inner dialogue between their religious adherence and their modern identity. Drawing on Schachter's findings, Guterman (2006) suggests that the more lenient laws may have been transgressed as a result of the inner conflict between the two voices: the modern versus the traditional. He goes on to speculate that such conflict might cause individuals to decide for themselves which laws to keep and which to transgress.

The quantitative research by Guterman (2006, 2008) is both interesting and useful: it informs us that people do transgress the laws of family purity and when they are most likely to transgress. However, it does not provide insights into *why* they make these transgressions. In fact the author has to turn to qualitative research by Schachter (2002) for possible explanations. This highlights the value of the qualitative approach in providing details, nuances and fine-grained understanding of experiences (Willig, 2001). Further qualitative research would not only develop understanding of the possible reasons for individuals' adherence to the laws, or the lack thereof, but also explore observance in the context of the marital relationship, arguably a neglected

area. Since the laws of family purity apply specifically to the marital relationship, it is surprising that no study has explicitly addressed the potential psychological impact observance of these laws has on the marital relationship.

Labinsky et al. (2009) made steps towards assessing this relationship. They conducted a relatively large quantitative study in the USA exploring the sexual lives of 380 orthodox Jewish women. They state that their motivation for this study was their experience of counselling this group and observing the problems arising within their marital sexual lives. They based their study on a previous investigation carried out by Laumann, et al. (1999), which investigated the prevalence and predictors of sexual dysfunction in the USA amongst men and women from the general population.

Amongst Labinsky et al.'s (2009) findings which covered various aspects of the women's sexual lives, they detected that physical satisfaction ratings were higher for women who displayed fewer conflicts about niddah and the mikvah, perhaps highlighting the role observance of the laws of family purity plays in the marital sexual lives of these individuals. Moreover they found that adherence to niddah was associated with better emotional satisfaction, but not physical satisfaction. The women reported experiencing sexual and emotional difficulties; half the participants had used some type of psychotherapy to deal with marital problems, depression and anxiety. Overall, the women surveyed reported less emotional and sexual satisfaction, and greater sexual dysfunction than those in Laumann et al.'s (1999) study. This difference perhaps reflects the apparent difficulties these women experienced in their marital sexual lives, and might account for their subsequent need for therapy.

Significantly, Labinsky et al.'s study was not published in a peer-reviewed journal but rather on an orthodox Jewish internet site. It may therefore lack credibility compared with other published research that has been through the rigorous peer-review process. Making it clear early in the article that their findings are intended for the observant lay community, and for Rabbinic, educational and health professionals who serve the religious community, the authors provide no real details about the measures they used, other than their claim to have used scales similar to those used by Laumann et al. (1999). A peer-reviewed journal would require measures to be clearly described in order that their reliability could be established and the study replicated. Moreover, the

authors' discussion does not relate their findings to the existing literature, something that would occur in a peer-reviewed journal. The reader is therefore unable to assess the relevance of the findings in the context of the wider literature. Perhaps the intention behind not publishing the study was to maintain the privacy of the topic. The assumption may have been that the findings would be more readily accepted if they came not from a scientific source but rather from a spiritual educational resource, which might be less likely to highlight the possible harms involved in adherence. In addition, the fact that all the respondents in the survey lived in the USA suggests that the findings may have limited relevance in the UK context. This highlights the need for further research into how modern orthodox Jewish women in the UK experience their sexual lives.

Despite these criticisms, however, it bears emphasis that the researchers have solid reputations, being very well known in the field, and that the study was conducted at a reputable institution (Mount Sinai in the USA). Despite its limitations, the study remains one of the few pieces of research to look comprehensively at the sexual lives of Jewish women.

Relevance to counselling psychology

“Multicultural counseling competence has become a cornerstone of the multicultural psychology literature” (Reynolds & Constantine, 2004, p.347). Developing such competencies is of paramount importance in the counselling psychology profession. Not only is this the essence of counselling psychology (Atkinson, Wampold & Worthington, 2007) but it is also crucial for ethical practice (Arredondo & Toporek, 2004). Expanding the multicultural counselling psychology research base is essential for the provision of culturally appropriate services to culturally diverse clients (Atkinson et al., 2007), thereby ensuring that counselling psychologists in the UK uphold the standards and values of the profession:

to know empathically and to respect first person accounts as valid in their own terms; to elucidate, interpret and negotiate between perceptions and world views but not to assume the automatic superiority of any one way of experiencing, feeling, valuing and knowing” (BPS, 2005, p.1-2).

Consistent with counselling psychology's humanistic underpinnings, counselling psychologists need to develop their cultural awareness and understanding in order to enhance therapeutic efficacy (Hayes & Toarmino, 1995). Applying traditional therapeutic models and techniques to minority groups has been shown to be unsuccessful (Sue & Sue, 1990). As Kareem notes, "A psychotherapeutic process that does not take into account the person's whole life experience, or that denies consideration of their race, culture, gender or social values, can only fragment the person" (1992 p.16). An intervention is "more likely to be effective when it matches or fits the cognitive map, lifestyle, or cultural background of the clients" (Sue, Akutsu & Higashi 1985, p. 275-276). While the process of cross-cultural therapy does not expect the therapist to know everything about the client's culture, it emphasizes the importance of remaining open and flexible, of challenging one's own views, and of being respectful towards other value systems (Eleftheriadou, 2003). As one team of researchers puts it: "The therapist who is educated about the orthodox [Jewish] community's values and mores will be better able to offer effective treatment" (Paradis, Freidman, Hatch & Ackerman, 1996, p. 285).

Research aims and questions

This study seeks to contribute to the limited multicultural counselling psychology literature relating to the UK and to the goal of "understanding the worldview of the culturally different client" (Sue et al., 1992, p. 481). Specifically, it aims to expand the research base on modern orthodox Jewish women, seeking to develop a deeper understanding of these women's experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity within their specific cultural context (Woolfe, Dryden & Strawbridge, 2003). In doing so, it endeavors to move the discussion beyond feminist, sociological and anthropological debates (Hartman & Marmon, 2004; Marmon, 1999, 2008) and to go deeper than quantitative studies such as that of Labinsky et al. (2009).

Bearing in mind the significance of the marital relationship for the psychological and physical health of the married couple and their children, this study focuses not simply on women's experience of observing religious laws but also on how such observance impacts marital relationships. It is hoped that this will facilitate the development of more culturally sensitive treatment interventions for couples adhering to such

practices. A further aim is to develop general multicultural awareness among counselling psychologists so that they can better serve minority groups. Finally, the study hopes to offer transcultural insights, reaching beyond the experience of orthodox Jewish women to that of women from other cultures who observe similar marital practices.

The participants in the current study all live in London and speak English as their first language. This obviates the need for translation, enabling the women to speak directly. The general research questions investigated by the study are as follows:

1. What are the participants' experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity?
2. Has observing the laws of family purity impacted their marital relationship in any way?
3. What are the participants' experiences of intimacy within their marital relationship and has observing the laws of family purity influenced their physical relationship?
4. Have any other areas of their lives been affected by keeping the laws of family purity?

METHOD

Research design

A qualitative methodology was employed for this study, using data gathered via semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Outline

Below, I begin by presenting the rationale for selecting the qualitative paradigm and the choice of methodology adopted. This is followed by an overview of the methodology and its philosophical underpinnings. I then present my epistemological standpoint and discuss how I will address reflexivity and validity throughout the thesis. I go on to outline the study's procedures, elaborating on: sampling; participants; materials; the interview process; ethical considerations; and the analytic strategy.

Rationale for the qualitative paradigm

A qualitative approach was deemed most suitable for this study since it seeks to understand how individuals make sense of the world and how they experience the events in it. It aims to explore "what it is like to experience specific conditions", focussing on "the quality and texture of experience" (Willig, 2001, p.9). This allows for deep exploration, understanding and interpretation of individual experience (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). As there is no theory to confirm or disprove, quantitative research methodologies would be unsuitable as they manipulate and measure variables in order to test hypotheses (Willig, 2001).

IPA was selected ahead of three other frequently used qualitative methods for psychological research.

Whilst grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) shares many similarities with IPA, it was considered unsuitable as it focuses on theory construction and social processes

that explain phenomena (Payne, 2007). Using the data to create theories was not the intention of this study; rather it intended to gain detailed insights of the participant's lived experiences, complementing the aims of IPA.

Discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) provides a means to analyse the orderly way of speech, accounting for how individuals make sense of themselves and their social worlds via language (Shotter, 1993). This was also ruled out due to its focus on language construction (Burr, 1995). Whilst IPA recognises the importance of language, it does not view it as the sole constructor of reality (Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw & Smith, 2006); rather than exploring the role of language in specific contexts, IPA engages with the individual's lived experiences, thoughts and perceptions.

Narrative analysis (Gee, 1991; Kirkman, 1997; Riessman, 1993) focuses on the way individuals impart their view of themselves through narratives, which are viewed as creations and claims over personal identity (Linde, 1993). IPA, on the other hand, does not particularly follow a narrative; rather it focuses on key themes of a particular phenomenon or experience and as such tends to privilege the person over the account itself. This is a far better fit for this study's aims of examining how individuals experience their personal and social worlds (Smith, 1995).

Overview of IPA and its philosophical underpinnings

The theoretical pillars upon which IPA is grounded are phenomenology (Moran, 2000), hermeneutics (Palmer, 1969), and idiography (Smith, Harreé & Van Langenhove, 1995).

Phenomenology is the philosophical approach to the study of what experience is like (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Philosophers such as Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre highlighted the importance of understanding the individual's lived experience and what specifically comprises this experience (Smith et al., 2009). IPA has a clear phenomenological dedication; it aims to gain a detailed understanding of the meaning and sense-making processes that individuals engage in their lives (Smith, 1996) whilst also considering the surrounding contextual factors (social and

economic) that underlie experience (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). Therefore establishing the diversity in human experience (Willig, 2001).

Understanding the experience of another involves interpretation, which leads us on to hermeneutics. Smith and Eatough (2006) suggest that the process of IPA involves a double hermeneutic between the researcher and the participant in which the researcher aims to make sense of how the participant makes sense of his or her world by taking an active role in trying to access the personal world of the participant. Hence the construction of an interpretative account is a product of the interaction between the researcher and participant: the researcher's own conceptions, beliefs, expectations and experiences are present and necessary (Smith et al., 1999) in order that they can make sense of the participant making sense of their world (Smith, 2007). IPA enables the researcher to in part adopt an "insider's perspective" (Conrad, 1987, as cited in Smith & Eatough, 2007, p.36) by attempting to stand as far as possible in the participant's shoes (the hermeneutics of empathy) while at the same time standing alongside the participant to critically examine the account and look deeper into the meanings conveyed within it (critical hermeneutics) (Ricoeur, 1970). This allows for both the hermeneutics of empathy and a more critical hermeneutics to be employed, producing a richer analytic account.

The idiographic mode of IPA is concerned with the detailed analysis of one unique case study or in-depth individual analyses of various cases (Allport, 1940). This contrasts with nomothetic methods, which are probabilistic and offer general claims for larger populations. The idiographic emphasis is the basis of the rationale for how the interview transcripts should be analysed (Smith et al., 2009). This offers a more complete in-depth analysis of an individual case as it focuses on the particular details, ensuring the analysis is comprehensive and methodical. It moves from single cases to more general statements which remain easily retraceable to the specific claim of the individual involved.

Epistemological stance

IPA has an epistemological openness, allowing researchers to make cautious interpretations about the conversational, emotional and cognitive phenomena found in

participants' narratives (Smith, 1996). In this it could be argued to be distinct from other qualitative methods. Whilst its primary focus is on gaining an insider's perspective of individual lived experience, it is conscious of the constraints of context and language on accessing the reality of the participant. Moreover, it complements the philosophy of counselling psychology, which has been defined as:

“to know empathically and to respect first person accounts as valid in their own terms; to elucidate, interpret and negotiate between perceptions and world views but not to assume the automatic superiority of any one way of experiencing, feeling, valuing and knowing” (British Psychological Society, BPS, 2005, p.1-2).

Hence the analysis cannot produce an unquestionable first person account, as both the researcher and participant construct this account in the inter-subjective space. In order to address the subjective and inter-subjective elements of such processes, I have engaged explicitly in reflexivity (Finlay, 2002) (see the Introduction and Discussion for my exploration of personal and methodological reflexivity.)

My standpoint in relation to this study draws on a critical realist position (Parker, 1998 & 1999; Nightingale & Cromby, 1999; Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000). This recognises that there is an external world that exists independently from our experience while not assuming knowledge to be objective (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). However, my viewpoint also recognises that we can only access a circular relationship between reality and discourse: discourse both affects reality, and is affected by reality and people; we are inextricably caught up in our own reality, context and language. The implications for psychological research are that the interpretations we make are unavoidably a function of the relationship between the researcher and participant. “What is real is not dependent on us, but the exact meaning and nature of reality is” (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006, p. 107). This represents a position somewhere between critical realism and contextual constructivism (Jaeger & Rosnow, 1988; Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000).

Quality in qualitative research

Yardley (2000) has devised principles that facilitate the assessment of the quality and rigour of qualitative research. An application of these as they apply to this study is presented below.

Sensitivity to context

In the spirit of maintaining sensitivity to the theoretical context (Yardley, 2000), this investigation has reviewed previous relevant research (see the Introduction, specifically the literature review), and this has helped to identify research gaps. While I have approached the topic of my research with certain prior theoretical understandings, I attempt at every stage to remain open to the newly emerging data.

The socio-cultural setting of the study is another important component of experience that will be considered. Language, social interactions and culture all play a critical role in the manifestation of phenomena. The ways in which these influence the beliefs, objectives and expectations of both participant and researcher (Yardley, 2000) will be addressed in the Discussion in a section devoted to Methodological Reflexivity. This recognises the dynamics that existed between the participants and myself, the researcher.

Commitment and rigour

My engagement with this topic is both as a researcher and as an orthodox Jew observing the laws of family purity. The fact that I have previously conducted an IPA means that I have developed a level of competence in the methodology, reflecting my commitment to the research method. The rigour of the study can be seen in the completeness in of the data collection and analysis (Yardley, 2000). The interviews obtained detailed accounts from each individual (see Appendix 10 for one transcript) and the analysis of each case involved “prolonged contemplative and empathetic exploration” (Yardley, 2000, p.222) that sought to address the complexity of, and variation in, each account.

Transparency and coherence

All factors involved in the procedures employed in the study will be detailed in order to uphold standards of transparency and coherence. I engage as much as possible in a process of critical self-reflexivity in which I consider my personal “interests, predilections and assumptions and how these might impact on the research process and findings” (Finlay, 2008a, p.17). This has been facilitated by my keeping a reflexive diary. To enhance the integrity and trustworthiness of this investigation I also consider how inter-subjective elements have influenced the data collection and analysis. Engaging in a process of hermeneutic reflection (Finlay, 2003) will enable me to reflect constantly on my experience as a researcher alongside the phenomena being studied (Gadamer, 1975). Additionally, I have engaged in supervisor and peer discussions involving non-Jewish individuals who by that very token may be more objective than I am and therefore able to identify and highlight possible biases I may have overlooked.

My epistemological position, outlined above, will necessarily influence how I have interpreted the data. The research and analytic process will be clearly explicated. Data extracts will be presented in the analytic account in order to clearly illustrate the patterns and concepts found (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Peräkylä, 1997). Line numbers, page references and transcript pseudonyms will be provided for each extract so that it can be easily traced back to the transcript. This will allow the reader to assess the fit between the data and the interpretations made (Yardley, 2000). Supervisor and peer review will also be employed in order to ensure as far as possible that the themes are truly reflective of the participants’ accounts. Additionally, I will provide a paper trail in the appendix: this will include a copy of one fully annotated transcript, along with the table of themes for that particular participant and the table of master themes for all participants from the cross-case analysis to ensure the transparency and coherence of the analysis is explicit. The ‘fit’ between the research questions, the philosophical perspective adopted, the method and the analytical procedures used are all congruent with the foundations of IPA. This ‘fit’ has been outlined in my discussion of the philosophical underpinnings of IPA and my epistemological stance.

Procedures

Sampling and participants

Purposive sampling was used to select participants who shared the specific characteristics outlined in the inclusion criteria below (Patton, 1990). In order to recruit volunteers for this research, I posted an advert explaining the purpose of the study and its ethical guidelines on a national Jewish website (Appendix 1). Based on recommendations from Smith and Osborne (2008) concerning sample size for an IPA, six Orthodox Jewish women between the ages of 25 and 45 were selected on a first come, first selected basis (see Table 1 for participant details.) A further inclusion criterion was that the participants had been married for between 1.5 and 20 years. The age range and length of time married were selected in order to ensure that women were experienced at observing the laws of family purity and also were premenopausal. Reflexive considerations concerning the sample can be found in the Methodological Reflexivity section in the Discussion.

The exclusion criteria were women in therapy at the time or within the past two years; divorced or separated women; and women who did not adhere to the Jewish laws of family purity.

Name (pseudonym)	Marriage Duration (years)	Age
Rina	6	42
Karen	14	36
Laura	18	39
Katie	2	28
Stacy	1.5	25
Becky	10	36

Table 1 - Participants (names have been changed to maintain confidentiality)

Materials

Along with my advert, I provided my email address for potential volunteers who wished to ask questions or express interest in participating. I was able to respond to such emails with an information sheet (Appendix 2), explaining the purpose of the study and the ethical procedures in place, so as to ensure that potential participants could give fully informed consent. Once they had read the information sheet and volunteered, they were contacted via phone to organise interview times.

A semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 3) was adopted (Smith & Osborn, 2008). This comprised a set of open-ended questions devised prior to the interview. The schedule was used to guide the interview in a flexible manner, allowing the participant to shape it according to their experience of the phenomenon. The researcher provided minimal input, using gentle prompts to help keep the topic in sight and to encourage the giving of detailed accounts. Close attention was given to the wording of the questions, in order that the participants would feel comfortable to provide detailed accounts of their experiences. The interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed.

A pilot interview was conducted on one volunteer in order to ensure that the questions were clear and appropriate and encouraged participants to talk openly and in detail about their experiences. The material from this pilot was not included in the main data set.

Interview procedure

I met each participant in a private room of a local synagogue or in their own home, ensuring that participants felt at ease to talk freely with minimal distractions. A friend accompanied me to each interview and waited outside to ensure my safety.

At the outset, I went through the information sheet (Appendix 2) with each participant, giving them ample opportunity to ask questions. This was in order to ensure the purpose of the study was understood and that informed consent could be given. Interviewees were then asked to complete a consent form (Appendix 4), a

consent to record form (Appendix 5), and a demographics questionnaire (Appendix 6) enquiring about the participant's age and marital duration.

At the end of the interview participants were debriefed. At this point they were asked how it was to participate and given an opportunity to ask any further questions. They were also given a debrief sheet (Appendix 7) which contained the contact details of various counselling services in case the interview had raised any issues or feelings of distress.

Ethical considerations

This research project gained approval from the University Research Ethics Review Panel (Appendix 8). It also got approval from the website commissioners to recruit participants through their website.

Right to withdraw

Participants were informed of their right to withdraw. My supervisor's contact details, provided on the information sheet (Appendix 2), were pointed out to them in case they wanted to withdraw or had any complaints they could not share with me. Participants were also informed of their right to refuse to answer any questions.

Confidentiality

Matters of confidentiality were clearly outlined in the information sheet (Appendix 2), and also explained verbally to participants. This included informing them that all personally identifying information in both the written transcripts and the final draft would be anonymised by my using pseudonyms and changing or deleting any other identifying details. They were also assured that the consent forms, recordings and transcripts would be held separately from each other in locked filing cabinets so that no name could be traced to its recording. Additionally, they were informed that the material might be published.

Potential distress

As the topic under investigation is particularly personal and potentially sensitive for some participants, caution was used not to push any participants to discuss things that they seemed resistant to. This was done by my paying particular attention to non-verbal cues indicating emotional distress. In addition, at the end of the interview participants were debriefed in an attempt to ensure that they left the interview in a similar psychological state to that in which they arrived.

Analytic procedure

The analysis followed the IPA procedures devised by Smith (1996) and elaborated by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Initially the recorded interviews were listened to and transcribed by the researcher. An iterative process of reading and re-reading the transcript to get a sense of the account followed. These readings of the transcript gave rise to wide-ranging notes. All observations, themes, questions, summaries, interesting language and metaphors pertaining to the data were noted in the left-hand margin of the transcript. Subsequent to this, psychological concepts were used to make sense of the data. These notes were abstracted to produce emerging theme labels, noted in the right-hand margin of the transcript.

Following the formation of these preliminary emergent themes (see Appendix 11), connections between them were identified, allowing for a process of amalgamation where similar themes were placed together and a name was found to define the cluster, giving rise to superordinate themes. All themes were constantly checked against the raw data to ensure they were truly reflective of the participant's experience. The superordinate themes were then organised into a table together with their constituent themes and quotation references so that illustrations of each theme could be traced back to the text (see Appendix 12). At this stage, themes that did not illustrate the participants' experience for example, those which were only mentioned once were jettisoned.

This step-by-step procedure was repeated for each individual transcript. Next, a cross-case analysis was carried out across the transcripts by creating a lengthy table of all

the superordinate themes and the themes that they comprised. The themes that were most relevant and prevalent across the participants' accounts were then selected, based on their frequency in the data, and "the richness of the particular passages that highlight the themes" (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p.75). This gave rise to a summary table of the superordinate themes and their constituent themes, representing a mapping of the analysis across all participants.

Following this, a narrative account was written of the interplay between the researcher's interpretative insights and the participants' accounts of their experiences, as evidenced through data extracts (Smith & Eatough, 2006).

ANALYSIS

This section presents the results of an IPA of six participants’ accounts of adhering to the laws of family purity and how they experience this relative to their marital relationships.

Three superordinate themes emerged from the analysis:

- The Period of Separation
- The Mikvah Experiences
- Psychological Messages

Through what is known as the ‘double hermeneutic’, IPA recognizes the importance of two interpretations involved in the process of analysis: firstly, the participants’ **meaning making**, i.e. participants’ interpretation of their own experience, and secondly, the researchers’ **sense making**, i.e. researchers’ interpretation of the participant’s account (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The final double-layered hermeneutic analysis is therefore partial and ideally reflexive.

Given the limitations of space, the themes selected for analysis in this study are those that seemed particularly figural and powerful. The narrative interplay presented therefore reflects one possible conceptualization of the participants’ experiences: other researchers are likely to identify different themes. The superordinate themes and their related themes are presented in Table 1 below.

Superordinate Themes	Themes
The Period of Separation	Distancing: The Dead Sea Renewal: Simmering Passions Protection: A Healing Time Out
The Mikvah Experience	Personal Space: Purification and Rebirth Invasion of Privacy: Shame of Exposure Return from Mikvah: Adjustment

Psychological Messages	Fearful Emotions: Guilt and Superstition The Silent Promise: Containment Gender Bias: Oppression
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Table 1:Superordinate themes and their related themes

Each superordinate theme, together with its theme and subtheme, is explored below, illustrated by verbatim excerpts from the transcripts.

The period of separation

Overview

This theme encapsulates the spectrum of the women’s experiences of separation during the niddah period, in which no physical contact between husband and wife is permitted. The women voiced ambivalent and divergent attitudes in reference to this theme. The separation was experienced as somewhat challenging for most participants, impacting both the individual and the marital relationship. Psychological needs remained unmet, particularly as the physical distancing of wife from husband led to distancing within other areas of their relationship. However, the negative accounts were juxtaposed with positive ones: for example, women experienced the benefits of renewed sexual desire and excitement within their marital relationships. Furthermore a strong feeling of being protected by the separation period was reflected across all accounts.

Distancing: the Dead Sea

With the exception of one, the participants describe finding the experience of separation challenging. They express the feeling that their needs for physical comfort or intimacy are left unmet. This is well illustrated in Rina’s account:

We had a stillborn baby, and that was very hard, not to be able to get a hug from your spouse when you’re lowest point in your life really. You’ve just been through the worst experience or one...I’m not going to say worse, I’m sure there are worse but one of the worst experiences in your life and you

can't actually get a cuddle. Or get a hug, you know, my husband went to bury the baby, and I like, he came back and we couldn't even hug. Yeah. And that's very hard (1,2.25-35, Rina²).

Rina expresses how challenging it was, after giving birth to a stillborn baby, not to receive the physical comfort she needed from her spouse as a result of being in niddah. A deeper interpretation of Rina's suffering suggested in her reference to the "lowest point" conjures up an image of being at the lowest point on earth: the Dead Sea, on the Jordan-Israel border, a place where no life can exist, mirroring Rina's experience: expecting to give birth to life but rather giving birth to death.

Rina goes on to place her experience on a spectrum of worst experiences: "the worst experience or one...I'm not going to say worse, I'm sure there are worse but one of the worst". She seems to sense the possibility of something even worse happening and prepares herself. Moving from "the worst" to "one of the worst" seems to soften the intensity of her pain by generalising it and enabling her to remain mindful of others' worse predicaments.

Rina repeatedly mentions the words 'hug' and 'cuddle'. A likely interpretation for this repeated use is that it communicates her desperation for physical comfort. Earlier in the transcript she mentions that she comes from a tactile background, which is clearly conveyed in her plea for comfort. At a deeper level she might be alluding to her intolerable pain and her wish for physical comfort to take away the loss. Her repetition of the phrase "that was very hard," conveys just how difficult it was not to have the physical comfort available from her spouse.

Interestingly, Rina switches between "we" and "you" repeatedly in this extract. There are multiple possible readings of this. Firstly, using the second person ensures that the reader gains a sense of her experience and pain by being placed in her position.

² Key to excerpts from transcripts

... Pause over 3 seconds

[] Material omitted

[Her husband] Explanatory material added by researcher

(4. 67, Stacy) Page Number/s. Line Identifier/s, Pseudonym

Secondly, it might assist her in distancing herself from her account, enabling her to talk about such raw emotions. At one point she attempts to use “I” but switches quickly to focus on her husband: “and I like, **he** came back and we couldn’t even hug”. It could be argued here that the vulnerability she felt at that time seems to be reflected in her discomfort in using the first person.

This theme of distancing is also reflected in the other participants’ accounts of their unmet need for physical comfort, which resulted in distancing in other areas of their relationships. For example, Stacy’s experience of separation seems influenced by her experience of suffering from anorexia in her youth. Although she is now in remission, the resultant difficulties she has experienced in her marital relationship seem to be exacerbated by her prolonged, erratic menstrual cycles, which lead to longer and more frequent periods of separation:

Also because I was in niddah for such long periods, sometimes you get, you turn yourself off and we used to live like we weren’t emotionally connected at all, because like, because you can’t be physically connected, you start to like put barriers so that you don’t want each other so much and then you just sort of like not...and then when I used to go to the mikvah it was like, oh what do we do now? Like, um, not really sure (10,11. 328-336, Stacy).

Stacy describes her experience of separation as a time of distancing within her marital relationship and as one that could be interpreted as being challenging from this excerpt. She appears to emotionally distance herself from her spouse during the separation, finding it difficult to retain any sense of closeness. Her depiction “you turn yourself off” creates the image of a tap that she turns off and on. She seems to close the physical tap because “you can’t be physically connected”. Subsequently she also closes the emotional tap: “you start to put barriers up”. However this method of ensuring “you don’t want each other so much” leaves her feeling drained of desire for her husband. When they do return to intimacy the atmosphere seems to be awkward: “like, oh what do we do now?” Her comments convey a sense of her vulnerability and inexperience: “like, um, not really sure”.

Stacy speaks in the past tense: “we used to live”, giving the impression that this distancing within the relationship is no longer as extreme, or that she has adjusted to the process. Despite this, her account well conveys her experience of being alone during these times and of how challenging it was for her to live with someone with whom there was no physical or emotional connection.

Like Rina, Stacy utilises both the first person and the second person in the above extract. However, in this instance it seems that when discussing herself she uses the first person: “I was in niddah”, “I used to go to the mikvah”, but when discussing matters related to her relationship difficulties she uses the second person: “**you** get, **you** turn **yourself** off”, “**you** start to like put barriers”, “**you** don’t want each other”. This is striking and could be interpreted perhaps as Stacy using the second person to distance her from her account, reducing her feelings of guilt and shame that she no longer desires her husband.

Rina discusses a similar experience of distancing in her marital relationship during separation:

I think my way of dealing with it is putting a barrier up. You know, I find I am much more ratty with him and I’m more...kind of business-like with him. I’m much more buck buck buck (7.166-169, Rina).

Rina’s difficult experience of separation, elaborated above, appears to impact her behaviour towards her spouse. She uses the image of putting up a barrier to depict her feeling of being completely separated and distant from her husband. This description conjures up the image of something heavy and solid that she can’t shift. Her manner becomes “business-like” suggesting that her communication becomes abrupt and cold: “I’m much more buck buck buck”. All this could be interpreted as indicating that she adopts a different persona in this situation.

However, the following quotes indicate the ambivalence and ambiguity in the participants’ experiences. It seems that it is not all ‘Dead Sea’ in terms of distance and barriers; a new way of relating can emerge out of the separation.

Laura speaks of the struggle she underwent in the early years of her marriage:

The... sort of background of not having any physical contact kind of distanced us in other ways too. That's my experience, I don't know if that's...that's definitely not true now (10.265-268, Laura).

She then goes on to describe how things have changed:

Now it's the opposite I would say. Now I think that...um...because those times were brief, um, it really is an opportunity for us to get some chatting done, actually, which is nice (10.271-273, Laura).

Laura describes being aware that in the early years of her marriage the physical distance resulted in distancing in other areas of her relationship. But after 18 years of marriage her perspective appears to have shifted, and she now appreciates the opportunity to communicate with her husband.

In direct contrast to Rina and Stacy's accounts, Karen finds the distance created by separation beneficial:

The times that we're not able to be physical are wonderful times of our marriage. As I said at the beginning, our marriage started off that way. Which we always feel was a great basis for our relationship. Where we had to talk to each other. Find out a lot about each other. We played a lot of games. We understood what we...you know, our strengths and our weaknesses (146.431-438, Karen).

Karen sees the roots of their relationship being planted and nurtured during the beginning separation phase of her marriage (due to her prolonged menstrual cycle on the pill). She used the word "wonderful" in relation to not being physical; this gives a powerful sense of how precious this time is/was to her. Other relationship channels had to be utilised, as the physical channel was unavailable: "we had to talk" and "find out a lot about each other". Karen clearly describes this as an invaluable space that allowed them to grow as a couple: "we understood what we...you know, our strengths

and weaknesses.” She speaks for both of them, “we”, suggesting that this is something they have discussed together openly, enhancing the sense of marital closeness emanating from her account.

Seemingly, therefore, this period of separation is not all about distancing. But it also appears that developing other methods of relating is imperative. Those women who spent more time talking with their spouse during this time of separation seemed to maintain their experience of closeness and intimacy.

Renewal: simmering passions

Despite the difficulties of separation depicted above, all the women express a romantic view that the separation period creates a renewed desire for intimacy within their relationships. The separation appears to create a longing for the other which helps to fire a simmering excitement for the relationship. Enforced separation means that contact, when it occurs, seems to be valued all the more. As a result, the relationship is enhanced.

Katie describes a time in her relationship when she would prolong the time she could be intimate with her husband by taking packs of the pill back to back with no breaks, enabling her to postpone her menstrual cycle. However:

I stopped running packs [the pill] into each other because it wasn't exciting any more, and I think we kind of lost the excitement altogether, because there was no separation (2.55-58, Katie).

The quote illustrates clearly how these prolonged periods of intimacy left Katie feeling at a loss, in fact leading her to return to a monthly cycle of separation and intimacy.

Becky shares this sentiment:

I do think that if we didn't keep it then...the periods when [we] didn't actually sleep together would probably get longer and longer and I think...in that sense

in that it keeps bringing it back and you keep thinking about it and you know it keeps it alive in your relationship (10.294-299, Becky).

Like Katie, Becky expresses the view that the separation period restores sexual excitement to her relationship.

Stacy too seems to find some value in separation:

...I think it's useful, actually. Like I think it...it...it does make you more like sensitive to when you can be together. I mean I wouldn't say it makes everything perfect or anything like that. But I mean it does mean that for at least the first day or so after you can touch again is quite special (2.32-37, Stacy).

In the light of Stacy's earlier accounts, her ambivalence is clear as she refers to the separation as "useful". This contrasts with her comment (in a previous excerpt) on the negative impact separation has on her relationship. She seems to acknowledge this benefit rather begrudgingly, perhaps reflecting her discomfort and hesitancy with intimacy.

Karen illustrates her experience of renewal in her drawn-out description of the days of separation:

And then as you count the days [after menstruation], people are saying ach you should be able to go to [the mikvah]...why do I have to count these days? I know full well why. And everybody else I know, knows full well why. Because you count the days, day one, day two, day three, day four. Gosh it's only day four still and then suddenly at day four you're like hello, this is taking a long time. Day five gosh two more days is a long time. Day six and seven are so exciting at that point. And then you're there. You're ready (163,164.887-893, Karen).

Karen reveals the process she goes through during the end of the separation period in this evocative quote that conjures up a palpable sense of anticipation and tension. She

describes counting the clean days (following menstruation cessation) as conducive to fostering her desire. She seems to convey the frustrated part of herself through the voice of the other: “people are saying ach you should be able to go” but then reminds herself of the benefits: “I know full well why”.

She counts the days out, communicating the process by which her desire and longing slowly build. It seems that by day four she unexpectedly feels ready as she shifts from enjoying her personal space to wanting to be intimate with her husband. Finally, the reader is given the clear sense of her feeling both prepared and excited as she rounds the quote off: “and then you’re there. You’re ready”. It could be interpreted from this that she is not only physically ready for intimacy but also that she has had enough time and space to reconnect with her sexual identity.

Protection: a healing time-out

The theme of protection surfaces across all the women’s accounts. Protection for most seems connected to the period of healing in which the physical wounds of childbirth are given space to repair. Alongside such physical healing there also appears to be a process of psychological healing. Here the women’s accounts convey the experience of relief in having the psychological space to adjust to their new identities and be excused from sexual obligation:

I didn’t miss sex after I’d just given birth, but I missed all the other aspects of a sexual relationship, the, you know, the touching, the holding and so on. Sharing a bed. Um, I do think that, um however, having said all that there is something to be said for a women being left alone with her baby for a couple of months, and not feeling that she has to be on call not only for a nursing baby but also for a husband and that sounds terrible because it ins...it kind of indicates that you don’t enjoy the sexual relationship, which is not what I mean, but I definitely mean in the first couple, probably three months after you’ve had a baby, there’s definitely something to be said for time out for a woman (17.486-499, Laura).

Laura expresses conflicting voices in her experience of separation post-childbirth. She conveys a longing for the physical relationship: “the touching”, “the holding” and “sharing a bed”. These sentiments communicate a deep need for care and affection that is left unmet by her spouse, perhaps explaining her experience of distancing that she expressed earlier. However this physical lacking seems to be offset by her appreciation for the time she is “left alone with her baby”. This time alone relieves her from the pressure of being “on call not only for a nursing baby but also for a husband”, creating the impression that she can manage only one appetite at a time: that of “a nursing baby” rather than her husband’s sexual appetite.

Laura goes on to express her guilt: “and that sounds terrible because it ins... it kind of indicates that you don’t enjoy the sexual relationship”. However, she seems to feel sufficiently protected to allow herself this experience, and it could be interpreted that she speaks with confidence and assuredness when she says “I definitely mean in the first couple probably three months after you’ve had a baby, there’s definitely something to be said for time out for women.”

Laura speaks in the third person plural in this excerpt, talking of “women” in general rather than using the first person. This collective voice might relieve her from any unwanted sense of inadequacy at feeling unable to play both the sexual wife and the nurturing mother. This period of “time out” is also a time for physical recovery, a time when she is healing the wounds of childbirth while also regaining her identity and sexual self. Her positive experience of this separation provides her with the space and time to adjust to her new role, to her shift in identity from wife to mother.

Like Laura, Karen also communicates feeling protected after childbirth:

I know that the first two months after I had the baby, so we obviously weren’t together then. And I was so grateful because, you know, you felt horrible and disgusting and I had pushed for three hours with this little bubala, so I was extremely sore down there (137.207-210, Karen).

Karen uses evocative language: “you felt horrible and disgusting”, to convey the result of the birthing experience which she seems to have found difficult due to its

length and after effects. She adopts the second person “you”, possibly to help separate herself from being reminded of these unpleasant feelings.

Stacy has not had children so her experience of protection is somewhat different:

It is great from the fact that we can't have, he, don't need any, I don't get any attempts from him that I have to reject (22.713-715, Stacy).

During the separation period, Stacy feels protected and relieved from having to reject her husband's sexual advances. Her struggle with her sexual relationship with her husband seems to seep out in her account in the way she stumbles with her speech, as she moves from “we” to “he”, to “I”. Another interpretation of Stacy's tripping over her words in this way could be that, as she speaks, she recognises that in fact she is the one who feels relieved during separation. This contrasts with her account earlier where she speaks of the negative distancing effects of separation.

Katie uses a collective female voice to speak about the benefits of protection:

I suppose if you've got separation period then the woman's in a way protected from that [husband who wants sex all the time] (17.479-480, Katie).

Perhaps she uses the third person to distance herself from her account, conveying her relief that she is protected from this felt sexual pressure.

Summary

The theme of separation illustrates the ambivalent and ambiguous messages expressed by the participants in this study regarding the separation period of niddah. The common experience of distancing and loss of connection within their marital relationships contrasts strongly with the renewed passion and sexual excitement that many also describe. The participants also seem to find the separation space protective, offering an opportunity for both physical and psychological healing.

The mikvah experiences

Overview

Following separation, the women immerse themselves in a mikvah before they resume physical contact with their spouse. The participants' accounts of their experience of this were deeply convoluted: feelings of purification and rebirth contrasted with traumatic experiences of shame due to exposure of the self at the mikvah. The return home from the mikvah was also described as beset with difficulties as the women adjusted from separation to intimacy.

Personal space: purification and rebirth

The women speak appreciatively of personal space at the mikvah, making clear that they benefit from the opportunity for purification and renewal:

Because I've got a baby and now it's...I'm just much more busy. When do I ever have time to have a bath? Never. So...um...that's really nice. And yeah. So I suppose it's just spiritually uplifting thing as well. You feel...I feel very kind of...this whole idea of kind of being newbor...like it's like a birth. And you're coming out of the water. When I'm plunging into the water, I really do feel that, it really feels very nice, because I kind of jump up...I go in under the water, but I also kind of...let my feet rise up so it's just me and I'm surrounded by water. It really does feel a bit like a womb, so it's nice (11.316-325, Katie).

Katie paints a beautiful and evocative picture of her mikvah experience. Her appreciation of the personal time gained indicates how busy her life has become since having a baby: evidently having a bath has become a rarity. Katie pauses eight times in this extract, perhaps reflecting her experience of slowing down and taking some time out at the mikvah.

Katie's experience of the immersion being "spiritually uplifting" suggests that she feels elevated and closer to God. When she describes being "newbor...it's like a birth", she invokes a vision of her rebirth: she becomes purified and renews both her

religious commitments and her relationship. Katie vividly describes her experience of “plunging into the water”, conjuring up an image of her immersion. A deeper interpretation could be suggested: she enters the water in an impure state and perhaps feels that she casts away her impurities, as if this water immersion offers a cleansing rebirth. She goes on to describe: “...[I] let my feet rise up so it's just me and I'm surrounded by water”. This image depicts Katie curling up into a foetal position so that she becomes encircled by water that provides her with a protective shell. Her experience in this excerpt is clearly intertwined with that of birth: “It really does feel a bit like a womb”. Perhaps her feeling of returning to the safety of the womb helps her feel protected, compensating for those moments when, as a mother, she feels the responsibility of being a protector.

Katie's experience of immersion stands out as profound. In contrast, Becky and Stacy seemed regretful that they have not had a more spiritual experience:

I think it's a shame. I wish there was a way of making the actual mikvah part of it more...lovely and spiritual...I'm too embarrassed to kind of stand around meditating (17.519-523, Becky).

Becky's short description perhaps reflects her experience of lacking time to meditate in the mikvah; this contrasts sharply with Katie's longer explanation of her spiritual experience of purification and renewal.

Stacy appears baffled as to why women who in other respects are not devout adhere to the laws of family purity:

I don't know, like I said, I'm not really very into it, I don't really enjoy it, um, I don't feel, I wish, like I think some people must feel some great sense of like, awe-inspiring cleanliness or something when they come out of the mikvah, some people like wow, it's an amazing experience, and I wish maybe I could feel that and I wish I could maybe perhaps know why these people who keep nothing else except this, why, why this? (18.572-579, Stacy).

Stacy's confusion and lack of feeling and understanding can be interpreted both from what she says here and from the way she stumbles through this part of her account. She seems deeply frustrated, even stunted perhaps, by her lack of feeling for the mikvah, as if longing for a piece of someone else's experience of renewal to hold on to.

For other participants, their personal time in the bathroom was paramount in their mikvah experience. They focused little on the mikvah immersion itself. Karen, for example, explains how preparing for the mikvah helps her to shift her mind-set:

Your actions help pretty much to shift your state of mind, without a doubt. You know and we all know that. You get dressed up and you feel like disgusting during the day and then you go to a wedding at night and you can get dressed up, you suddenly feel like a queen now. And you're ready to be regal and engaging and enchanting (164.904-910, Karen).

The contrast between Karen's description of feeling "disgusting during the day" and what she feels when she dresses up at night for "a wedding" and a complete new identity ("you suddenly feel like a queen") is immense. Her evocative phrase "ready to be regal and engaging and enchanting" conveys how transformative she finds the experience of using the mikvah space for purification. She shifts her identity from that of the daytime busy, "disgusting" mum who has no time to take pride in her appearance, to that of a sexual, confident, powerful woman, ready to engage and enchant her husband at night.

Laura and Becky also describe valuing the reflective, personal space provided by the mikvah. Laura conveys her relief at being forced to take time for herself:

It's good to have those times of reflection actually. Life is extraordinarily busy; it is in the middle of the day. But you know, the phones are ringing, I have a sick mother-in-law, everybody needs cooking, the babies, this that and the other. It's a very frenetic lifestyle. So I mean a religious orthodox life can be. So um...so...I...I like that...I that I'm demanded. It's demanded of me to

make time for myself to do those things, to think about my personal relationship with God. I like that (7.197-206, Laura).

Laura creates a vivid picture of her “frenetic lifestyle” in her manner of speech listing the various responsibilities she has and her choice of vocabulary (“this, that and the other”). Her use of the word “demanded” is also interesting in this context, perhaps conveying that the only way she can take time out for herself is if she is “demanded”: in other words, she has no choice.

These sentiments are echoed by Becky:

The evening when you go, it’s kind of your evening out and you know...and often I think in the bathroom that’s quite a reflective space and if it’s a nice space and you’re kind of lying in a lovely warm deep bath and no one is going to knock on the door and the phone is not going to ring, and that’s...that’s a really lovely reflective place to be (6,7.185-192, Becky).

Despite Becky longing for a more spiritual experience, she appears to value the personal reflective space. She seems to expect spirituality and purification to be something more than just reflection, which is interesting when compared with other accounts. For example, Katie seems to find the experience as a whole spiritual, due to the physical act of immersion in the water, and Karen also finds the actions of the mikvah experience significant. Contrastingly, Becky seems to struggle to use the physical aspect of immersion to achieve a sense of spirituality. In this later quote there is almost a sense of her making the best of it. She describes it as at least being “a really lovely reflective place to be”, almost as if trying to temper her disappointment in it not being as spiritual as she would like.

Invasion of privacy: shame of exposure

In contrast to the experience of personal space, participants also shared their experiences of feeling that in the mikvah their privacy had been invaded, leaving them feeling exposed.

Becky's experience of the mikvah preparation process, depicted above, contrasts sharply with her experience of entering into the mikvah water:

So you're walking down [into the mikvah water] completely exposed and she [the mikvah attendant] might be looking at you or she might not. I mean it's kind of not relevant but she's looking at my nakedness, but on the other hand I feel exposed. I just feel exposed. Whereas some ladies kind of hold up the towel as you walk in until you're under the water. They kind of hold it up like that, so that you're not, you know...they couldn't see you even if they looked at you. And that's a lot nicer, because you can kind of...get into the mikvah without being watched and kind of get yourself settled without being watched (14,15. 447-459, Becky).

Becky paints a picture of herself as vulnerable: "walking down completely exposed". This leaves the reader with a sense of how naked she feels under scrutiny. Her repetition of the word "exposed" suggests that she feels her privacy has been invaded. She refers to herself in the second person at points in the extract, perhaps in an attempt to protect her privacy and cover her nakedness by distancing herself from her account. Becky's experience of feeling "looked at" and "watched" could be read as further indicating a sense of being scrutinized and even judged. Perhaps her emphasis on her *physical* nakedness here could be interpreted as connected with a sense of *spiritual* exposure whereby she feels she is being judged for her religious observance, or lack thereof.

Yet another reading of Becky's account suggests that her sense of being physically exposed could be intertwined with feeling psychologically exposed. Contradictory messages surface: "she might be looking at you or she might not. I mean it's kind of not relevant but she's looking at my nakedness, but on the other hand I feel exposed". Whilst she endeavours to soothe away her fears she clearly feels both exposed and unsafe.

Stacy, too, conveys the discomfort she experiences at the mikvah:

Like, I don't really like being naked in front of people. Like, I find it really hard to be naked in front of people. And I hate like looking in the mirror and stuff like this. So, like, at the mikvah with all this, like mirrors all over the place, and people looking at you naked, like, I find it really, like, difficult (6.178-183, Stacy).

Stacy's experience of being naked "in front of people" and "looking in the mirror" forces her to confront her feelings of shame at her displeasing body image. Moreover she seems to have magnified the experience, speaking of "mirrors all over the place" and of not one attendant but "people looking at you naked". This could be interpreted as conveying how exposed she feels, along with her halting manner of speech here, peppered with the repetitive use of the word "like".

Perhaps it is Becky and Stacy's experience of exposure that distracts them from engaging in a more spiritual mikvah experience, as their thoughts are focussed on their physical discomfort.

Karen is also very sensitive to being exposed and to the need to maintain her privacy. Interestingly, in her account she speaks of her fear of invading **others'** space:

At one point I was going to a mikvah where you would meet people in the waiting area and um...I very much decided that I did not want to go there, even though it was a very nice mikvah, I didn't want to go there. I'd rather go to a slightly less nice mikvah and make sure that that was not happening. You know, because I didn't wanna...I didn't wanna engage that way in other people's lives. I felt...a...you know, I don't want you to know about me but even more than that, I don't want to know it about you. I don't want people...I want to feel like this is something that everybody can keep intimate to themselves, intimately. Um and I want to be able to preserve other people's ability to be intimate and not be somebody who's breaching that for anybody else (178,179.1294-1308, Karen).

Karen's account here seems to be filled with guilt-ridden messages concerning the privacy of intimacy and shame about knowing where others are at in their marital

sexual cycles. Seeing other women at the mikvah, whose presence signifies that they are about to return home and are once again permitted to have sex, evokes in her feelings of “breaching” their privacy. This sentiment comes across strongly, illustrating the importance she attaches to preserving the privacy of the marital relationship. Throughout this part of her narrative Karen utilises the first person “I” which could infer her clear ownership of this feeling.

In direct contrast, Laura appreciates being part of the mikvah club:

I think there is definitely an understanding between women at the mikvah, quite nice. It's like a...quite like that...bonding. It's not a...it's very passive bonding. It's not like an active thing (21.624-627, Laura).

Laura's experience of meeting people in the mikvah appears to be more positive and comforting. The private, unspoken membership “passive bonding” seems to give her a sense of belonging in the community rather than one of invaded privacy. This demonstrates a clear divergence in the experience of these two women in relation to this particular theme.

Return from the mikvah: adjustment

The participants all describe the return home from the mikvah and the subsequent shift from separation to intimacy in their marital relationships as a period of adjustment.

Stacy tells of a distinctly traumatic experience:

I always thought it's such, it was such a bad start to what was meant to be like the beginning of your relationship to, like, together, and like to go to the mikvah and me to be all flustered and feeling really rubbish and having looked at me in the mirror for the last like three hours and then come home and have to be naked in front of someone or whatever and then just found I was coming home from the mikvah and saying like just leave me alone, you what I mean, like just don't touch me and, um, like I always keep my clothes on, and like, it

was really hard to like get anywhere cos I'm just not in the mood, like, it's just and I was always like oh why do they make such a mood killer before you're meant to be in the mood? Like, so it's quite hard (9.264-278, Stacy).

Throughout this excerpt there is an underlying tone of pain and suffering, clearly conveyed through Stacy's manner of speech and what she says. Stacy's experience of anorexia and her resultant difficulties with her body image and relational intimacy permeate her account. Her mikvah experience and subsequent homecoming seem to make her feel like a failure, confirming her low self-esteem. Her vulnerability finds reflection in her defensiveness: "why do they make such a mood killer before you're meant to be in the mood? Like, so it's quite hard". This conjures up the image of pest controllers: just as they lay poison to kill off pests, the mikvah kills off any opportunity for Stacy to feel sexual.

Stacy describes her experience of returning home to her spouse "to what was meant to be like the beginning of your relationship". Her premarital expectation of the return from the mikvah being filled with excitement and offering an opportunity for a new beginning, is left unmet. Instead, she is consumed by "having looked at me in the mirror for the last like three hours". This reflects her overwhelming experience of an invasive process of bodily scrutiny rather than mikvah preparation as it is meant to be.

Stacy refers to returning home only to "have to be naked in front of someone". There's a sense of her feeling forced into this, and that it feels wrong to her. This description of "someone" portrays her husband as a stranger and could be interpreted as reflecting her difficulty in adjusting from separation to intimacy. She previously spoke about the subsequent distancing she endures following separation in her relationship. Her fears become transparent as she comes home: "saying like just leave me alone", "like just don't touch me". She attempts to withdraw to protect herself from feeling more exposed: "like I always keep my clothes on..." In this way she protects herself from more body shame and the reader is left to wonder about the impact of this on her relationship.

In direct contrast with Stacy, Katie and Laura both experience a more positive adjustment from separation to intimacy:

We're more thoughtful and mindful, kinder towards each other and I suppose look forward to, erm, having a physical relationship as well (12.356-358, Katie).

The brevity of Katie's account of her experience contrasts with Stacy's detailed and lengthy account, underlining their very different experiences.

Laura shares her experience of the past thus:

It was generally very positive. It was fun, we made time, you know, we had sex again which was, especially when you're a young couple as, exciting when there are no kids around to knock on your door (8.221-224, Laura).

Laura refers to the sexual excitement and desire she and her husband shared as "a young couple". The inference is that their sexual relationship was perhaps more exciting and alive when they were a young couple without children who "knock on your door". This suggests that at this stage of their life together their priorities, and their opportunities for sex, are different.

Yet another element in this experience is articulated by Rina and Becky. Both seem to have found the adjustment more testing and express resistance to the obligation or expectation of being intimate with their spouse upon returning from the mikvah:

I used to find it...certainly at the beginning very strange to be separated from your husband and suddenly meant you come home and your husband's waiting for you with open arms and...and it all feels very put on. Like okay suddenly I'm going to kiss you. Maybe I don't want to kiss you now. I don't have to kiss you just because I've got back from mikvah (8,9.213-219, Rina).

Rina appears to find the shift "sudden", perhaps too quick for her to feel comfortable with. She speaks in the past tense: "I used to find it", inferring that this experience possibly is now different. There is a sense that it feels too orchestrated and she rejects

the felt obligation. This is reflected in the ambiguity at the end of her quote: “maybe I don’t want to kiss you now”.

Becky expresses a similar sense of resistance:

Well he gets very excited. And um he...he always comes and welcomes me and makes a big effort to welcome me. Um I wouldn’t say that we on the whole sleep together that evening, but...you know, usually that week we’ll kind of make time for each other and... but it can take a while to relax after that stress mind-set and that stress relationship. So you know that’s another reason why you know, just because you’ve been to the mikvah it doesn’t mean to say that I’m ready to jump...you know...you have the kind of you know get comfortable with your relationship again (11.326-338, Becky).

Becky conveys her experience of needing time to shift the “stress mind-set and that stress relationship”, perhaps indicating the challenge of moving so quickly from separation to intimacy. Like Rina, she rejects the felt sexual obligation and allows herself the time to “get comfortable with” her relationship again, perhaps further indicating the distancing effects of the separation. Both Becky and Rina allude to their husbands expectation: “your husband’s waiting for you (Rina)”, “he gets very excited (Becky)”. This is indicative of their felt obligation of intimacy, yet both explicate their hesitation and rejection of this felt pressure, perhaps conveying a sense of their vulnerability.

Summary

The mikvah theme illustrates clearly the complexity of the women’s mikvah experiences. The women appear to exist simultaneously at both extremes of the spectrum. They express the benefits of the personal mikvah space, the purification process and a sense of renewal, even rebirth. But they also share their experience of having their privacy invaded at the mikvah, of feeling exposed and ashamed at this intrusion into their personal space. Their return home and adjustment to intimacy with their spouse seems to be strongly influenced by their mikvah experience; for some, this adjustment is smooth, while others find it more challenging.

Psychological messages

Overview

This theme encapsulates some of the many psychological messages the women communicated throughout their narratives: fear, guilt and superstition emanated from the accounts. The women expressed their fear of punishment versus their sense of feeling protected, which appeared contingent on their observance of the laws. There also seemed to be an undercurrent of frustration, as the women grappled with the extent to which the laws were experienced as prejudice. However, as with the previous themes, there were contrasting voices of negativity and positivity.

Fear, guilt and superstition

The women all expressed fears about not keeping the laws. Following the loss of her baby, Rina increased her observance of the laws of family purity. Here she explores her reasons for this:

I guess to some extent I guess superstition. I guess I don't know. We'd just lost the baby, we'd just...I thought, gosh, I thought what kind of punishment did I deserve for this? You know, like maybe, I don't know. I really don't know whether that became very scared of not keeping to it. Um...I guess I don't know (14.372-378, Rina).

Rina expresses her vague but clearly deep-seated fear that she was punished due to her lack of adherence. Her account conveys her difficult experience of loss and her attempt to understand her experience. Her use of the word "superstition" reflects her awareness of the fear underlying her adherence. However it seems that once she accredits her observance to superstition, she goes back to "I guess I don't know". It could be interpreted here that confusion might feel safer than being motivated by superstition; such irrational fears might feel limitless and therefore evoke more anxiety than confusion alone.

She then communicates her guilt and remorse: “I thought gosh, I thought what kind of punishment did I deserve for this”? She seems to grapple with unnamed reasons and finally sounds defeated as she says: “I don’t know. I really don’t know whether **that** became very scared of not keeping to it”. This suggests her inability to understand or conceptualise the reasons for her loss outside the frame of reference of adherence. Rina uses **that** instead of **I** perhaps to distance herself from the experience, possibly reflecting her difficulty in directly linking her guilt at her loss with her fear.

There is also a paradox here. Throughout the interview Rina talks of the difficulties she experiences in relation to adherence and yet she is now more observant than ever (hyper-adherence). Perhaps her increased commitment could be interpreted as helping her manage her feelings of guilt, her sense that her past actions may have resulted in the loss of her baby. She may now feel that she is protecting her family unit by adhering to the laws. This defensive function appears to appease her superstitious fears and therefore reinforces her need to strictly adhere to the laws in order to ensure she does not experience the anxiety of her fears and the pain of her guilt. It could also be suggested that these unconscious processes might leave her somewhat perplexed about the reasons for her adherence, as is clear from the quote above.

In contrast Karen sees her observance of the laws as preventative of difficulties rather than as a response to problems that have already occurred:

I just absolutely convinced myself that, that was going to be it. I was going to have major fertility problems and...and...that’s also why I was extremely careful, trying to...I was very, very, grateful for this woman's fifteen sessions, and I was going to be really, really careful about keeping these laws very carefully, because I knew that was a *segula* [Hebrew word meaning remedy or healing power] to have children (134.128-136, Karen).

Karen vividly portrays her fearful experience in this extract. Her dread of infertility is apparent, and it might be suggested that this underlines the value she attaches to childbirth. She seems to have clung to the laws to help ease her fears with her strict adherence. The emphatic: “really, really careful” seems to embody her need to gain control over her fear. Her use of the word *segula* in relation to bearing children

conveys her hope that her strict adherence will help protect her from infertility. Through the process of the 15 sessions of premarital learning, she seems to have gained a sense of relief and protection from her fears.

In reality Karen never suffered from infertility and went on to have six children. It can be interpreted from her account that she feels that her adherence to the laws saved her from infertility. This appreciation and positive experience of the laws can be seen clearly throughout her interview and perhaps clarifies why she went on to teach the laws to women who were not religious. That may have been her way of trying to help others through inspiring them to gain the benefits she experienced.

Becky subtly alludes to her fear of not adhering:

For me it was really important that we kept it, especially before we had children. So that...and that the children were like conceived in...in a spiritual environment in that sense (13.408-411, Becky).

Becky highlights the importance of the “spiritual environment” for the moment of conception. However she does not elaborate on what this means to her. It could be indicative of an unspoken expectation that adhering to the laws acts as a protective tool. As she imagines God’s blessing being bestowed on the conception in an atmosphere of purity and holiness, this perhaps eases her fears concerning the risks of pregnancy and childbirth.

As Stacy does not have children her experience of fear comes from a different angle:

I don’t know if I’m being judgmental or if I’m just really interested, but I just, I just wanna know what their logic is like, don’t they go to bed really scared but that God who they believe in is gonna like, you know punish them for not covering their hair, or He’s gonna punish them for not doing x, y or z? (26.811-816, Stacy).

Stacy provides us with insight into her religious commitment and devotion, which seem underpinned by fear of punishment. Tackling others’ relaxed approach to

religious adherence she cannot comprehend their belief in God and yet lack of observance. Her description “don’t they go to bed really scared” conjures up the image of a small child fearful of going to bed at night. In this vein, perhaps Stacy, like a child, goes to bed frightened of the punishments she may incur if she fails to be totally observant.

The silent promise: containment

Despite the many challenges involved in adhering to the laws of family purity and the undertone of fear expressed above, the women all express feeling contained and protected by the framework of family purity. Perhaps they feel contained from their fears through their adherence.

Laura expresses her appreciation of the value and space given to the sexual relationship:

I'm grateful for that, that it's given the space it is, that it...it...it's given room, that it's exciting and that change which is what initiated this. Um...it is exciting because sex is an important part of marriage. So there's time for that, but there's not...it's not all the time. So again, other parts of the relationship can develop (9.237-242, Laura).

Laura's description here could be interpreted as illustrating the significance of timing within her sexual relationship. She seems to appreciate that “it's given room” but also that “it's not all the time”. There is a strong sense that she feels contained by this structure, which seems simultaneously to retain the excitement of intimacy whilst providing her with space in which “other parts of the relationship can develop”. This sense of containment through observance is further reflected in her view of Jewish law:

When I look at Jewish law I see a framework for a hopefully healthy, sensitive disciplined but not fanatic in an...you know...lifestyle (24.693-694, Laura).

Whilst Laura sees the framework as positive, she hints that she finds striking a balance a challenge. It is interesting that she stops herself from finishing her sentence towards the end of the quote and then changes tack. It might be construed that by so doing she avoids delving further into the difficult topic of religious fanaticism. She quickly retreats to safer ground, leaving the reader to wonder what she might have articulated and whether this slip is related to her struggle to maintain a balance in her degree of observance.

Katie also seems to view the laws' imposition of boundaries and limitations as beneficial:

I suppose it does teach you to kind of have...be a bit more moderate in terms of what you want at all times. And to be able to stop yourself from having, it does learn you, teach you to kind of have limitations. To accept limitations or boundaries or whatever (17.492-495, Katie).

Katie suggests that her desire is shaped by having to accept the limitations, to "be a bit more moderate in terms of what you want". There's a sense that this can be annoying: "I suppose it does teach you", as if to say there is benefit, although it might be frustrating in the moment of desire. She seems to imply that this ability "to stop yourself from having" and "to accept limitations or boundaries or whatever" is useful. Perhaps it could be inferred here that she is suggesting adherence to these laws within the relationship may make it easier to resist temptations outside the marital relationship.

Karen provides a very rich, detailed description of her appreciation of the laws of family purity:

It gives you a framework for newness, you know, and nobody is wise enough to build themselves a framework for newness because that's not how we think about life. And I don't know if anybody is really educated in that way. You should be looking for healthy newness (141.327-332, Karen).

Here it could be interpreted that Karen places the laws of family purity on a pedestal. Her phrase “nobody is wise enough to build themselves a framework” suggests that the laws exist beyond the wisdom of man. Her description of building conjures up the image of God creating a blueprint for marital life. This building process requires deep insight, understanding and knowledge which, it could be suggested, she views as transcending human ability. Thus Karen’s experience of feeling contained by the laws comes from the way she conceptualises them as a protective Godly framework. There is a strong undertone in her account that adhering to the laws will protect her marital relationship from adversity. As is made clear throughout her account, her adherence imbues her relationship with renewed excitement.

Karen’s emphasis on a “framework for newness”, repeated twice in this passage and a recurrent theme in her account, could be argued as conveying her fear of boredom with the sexual aspect of her relationship. One interpretation might be that the laws may ease her anxiety or hush any fears about how to maintain this “newness” within her marriage and keep her partner sexually interested. This framework therefore appears to create a sense of safety and containment for Karen, an environment in which her needs can be met in a healthy way. This may provide insight into her unrelenting devotion to the laws.

Gender bias: oppression

The participants revealed varying experiences of finding the laws oppressive due to the focus of the laws on women and their changing status of purity.

Laura begins by declaring herself to be ‘comfortable’ with the situation:

I'm comfortable with it. I'm comfortable with it, but I would understand how someone thinks oh, women and bleeding and all that kind of stuff. I don't feel that way, because I do see it within a whole system of a male seminal emission. I do see it within a whole system of a male seminal emission. Where men...well I think [inaudible 0:49:29] do go to mikvah, Um...but it's not the general traditional thing to do. Okay but it is definitely within a framework,

that *tahara* [ritually clean] stuff which um...which is part of the system. Um again, I do understand that it can look...it does look (25.724-732, Laura).

While stating she is “comfortable” with the laws’ focus on women, Laura’s repetition could be argued as indicating that she may be experiencing some *discomfort* in fact. She appears to grapple with others’ attitudes to women moving between states of ritual purity/impurity: “I would understand how someone thinks...” She also seems to liken menstruation to men ejaculating in terms of impurity. Her repetition of the male seminal emission phrase almost gives a sense of her trying to convince herself here, as well as the listener. She then relates that men also do or can go to the mikvah, again giving the impression of trying to equalise the sense of a need to purify across both genders.

In the latter part of the quote she states that the “tahara stuff” is “definitely within the framework” and therefore “part of the system”. This seems to convey how she reconciles in her own mind a woman’s need to observe niddah and engage in ritual purification. This is despite her apparent general discomfort with the laws’ exclusive focus on women, expressed in the earlier part of the quote and again in the final sentence of the excerpt. That this is a difficult subject for her to discuss and to reconcile in her mind is evident in the stumbling and halting nature of her speech.

Becky, however, adopts a quite different perspective:

The idea that women, because they menstruate, are in some way impure or unclean or...I don’t know. If you think about that in some ways I find it quite offensive. But on the other hand if you look at it from a woman’s point of view, as something special about women, and don’t see it about kind of men don’t want to touch a woman who’s menstruating, but it’s about the woman’s spiritual...I don’t know, er...what’s the word? Cycle. Then I think that’s really lovely (7,8.213-222, Becky).

Becky seems much more certain and clear on this issue than Laura, demonstrated in her more definite manner of speech and her clearly and unequivocally expressed views. She seems to have reconciled this issue in her mind by developing a more

spiritual explanation for the need for women's separation during menstruation. This provides her with a convincing, "really lovely" counterpoint to the idea that such separation is oppressive.

There seems to be a spectrum of experiences here, and the women seem in the main quite confused and ambivalent about this issue.

Stacy seems to describe feeling a certain level of oppression:

I mean, um, it's not, for him it's not a big deal at all and he doesn't have to do anything, so he's not the one who has to take a whole evening out from whatever to you know, I go to university in the evenings and like, I've had to skip lectures to go to the mikvah, it's a bit annoying like, or like you know, you have to start with the whole, and like you know, in our old flat we didn't have enough hot water to make a bath and then a shower, so I had to take my bath like an hour before the shower so that the hot tank, water tank, so it's just like even more time wasted, so it's just a bit like Hello? Do you get the fact that I'm wasting my whole evening here? Just, you know, it's a bit annoying (7,8.219-231, Stacy).

Stacy's resentment seeps into her account. However its direction is blurred. Is she resentful of her husband in general, or of the fact that he does not have to attend the mikvah? Or is it the fact that she has to observe the laws in the first place? She appears to project her frustration on to her spouse and seemingly feels unheard by her husband or that her efforts are not recognised: "it's just a bit like Hello? Do you get the fact that I'm wasting my whole evening here?" She appears frustrated by the time it takes to prepare for the mikvah. On a deeper level it could be argued that she seems to be fighting against the gender bias, the idea that she has this responsibility and obligation to purify herself while her husband "doesn't have to do anything". By explaining how she has to miss university classes and grapple with the water heating system at home, she depicts her frustration in concrete terms.

She repeatedly uses the words "it's a bit annoying", and this phrase seems quite mild compared with the lengthy detail she goes into regarding the facts of the matter. It

could be interpreted that she is in fact more than a bit annoyed but feels a need to restrain how she expresses this. The same might be said for her repeated emphasis on “taking a whole evening out” and “wasting a whole evening”. She repeats the word “wasted” twice in the quote as well, which might suggest that she feels more strongly about this than the quote initially reveals. Indeed, it could be interpreted that at some level she sees the ritual purification as a “waste of time”.

Summary

The psychological messages conveyed in the women’s accounts add depth to our understanding of the women’s experiences. Despite their fears and frustrations, their appreciation of the containment offered by the laws helps us understand their unrelenting commitment. It appears that the women may overcompensate for their fear of punishment or their lack of previous adherence by hyper-adherence to the laws. Interestingly, three out of the six participants mentioned that they taught the laws to other women, perhaps reflecting their felt duty to ‘pay it forward’ by sharing with others what has helped them. There is a strong sense of an unspoken promise and a view that adherence to the laws offers a supportive marital framework and protection from familial adversity whilst maintaining interest and excitement within the marriage. Seemingly they feel contained from their fears through their adherence. The women appear to exist on a spectrum concerning gender-related oppression, ranging from those who are reconciled at one end to those who are resentful at the other end.

Summary of the analysis

For most of the participants, the period of separation resulted in distancing in their marital relationships as their intimacy needs were left unmet and subsequently they adopted distinct personas. This experience seemed to be contingent on the couples’ ability to utilise verbal communication to retain a sense of intimacy and closeness within their marital relationships. The distancing was juxtaposed by accounts of renewal in which the participants expressed their sense that separation allowed for a renewal of passion and excitement within their marital relationships. They also expressed the protection they derived from the physical and psychological healing

space which separation offered. As regards the mikvah, contrasting voices of joy and pain were expressed. Whilst most participants appreciated the personal mikvah space and found it offered them an opportunity for purification and rebirth, this was offset by the challenges some experienced as they felt their privacy was invaded and they felt exposed. This in turn seemed to impact the women's experiences of returning home to their husbands. For some, the shift from separation to intimacy was exciting, whilst for others this adjustment was somewhat challenging. The women's adherence seemed underpinned by fear of punishment and adversity. However they found solace and containment from their fears through their strict adherence to the laws. The women grappled with the notion of oppression, existing on a spectrum from resentful to reconciled. Within each theme the women's accounts diverge and contrast, highlighting the costs and benefits for them personally and for their marital relationships. A common thread in all their accounts, however, is their unrelenting commitment to the laws.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate, from a phenomenological perspective, participants' experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity and possible impacts on the marital relationship. Through utilising the double hermeneutic processes within IPA (Smith, 1996), this study has revealed the complexity and depth of such experiences for this sample, suggesting a sophisticated weave of contrasting voices as the women reflect on the costs and benefits of their adherence.

Three main themes emerged from the analysis. In this section, each will be evaluated in the light of previous research, highlighting the novel elements and insights thrown up by the current study, as well as the overlap with previous studies. It will also attempt to identify the potential influence of the participants' experiences on their marital relationships and the clinical implications of the research findings, both for counselling psychologists and for the multicultural counselling psychology literature. Following this, the study's limitations will be presented, and the section will end with an exploration of methodological and personal reflexivity.

Separation and the marital relationship

Distancing

The women in the current study presented the period of separation as paramount in their experience of adhering to the laws of family purity. They highlighted the challenges they encountered, as for most their needs for intimacy and comfort were left unmet resulting in distancing in their marital relationship. This aspect of their experience can also be seen in the small amount of literature that examines observance of the laws of niddah.

For example, in their analysis of 380 women's questionnaires, Labinsky et al. (2009) touched upon the theme of distancing emphasised in the present study. In response to questions about mikvah attitudes, the women in Labinsky et al.'s study expressed sentiments about their husbands withdrawing from them during the niddah time, leaving them feeling rejected. Interestingly the theme of such rejection did not emerge

during the course of the present study. However if one examines the accounts, the women could be viewed as the ones rejecting their spouses, through the distancing behaviours they manifest. This can be seen explicitly in Rina and Stacy's accounts as they describe adopting cold, abrupt modes of communication with their husbands during periods of separation. This suggests that perhaps during the separation period individuals in this group adopt distinct negative communication patterns with their spouse, which could lead to partner dissatisfaction and further distancing.

Comparing the present study's findings with those of Labinsky et al.'s (2009) investigation is problematic due to the weaknesses within their research highlighted earlier (see the Introduction). Whilst they suggest that the women in their study experienced emotional difficulties resulting from their observance, there is no detail about the percentage of their participants who felt so, nor do they offer any interpretation of these problems. Their study explores neither the significance of this theme in the women's experience of separation nor the subsequent difficulties it appears to pose for their marital relationship.

However, Labinsky et al. (2009) received 380 responses to their questionnaires, and these provide useful insights into this under-researched topic.

Approximately one quarter of Marmon's (1999) 46 participants also suggested that emotional distancing occurred during separation due to an increase in tension, and arguments as well as a lack of physical reassurance and support from their spouse. These findings support those of the present study.

Hartman and Marmon (2004) suggest that the women in their study felt suffocated by niddah requirements, including separation, which they argue acted in "violent opposition to their psychological and emotional health" (p.396). This finding stands in contrast to the accounts of separation presented in the present study. Hartman and Marmon's arrival at such harsh conclusions, however, may be a result of the feminist perspective they held, which could be argued as biased towards more oppressive interpretations.

One possible conceptualisation of the present participants' experiences of separation could be that their unmet needs for emotional and physical intimacy left them feeling vulnerable. Subsequently they engaged in distancing behaviours from their spouse to protect themselves from further feelings of vulnerability. It can be argued that this is seen explicitly in Stacy and Rina's accounts: they appear to react negatively towards their spouse, engaging in abrupt, cold and aggressive behaviours, at times displaying angry withdrawal during the periods of separation.

Interestingly such responses feature in research on attachment. Hollist and Miller (2005) suggest that individual functioning and ability to regulate emotions within romantic relationships are linked to adult attachment styles. West and Sheldon-Keller (1994) elaborate upon Bowlby's attachment terms from the Adult Attachment Inventory (p.103). They describe the attachment category of the disorganised adult who could be argued to display similar behaviours to those of Stacy and Rina, including angry withdrawal from their attachment figure, negative reactions to the perceived unresponsive and unavailable attachment figure and generalised anger towards their attachment figure. Perhaps the separation behaviours expressed by some of the women in the present study, and their inability to retain a sense of closeness when their attachment figure was unavailable (i.e. when physical intimacy with their spouse was prohibited), may have been impacted by their attachment experiences.

Perhaps we can further speculate that during separation Karen's more positive experience of closeness to her spouse might be reflective of a more secure attachment style. Interestingly, although separation in the beginning stages of Laura's marriage was described as causing distancing, later in life she appeared to value the separation period, no longer finding it distancing as before. When making links between attachment styles and marital functioning, then, it appears that individuals can come to earn a secure attachment, as new experiences can revise working models (Paley, Cox, Burchinal, Payne, 1999). A secure partner can help a less secure one regulate their emotions and therefore adjust their attachment style, not by cancelling previous effects but by facilitating revisions (Payley, et al.). Hence Laura, who was married for 18 years, could be argued to have perhaps revised her attachment style (Hollist & Miller, 2005).

Although these speculations offer novel insights, the relationship between attachment styles and marital functioning is complex and beyond the scope of this study. However this observation has highlighted a worthwhile area for further research: the possible link between the women's early models of attachment and their subsequent experience of intimacy and separation when adhering to the laws of family purity. This would be of significant interest to counselling psychologists working with couples adhering to similar practices. Understanding the role attachment plays in their separation experiences and reunion responses could be important in the treatment formulation and interventions adopted. Moreover it would help us understand whether it is the separation itself that is specifically challenging for the relationship, or the subsequent change in behaviour that participants adopt during separation. If behavioural changes cause difficulties then perhaps these can be directly targeted in therapy. This is elaborated upon in the section on clinical implications below.

The current study can therefore be seen to expand upon the previous studies reviewed above by highlighting the importance of separation for the marital relationship, in particular the theme of distancing. It offers fresh insights into the psychological consequences of separation, highlighting an area where couples may engage in dysfunctional communication patterns which seems to cause distancing and withdrawal from the marital relationship for this sample of women.

Renewal

The women in the present study expressed ambiguous and ambivalent voices about separation. Their negative experiences of distancing contrast with their positive experiences of renewal. All felt that the physical distance fostered a renewal of passion and excitement within their physical relationships; it fired their longing to be together. Significantly, over 50 percent of Marmon's (1999) 46 participants indicated a sense of rejuvenation in their sexual lives resulting from separation, thus supporting this finding. Similarly, three-quarters of Labinsky et al.'s (2009) sample believed that following the laws of family purity improved their sexual lives. However, it can be argued that the nuance and detail that have emerged in the accounts of the six participants in the current study highlight the advantage of using a qualitative methodology (Willig, 2001) over the quantitative methods used by Labinsky et al.

Labinsky et al. (2009) propose a link between the separation period and enhanced sexual frequency, further strengthening the validity of the renewal theme that emerged from the current study. Thirty-five per cent of Labinsky et al.'s participants reported having sexual intercourse three to six times per week, in contrast with Lauman et al.'s (1999) figure of 17 per cent in the general population. Labinsky et al. suggest that this increased frequency is linked to the fact that observing couples concentrate sexual intimacy into the two weeks available to them every month. The participants in the present study clearly voiced accounts of their renewed sexual excitement and interest in their spouse following the separation period. This might explain why Labinsky et al. note increased levels of sexual frequency contrasted with the general population (which does not observe separation periods). However, it must be noted that a large number of Labinsky et al.'s participants reported having intercourse once a month or less. This indicates that other factors may influence sexual frequency and that separation may enhance frequency only for some couples. Unfortunately, the failure of Labinsky et al. to specify the percentage of participants who reported lower sexual frequency leaves us with incomplete evidence for this claim. Nonetheless, this highlights an interesting area for future research: the extent to which separation leads to enhanced sexual frequency and whether this can be linked to marital satisfaction.

Protection

The women in the present study spoke of the emotional benefits they derived from the protective space accorded to them by separation. Marmon (1999) also found that the women in her sample frequently mentioned the emotional and physical benefits of separation, thus further enhancing the robustness of this finding. Similarly, Hartman and Marmon (2004) document their informants' appreciation of the nonsexual sphere within their marital relationship, which is seen as offering them personal time-out and the sexual power to say no. However, these researchers focus on the empowerment-oppression dichotomy, seeing the expressed benefits as a possible form of resistance to the patriarchal silencing of women. This contrasts with the current study's focus on the women's experiences and their marital implications.

The theme of protection is also consistent with the findings of Labinsky et al. (2009). Two-thirds of their 380 respondents mentioned feeling relief about being in niddah. One-third of them reported feeling such relief every month while roughly a quarter of all respondents postponed going to the mikvah for emotional reasons. However, Labinsky et al. do not elaborate on why the women felt relieved or what this meant to them. In contrast, the present study explicitly draws out the value of the psychological and physical protection provided by separation. Niddah is shown to offer the women a protective space, relieving them of their felt sexual obligation and providing an opportunity for both psychological and physical healing.

The present study therefore emphasises the importance of separation in participants' experience of observance. In contrast with previous research, it also highlights the psychological impact of separation for the individual and their marital relationship. The clinical implications are explored below.

Clinical implications

The theme of separation highlights distancing as an important component of the women's experience. Although renewal and protection emerge as equally important themes, it is the distancing experienced by this group of women which appears to have the most negative impact on them and their marital relationship. Some participants adopted distinct personas, becoming more abrupt, cold and negative during the separation period. This highlights the importance for couples adhering to the laws of separation during menstruation to have an opportunity to reflect on the behaviours they adopt, in order to address possible dysfunctional coping behaviours and find alternative ways to remain connected to their spouse during physical separation.

Counselling psychologists might consider helping couples develop an awareness of the importance of working on their emotional connection during separation periods, rather than accepting it as a time of complete distancing. Couples could be encouraged to utilise communication training skills (Baucom & Epstein, 1990; Guerney, 1977) in order to better convey their feelings verbally and maintain a sense of closeness to their spouse during separation.

Baucom and Epstein (1990) suggest that unmet intimacy needs can have a negative impact on the couple: they may subsequently engage in negative reciprocity. Therefore working with a couple's attributions (Kirby, Baucom & Peterman, 2005) may help them determine what aspects of their partner's behaviours are necessary for observance and which behaviours can be altered. Such a strategy aims to modify negative attributions, reduce negative behavioural responses and highlight areas of behaviour which may be amenable to modification. This is significant not only for counselling psychologists working with orthodox Jewish women but also for those working with women of other religious faiths that adhere to the practice of separation during menstruation.

The attachment perspective offers another treatment lens: counselling psychologists might assist couples with insecure attachment styles adhering to separation practices, by integrating attachment focused interventions into the treatment plan. Emotionally responsive therapists who offer clients a safe, reliable and stable relationship with clear boundaries will assist clients with affect regulation (Bowlby, 1988; Holmes, 2001; Mallinckrodt, Gantt & Coble, 1995), providing the safe environment necessary for therapy to progress. In this way individuals might be able to learn to manage separation within the therapeutic relationship, developing their skills, in order to respond more functionally to the separation within their marital relationships.

Mikvah experiences and the marital relationship

The present investigation also sheds new light on how women's experiences at the mikvah may influence their return home and readjustment to sexual intimacy. Many of the women in the current study expressed the view that the mikvah offered them an opportunity for purification and rebirth. This theme is conspicuously echoed in the findings of Labinsky et al. (2009), where two-thirds of their respondents found the ritual immersion religiously enhancing and referred to a rebirth experience that is very similar to that cited by the present sample. Hartman and Marmon (2004) also briefly allude to the rebirth experience in one of their participant's accounts. This suggests that this particular finding about the mikvah experience is robust.

As in the present study, Labinsky et al. (2009) discerned contrasting voices, with a quarter of their respondents finding the mikvah experiences unpleasant. Amongst their negative responses can be found sentiments identical to those expressed by some in the current study, with participants speaking of being ashamed and exposed as their privacy was invaded. Similarly some of the women in Marmon's (2008) study mention the discomfort caused by the presence of the mikvah attendant.

Contrasting voices

The current study, in common with the previous research (Labinsky et al., 2009; Hartman & Marmon, 2004; Marmon, 1999, 2008), highlights the mixed messages emanating from women adhering to this type of religious observance. The women in the present study find separation both challenging and beneficial. They find the mikvah both a safe personal space for reflection and a time of shame and exposure. Many of the women in Hartman and Marmon's study spoke about the negative elements of niddah, yet concluded by emphasising the value they found in adhering to the laws and in being part of a religious community. Across these studies there emerges a sense that women's adherence to the laws is unshakably firm, irrespective of any negative aspects.

These mixed messages and conflicting voices can perhaps be better understood with reference to the work of Guterman (2006, 2008), who found that modern orthodox Jews experience an identity conflict, indicated by their transgressions of some of the laws during the two weeks of niddah. Schachter (2002) proposed that modern orthodox Jewish young adults are susceptible to this identity conflict, especially in relation to their sexuality. These youths view life from two perspectives: a religious-traditional one and a modern-Western one. This dual perspective surfaces in their accounts of premarital sexual behaviour, which they view as both "extremely wrong" and "not such a big deal" (p.422). Schachter's respondents seemed well aware of this double perspective, which appears to reflect the simultaneous attraction of tradition and modernity within contemporary Jewish orthodoxy (Schachter, 2002).

Such conflicting voices also appear within the present study, suggesting that perhaps the women's experiences are underpinned by identity conflicts which find expression

in the dual messages conveyed in their accounts. This may well be an unconscious process, as none of the women spoke of feeling this conflict or sense of confusion. Nonetheless, all conveyed their experience of living with contrasts.

Ribner (2003) propounds that such identity conflict leaves modern orthodox married couples feeling conflicted about sexual behaviour. While growing up they have been taught that sex *before* marriage is forbidden, but *within* marriage it is permissible and in fact praiseworthy. Then, during niddah, sex again becomes seen as wrong; subsequently, post niddah, it becomes encouraged. This perhaps results in conflicts that may lead to religious transgression. Moreover, modern orthodox couples attempt to combine Western values and ideas of love, marriage and sexuality with the limitations imposed by niddah, resulting in similar tensions. Ribner further suggests that reinstating sexual intercourse on the night of the mikvah may prove inharmonious, as it requires the operation of an internal on/off switch beyond the ability of some couples. This difficulty of shifting from separation back to intimacy was also described as challenging by women in the present study, some of whom did not resume intercourse upon their mikvah return.

Difficulties adjusting back to intimacy are also highlighted in some of Labinsky et al.'s (2009) accounts. While Labinsky et al. allude to the difficulties women experience at the mikvah and in the return to intimacy, the authors do not explicitly conclude that the mikvah has a direct bearing on adjustment back to intimacy. This is something that the present study identifies as occupying a central place in the process of adjustment, with important clinical implications discussed at the end of this section.

Trauma reaction

Smith et al. (2009) argue that "it is in the nature of IPA that the interview and analysis will have taken you into new and unanticipated territory" (p.113). The women in the current study, as well as those in previous research, indicate that mikvah experiences can be both extremely beneficial and deeply traumatic.

In Green's (1990) description of the various dimensions to traumatic stress, she notes that these include receiving a threat to one's bodily integrity. At the mikvah it seems that some women experience such a threat to their bodily integrity by being naked and thus open to scrutiny. Upon their return home, the women who felt threatened, exposed and shamed seemed to withdraw from their spouse, avoiding intimacy and feeling both low and angry.

Frederikson, Chamberlain, and Long (1996) suggest deficits in expression or self-disclosure can result in detachment, distancing, isolation and conflict. These sentiments were evident in some of the women's accounts of returning from the mikvah, where they seem to withdraw from their spouse, opening the way to distancing and isolation. Moreover some of the women discussed feeling angry and irritable upon their return from the mikvah. Irritability has been identified as significant in reducing the motivation of a partner to offer support (Lane & Hobfoll, 2002; Mills & Turnbull, 2004). This lack of spousal support might in turn reinforce the women's experience of vulnerability and distance, making the adjustment back to intimacy even harder.

These findings offer another lens through which to view the experiences of the women in this study. It may be that the more exposed, vulnerable and traumatised they feel at the mikvah, the more they engage in distancing behaviours on their return, thereby rendering more difficult their adjustment back to intimacy. However, it is possible that a woman's general marital satisfaction, rather than her experience of trauma at the mikvah, is the major influence on her experience of adjusting back to intimacy with her spouse. Hence no direct conclusions can be drawn from the contrasts depicted here.

Clinical implications

The adjustment back to intimacy for the participants in this study has been highlighted as an area of difficulty impacted by the women's experience of distancing following separation and experience of trauma at the mikvah.

The distancing that occurs during separation appears to impact the ease with which

couples readjust back to intimacy. In order to minimise this difficulty counselling psychologists could work with couples to help them retain their sense of marital closeness during the separation period. Encouraging couples to share thoughts, feelings and attitudes throughout the separation time (Finkenauer & Hazam, 2000) would aim to reduce marital distancing and provide space for self-disclosure about challenging aspects of observance, such as the mikvah experience.

As suggested in the present accounts, the women's experience of feeling exposed and vulnerable at the mikvah impacted their return home and adjustment to intimacy with their spouse. To ease this transition, perhaps counselling psychologists could help couples devise an individualised reunion plan, so that the return to intimacy is not immediate, but rather a slow process meeting the specific needs of the couple. A stepped plan for returning to intimacy might offer the women some time to feel safe and contained in their relationships prior to intimacy, in turn reducing their need to engage in distancing behaviours.

Psychological messages

The use of IPA in the current study has revealed novel psychological themes not evident in other research as well as further insights into previous conclusions. It is argued here that these help to develop our understanding of the participants' experiences of observing the laws of family purity.

Fear and containment

The women's adherence appeared to be motivated in part by fear of adversity, guilt and memory of prior punishments. A degree of superstitious belief also seemed to motivate the women to maintain their commitment to the laws, perhaps as a means to appease their fears and allow them to feel that they were protecting their families. In religious mental health research, fear has been conceptualised as an extension of the religious framework, as it is seen as a significant motivator of compliance (Narramore, 1979; Brent, 1994), emanating from an emphasis on punishment (Elias, 1974; Shaver, Lenauer, & Sadd, 1980). This suggests that fear plays a significant role in religious commitment.

The women expressed feeling safe and contained by the boundaries and framework that the laws imposed on their sexual lives. This could be interpreted as the flipside to fear. Fear seemed to drive their adherence, which in turn offered them a feeling of safety and containment, in turn appeasing their fears. The safety instilled by the law-imposed boundaries brings to mind the principles of attachment. The women repeatedly referred to the benefits of the imposed boundaries. This seems reminiscent of Authoritative Parenting, also known as Boundaried Parenting (Baumrind, 1978), which sets clear, consistent boundaries for children. Here, parents are attentive to their children's needs, will typically forgive the child if standards are not met and will guide the child to learn better practice (Santrock, 2007). This parenting style is seen to help children develop self-esteem (Baumrind, 1978). To an extent, the women's experience of feeling safe and contained by the laws mirrors the authoritative parenting model. God offers a clear framework for the women's sexual lives, possibly similar to the structure boundaried parenting offers children. This framework thus helps women develop feelings of confidence and safety in their marital sexual relationships.

The question of the extent to which religion benefits mental health is controversial and well beyond the scope of this investigation. However, it is important to note that religion has been indicated as a potential protective factor against mental illness (Ellison, Burr, & McCall, 1997). Koenig, McCullough, and Larson (2001) found that in a meta-analysis of 101 studies exploring the link between religiosity and mental health, two-thirds of participants reporting high levels of religiosity reported lower levels of anxiety and depression. Research has also established a positive correlation between religious beliefs and practices and greater life satisfaction (Koenig et al., 2001). In addition, religion has been found to offer comfort rather than strain in people's lives (Exline, Yali, & Sanderson, 2000). Such findings perhaps account for why the women in the current study persist in their adherence, despite the challenges involved. It may be that in some way their adherence offers protection against challenges to their mental health.

Oppression

While the women in the current study revealed an awareness of the issue of oppression, in the main they were quite confused and ambivalent about whether they found the laws oppressive. The women's narratives revealed a spectrum of responses, from the reconciled to the resentful and this spectrum of views is also evident in the research of Hartman and Marmon (2004). The women in their study grapple with the notion of oppression, often raising the issue in an unprompted fashion. They communicate their desire not to view themselves or be viewed by others as oppressed, while at the same time revealing a certain amount of confusion and ambivalence.

In the present study some women seemed to experience cognitive dissonance: a feeling of discomfort resulting from holding two conflicting ideas in mind simultaneously, motivating the individual to alter their attitudes, beliefs or actions in order to reduce dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Perhaps in an attempt to minimise this conflict, some resisted engaging with the concept of oppression. For example, Becky chose to adopt a spiritual perspective, perhaps reflecting her need to reconcile this issue in her mind. Laura emphasized her belief that purification applies equally to both sexes, perhaps using this to reduce her sense of oppression. But others clearly voice resentment, reflecting their sense of an oppressive gender bias.

Feminist research has generally highlighted, and adopted a critical stance towards, the strictures surrounding the menstrual taboo (Baskin, 1985, Wenger, 1998/1999, Plaskow, 1990). However, the current study offers a rather different perspective. By shedding light on the lived experience of women who live under these systems, it reveals that while such women do indeed grapple with the notion of being oppressed, they hold diverse viewpoints on this question. In fact, some women appear to derive psychological benefits from their adherence, as their fears are kept at bay and they find safety and containment through their observance.

Second person narration

Regarding the use of language in the present study, it is interesting to note the frequency with which participants utilised the voice of the second person. Brown and

Gilligan (1992) and Gilligan et al. (1988) note that dissociation of this type, absencing the self completely as a first-person voice from one's own account, signifies inner discord and unresolved conflicts concerning the experience. Demjen (2011) proposes that it is suggestive of emotional depth, emotional distancing, an inner split and self-alienation. Margolin (1990) posits that speaking in the second person allows the speaker to speak to him/herself, creating an opportunity for internal dialogue. It can also reflect a process of emotional distancing from the event (Fludernik, 1994).

These considerations add depth to possible interpretations of the participants' use of the second person during the current research. The women may have used the voice of the other to distance themselves emotionally from what they were sharing. Moreover, the women displayed inner splits, reflected in the mixed messages of the positives and negatives of their adherence. Using the second person may also have been an attempt to distance themselves from their accounts in effort to protect their privacy. In addition, engaging the voice of the other may have helped them manage their experience of cognitive dissonance.

Counselling psychology: implications

The current research is argued as having important implications for the multicultural counselling psychology literature and for counselling psychologists working with individuals and couples across cultures. To date, this is the first piece of research conducted from a counselling psychology perspective on UK orthodox Jewish women and their experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity. Moreover, it explicitly explores the possible psychological impacts of such observance on the marital relationship and offers clinical implications that could be incorporated into the treatment of such clients.

The insights proposed shed light on orthodox Jewish culture and associated marital practices. Not only does this research add to the knowledge of an arguably under-researched minority group, it also challenges some of the present stereotypes surrounding this group and their customs by providing a deeper understanding of Jewish culture and the practices orthodox Jews adhere to. This research assists counselling psychologists in their journey toward developing multicultural

competencies, specifically in “understanding the worldview of the culturally different client” (Sue et al., 1982, p.481), thereby ensuring that treatment does not contradict the client’s value system or limit the therapeutic benefits and outcomes (Bergin, 1980; Cunningham, 1983; Gass, 1984; Kuyken, Brewin, Power, & Furnham, 1992). Through understanding these women’s experiences in context, the level of therapeutic empathy, understanding and acceptance (Rogers, 1957) offered to clients is enhanced and “appropriate intervention strategies and techniques” are more likely to be offered (Sue et al., 1992, p. 481; Gaw, 1993; Jenkins, 1994).

Whilst this study recognises that society is increasingly culturally diverse (Sue, 1991; Sue & Sue, 1990) and that techniques and approaches need to be specifically adapted for distinct racial and ethnic minority populations (Ibrahim & Arredondo, 1986; Smith, 1982; Sue, 1990; Sue & Sue, 1990; Sue et al., 1982), it also clarifies that marital practices of separation during menstruation are evident across several different religions. Therefore the present findings can be argued to have transcultural implications. Hence, they should prove helpful to any counselling professional working with couples adhering to such practices.

This study highlights its participants’ unrelenting commitment to the laws. In so doing, it reinforces the point that interventions should not encourage religious clients to move away from their observance: rather the treatment plan needs to accommodate a client’s cultural values and beliefs. The need for this level of cultural sensitivity is evident in Ribner’s (2003) work treating orthodox Jews in sex therapy, in which he highlights the difficulties encountered when treatment conflicts with the value system of the Jewish client. Ribner discusses a significant challenge which presents itself in Jewish law, namely the prohibition against male extra-vaginal ejaculation. This law poses difficulties for sexual treatments protocols that encourage extra-vaginal ejaculation. As Ribner emphasizes, clinicians working with this client group will be hard pressed to encourage treatment practices that act in opposition to these laws and therefore the therapist must acquire an understanding of these values and use a creative array of interventions or adaptations to existing interventions to ensure treatment does not conflict with the client’s value system.

In a similar vein when sexual matters or where emotional difficulties become extreme as a result of observing the laws of family purity, or treatment conflicts with adherence, the counselling psychologist working with the observant would be encouraged to consult with the client's Rabbi about the treatment plan. The Rabbi could then make a legal decision specific for that person concerning their observance and treatment (Donin, 1972). In such circumstances, the counselling psychologist must be prepared to give the Rabbi the problem formulation, onset, duration, the efficacy of the intervention and treatment plan required, in order to assist the Rabbi in his understanding of the problem. Whilst consulting with the rabbi, it is crucial that the therapist is open to adapting the treatment plan to ensure client cooperation (Ribner, 2003). The rabbinic consultation would be imperative in order for a suitable therapeutic plan to be devised, one that is culturally sensitive and ensures treatment is optimal. This implication is transcultural; encouraging counselling psychologists working across various religious and cultural groups to consult the religious leader (with the client's consent) when treatment methods may come into conflict with a client's value system.

Another significant implication when working with an individual or couple experiencing difficulties associated with their observance of the laws pertains to the individual's understanding of the law. Many couples are misguided in their understanding of Jewish law's perspective on sexuality (Ribner, 2003). This may result in their adherence being unnecessarily extreme and dysfunctional, subsequently contributing to serious individual and marital difficulties. For example, if a woman misunderstands the guidelines for mikvah preparation, perhaps as a result of obsessive compulsive tendencies, her cleansing behaviours might become punishing, resulting in her spending several hours preparing and scrubbing her body until her skin becomes raw and wounded. Should the religious prohibitions and rituals in sexual relationships also be a novel area for the therapist, they would not necessarily be able to determine the appropriateness of this behaviour. It is therefore up to the culturally sensitive counselling psychologist to become familiar with these restrictions, perhaps again assisted by rabbinic consultation, so that they can more easily distinguish between legitimate cultural norms and behaviours symptomatic of pathological states (Cunin, Cunin, & Cunin, 1992; Ribner, 2003). The counselling psychologist would need to develop a trusting therapeutic alliance with the client prior to helping them

see that their behaviour was not in accordance with Jewish law. Again this might require the counselling psychologist to work alongside the Rabbi in order to help assure the client that the law has been misunderstood and their behaviour is a consequence of perhaps obsessive compulsions. This would ensure that the client does not see the therapist as lacking in respect or understanding of their religious devotion.

Considering the above implications, the culturally sensitive counselling psychologist must therefore not assume their theoretical approach suffices; cultural issues need to be kept at the forefront of practitioners' minds and consideration needs to be given to the meaning culture holds in our clients' lives, and in our own lives (Eleftheriadou, 2003). The process of cross-cultural therapy does not expect the therapist to know everything about the client's culture, however it is crucial to be flexible and open to challenging one's own views and considering distinct value systems, working with both similarities and differences within our practice (Eleftheriadou, 2003). Moreover, the counselling psychologist in practice needs to be mindful of the relationship triad which includes the person, the family system and the cultural context, in order to understand the factors underlying each individual's presentation.

Limitations and suggestions for further research

The fact that the findings of this study cannot be generalised, must remain specific to this group of participants and are based on my own interpretations are among its potential limitations. Arguably further research into women's experiences of observing the laws of family purity is therefore needed. For example, exploring experiences between different sects of Jewish women and between different religions, for example, contrasting the experiences of orthodox Jews with those of orthodox Muslims may help develop our understanding of the observance of marital cultural practices across religions. Whilst the findings lack empirical generalisability, Smith and Eatough (2008) highlight the significance of IPA and the "light it sheds within this broader context" (p.41). Therefore the current findings and the clinical implications that flow from them can be argued to have theoretical generalisability and transferability (Smith et al., 2009) to counselling psychologists working with individuals from distinct cultural groups who adhere to similar practices during

menstruation.

The participants in this study described themselves as observers of the laws of family purity. During the interviews, however, it became clear that their adherence varied quite considerably, and that the frequency of their menstrual cycles also differed, with some experiencing separation monthly and others only once every six months. The women's experiences may have been influenced both by the degree to which they observed the laws and by the frequency of separation periods. This needs to be accounted for in any follow-up research. For example, participants could be asked to comment on the degree of their adherence, or a questionnaire could be employed to ascertain a measure of adherence to the laws along with frequency of menstruation. This process would ensure a more homogenous sample, in line with IPA (Smith et al., 2009). Additionally, the women who volunteered were self-selected (most responded the same day the advert was posted). This speed of response might reflect a bias in the sample, which may overrepresent those eager to have their voices heard and confident that they have something important to share.

The accounts presented here might in addition be susceptible to lapses in memory and distortion. Some of the women were recalling experiences from 15 years earlier, perhaps reflecting their memories of events rather than the reality of that time in their lives. Further research could tackle this limitation by interviewing groups of women at the same stage of life: for example, exploring the experiences of observance for newlyweds, after five years and after 15 years of marriage. Looking at the similarities and differences emerging from the accounts would provide valuable insights into how women's experience of observance changes over time.

Methodological reflexivity

Finlay (2008b) argues that reflexivity reaches beyond declaring one's intentions and subjectivity; one also needs to be aware of the dynamic of the interviewer-participant relationship, which is similar to the therapeutic relationship and whose far-reaching effects in qualitative research (Finlay, 2002) need to be adequately accounted for. One of the significant challenges of this research was to be both involved with the research participants and to remain as a phenomenologist "scientifically removed" from the participants (Finlay, 2008a, p.3). As a female orthodox Jew with my own opinions on the laws of family purity and my own experiences of adherence, I of course found it impossible to bracket myself off completely. However, I aimed to maintain, as much as possible, an empathetic openness (Finlay, 2008a).

Reflections on the interviews

In terms of what may have been going on in the interviews, the participants knew I was Jewish as I recruited them on a Jewish advertising website. Moreover they may have assumed I was either observant of the laws or had experience of them due to my understanding of the phenomena. This would have impacted the interview process, potentially making participants feel more at ease to talk freely, since they assumed I would understand their experience. On the other hand, they may have felt more constrained about presenting Judaism in a pejorative light, perhaps fearing that they would taint my impression of the laws, or send negative messages to those reading the research. They may have even feared punishment if they offered negative responses, and this may have encouraged them to be overly positive. As Smith and Osborn (2008, p.54) point out, "people struggle to express what they are thinking and feeling, there may be reasons why they do not wish to self-disclose, and the researcher has to interpret people's mental and emotional state from what they say". Undoubtedly the women in this study will have withheld some material and this will have affected the accounts that they gave; after all, I was probing their most intimate personal relationships.

At the time of the interviews, I was myself preparing to adopt the laws of family purity in conjunction with my upcoming marriage. Despite my best efforts to maintain

an equal stance to all points in the interviews, it is possible that my responses (verbal and non-verbal) influenced the answers given. For example, my presenting more positive facial expressions to the women's positive experiences and more sympathetic expressions to their traumatic accounts may have encouraged them to overemphasise the negatives, or play up the positives. Additionally my choice of interview prompts concerning their marital relationships may have also influenced the responses given. Perhaps they would have focused less on the marital rather than the individual impact had the former not been an aim of the study.

Reflections on the analysis

Some participants affected my process of analysis more than others. Although I attempted to give all voices equal weight, I kept feeling pulled by the more painful, negative accounts such as Stacy's. She came across as a deeply traumatised individual due to her past history of anorexia. During the interview I noticed having to stop myself from entering into "therapist mode" and post-interview I found I had to consciously disengage from carrying her pain with me. During the analysis, I found myself immersed in her transcript for hours at a time; it was hard to remove myself. At her place at the extreme end of the spectrum, she seemed to make certain themes heavier. This made me fearful that a bias might arise in the analysis and I would end up conveying the experience of adherence in a negative light, when clearly there were many positive sentiments that were expressed. On reflection, it is possible that Stacy's case would have been better suited to a case study to convey the entirety of her experience and all its complexity.

At times I also found it difficult not to engage with the specificity of the women's experiences. Such was the case with Rina, who had had a stillborn baby. I found myself getting caught up with her individual account and therefore found it challenging to recognise the themes that were developing. Only when I was able to take a step back from her specific scenario was I able to see clearly the role observance of the laws of family purity played in her life and therefore the themes that were developing.

Personal reflexivity

Hertz (1997) suggests that: “to be reflexive is to have an ongoing conversation about the experience while simultaneously living in the moment” (p. viii). Whilst engaging in personal disclosure one walks a fine line, attempting to account for one’s subjectivity while not wanting to engage in self-analysis at the expense of the research participant’s accounts (Finlay, 2002).

The personal process I have experienced alongside my research has also been important in shaping the research process. As I progressed with writing my analysis and discussion, I was adjusting to early-married life and to adhering to the laws of family purity (see Appendix 9 for further reflexivity concerning this). Undoubtedly my personal experience has impacted the research process, as I was immersed in the participants’ transcripts alongside my own practice, and frequently I found could not distinguish my experience from those of the participants. My reflections on my experiences in my reflective diary frequently mirrored the accounts of the participants in the study. It is hard to discern whether, as a result of being entirely immersed in the participants’ accounts at the same time as beginning my own process of observance, I was already affected by their experiences and their accounts subsequently shaped my own experience. Perhaps my experience would have overlapped with theirs, regardless of my conducting this research. Nonetheless the value I placed on the particular themes of separation, mikvah experiences and the psychological messages in the study are no doubt influenced by my own experience and my sense of what was important to the women. Another researcher may have viewed things differently.

I was aware that I might be inclined to make more of the participants’ positive experiences than their negative ones. I therefore kept checking back to the raw data to ensure the noted themes were the most pertinent. I was also keen to identify the difficulties that the participants experienced, as this would highlight areas to target in treatment. I utilised personal reflexivity alongside supervisor and peer discussions to challenge each theme and make sure they were reflective of the participants’ accounts. By such means I endeavored to offset or minimise any personal bias.

I was able to understand, and empathise with, the conflicts, pains and struggles experienced by the participants in this study because of my own experience of observance and of the conflicts I face within my culture and religion. Concerned about the level of personal involvement I had in the research, I might have been inclined to offer a balanced perspective in which negative and positive factors were given equal weight. Perhaps I was hesitant to paint a positive picture, fearing a bias towards the benefits of adherence. On the flip side, I was cautious about presenting a strongly negative picture and a bleak conclusion, as this might have given rise to serious conflicts within me concerning the value and benefit of my own adherence. Therefore the resultant balanced perspective may be a consequence of an unconscious process whereby I have attempted to give equal weight to the positives and negatives of observance.

Conclusion

The findings of this study constitute a significant contribution to multicultural counselling literature in the UK. Using the specific example of orthodox Jewish women, their psychological experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity and the subsequent marital impact, this research has shed light on three significant themes with profound clinical implications. The theme of separation encompasses the women's experience of distancing within their marital relationships. This contrasts with the renewed passion and sexual excitement they feel for their spouses and the sense of protection that the separation space offers them. Such findings highlight the importance for couples adhering to such practices to find ways of retaining intimacy and emotional connectedness during separation.

The women's mikvah experiences incorporate the sense of purification and rebirth felt at the mikvah alongside their contrasting experience of exposure. This sense of vulnerability has been linked to their adjustment difficulties in restoring sexual intimacy with their spouses, highlighting the importance of the mikvah experience in the women's return to intimacy. Counselling psychologists can assist individuals in managing their feelings of vulnerability, helping them become aware of any dysfunctional coping behaviours, and suggesting a stepped plan to restore sexual intimacy at a pace which does not augment their experience of vulnerability.

The psychological messages conveyed in the women's accounts reveal the fear that underlies participants' adherence and the subsequent safety and containment experienced from their observance. The experiences offered in this research challenge previous feminist conclusions relating to the oppressive nature of observance by pointing to a diversity of responses.

Within each theme, there are significant convergences and divergences, highlighting the complexity of the women's experiences. Despite their positive or negative experiences, their commitment to the laws is clearly unrelenting. This highlights the significance of counselling psychologists upholding multicultural counselling competencies, understanding clients' values and adapting treatment interventions to suit clients' needs, so that their values are not opposed and that treatment interventions are instead complementary to their beliefs. These findings can be transferred across the various cultures that adhere to the practices of menstrual separation.

In summary, this research not only contributes to a limited research base but also highlights the significant impact that observing marital cultural practices has on the marital relationship, hopefully paving the way for further research into this important realm of human experience.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Recruitment advert

I am recruiting Orthodox Jewish Women between ages 25-45, married 1.5-25 years, who adhere to the Jewish laws of family purity to take part in my doctoral research project. My study is looking at women's experiences of adhering to the Jewish laws of family purity and how such experiences may impact the marital relationship.

Your participation will involve doing an interview with me that will last for around one hour. I will ask you questions to get you to talk about your experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity, and how this has impacted your marital relationship, sexual relationship and marital satisfaction.

I will be recording interviews and I will transcribe them later for my research, which might at a later date be published.

If you wish to participate I will need you to read an information sheet and give informed consent for this. I will give you a form to sign for consent to participate and another for consent to record the interview.

Your participation is not expected to involve any risks of mental or physical harm any greater than those involved in your daily life, but nonetheless you will be debriefed fully at the end of the interview. I will ask you how you found it to participate and will provide some information about where you can get support should any difficult issues arise as a result of the interview.

All the material you provide will be confidential and your name will be changed so that it will not be recognised by anyone else.

Once you have consented to participate, you have the right to withdraw your consent and participation at any time during or after the interview. I will provide you with my contact details and those of my supervisor, so that you may withdraw at any time,

should you so desire. There will be no penalty for withdrawing your participation from the project and I will destroy any recordings or data related to you.

I hope that this information is enough to give you some idea of whether you would like to participate in this research. Your participation will be invaluable and also much appreciated. Should you wish to volunteer or have any further questions that you would like answered, please contact me at:

Amelie Black. Email: elie786@aol.com

Appendix 2 - Information sheet for participants

Thank you for considering taking part in this research project. This information sheet provides some details about the project in order to help you understand what it is about, why it is being conducted and what your participation will involve. This is so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not you would like to consent to participate.

The project is titled “An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Orthodox Jewish women, adherence to the laws of family purity and the marital relationship.” It is an investigation into women’s experiences of observing the laws of family purity, and how this might impact the marital relationship. I hope that the study will increase our understanding of the psychology of how physical and sexual abstinence within the marital unit, impacts the marital relationship. Moreover, whether there are useful implications for marital therapy in general.

Your participation will involve doing an interview with me that will last for around one hour. I will ask you questions to get you to talk about your experiences of adhering to the laws of family purity, and how this has impacted your marital relationship, sexual relationship and marital satisfaction.

I would like to record the interview so that I can transcribe and analyse it later for the project. I will need your consent for this and have a form that you will need to sign for consent to participate and another for consent to record the interview.

Your participation is not expected to involve any risks of mental or physical harm any greater than those involved in your daily life, but nonetheless you will be debriefed fully at the end of the interview. I will ask you how you found it to participate and will provide some information about where you can get support should any difficult issues arise as a result of the interview.

All the material you provide will be confidential and your name and personally identifying information will be changed so that it will not be recognised by anyone else.

Once you have consented to participate, you have the right to withdraw your consent and participation at any time during or after the interview. I will provide you with my contact details and those of my supervisor, so that you may withdraw at any time, should you so desire. There will be no penalty for withdrawing your participation from the project and I will destroy any recordings or data related to you.

Your participation will be invaluable and also much appreciated. Should you have any further questions that you would like answered, please contact me at:

Amelie Black. Email: elie786@aol.com. Telephone: 07949369648.

Appendix 3 - Interview questions

1. Can you describe to me your experience of, or what it has been like for you to keep the laws of family purity?

Prompts

What was it like for you keeping these laws at the beginning of your marriage?

How has that changed from the initial stages of marriage to now?

Would you be able to describe a little more about that time?

How did you feel emotionally at that time?

Do you feel differently now compared to then?

If yes, what has changed?

What was it like for you to go to the Mikvah?

2. Do you feel that the laws of family purity have had an impact on your marital relationship, and if so, how?

Prompts

How has it impacted on your sexual relationship, if at all?

How has it impacted on your emotional relationship, if at all?

Do you feel it has affected any other aspect of your relationship?

3. How has keeping the laws of family purity influenced different areas of your life, if at all?

Prompts

How has it impacted your relationships with other people, if at all?

How has it impacted your relationship with yourself, if at all?

How do you feel it influences your relationship with your body? Self esteem?

How has it affected your beliefs about marriage, commitment and intimacy, if at all?

4. Can you tell me a bit about your experiences of intimacy within your relationship, and how you feel keeping the laws of family purity has impacted your physical relationship with your spouse, if at all?

Prompts

How often do you have sex with your spouse?

Can you tell me a bit about your feelings of satisfaction within your marital sexual life, and your marital relationship?

Can you tell me a bit about your priorities in your marriage, what aspects do you find crucial for marriage to work well?

5. Is there anything that I have not asked you that you expected might come up or would like to still share?

Appendix 4 - Consent form

I consent to participate in the project entitled “An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Orthodox Jewish women, adherence to the laws of family purity and the marital relationship” conducted by Amelie Black a Counselling Psychologist in Training at the Department of Psychology, London Metropolitan University, London.

The project is supervised by Dr Elena Gil-Rodriguez at The School of Psychology, Faculty of Life Sciences, London Metropolitan University, Calcutta House, 1 Old Castle Street, London, E1 7NT. Telephone: 020 7320 2331.

The research will be conducted according to the Code of Conduct and Ethical Principles of the British Psychological Society.

The purpose of the study is to investigate women’s experiences of keeping the laws of family purity, and exploring how this impacts their marital relationships. I understand that the only requirement will be for me to be interviewed by Amelie Black, which will take approximately one hour.

I understand that the results of this research will be confidential, and I will be given a pseudonym in any written material so that my identity will not be attached to the information I contribute. The key that lists my identity and pseudonym will be kept securely and separately from the research data in a locked file. It will be destroyed when the research is completed. In addition, I understand that the purpose of the research is to examine groups of people and not one particular individual.

The research project is expected to provide further information on cultural marital practices and the marital relationship. This hopes to increase our understanding of the difficulties experienced by different cultures within their marital relationships, in order to develop treatment models for marital therapy.

I understand that the results of this research may be published in psychological journals or otherwise reported to scientific bodies, but that I will not be identified in any such publication or report.

I understand that my participation is voluntary; that there is no penalty for refusal to participate or for withdrawing from the study, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation at any time. I understand that, if I withdraw my consent and participation my data, including any recordings, will be destroyed.

I understand that this project is not expected to involve any risks of harm greater than those involved in everyday life, and that all possible safeguards will be taken to minimise any potential risks.

If I have any questions about any procedure in this project, or wish to withdraw my participation at any time, I understand that I may contact the researcher Amelie Black at email: elie786@aol.com or telephone: 07949369648.

Signed (Participant).....

Name (Block Capitals).....

Date.....

Appendix 5 - Confidentiality and consent agreement on the use of digital audio recordings

This agreement is written to clarify the confidentiality conditions and consent for the use of digital audio recordings made by Amelie Black for the purposes of psychological research.

The participant gives.....(name) permission to tape the research interview on condition that:

- The permission may be withdrawn at any time
- The digital audio recordings are used solely for analysis by Amelie Black
- The digital audio recordings will not be heard by any person other than.....(name) or an employee of a transcription service for the purpose of transcription only
- The digital audio recordings will be stored under secure conditions and destroyed at the appropriate conclusion of their use

This agreement is subject to the Code of Conduct and Ethical Principles of the British Psychological Society and the law of the land.

I have read and understood the above conditions and agree to their implementation.

Signed (Research participant).....Date.....

Name (Block capitals).....

Signed (Researcher).....Date.....

Name (Block capitals).....

Appendix 6 - Demographics

1. What is your age?
2. How long have you been married?
3. What religious group do you affiliate yourself with?
4. Do you have children? How many?

Appendix 7 - Debriefing for participants

Thank you for taking part in this research project. Your help is much appreciated.

The purpose of the research is to investigate Women's experiences of observing the laws of family purity and how this impacts their marital relationship. Your contribution has been invaluable and is much appreciated.

It is hoped that the study will increase our understanding of the psychology of how physical and sexual abstinence within the marital unit, impacts the marital relationship.

If you have any questions regarding the research, or wish to withdraw your consent or participation at any time, you may contact me directly at: elie786@aol.com or by phone: 07949369648.

The contact details of my supervisor Dr Elena Gil-Rodriguez, are as follows: School of Psychology, Faculty of Life Sciences, London Metropolitan University, Calcutta House, 1 Old Castle Street, London, E1 7NT. Telephone: 020 7320 2331. You may contact my supervisor should you have any queries or issues regarding the research or the conduct of the interview, for example, that you do not wish to share with me.

At the end of the interview, I asked how you had found it to take part in the research and how you were feeling after the interview. If as a result of participating, you have experienced or are experiencing any difficult feelings such as sadness, embarrassment, emotional stress or feelings about yourself that you are uncomfortable with, I have provided below some details of organisations that you can contact in order to get some support. I hope that these might be useful if issues have come up for you during or after the interview that you would like to talk to someone about.

Samaritans: Provides 24-hour confidential emotional support for those experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Tel: 0845 790 90 90. Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

Relate: Relate offers advice, relationship counselling, sex therapy, workshops, mediation, consultations and support face-to-face.

Tel : 0300 100 1234. Website: www.relate.org.uk

You could also go to your GP or could contact the BACP for information regarding finding a counsellor.

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy:

BACP House, 15 St John's Business Park, LE17 4HB. Tel: 0870 443 5252. Website: www.bacp.co.uk

**London Metropolitan University Psychology
Department, Ethics Panel**



I am pleased to say that the following project;

Faculty of Life Sciences
Calcutta House
Old Castle Street
London E1 7NT
Dr Chris Cocking 020 7320 1236
Facsimile 020 7320 1236

**Title "An IPA: Orthodox Jewish women, adherence to the laws
of family purity and the marital relationship".**

www.londonmet.ac.uk

Researcher: Amelie Black
student ID 08016745,

Supervisor: Mark Donati

**Has received provisional ethical approval to proceed,
providing that it follows the requested action below, and also
follows the ethical guidelines used by the Psychology
Department and British Psychological Society. The researcher
is also responsible for conducting the research in an ethically
acceptable way, and should inform the ethics panel if there
are any substantive changes to the project that could affect
its ethical dimensions, and re-submit the proposal if it is
deemed necessary.**

Signed:

Dr Chris Cocking (chair Psychology ethics panel)

c.cocking@londonmet.ac.uk

Date: 22/9/2011

Appendix 9 - Personal reflexivity: my experience of observing the laws

My experience of separation is in many way similar to that of my participants: it is a mixture of both positive and negative elements. I find the physical distance at times frustrating, although I do not feel distant from my husband during these periods. I feel that other communication channels need to be utilised when the physical method of communication is not available, and my degree of success here influences my experience of closeness to my spouse during that time. As I am mindful of the difficulties I might experience (I had completed the interviews prior to my observance) my mind is perhaps more open and therefore more accepting of any challenges. This has made the process significantly easier, as my expectations allowed for negative as well as positive sentiments. From my participants' accounts I was also aware of the importance of working on communication, especially during periods of separation. As a counselling psychologist, developing skills in communication and reflexivity is critical for me, my life and relationship satisfaction, and my work with clients. Maintaining a sense of intimacy during separation was perhaps more manageable with these skills.

My experience at the mikvah often feels similar to the benefits I gain from personal therapy, especially in the way that it carves out a reflective, honest space. I really enjoy the preparation where I have an opportunity to cut out uninterrupted personal time for myself. I feel it offers me a spa like experience where I pamper myself, and it gives me a feeling of importance and value within my relationship. This year has been filled with many new adjustments and therefore having a space to focus on my body has been valuable, both physically and psychologically.

The mikvah time also brings spirituality into my life, which I appreciate. Through this physical preparation I also become more confident; it helps me shift my mind-set and identity to that of a sexual woman. In general I am quite comfortable being naked, therefore I don't feel the sense of exposedness that the women voiced. Perhaps as my body changes and, should I feel less comfortable naked, this experience may change. My return from the mikvah also feels positive and exciting. I feel physically cleansed and ready to be intimate with my husband. The adjustment back to intimacy for me has been a smooth transition; there is a sense of newness and enhanced sensitivity,

which makes me more appreciative of our physical relationship. Similar to the women in the study, I appreciate the space sexuality is given within my marital relationship and feel contained by the framework of the laws.

Appendix 10 - Karen's interview transcript³

Left hand column comments	Transcription	Right hand column comments
	I: Um so the format basically I'll just ask you very open ended a few questions. And I'd like for you to take anywhere. There's no right way, no wrong way. If there's an area don't want to discuss that's fine. Or if there's something you ...	
	I: just take it in the way that you want. Feel free um ...	
	I: and feel free to go on, don't feel that you are taking the stage or anything. That's what I want. Um ... okay. To start with can you describe to me a bit about what you experience has been like just keeping the laws of family purity? Perhaps from the beginning to where you are now?	
	I: Okay. Um So first I should say that I've been married for fourteen years. [Inaudible 0:00:41] don't know if that's okay? Okay. So I've been married for fourteen years.	Marital context
Setting the context, married 14 years	R: Um fourteen and half years. Um I interestingly, to start with this - to make it a bit more interesting. Um when I was actually when we first got married, So I'm an FFB, I was from ⁴	Marriage onset
Declaration	R: from birth. I never was with anybody else before I got married. Um when I was actually ... when we did get married and when I was learning all the laws	Prior sexual experience
Importance of marriage onset	R: of family purity. I was ... um I was working in a psychiatric hospital for my training - for my nursing training. Um and one of ... I was working in a closed ward	Initial adjustment
Importance of marriage length		Premarital learning
Early shaping experiences		
Religious life, sheltered early on		
No prior sexual experience		
Pre marital experience learning the laws		

³ Key: I = Interviewer. R= Research Participant

⁴ Frum: Religious/orthodox

23	R:	actually. And one of the very, um very, ill unfortunate men	Shocking/challenging early experience
24	R:	there was a guy and he became clinically	Loosing sexual innocence
25	R:	obsessed with my marriage. And with my sexual	
26	R:	relationship of my marriage. So and it was a very open	
27	R:	Sort of kind of place, meaning you know, ideologically very	
28	R:	open. So therefore they were very happy for	Protection?
29	R:	him to continue talking about this in group therapy, in	
30	R:	group sessions and they were okay with him being	Projection? Boundaries.....
31	R:	obsessed with my marriage and it was okay.	Anger at innocence
32	R:	And I this little, schmuhy little girl, who was twenty one	Loss of innocence
33	R:	years old at the time, was very much confronted with	Vulnerable
34	R:	this and he wanted to know everything about	
35	R:	everything from me. And I was very much not protected	Lack of protection
36	R:	for some reason by the people [inaudible 0:02:15]	
37	R:	by the people who were supposed to be protecting me.	Lack of protection
38	R:	Um which then subsequently was dealt with, but I kind of	Early adjustment
39	R:	went in to this marriage, and I thank God my husband	
40	R:	was very much on the other end of the phone and I kept	Husband support
41	R:	Calling him saying help, la, la, la, I don't know what to do!	Panic
42	R:	Because to talk about this in such a ...not how I ever	Communication boundaries
43	R:	thought I was going to go in to a marriage you know.	
44	R:	And it was really a very interesting hashcacha ⁵ for	Relying on Faith
45	R:	me you know, just of how that all panned out. So I went	
46	R:	in to marriage almost very differently than I thought I was	Early marriage experience
47	R:	going to go in to it. With different thoughts, he had ...	
48	R:	He would say very vulgar things to me and talk very, very	Intrusions

⁵ Hashcacha: divine providence

Trapped, couldn't undo what said	49	R:	Openly and very ... there was no escaping it at that point.	Lack of maturity/confidence = fear
Lack of maturity to stand up against it	50	R:	Um and I was too young to really put up enough of a fuss and say, I don't tolerate this. I'm not willing to go through this. And somebody has to protect me. So therefore I did go into into you know my first you know, first night of	Need for protection
Desire to go back and defend self	51	R:		Wedding night
Need for protection	52	R:		Loss innocence
Wedding night different	53	R:		Bonding experience
Different mindset	54	R:	marriage in a different state than I thought I was going to be. Having said that, it did bring my husband and I much closer to each other, whereas normally in a frum relationship you kind of never really speak about things as openly as my husband and I did.	Communication
Bonding experience	55	R:		Husband support
Opportunity for communication	56	R:	And again since he was a doctor he was very much able to help me, he had already been through his studies and he had been through some difficult things in his ... in his experience as well. He was really able to help me a lot and we became very, very close on a different level than I think most other people become	Sharing experience
Opened up sexual communication	57	R:		Bonding experience/ social comparison
Husbands support/openness	58	R:		
Husband older more knowledgeable	59	R:		
Empathy	60	R:		
Understanding, sharing experiences	61	R:		
Closer connection	62	R:		
Shifting mindset, social comparison	63	R:		
Sense of head start	64	R:		
Early unexpected closeness and comfort	65	R:	close you know at that point. Going through these laws of family purity. Um and and and so going into it So we were already very close to each other and I think that in general I had a very, very good teacher.	Early adjustment
Supportive marriage teacher	66	R:		Pre marital learning
Superior treatment	67	R:	An excellent teacher, excellent. She was someone who I sought out you know, it wasn't anyone, she was somebody who was my, somebody who I knew to be an amazingly wise woman. And she didn't usually teach these classes but she did to me. And she gave me	Admiration of teacher
Inspiring, wise	68	R:		Wisdom
Social comparison, sense of luck	69	R:		
	70	R:		
	71	R:		
	72	R:		
	73	R:		

Special treatment	74	R:	fifteen sessions as opposed to the normal, usually people do about five or six sessions. And she spoke to me a lot about everything. The underlying meaning of it all. Um ... and she gave me tremendous amount of confidence and a tremendous amount of joy and I was very much looking forward to having a marriage that was based on these laws. I had a very interesting beginning. You know, a very solid start from my perspective and a very scary start from this guy, you know feeding me with all kinds of vulgar, crazy ideas and thoughts and confusion. Which thank god I did manage to rectify. Interestingly I never went to her. I think was so embarrassed by my life having spiraled so out of control and again, I was so young, and when I think about it now, I think how come I didn't just seek ...? I never spoke to my mother about it. I never spoke to anyone besides my husband. My future husband you know and then my husband about this guy you know and what he was putting in my head. But again I was just too young. When you get married young you're you ... you ... it's wonderful in certain ways because you're very open to anything and willing to be you know the two of you forge your relationship that is kind of harder possibly to forge when you're older, cos you come with so much more baggage. And he was the only person that I could turn to at that point. Whereas I felt that I should	Social comparison, special treatment Gaining meaning Deep understanding of F.P. Building confidence Premarital excitement Appreciation of laws Solid foundation Early shattering experience Rectification Shame/embarrassment – lack support Loss of control Lack of perceived support Husband support Husband safety Innocent Too young, early adjustment, maturing Benefits of innocence Grow together Costs of later marriage Adulthood = baggage Attachment bond formed Husband support
Benefits of support and teachings	75	R:		
Repetition of tremendous Positive start point, joy and confidence	76	R:		
Appreciation of laws and understandings for early experience	77	R:		
'solid start', safe, contained	78	R:		
Scary challenge of the man 'vulgar, crazy ideas, confusion', shattered/polluted thoughts Worked through them Ashamed of this experience Felt out of control 'spiral', fear of judgment	79	R:		
Young, innocent, lacked confidence	80	R:		
Privacy of topic, shameful	81	R:		
Husbands support	82	R:		
Infiltrating her innocent mind Empathy with young girl Untainted, benefits of innocence Open mind	83	R:		
Easier to come together Challenges of later marriage Social comparison	84	R:		
Later life baggage	85	R:		
Entire support, reliant on hub	86	R:		
	87	R:		
	88	R:		
	89	R:		
	90	R:		
	91	R:		
	92	R:		
	93	R:		
	94	R:		
	95	R:		
	96	R:		
	97	R:		
	98	R:		
	99	R:		

Appreciation for his response, 'beautifully'.	100	R:	turn to and he was responded with me beautifully. He responded	View of husband
Open communication channel	101	R:	very much appropriately, he didn't say don't talk to me about this, you know. This isn't appropriate, we shouldn't be speaking about this now, you know.	Open communication
Willing to discuss sexual topics	102	R:		Empathy
Didn't seek rabbinical input, negotiated it alone – role of rabbi	103	R:	We didn't even go to our Rab ... we just dealt with it on our own. Which and I think we dealt with it very well, you know. He was really was very wise. He was older, he's now years older than me. So he wasn't a baby. And he was able to calm me down and just say you know what this is how we are going to deal with it. Tomorrow you'll go in and you'll do this and...	Role of Rabbi
Respecting and dependent on hub	104	R:		Communication strength
Mature figure	105	R:		Conflict management skills
Able to look after her, support	106	R:		View of husband support
Guidance, support	107	R:		Father figure
	108	R:		Sense of safety
Resentment for lack of protection	109	R:	Interestingly, that he didn't say to me you need to be protected.	Husband support
Desire to be childlike/protected	110	R:	He just somehow ... he wasn't that old he was somehow willing to be my protector, emotionally and... And that was it. And we got through it okay. So the beginning of our marriage was ... was again it was interesting. Happen to have been that also I had never been on the pill before. Going on the pill I did go on the pill to regulate my cycles before I got married. Um especially as my dates were totally not going to work out, I mean my periods were all over the place. Um so I did go on the pill to regulate what was	Guidance
Need for protection	111	R:		Need for protection
Husband protector emotionally	112	R:		Disappointment
Negotiated through	113	R:		
Use of 'Interesting', avoidance of challenge, positive outlook	114	R:		Early marriage experience/adjustment
Experience of going on the pill	115	R:		
Expectation of regulating cycles	116	R:		Early marriage experience
	117	R:		Cycle regulating
Irregular cycles	118	R:		
	119	R:		
	120	R:		
	121	R:		
	122	R:	going to be. And it worked perfectly well. And then I came off the pill, as I did immediately after I got married, because I wanted to get pregnant right away and escape nursing school. But it turned	Irregular cycles
After marriage desire to have children	123	R:		Desire for pregnant
Immediacy, 'escape nursing'	124	R:		Escaping work
	125	R:		

Fearful of pregnancy	126	R:	out that I ... the other thing also I was convinced ...	Catastrophising
Fearful of fertility problems	127	R:	I had convinced myself that I was not ... that I was	Fear
Worry about future problems	128	R:	going to have infertility problems. Don't ask me why, I	Fear / projecting problems infertility
Desire to have children	129	R:	just absolutely convinced myself that, that was going to be	
Sense Family purity aids childbirth	130	R:	it. I was going to have major fertility problems and...	Fear of infertility
Appreciation for teacher	131	R:	and... that's also why I was extremely careful,	Hyper-adherence for protection
Caution and value in keeping laws	132	R:	trying to ... I was very, very, grateful for this woman's	Protection
Religious protection	133	R:	fifteen sessions, and I was going to be really, really	Silent promise
Husband challenged her projections	134	R:	careful about keeping these laws very carefully,	Appreciation of laws, protection
Questioning her fears	135	R:	because I knew that a segula to have	Commitment to laws, deal with G-d
Looking at evidence?	136	R:	children. So we both kin ... and I told my husband	Strict adherence
Lack of rationality, expectation of problems	137	R:	I said I'm going to have problems and he was wise	Fear of infertility
Convincing self of problem	138	R:	enough to say,' why do you think your gonna have problems?'	
Fearful of preg. ambivalent emotions	139	R:	He	Husband support
Erratic cycle, difficulty of period cycle 'went nuts'	140	R:	said 'You're a nurse. You should know that there's	Menstrual cycle
Three month separation	141	R:	no reason for that'. I said I just something I feel and I	
Anticipation of going to mikvah	142	R:	know. I just know it. And so the first time that I had	Loss of control
Repetition of 'start bleeding', emphasising the onset	143	R:	my period after we got married I said 'see!' See I knew	Difficulty of erratic cycle
Difficult experience, emotionally challenging	144	R:	I wasn't going to get pregnant. And he'd like lets calm	Prolonged separation
Husbands support and strength	145	R:	down about it and then my period just went absolutely	Disappointment, frustration
	146	R:	nuts. And I pretty much could not get to the mikvah for	
	147	R:	about three months. I just every time I thought I was	Challenging time – early experience
	148	R:	going to be able to go to the mikvah, um ... sixth day	Husband support
	149	R:	I would start bleeding, on day six I would start bleeding.	
	150	R:	it was a very overwhelming and emotional time for me	
		R:	but again my husband is very solid about it all. And	

Removal of blame	151	R:	kept saying listen you know why this is happening? It's	
Medical/biological explanation	152	R:	the pill. You know your hormones have to calm down.	Hormonal challenge
Fearful of ailment	153	R:	it's okay, and I kept saying oh we need to see somebody	
	154	R:	we need to go to a specialist. He'll say not yet, lets	Panicking
Husbands support, calmness	155	R:	calm down about it, it'll be fine. We played a lot of	
Utilised the time, bonding, played games	156	R:	trivial pursuit, I remember that. A lot of games we bought.	Space for building relationship
Lack of money/distraction	157	R:	We had no money at the time, we were living in a very	Little physical things
Small place, little money emphasis	158	R:	cute little place. But we had you know we had really very	
Hard to put food on the table	159	R:	little money.	
	160	R:	I remember we used to go to get Bagels on	Struggle for money
	161	R:	Friday afternoon, which is just down the road. And	
	162	R:	buy ... they had this deal that on a Fri ... as they	
	163	R:	we're closing they would basically almost giveaway like	
	164	R:	twenty of their bagels for like two shekels or something,	
	165	R:	really nothing. And that was our food for the week, which	Positive perspective – spin
Positive outlook and acceptance	166	R:	was great. So we had ... We always had lunch, for sure	Controlled mindset
	167	R:	and dinner we ... We ... You know we did it. We	
	168	R:	managed. We certainly managed. I mean he was	Appreciation
Fear of no money contrast 'certainly managed'	169	R:	working as a doctor but he was learning more	
	170	R:	In kolel ⁶ at the time he was learning and there was mamash ⁷	
Difficulty of no money	171	R:	no money going on there and we	Struggle of no money
Sense of contentment and acceptance	172	R:	really ... We're you know just about making ends meet.	
	173	R:	But	
	174	R:	I remember the one thing they said is we need to	Prioritising needs
Prioritising board games to play	175	R:	invest in board games and that we needed to do.	Separation activities
Investment in the relationship fun			So that we are ... so that we have something to do.	
Awareness of needs			And we're both relatively intellectual. And like to play	Awareness of couple needs

⁶ Kolel: Centre for Jewish education

⁷ Mamash: really

176	R:	games we'd play scrabble, we played trivial pursuit and... till we knew every single question [inaudible 0:09:17]	Playing games
177	R:	But we were fine and we had a very good time together, we really did. Despite the fact that we're not together physically. Really, really not for about the first three months. Um ... and he was amazing, he was amazing about it. And I have been you know, sort of ...Read up about different things you know and if a man's not sleeping with his wife, then that's it, he's going to be somewhere else. And I kept asking him and he kept reassuring me that he hadn't been with anybody for years and years and years and it was absolutely fine. Um ... and then ... and then	Enjoying time together Physical separation – view of husband Early marital experience Media fears Fear of separation= husband betrayal Insecurity Husband reassurance
185	R:	thank god things did settle down. And I got pregnant pretty much right after that. Much to my amazement. And um ... then subsequently ... subsequently I did I did have you know I ... I got pregnant and then I suddenly had a year off of taharat hamishpacha ⁸ right didn't do anything then. And then I was breastfeeding and I got pregnant whilst I was breastfeeding and then again I got pregnant the next year. So I was pretty much pregnant for three years straight, whilst breastfeeding. so the first three years of my marriage, I probably didn't really do too much of taharat hamishpacha. And then ... And how was that for you?	Cycle regularity Relief: Joy of pregnancy No family purity cycle – relief? No separation Loss of cycles Early marriage experience = 3yrs off
188	R:	So that's interesting – um I guess I didn't know any different and again the beginning of the marriage ...	F.P. experience -Lack of comparison
178	R:		
179	R:		
180	R:		
181	R:		
182	R:		
183	R:		
184	R:		
185	R:		
186	R:		
187	R:		
188	R:		
189	R:		
190	R:		
191	R:		
192	R:		
193	R:		
194	R:		
195	R:		
196	R:		
197	R:		
198	R:		
199	R:		
200	I:		
201	R:		
202	R:		

Sense of playing a lot of games
Able to have fun, amidst little
money and no physical contact

Physical distance
Supportive hub, repetition of
'amazing'

Insecurities, negative fantasies
Fear of hub betrayal

Sense of inadequacy as not
satisfying him
Need of reassurance
No threat

Sense of anxiety , repetition of
then
Build up to shock of pregnancy
'Amazement', relief unmet fears
Repetition 'subsequently, I did'

'a year off' off the hook
Lack of cycles
Breastfeeding-preg cycles
Preg again
3 years of minimal adherence

Lack of relevance of laws
Interesting experience

⁸ Taharat Hamishpacha: Laws of Family Purity

203	I:	You'd had the first three months of not being able to	Separation- intimacy
204	I:	be physical and then ...?	
205	R:	Correct. And then it was just a given. I know that the first	Expected physicality
206	R:	two months after I had the baby - so we obviously	Intimacy prohibition
207	R:	weren't together then. And I was so grateful because	Post baby separation
208	R:	you know you felt horrible and disgusting and I had	Appreciation of separation
209	R:	pushed for three hours with this little bubala, so I was	Exhaustion & pain labour
210	R:	extremely sore down there and I had a episiotomy and	Post Painful
211	R:	extremely for weeks and weeks after it I couldn't sit.	Pain, need for healing time
212	R:	I was one of those good good going labours that you think	Labour pain
213	R:	that you'll never recover from, but thank god you do. So	Recovery space
214	R:	I was very grateful and very frightened to be with him	Fear of intimacy
215	R:	again. Um but you know, but thank god it was you know, I	Protective space
216	R:	didn't actually and then at one point actually I remember	
217	R:	this, we were going to ... um I was going to go ...	
218	R:	I was finally going to go to mikvah ⁹ ,	Renewal – return to mikvah
219	R:	It had been about two months. We had moved in with my	
220	R:	parents because we were going to come here.	
221	R:	[Inaudible 0:11:44] come here and I moved in with	
222	R:	my parents. As we tend to lift and we're on our	
223	R:	way and we just couldn't possibly imagine you know, me	Scheduling mikvah difficulty
224	R:	going to the mikvah and nobody knowing and oh it was	Privacy of mikvah
225	R:	a Friday night as well. That's also ... so Friday nights	Complexity of mikvah timing
226	R:	So it was just very complicated. So we said, we're going to	
227	R:	splash out and we're going to go to a hotel that had a	Hotel = special intimate time
203		Shift from 3 month sep to 'a given'	
		Appreciation for Post birth separation	
		'grateful' for space	
		Use of 'you', generalising experience	
		Pain of childbirth	
		Soreness, body trauma	
		Needed time to recover	
		Hardcore labour	
		Fearful of permanent damage	
		Grateful for laws and space, fear of sex and pain	
		Sense of anxiety, appreciation for G-ds hand	
		Distressing experience	
		Excitement to go to mikva	
		After 2month post baby	
		Complexity of other knowing mikva	
		Privacy of mikva attendance	
		Difficulty of mikva timing	
		Excitement of hotel arrangement	

⁹ Mikvah: Ritual bath

228	Exciting	R:	mikvah on the premises. And it was all very	
229	Lack of control	R:	exciting. And on Friday afternoon, so I'm getting myself	Fear of period
230	Denial of period, unwanted	R:	ready and suddenly I feel period pains, i feel cramps.	Denial
231	Trampled experience,	R:	I think nah it's nothing, it's nothing, it's just feelings and	Flow of blood
232	unexpected period	R:	then suddenly I mean a tremendous amounts of blood	Break through
233	'boy oh boy' upsetting	R:	and boy oh boy was that it was just a horrible thing.	Painful experience, prolonged separation
234	Shock	R:	Horrible.	Positive spin -- mind-set control
235	Repetition of horrible	R:	Horrible. It was horrible. Horrible. I just remember	Renewal return
236	Emotional physical pain	R:	it being very, very painful and at that point I was so	Fearful
237	Positive spin	R:	good for me, because I think I'd had to get myself so	Convincing self: hindsight
238	Desire to 'do this', ready for	R:	geared up to wanting to do this, because I was really ...	Separation- Enhanced desire for husband
239	intimacy	R:	I still was you know, a bit frightened and bit sore and	Husband support
240	Allowed her to heal	R:	ultimately it was a very, very positive thing. It was a very	Husbands support
241	Spin disappointment into	R:	positive thing because I felt so devastated and so let down	Ability to work through issues and take
242	positive	R:	and at least he was fine and rock and just saying	positive
243	Devastation and disappointment,	R:	Listen this is gods will. Absolutely fine. No problem	Renewal excitement
244	leads to desire and longing	R:	great let's enjoy the weekend in a hotel. I'm like	Strong memory
245	Husbands support	R:	No you mustn't be enjoying this, and its so	Menstrual discomfort/ emotional pain
246	Seeing G-ds hand	R:	Pathetic and he'd be like no, no, no. You know	Hormonal challenges
247	Focus on the positive	R:	I'm in a hotel, when do we ever get to do this? And it was	
248	Versus focus on the negative	R:	very exciting. We've subsequently been many times away.	
249	Struggle b/n mindsets	R:	But you know we always remember that time, being in this	
250	Difficulty accepting separation	R:	hotel, the first we were being in a hotel and we were like	
251	Strong memory	R:	[laughs] the reason we're doing ... and also I was in	
252	Laugh in retrospect	R:	a lot of pain, I was in a lot of discomfort. Because I had a	
253	Physical pain	R:	very strong period or whatever it was. You know, my	
254	Menstrual pain	R:	hormones were kinda kicking in again, very violently.	
	Hormonal challenges 'violently'			

255	Experience of intimacy	R:	So that was that and eventually we need it and how	Experience of intimacy
256	Shifting focus, avoidance	R:	was it for me in general to be ... to be together? So it's	View of laws – beauty
257	Laws of FP 'beautiful'	R:	interesting as in the beginning of your marriage um ...	Desire to teach the laws
258	Teach the laws	R:	Taharat hamishpacha is such a beautiful ... I mean I do ... I	Pride
259	Desire to share experiences	R:	Teach it quite a bit, and actually tonight I'm going to	Importance of mikvah
260	Proud of the investment	R:	teach. Um they've opened up a new Mikvah there,	Pay it forward
261		R:	of their own money –The Synagogues	Excited by teaching
262		R:	are not ... do not fund it.	Sympathy for others
263		R:	They opened it themselves and they are doing a whole	Social comparison
264	Sharing with other women	R:	programme there for women, which is very nice. And	Laws instill newness/excitement
265		R:	I'm actually teaching there tonight. Doing a five week	Benefits of laws
266		R:	course for them. So and tonight were actually doing the	Value
267	'nitty gritty laws' specific laws	R:	nitty gritty of the laws and... and always say to people that	3 yrs of minimal observance.
268	Appreciation of laws, social comparison	R:	I have no idea how anybody manages without	Experience of no cycle
269	Need of structure	R:	taharat hamishpacha because I ... it becomes very	Marital framework
270	Fear of staleness	R:	staid would be the word you know. And yes once I think	Benefits of separation
271		R:	subsequent to my actually being able to practice	Enhanced intimacy joy
272	Experience of irrelevance of laws	R:	Taharat hamishpacha properly - you know I had a three year	Requiring effort
273	Use of word 'break'	R:	break in between kids, subsequently, so there were	Instilled values
274	Time without sep-intimacy cycles	R:	years when I really was every single month without	
275		R:	two weeks on and two weeks off, and once you get that in	
276	'get that into place', sense it takes time to adjust to	R:	to place and you understand you know the ... the ... this is	
277	Fits well with marriage	R:	how a marriage is supposed to work, and how it's	
278	'supposed to look' sense of ingredients to make it, enhances joy	R:	supposed to look and the joy of being together and the	
279	Sensitivity, effort to make it special	R:	trying very hard to make everything special for each other.	
280	Experience of no laws	R:	And that when you are together on a regular basis um ...	

281	R:	you know I've been pregnant and nursing for a long	Benefits of f.p. = foundations for intimacy
282	R:	time. That very much stays with you. I mean you still	
283	R:	need to work on it. To keep that understanding as part	Relationship needs work
284	R:	of your relationship, but it sets everything up so	Provides positive framework
285	R:	beautifully for you, that I can't imagine how anybody ...	Lack of understanding
286	R:	somebody would have to be so intuitive and wise	f.p. laws are wise and intuitive
287	R:	and in tune with their own emotions against everything they	f.p. above human conception
288	R:	feel	
289	R:	almost you know but to be together ...	
290	R:	What do you mean by that?	Desire for intimacy
291	R:	What I mean by that you know you feel that you want	
292	R:	To be together with your husband you know. And you feel	Modern society = act on feeling
293	R:	like ... and you're certainly taught that in Western Society	
294	R:	that go with whatever you feel. You know, follow your	Society lack boundaries
295	R:	heart. If you feel something ... if you feel you know and	
296	R:	follow your drives, follow your emotions, they're no need	Lack of boundaries = frightening
297	R:	To to to hold yourself back from anything.	Fear of feelings
298	R:	If you feel you need it then you deserve it you know.	Desire = overwhelming – shopping
299	R:	And that's very much pumped in to certainly a woman's	External threat
300	R:	you know ... people who are trying to get you to buy	
301	R:	products. Very much will I mean it is	Feeding addiction
302	R:	consistently trying to advertise you know, feed your	Lack of boundaries in society
303	R:	addiction. Feed it. You know why why hold back. There's	
304	R:	no need to hold back you should just be feeding	Marriage = feed addiction
305	R:	whatever it is you want to be doing. So therefore, in a	
306	R:	marriage one would probably assume that until it's	Addiction burnout
307	R:	used up you feed it. Right? But every addiction at some	
		point will be used up and certainly if it's not fed	Fear of sexual burnout

308		R:	Appropriately	
309		R:	it's going to become dangerous and when I don't buy	Addiction = danger
310		R:	the same pair of shoes even though I love them, every	Need for structure/self control
311	Resistance towards western 'newness'	R:	single time, you know, I've got to have newness, and	Fear of unlimited desire
312	Happiness = newness	R:	newness and newness. And the key for life for sure ...	Need for newness
313	Perhaps underlying fears of getting old	R:	the key to happiness in life is a concept of newness.	Key to life = newness
314	Key to depression	R:	everybody who feels that things are old, that's where	Depression = oldness
315	Resistance to newness	R:	depression sets in. And happiness is newness. So	Happiness = newness
316	Sense of prompting and avoiding boredom	I:	you know, if you're not going to be intuitive you'd think	
317	Need to ensure it doesn't run out	R:	you'd want to be with the same person until that	Expectation of burnout
318	Sense that newness leads to divorce	R:	runs out. Go somewhere else until that runs out.	Newness = breakdown
319	This ritual prevents going elsewhere	R:	But obviously if you were very forward thinking and	Wisdom of laws
320	Appreciation for ability to restrain/self control	R:	very wise and intuitive you'd be intuitive to the fact that	Safety/ containment
321	Learnt from teachings	R:	no. i should hold back and I should hold myself back	Need for boundaries/restraint
322	Social comparison	R:	from certain things. But I can't imagine anybody really	Value of observance
323	Appreciation and respect for relig	R:	being able to really understand that for themselves.	Appreciation for laws
324		R:	This why it's such a beautiful thing in Jewish ...	
325		I:	So you're kinda saying that it instills newness each time?	
326	F.P. instills newness	R:	Right. So that is what I'm saying. Yes. So what	Fp framework for newness
327	Appropriate framework	R:	taharat hamishpacha does it gives you that. ... it gives you	Containment over fears
328	Wisdom repetition	R:	a framework for newness. You know and nobody is wise	Beyond human ability
329	Unnatural concept and way of thinking	R:	enough to build themselves a framework for newness.	
330	Seems to have developed this theory	R:	because that's not how we think about life. And I don't	
331	'healthy newness'	R:	know if anybody is really educated in that way.	Fearful of burnout
332		R:	You should be looking for healthy newness. Just sounds	FP instills healthy newness – framework

Superficial humour, depth of concept	333	R:	ridiculous. You know, in school healthy newness,	Values of healthy newness
I felt v drawn by this point	334	R:	but I try to teach that to my kids. That when things	Beauty of newness
	335	R:	are getting a little bit ... but that's why	
Beauty of change, parallel changes of life to f.p. laws enthuse change/newness	336	R:	it's so beautiful that you're not born	Healthy newness
	337	R:	at one age and carry on the same age until you die.	Beauty of change
Growth oriented person, mind-set thought processes	338	R:	You know, you're ... everything is a constant sense of	
Sense of life cycle changes, newness	339	R:	growth and even being thirty is new and being forty is new	Joy of healthy change
Lack of certainty/control	340	R:	and being fifty is new, being sixty is new. You know, and	Social comparison
Control over outlook, 'joyful'	341	R:	That's that should be seen as a joyful thing as opposed to a	Appreciation for life
	342	R:	Depressing things because it's beautiful to watch the kids	
Lives in the present moment	343	R:	grow. People say to me oh there's nothing to do in the	Beauty of children development
Appreciation for the present	344	R:	winter with my kids, it's so boring and I think my gosh	Convincing self – strong tones
Social comparison	345	R:	just watch them. You know, it's so exciting. There's new	F.p. Gives newness = benefits
Joy in childrearing	346	R:	things that they do every single day and be involved	Benefits of protective framework
Newness = joy, joy from kids	347	R:	in that and be joyful and newness is the most joyful	Pain of separation
Convincing self?	348	R:	thing that we can have. And embrace it and enjoy it.	Appreciation of boundaries
f.p. gives framework –	349	R:	it's its ... and so taharat hamishpacha gives you that	Separation benefits = no rejection
Creates pain and longing for the other	350	R:	amazing framework where ... Yes there's a pain of	Renewal of interest
Beauty in pain/longing	351	R:	not being together, but how beautiful is that pain?	
Enjoyment of succeeding restraint	352	R:	You know, and how beautiful is that sense of we cant.	
Use of 3 rd person,	353	R:	and it's not a matter of you don't want to, I don't want to.	
Avoids rejection, maintains desire	354	R:	I'm rejecting you, you're rejecting me instead both of us	
Maintains bond, flirting excitement	355	R:	are kinda in this together in a sense so we're flirting with	
	356	R:	each other a little bit because we kinda want it but we	

Awareness of 'brick wall' impossible to have it	357	R:	know that there's a brick wall between us. The row of	Boundary for intimacy
Unavailable, split by wall – roses	358	R:	hedges in between us. Roses ... right what do they say	Barrier=passion
Making analogy prettier	359	R:	hedge of roses between us, which we can't pass over,	
Desire whilst knowledge of not allowed, repetition 'really want'	360	R:	even though we really want to, we really want to, we're	Renewal desire
Mutual desire, repetition	361	R:	both in this together and we really want to, we really want	Desire
Coming together=joyful newness	362	R:	to but we can't. And then when we actually get together	Finally renewal
Excitement	363	R:	there's... there's ... there's again this joyful newness and	Renewal of newness
Priceless, amazing effects	364	R:	... and excitement, that ... that ... that is	
Repetition of priceless, social comp	365	R:	priceless. It's absolutely priceless and people...	Appreciation on laws
	366	R:	I was actually looking the other day online cos I was	Social comparison
	367	R:	reading on, I just was ... maybe even last night,	
	368	R:	or it was a very long time ago, might have been once	
Example of this positive outlook	369	R:	I um ... and I was reading about this guy,	
	370	R:	he is actually an orthodox Jew. Apparently he was	
Man on Oprah	371	R:	on O I don't know if you come across him =	
	372	R:	and he has rabbinical ordination from	
Family therapist – why men cheat	373	R:	a place in and he has um ... he wears a keep a kippah	Religious man
Underlying fear of betrayal	374	R:	on O and he is a family therapist who talks a lot	
	375	R:	about why men cheat and what women	Fear of betrayal: containment through laws
	376	R:	can do. And and an an so some people would say, what do you	
Fearful of outcome	377	R:	mean about men? And he says I'm not excusing men.	Convincing self
	378	R:	But you understand there's ... and he talks a lot about	Need for containment
			shalom bais ¹⁰ . And he really talks about shalom bais - peace	
Peace in the home, repetition	379	R:	in	Peace in the home

¹⁰ Shalom Bais: Peace in the home

Religion and home peace, purity, happiness	380	R:	the home. And the Torah ¹¹ 's concept of how to ... of how to bring about peace and purity and happiness within the home. And he hadn't ... I didn't hear him mention this Concept of abstinence but he talks about ... and some of the women who really cottoned on where just speaking in such wise ways, you know. They were saying listen my husband is ... was not faithful, and again in Judaism that's the end of the marriage but outside of Judaism you know there's a way back. Um So my husband is not ... was not faithful but she ... But he but I now understand why he wasn't faithful and I can either spend the time being Angry about it and and see that as something that defines my marriage or I can move on and understand that and try to take a lesson of why it was that he was unfaithful. And what we can try and do and look towards making this happy ... making this marriage a happy marriage. And some of the men were saying but I don't understand you know, why aren't you angry about the fact that he was and that, why isn't that your main drive? And she said why would I want it to be my main drive? Why would I want unhappiness to be my main drive in life? I want happiness, that's what I want most first and foremost in my life. I want happiness and that's what I want. And he said that's brilliant.	f.p.= framework for peace/purity
Sense of gaining control through wisdom	384	R:	the women who really cottoned on where just speaking	Story of women's experiences
Unfaithful husbands	385	R:	in such wise ways, you know. They were saying listen	Jewish approach to affairs = end
Sense of way to work through it	386	R:	my husband is ... was not faithful, and again in Judaism	
Gaining understanding helps move on	387	R:	that's the end of the marriage but outside of Judaism you	
	388	R:	know there's a way back. Um So my husband is not ... was	
	389	R:	not faithful but she ... But he but I now understand why	Understanding of affair
	390	R:	he wasn't faithful and I can either spend the time being	Gaining control
Choosing what attitude to take	391	R:	Angry about it and and see	Positive thinking
	392	R:	that as something that defines my marriage	
	393	R:	or I can move on and understand that and try to take	
How to move on	394	R:	a lesson of why it was that he was unfaithful. And what we	Goal of marital happiness
Priority of marital happiness	395	R:	can try and do and look towards making this happy ...	
Desire goal of marital happiness	396	R:	making this marriage a happy marriage. And some of the	
	397	R:	men were saying but I don't understand you know, why	
	398	R:	aren't you angry about the fact that he was and that, why	Cognitive control
	399	R:	isn't that your main drive? And she said why would I want	Choice of happiness
Sense of control of happiness	400	R:	it to be my main drive? Why would I want unhappiness	Desire for happiness
Goal of happiness, key to it	401	R:	to be my main drive in life? I want happiness, that's what	
Main priority in life	402	R:	I want most first and foremost in my life. I want happiness	
Awe, emphasis on amazing	403	R:	and that's what I want. And he said that's brilliant.	Cognitive control: Value of positive thinking
	404	R:	That's amazing. You know and the forward thinking of	Acceptance of challenges
Focus of forward thinking, f.p. is one step ahead, preventative	405	R:	being able to say but I don't get everything that I want, but	

¹¹ Torah: Bible

Appreciation for self restraint, fearful of indulging, letting go	406	R:	i don't have everything that I want. But surely this not	Boundaries - safety
Pain and happiness are combined	407	R:	Good? but it's happiness that I want. And in order to	Pursuit of happiness
Sees them as one and the same	408	R:	have happiness - pain and happiness	Pain and happiness intermingled
Example of pain of children and joy	409	R:	are extremely intermingled.	
Extreme ends of spectrum	410	R:	I mean we always say what is your greatest pain in the	Greatest pain and joy = children
F.P. is seen as investing in pain for joy	411	R:	world and it's your children. What is your greatest	
Similar in life – pain=gain	412	R:	happiness in the world and it's your children. You know	Parallel with f.p. laws: investment
G-d reference, relig. mindset, v boundaries	413	R:	how can that be? Because the more that you put in	Investment in kids = enhanced emotion
'were v grateful', collective person	414	R:	to something the more painful something is, the more	Belief in god
Use of I, appreciation of structure to live	415	R:	effort and more pain the greater the joy is. And there's no	Appreciation of laws
Bible suits humans, tailor made for her	416	R:	getting around that. That's the way that god created us	Framework: safety
Complexity of human mind, enjoyment of fulfillment in growth	417	R:	and that's the way that he ... And we're very grateful, I'm	Tailor made
Growth oriented person	418	R:	very grateful that he gave us a framework within to live	Bible fit with human psyche
	419	R:	the way that he created us. And this is the greatest example	
	420	R:	of how the Torah is tailor made to ... to you know ... to	F.P: Growth oriented process
	421	R:	human psyche and human ability to grow and become	
	422	R:	greater. Um Well ...	
	423	I:	SoI mean particularly what you're saying is amazing	
	424	I:	you said a lot ... I guess you kind of went through	
	425	I:	this process of three months of not being together and	
	426	I:	then three years of almost kind of being able to be	
	427	I:	together and then cycles of keeping the laws. How has	
	428	I:	that kind of impacted your relationship? How do you kind of	
Intimacy v separation	429	I:	experienced relationship in the times when you are not	

430	Appreciation of separation within marriage	I: able to physical and then the ...?	Intimacy – separation cycle
431		R: Okay. Right. So I would say that the times that we're	View of separation
432		R: not able to be physical are wonderful times of our	Early separation benefits
433		R: marriage. As I said at the very beginning of our	Relationship foundation
434	Marriage onset separate	R: marriage started off that way. Which we always feel was	Value of separation
435	Strong basis for marriage, more than physicality	R: a great basis for our relationship. Where we had to	Communication benefits
436	Enhanced opportunity for communication, learning, understanding, appreciation for space	R: talk to each other. Find out a lot about each other.	Separation benefits
437	Opportunity to bond	R: we played a lot of games. We understood what we ...you know	Building relationship
438	Learn each other, sense of great depth	R: our strengths and our weaknesses. And we wanted to	Psychological space
439	Desire to be close with other	R: spend a lot of time together. And it wasn't at all about	Developing understanding
440	Beyond physicality	R: anything physical. Not that we didn't want to be physical	Desire for physicality
441	Desire for physicality, created space for communication	R: with each other but we kind of just removed that from the	Building on other parts of the rel
442	Space to learn to communicate	R: equation. And therefore, if I was upset about something,	Developing communication skills
443	Sense of being soothed to communicate	R: he was able to talk to me about it. And I remember the first	Developing communication skills
444	Rare miscommunications, stood out	R: our first major like miscommunication. It was an amazing	Separation benefits – miscommunications
445	Appreciation of separation	R: thing that we were not able to be physical with each other.	
446	Her emotional needs sig	R: Because I remember that at one point, this guy was	
447	Upset re man at work	R: driving me nuts in the hospital. And I was ... and I came	
448		R: home and we were married for about four weeks at the	
449		R: time. Right? And I came home and I was stewing on	Feeling hurt angry
450	Sense of women's role to get emotional, moody	R: the couch as a woman does, you know. Stewing and	

451	R:	stewing and stewing, waiting for him to come home.	Husband saviour from pain
452	R:	Just feeling how bad I felt about myself. How unprotected	
453	R:	I was how vulnerable I was. How young I was	Desire for protection
454	R:	How ridiculous this was. How nobody was you know	
455	R:	helping me and... it was ... just terrible, terrible, woe is to	
456	R:	me, woe is to me.	Hurting
457	R:	You know, and enjoying the fact that he was	Relief
458	R:	about to walk in to the door and just make everything	View of husband
459	R:	better. And that was what he was going to do. And	Relying on husband
460	R:	everything was going to get better. And again we couldn't	Emotional comfort not through physicality
461	R:	touch each other but he was going to come and sit with	Physical barriers
462	R:	me and talk to me and spend time with me and just tell	Seeking validation
463	R:	me how great I was and just how wonderful I was for just	Opportunity for communication
464	R:	dealing with all this. And how right I was to be upset and	
465	R:	validate every one of my feelings and that was it.	Desire for comfort
466	R:	And I was just stewing there and sitting there on the couch	
467	R:	I don't know what i looked like. But I must have looked like	Shame
468	R:	an angry female. And he walked in the front door and	Drawn description
469	R:	he was very hungry he said to me later, I came in and	
470	R:	obviously I had done nothing about dinner, I mean	
471	R:	it was nothing, and it was all about me, and	Self focus
472	R:	about my feelings and about what was about you know,	
473	R:	what's going on in my heart? Dinner was nothing	Intense emotions
474	R:	compared to my emotion.	
475	R:	And he walked in and he saw me on the	
476	R:	couch, and I didn't look up, I didn't greet him at all,	
477	R:	because I was waiting for him to come over and just you	
478	R:	know be with me completely. And he saw me sitting on	Learning about each other

emotional closeness					
Crossed communication	479	R:	the couch, and he thought, oh she needs a few	Perceptions	
Unmet needs	480	R:	minutes on her own, you know before she can before	Miscommunication	
Disaster, panic anxiety	481	R:	I should come in to her life. You know, she needs a bit	Shocked/let down	
Anger fear	482	R:	of time on her own. So he quietly let himself back out of	Lack of support	
Lack support	483	R:	the house and walked away. Oh my goodness.	Need unmet	
Real fear of rejection evoked	484	R:	What have I married? He can't deal with me. He can't	Fear of abandonment	
Abandonment	485	R:	deal with me, this it. All those thoughts all those things,	Resentment	
	486	R:	all those words about how he'll always be there for me.	Empathy	
	487	R:	He's not there for me. That's it. And he just ran away	Understanding	
	488	R:	right? He runs away the first opportunity ...	Emotional space	
	489	R:	you know? What an ogre, what a horrible human.	Misunderstanding	
	490	R:	And I mean, poor guy, when he came back fifteen minutes	Husband superiority	
	491	R:	later thinking he was the biggest tsaddik ¹² in the	Loss of control	
	492	R:	world for having left me. You know, being starving and	Husband support	
Miscommunication, lack of understanding			having left you know me to my own devices, kind of		
Real example of normal com, that fp. Helps learn the other and coping	493	R:	gathering my thoughts together. Walked in to you know		
Shame in self vulnerability and anger	494	R:	not a very pleasant sight I was like wow		
Accusing the other	495	R:	How dare you do that! he was just like 'huh'. But I thought		
Confusion, 'huh'	496	R:	huh, huh, huh! And I just didn't let him get a word in		
	497	R:	edgeways. I genuinely thought that was the right thing to		
	498	R:	do. You know and he just stood there and let me have		
	499	R:	a go and... and rant and rant and rant. I said well don't		
Going on and on, 'rant', paints negative pic of self	500	R:	you have anything to say for yourself. And he was like		
	501	R:	I'm sorry? You know because he just had no idea what to		
Able to communicate	502	R:	say. Um ... and then he said can I make you something		
	503	R:			

¹² Tsaddik: kind man

Learn to manage conflict and support the other	504	R:	to eat? And I said okay. You know and he rustled up a	Comfort
	505	R:	bagel, as we always had with some eggs you know	Developing communication skills
Providing what he needs	506	R:	[inaudible 0:26:22] and I said but I don't understand why	
	507	R:	you left? And he said I thought you needed some time	
	508	R:	on your own? And I said how could you think that?	Gender differences
Different need and gender diff	509	R:	You know if a woman is sitting there how could you	Different needs w/n couples
	510	R:	think that? And he goes because I'm not a woman. I don't	
	511	R:	know. You know, and then I remembered that a few weeks	Distinct coping behaviours
Difficulty not knowing e thing	512	R:	after that. He was a bit upset about something and I never	
	513	R:	found out what it was. But something that had gone on	
Unsure what he was feeling?	514	R:	and he was feeling a bit ... and he'd had to work through	
Pause to rationalise	515	R:	in his mind. And I remember coming over and being just	Emotionally smothering
Providing what she needs	516	R:	all over him. Not physically, but emotionally just like	
	517	R:	can I help? What's wrong? You know face me, look	Need for emotional connection
Her need to connect emotionally and verbalise all feelings	518	R:	at me, talk to me. This and that. And he was kind of	
	519	R:	when is this going to end? You know, when is she going	His need for emotional space
	520	R:	to go away and leave me alone? I just need to sort this	
His need to digest and process alone	521	R:	out on my own. Because we obviously dealt with things in	Gender differences
Acceptance and understanding of diff coping strategies	522	R:	such a different way. But the fact that we were able to	Communication strength
	523	R:	speak about it plus it just makes everything better you	
Physicality helps quick fix	524	R:	know, which sometimes happens by just being	Physicality removes need to talk
	525	R:	physical with each other um ... and just hugging you	Communicating through difficulties
	526	R:	know and we were just able to talk it through and say	
Able to learn to communicate needs	527	R:	these are my needs. You know and I need you to ...	Separation = developed awareness of needs
Learning of own needs	528	R:	When I feeling like this, this is how I need you to respond.	Gender differences
Sense of rejection	529	R:	And shocked the heck out of me. I said really? You	
	530	R:	don't want me to be anywhere near you when you're	Husbands need for emotional space

Difficult to understand/accept	531	R:	upset? I mean what kind of ...? He's like I guess it's just men. He's like I think if you ask most men they would say that. I said No. Definitely not my brothers. He said	Gender diff Rejection
Resistant, defensive = digesting new understanding	532	R:		
	533	R:	if your brother was upset would he want you? I'm like	
	534	R:	I can't remember a time when I've done that but I'm sure,	Learning about the other
	535	R:	surely you know. If they're upset I don't know, like they	
	536	R:	would talk to me about it. He said I know your brother,	Reappraising behaviour
	537	R:	there's no way they would do that. I said, maybe not but	
	538	R:	my father for sure. And I'm like ... and he helped me	Communication
	539	R:	understand that was how ... you know that it wasn't ...	Growth: building trust
	540	R:	that there was a way forward in this marriage. I just	
Fear of challenges too great to bear	541	R:	suppose he just fe ... And I thought that's it. This is	Growth together: containing emotions
	542	R:	over. You know, there's no way I can live with	Fear of ending/breakup
	543	R:	somebody who can ... who is so different than me and	Panic
	544	R:	so horrible and so just ...just unfeeling and unkind	Changing perceptions
Acceptance and understanding of difference	545	R:	and ungenerous. But we were able to really, really work it	Resentful
			through. Right at the beginning because we just had the	
Opportunity of F.P. gave space to work through these differences	546	R:	Opportunity	Working it out
	547	R:	to do so. And we weren't going anywhere and we weren't	Separation provided space early on to work
	548	R:	going	
	549	R:	anyway, and there was nothing else you know, even	Priority of relationship
	550	R:	calling to us. You know there was nothing there besides	
	551	R:	a couch and food and talking and that was it. And it took	
Sense of focus and main goal w/o distraction helped	552	R:	us a year. And say our first year was full of these kinds	Limited distractions
	553	R:	of things and it would always happen when we ... we not	Early adjustment
Adjustment towards each other	554	R:	able to be together. We always felt this interesting	
Work done during separation period	555	R:	tension between the two of us, of not being able to	Separation – early = fights
Separation tension	556	R:		Tension

Adjustments to sexual needs	557	R:	be together. And we didn't understand where it was coming from right. Because you're two uninitiated to the fact that it was sexual tension. and he didn't know how to behave right, you know, we didn't really know how to behave around each other at that point because we wanted. You know, I kept being taught,	Lack of insight
Unsure how to manage desires unmet	558	R:	you don't want to be too flirtatious at that point, because you don't want him to you know become aroused in anyway. And so you kind of feel like okay, well how do we ...? And there was a little bit of tension but it brought up such ... we were able to just deal with this kind of issues. You know, and I'd say well you don't take the garbage out enough. You don't offer me help.	Sexual tension
Strict relig adherence	559	R:	you don't this and that. And he was brought up in a family where help was not telling his expected did you what so ever at all. And you know and all those different things that you go through we often came to them at times when we were not able to be physical. Um and at times when we were able to be physical	Ealy adjustment
Fear of arousing him, being to blame	560	R:	that's kind of all we really focused on. Everything was very much glossed over. Everything was just about being physical. And when we weren't able to be physical, it was just so much a better thing.	Restraint
Shifting, stopping, sense of uncertainty, anxiety	561	R:	So it sound like in a way the times you were not able to be physical was the time you really worked at things? But was it any ...? It sounds like in any, in a bit a way	Holding back
Tension brought up provided material to work with	562	R:		Fear of sin
Figuring out household divisions	563	R:		Unsure how to behave
Managing space and boundaries	564	R:		Managing early tension
Learning about family of origin and expectations	565	R:		Learning process
Separation created space to deal with issues	566	R:		Household chores
Intimacy periods 'glossed over'	567	R:		Frustration, lack of support
Easier communication when non-physical	568	R:		Separation = addressing disputes
	569	R:		Separation space
	570	R:		Physical times = focused
	571	R:		Physical priority
	572	R:		Separation benefits
	573	R:		
	574	R:		
	575	R:		
	576	R:		
	577	R:		
	578	R:		
	579	R:		
	580	R:		
	581	R:		
	582	R:		

Sep = growth oriented	583	I: that was a harder period in the ...?	that was a harder period in the ...?	Separation = growth oriented
	584	R: I guess it was a more growth orientated period I would say.	I guess it was a more growth orientated period I would say.	Separation investment
	585	R: Harder in terms of yeah ...	Harder in terms of yeah ...	
	586	I: A lot more work in [overspeaking]	A lot more work in [overspeaking]	
More work	587	R: A lot more work.	A lot more work.	
	588	I: I don't mean in a necessarily negative aspect.	I don't mean in a necessarily negative aspect.	Separation benefits
	589	R: I wouldn't say it was in a negative way. I would say yes.	I wouldn't say it was in a negative way. I would say yes.	
Separation = work	590	R: That was where the work was involved. Because	That was where the work was involved. Because	Intimacy periods positive
	591	R: I felt like you know, being physically together we were very happy. We were very, very happy when we were together	I felt like you know, being physically together we were very happy. We were very, very happy when we were together	Ease of physical times
Intimacy = happy, close	592	R: You could be comforted easier?	You could be comforted easier?	
	593	I: Yes. In two seconds and also it's just much easier to say, I love you at that point. And there's so much ...	Yes. In two seconds and also it's just much easier to say, I love you at that point. And there's so much ...	Physical closeness
Less space for communication	594	R: there's so many endorphins going through your body	there's so many endorphins going through your body	Intimacy benefits
Physical closeness makes love easier	595	R: you know that you kind of well ... feels much better.	you know that you kind of well ... feels much better.	
Hormones aid	596	R: Whereas when you can't even touch each other, um ...	Whereas when you can't even touch each other, um ...	Separation strain
Freeing of boundaries = easier	597	R: you know, we don't even we don't pass each other things.	you know, we don't even we don't pass each other things.	Strict adherence
Strict adherence	598	R: It just felt like ... I remember at the time, you know just to finish	It just felt like ... I remember at the time, you know just to finish	
	599	R: what I thought, that before it just obviously much more	what I thought, that before it just obviously much more	
Separation, leaves you vulnerable	600	R: raw you know. There's no glossing over anything. It's real	raw you know. There's no glossing over anything. It's real	Separation = communication
No quick fix,	601	R: deep talking connection, based on our psyches. And and	deep talking connection, based on our psyches. And and	Psychological bonding
Need to connect deeper	602	R: emotional needs as opposed to anything else.	emotional needs as opposed to anything else.	Developing emotional awareness
Emotional connection, heavy	603	R: and it builds stress, a very, very strong foundation	and it builds stress, a very, very strong foundation	Foundation building
Creates more stress, strong basis for marriage	604	R: certainly in those first three months and also that time	certainly in those first three months and also that time	Early adjustment
Early marriage	605	R: after. After my son was born. You know those first	after. After my son was born. You know those first	
Following births	606	R: two months after he was born... Which was a lot a lot of	two months after he was born... Which was a lot a lot of	Post birth hormones
	607	R: emotion anyway. And I was an emotional wreck after he	emotion anyway. And I was an emotional wreck after he	Difficulties after birth
Emotionally challenging	608	R: was born. I had a very hard labour. And looked at	was born. I had a very hard labour. And looked at	Labour effects
Vulnerable 'wreck', painful	609			
	610			

labour					
Difficult gender discrim, lack of understanding	611	R:	my husband, as howd do you lay claim on this baby the	Labour resentment	
	612	R:	same way that I do, when you haven't gone through		
Challenge of diff roles/experiences	613	R:	anything that I just went through? I mean you say you	Lack of understanding	
	614	R:	feel bad for me but you have no idea you know?	Need for empathy	
Desire to be around similar others	615	R:	I often want to be in the comfort of my friends who've	Desire for comfort from similar others	
	616	R:	gone through that as opposed to my husband, who		
	617	R:	was this big pretender you know? And thinking he	Lack of connection	
Sense he couldn't feel her pain	618	R:	knew because he had delivered babies before. But yeah,		
	619	R:	he had no idea what it was like. And he at one point, made	Feeling powerful	
Little space for his emotions	620	R:	this very sad mistake of saying 'you know it's really		
	621	R:	hard for me too'? [Laughs]. To which he got a 'oh yeah!'		
He has learnt how to be with her	622	R:	Um you know and he never said that again. But		
Use of humour to convey deeper msg about challenges of difference	623	R:	he always says to the husbands 'tut, tut, tut, don't say		
	624	R:	that to your wife, Because they don't really want to		
Learning to communicate	625	R:	hear that. You think they want to, they don't want that.	Communication needs	
Need for support	626	R:	They just want, yeah, I know it seems too hard. Gosh,	Support/comfort	
	627	R:	I was so scared for you. It seems so, so hard you		
	628	R:	know, but that's all they want to hear'. And how well you	Validation	
Need/desire for admiration	629	R:	did and how beautiful you were in the process. And it	Seeking approval	
	630	R:	was just amazing you are you know. It's a very emotional		
Very needy emotional time = pain = learning	631	R:	thing. But it really obviously ... we learned a lot about		
	632	R:	all kinds of emotional needs at that point in our lives. We	Early adjustment = learning curve	
Enhancing closeness through pain	633	R:	really did but I remember just the ... also the closeness	Bonding	
Intimacy of special laws	634	R:	that brings to you. And the intimacy that it affords you	Enhances closeness and intimacy	
Privacy b/t u, ur secret	635	R:	Being not a. being the only people that know about this right?	Privacy	

Enjoyment of the privacy, isolated/special	636	R:	At the time, no one knows what you're up to, in your relationship with your husband. And I remember at one point, um we were living in the old city, we had, we	Special secret
	637	R:		Story w/girls
	638	R:		Example of niddah practical difficulties, privacy, but also enhanced desire
Open home	639	R:	had our son and we had done a fellowships programme and there were a lot of girls who were in the old city at the time and coming back to us and there were like	Story explicating privacy of topic
	640	R:	three girls that kind of turned up at our door you know, we used to give them dinner and you know, and shmooze	
Different roles	641	R:	and would often go off and learn and whatever, and I would spend time them. And one day three girls turned up. Three girls who I was very, very close to turned up. And I was in the bath getting ready to go to the mikvah right? So he didn't know how to handle it,	Mikvah preparation
	642	R:		Privacy of topic
Mikvah preparation	643	R:	because he very honestly kind of said 'oh'. He said she's not around now. But she'll be back later. You know she'll be back later. She'll come back like an hour or two. And they said well actually you know, and they were very, very close. So they were very used to our house and they'd take care of the baby and whatever.	Avoidance of topic
Difficulty of timing and space for it	644	R:	And they were like, you know, we'll just hang out with . We'll just stay here. We'll wait is that okay? You know and he didn't say no. He said sure. Sure. No problem of course. You know, guys take books, whatever, do whatever, you want basically. We had all these books and they would read, and they would do whatever. And they would eat and then they would whatever they wanted to do in our house. You know, [inaudible 0:33:45] so this was like, um okay. So and I could hear him outside,	Lacking assertiveness
Uncertain how to manage privacy	645	R:		Intrusion of others
Avoidance of topic	646	R:		Welcoming of guests
	647	R:		
	648	R:		
	649	R:		
	650	R:		
	651	R:		
	652	R:		
	653	R:		
	654	R:		
	655	R:		
	656	R:		
Difficulty communicating with others needs	657	R:		
	658	R:		
	659	R:		
	660	R:		
	661	R:		
	662	R:		
Plotting b/n them = bonding	663	R:		

Planning an escape Secrecy of mikvah	664	R:	that you know, outside the bathroom. So he closed the	Mikvah stories
	665	R:	door - thank god we had a ... the bathroom was closer	
Shock/drama of returning, sense of discomfort, anxiety.	666	R:	To the outside door so I was able to go out without	Planning mikvah attendance
	667	R:	them seeing that I was there. You know, and I closed the	
Negotiated return from mikva Special welcome, he'd be homes	668	R:	door very gently. Um ... I don't know if they knew	Need for privacy
	669	R:	that I felt, they didn't ... never mentioned it. Um and I then	
Important for her	670	R:	I came back, came back right? So	Husband home after mikvah
	671	R:	as he was there, um ... cos we had this thing also that	
Need for affection	672	R:	when you go ... when ... that when I come back from	Different needs Equalising roles/ responsibility Return from mikvah – greeted Positive renewal
	673	R:	the mikvah that he has to be there. Like that was something	
Desire or privacy Lack of confidence to assert boundaries	674	R:	that we decided. Like even if it was a time you know,	Renewed desire for spouse
	675	R:	In the winter, when he would be learning whatever it is.	
Longing to be alone	676	R:	It was very important that he be there. Not anymore. But	Early adjustment
	677	R:	certainly at that time in our lives, I thought I wanted to	
Changes in marital confidence and unity	678	R:	be greeted. Um that was something that i expressed to	Renewed desire
	679	R:	him and he felt very much that was a very positive thing.	
Fear of insulting other Growth w/n marriage,	680	R:	[Inaudible 0:34:31] and he was talking to the girls and	
	681	R:	whatever and and I came in. And it was so new after we had	
	682	R:	this break from I think he must have been about	
	683	R:	two months old or something at the time, three months old.	
	684	R:	Um, and I came in and he you know, we didn't know what	
	685	R:	To do with ourselves. We were trying to get rid of these	
	686	R:	girls, but they weren't going anyway. Right, and we're ...	
	687	R:	obviously they really weren't going anyway. There was	
	688	R:	just nothing we could do. And we weren't bold enough	
	689	R:	to be able to say you know what guys? We're going to	
	690	R:	kick you out now, because we want to spend some time	
	691	R:	together. We just weren't at that stage in our marr ... in	
	692	R:	our lives where we felt that we could do that. And we	
	693	R:	just didn't want to insult them. Obviously. But now we	

719	Desire for others to share this	R:	anybody in the world not to have the opportunity to experience that. You know that incredible ... and we always	Sympathy for non – fp
720	‘electricity’ sense of magic	R:		
721	Neutral spoon versus energy of passion	R:	we always talk about the wooden spoon. About the fact	‘wooden spoon’ effect
722	Good energy only w/n restriction	R:	that how much energy can be created within a marriage, if	Marital energy
723	‘parameters’	R:	there are the right parameters. And how much	Framework protection, safety
724	Potential for bad energy	R:	destructive energy there is as a consequence as well.	
725	Convincing me/self/others?	R:	There’s so much positive energy within a marriage, you	Marital energy
726	+ve v –ve, growth, building	R:	can build each other to be the greatest people in the world.	Potential marital energy
727	Sense of a whole together	R:	Um and we always say that you know, without each other	
728	Nothing apart, no sense of self	R:	we’d be nothing. An an and with each other we are a lot.	Complete together
729	Social comparison	R:	And but I ... again we have two friends who have gone	
730	Divorcing friends – power of destruction	R:	through such acrimonious divorces and the incredible	Social comparison
731	Repetition of ‘phenomenal’, fearful of the energy of destruction, need to convince el of the secrets	R:	power of destruction is phenomenal. Phenomenal.	
732	Recognises the power of the partner	R:	No	Power of destruction
733	Power of the marital uni	R:	one can destroy you as much as a partner can. As	Power of partner
734	Awareness of the parental destruction	R:	much as a husband or a wife can. No one. There’s	
735	And potential for building	R:	nothing ... I mean parents can destroy quite well. But	Power of parent – attachment pattern
736		R:	I think you know, again, I guess it’s conversely, they	Strength of relationship
737		R:	also can build you so much. And they can destroy you	Power of couples
738	Repetition of ‘incredibly powerful’	R:	just as equally. A husband and wife can also do it in a	
739	Repetition of ‘broken’	R:	incredibly powerful way. Incredibly, incredibly, powerful	
740	Sense that she would feel broken if unsuccessful. Wish to	R:	way. I mean I have two friends who are just broken,	Social comparison
		R:	broken people. And there’s only a certain amount I can do,	Need to save others

Niddah	766	R:	certainly [inaudible 0:39:14] that broke down so badly, that she used to withhold you know, sex from him.	Sexual control
Marital breakdown	767	R:	she used to withhold that from him. She's say I'm not going to the mikvah. I refuse to go to the mikvah, and you'll have to ... you know, you can't force me. And because there was a lot of bad feeling, there's a lot of tremendous bad feeling in the context of that. But I think I just think it engenders a sense of ... it provides a framework for healthy living that's all. You can't be forced in to living in a healthy way. And you need other things also as well to live in a healthy way. Just for ... for ... First and foremost to be kind to each other. to be giving and to be nice and to prioritise each other.	Mikvah refusal Sexual power
Mikvah tool for sexual power	768	R:		
Safekeeping of mikvah	769	R:		
Marital tribulations spill over into the area of F. P.	770	R:		
'tremendous' sense of awesome power	771	R:		
Promotes / gives framework for healthy living, 'that's all' doesn't create it	772	R:		Sexual rejection
Sense of an opportunity	773	R:		f.p. = framework healthy
F.P. combined with other things	774	R:		
Marriage needs: kindness	775	R:		Marital needs
Giving (generosity), nice, prioritise	776	R:		Nice, prioritise
Spends time invested in guidance	777	R:		
Importance of time and space for communication	778	R:		Relationship development
Appreciation of specific guidelines	779	R:	I was listening to this thing last night about this guy, this woman was talking about ... He was saying ... he was actually saying that you should, couples should spend forty five minutes	Communication development
Relationship pressures, Removal of life pressures	780	R:	at least three times a week alone with each other.	Relationship priorities
Social comparison	781	R:	Talking about things other than bills and pressures and children and nappies and schools. And he said that most people would find that very hard. And most people in the audience was saying there's no way. There's no way we could find the time. And he said do you	Relationship challenges, life cycle
Seems to be implying that surely w/o this time = poor rel	782	R:		Social comparison
	783	R:		
	784	R:		
	785	R:		
	786	R:		
	787	R:		Marital Priorities

Lack of importance or value of TV – cultural	788	R:	watch TV? And they said well yeah, but ...But that's	Social comparisons
Lack of value for team	789	R:	very important. You know football ma ... football games	
	790	R:	are extremely important in America. During the football	
	791	R:	season which is a relatively short time in America, it's from	
	792	R:	the end of the summer from September to January.	Lack of time for spouse
	793	R:	So that kind of the rest of the year, there's baseball.	
	794	R:	Football is more a thing than baseball. And this guy's	Male priorities
Lack of prioritising and time for each other = problems	795	R:	saying during the football season there's no way I could	
Social comparison	796	R:	find the time to spend forty five minutes to spend with my	Social comparison
Value of priorities	797	R:	wife. And he's like I guess it's all about priorities, you	
Marital priority	798	R:	know. If you want your marriage to make up, is it more	
Football comparison	799	R:	important for you that your football team loose	Marital investment
	800	R:	than your marriage breaks up? He said well but if she's	
Understanding the others needs v prioritising	801	R:	you know, understood me, she would know how	
	802	R:	important this is to me. So it's all a matter of priorities.	Prioritising the other
	803	R:	it's all a matter of being able to priorities each other.	
Mikvah assists focus on prioritising	804	R:	but that's the nice thing about mikvah, is you know	Comparison to F.P.
Renewal, bring back tog	805	R:	that once a week, once a month at least, once a month	Mikvah comfort/cycle
	806	R:	you're going to be together. I have friends who are	Space for priority
Social comparison	807	R:	not religious who said to me when I've spoken to them	
	808	R:	about this, and they say, do you mean to tell me that	Social comparison
Sexual frequency	809	R:	every month you've got to be with your husband?	Sexual frequency
Shock at others lack	810	R:	And like do you mean to tell me that you're not with your	Social comparison
	811	R:	husband every month? And they're like well he's lucky	
w/o boundaries = no sex	812	R:	if it's a once every three months. They said I'm exhausted	Lack of sexual framework
	813	R:	what are you talking about? And I said well do you	
Marital priorities	814	R:	think that's good for your marriage? Well I don't care	
Putting self first	815	R:	I'm exhausted. Like he's got to deal with it you know.	Life cycle impact
Care taking responsibilities.	816	R:	Like I'm the one that takes care of the kids, he gets to	Childcare

exhaustion intrude				
Anger at spouse for independency	817	R:	go off to work every day and play on his computer, you know, and I'm at work ...I'm at home with the kids. I'm thoroughly exhausted. But I said do you not find time to watch TV? Do you not ever go out with your friends?	Challenges on relationship: children
Care taking exhausting	818	R:		
Values of religion	819	R:		Prioritising different
	820	R:	They said well yes, but that's energising. Being with my husband's exhausting. I've no desire to do that whatsoever. And again that's obviously going to lead to	Sexual honesty
Exhaustion	821	R:	tremendous negativity within a marriage. You know	Expectation of marital breakdown
Lack of sexually intimate space in marriage = negativity	822	R:	and just to have a ... to know that one point in your life,	Control over sexual cycle
Knowledge, awareness monthly 'going to have to' sense of obligation, appreciation	823	R:	that one point every month, you are going to have to	Framework/routine
Of physical preparation	824	R:	Physically prepare for it. I think that's incredibly important for a woman. But they say why does the women have to	Physical preparation
Obligation on women to prepare	825	R:	prepare for it and the man doesn't? I'm like the mans	Gender difference
Women and men diff needs	826	R:	ready, the man wants to do it that minute, you know, wants	Reconciling oppression
Expectation man is always sexual	827	R:	to be there. Woman actually needs to go through the process of preparing herself. It's extremely important, besides a lot of other reasons for it. It's extremely	Mikva preparation
Women need to get there	828	R:	important for a woman to prepare herself. I think, that a woman would be too tired. She just wants ...	View of women's benefits: oppression
Value of mikva preparation	829	R:	just quickly going to the mikvah, or whatever it is, you know, have bath and then she has to sleep with her husband, I think she would be like, yeah not tonight.	Mikva prep
Generalises use of 'women' never personalises	830	R:	You know there would be a hundred reasons why she would find that she just cant. Whereas if she actually has to spend at least an hour getting herself preparing for it,	Preparation benefits
Sense of too tired for sex	831	R:		
'has to sleep' obligation, expectation women doesn't want it	832	R:		Obligation of sex
Excuses to push off sex	833	R:		Sexual avoidance
Many reasons why	834	R:		Less interested in sex
Preparation = desire	835	R:		Sexual preparation

Physical prep	842	R:	doing something - physically putting effort in to ... and	Physical preparation
If put time into prep going to make worthwhile	843	R:	the eventual outcome then for a woman that's ... okay,	Encouraging the unnatural
Convincing self	844	R:	so obviously I'm not going to put the effort in and then	Enhances desire
Mikvah prep ties u in sense she needs that time	845	R:	fall asleep at the end of it. It almost seems a ridiculous thing to do. You know to put in all that effort. But a woman	Convincing self of women's needs :oppression
	846	R:	definitely needs that time. I'm not saying that a man	Male preparation/ role. Equalising across gender
Awareness of men preparation 'shouldn't come disgusting', interesting avoidance of sexual words. Nice for him to make effort	847	R:	shouldn't somehow prepare himself as well, because it's	
	848		Appropriate, he shouldn't come disgusting you know. And	Reconciling gender distinction in her mind
	849	R:	then didn't want to be with her, but when she's all so	Husband greeting
Dual effort	850	R:	clean, but ... then he should make things nice for her.	Gender: Giving him a role - equalising
Negotiated with husband	851	R:	Certainly, and again I was saying to my husband, I need	Husband understanding
Need for him to understand and appreciated the investment	852	R:	you to be home and ready and appreciate what I've just	Return from mikvah
He shows this by physically and emotionally welcoming her	853	R:	gone through in order to be with you, you know. And	Emotional/physical transition
He understand her needs	854	R:	welcome me with open arms you know, emotionally	Husband understanding
Found a way to manage this	855	R:	as well as physically. and he very much understood	
Appreciation of structure as seems as if otherwise low libido	856	R:	that and he said that sounds 100% appropriate to me.	
Many excuses	857	R:	But I think that a woman would not ... she just wouldn't	Sexual expectation
Different sexual drives, low self drive	858	R:	do it. There are a hundred other reasons a	Life cycle challenges
For her its lower down priority	859	R:	woman ... is so tired by the end of the day and doesn't	Sexual drive differences
7-25	860	R:	have the same sexual drives as a man has. They just	Sexual drive comparison
Exhaustion main factor	861	R:	don't. We have many other drives you know and	
	862	R:	seventh, or tenth or twenty fifth and all this is the sexual	
	863	R:	drive, especially when we are tired. When we were	
	864	R:		

Higher libido when younger	865	R:	younger, it's not like that. You know, men and women	Sexual drive changes
Aging = more responsibilities	866	R:	are quite sexually driven. But as you get older and	Life cycle -- responsibilities
Hormonal changes	867	R:	your responsibilities become more heavily involved	Hormonal changes
Breastfeeding impacts hormones	868	R:	you know and your hormones start playing on you,	Body changes/breastfeeding
Feel less sexual, 'gross'	869	R:	and you're breastfeeding a baby and you're kind of	Relationship w/ body
Hormonal change	870	R:	thinking that's gross. You know, and it just it just. And your	Awareness of lower libido
	871	R:	hormones just definitely do change.	
	872	I:	So how do you manage that within yourself? To kind of	
	873	I:	you know, when you're not feeling very sexual and	
	874	I:	you are breastfeeding and all these things that kind of	
	875	I:	act against feeling like some ness, you know and then	
	876	I:	you are together? How is that for you?	
Appreciation of mikvah time	877	R:	So I would say that first of all when you have that time of	Mikvah support
Conductive	878	R:	Mikvah, then it's incredibly conducive to just ... there's	Separation benefits = enhanced desire
Separation benefits	879	R:	nothing like absence makes the heart grow fonder.	Absence makes the heart grow fonder
	880	R:	there's nothing like it. Where I'm amazed at myself	
	881	R:	because when I'm having my period, I'm feeling gross	
During period appreciate space/sep	882	R:	and incredibly grateful about the fact that I don't have to	Separation benefits - Menstrual bleeding
'near anybody' lack of person identification	883	R:	go anywhere near anybody. I mean my husband. And	
	884	R:	then as you count the days, people are saying ach you	
7 clean days annoying, lack of sense	885	R:	should be able to go to ... why do I have to count	Seven clean days
Awareness of own needs	886	R:	these days? I know full well why. And everybody	
Everything has been made perfect, has to have a place in her life	887	R:	else I know, knows full well why. Because you count	Benefit of countdown
Counting the days creates the longing and desire for renewal	888	R:	the days, day one , day two, day three, day four. Gosh	
	889	R:	it's only day four still and then suddenly at day four your	Shifting mindsets
Sense that desire takes time to build	890	R:	suddenly like hello, this is taking a long time. Day five	

Followed by excitement 'then your there' arrive at physical and emotionally ready place	891	R:	gosh two more days is a long time. Day six and seven are so exciting at that point. And then you're there. You're ready.	Desire build up
Transforming transition Hormonal transition too 'your hormones def will allow' sense you need to let urself go	892	R:		Achieved excitement
	893	R:		
	894	I:	so it really is a transforming time?	Transforming time
	895	R:	It is a transfor ... it' definitely a transforming time. Certainly	Hormonal synchrony
	896	R:	your hormones will support that. If you allow it to. Your hormones definitely will allow ... will support you through	
	897	R:	that. Um and then you get through this whole process of	
	898	R:	you know probably have to go through this process, and	
	899	R:	you go through process, and then by the end you're very excited to be together.	Separation benefits
	900	R:		
	901	R:		
	902	I:	You're ready?	Mind-set shift
	903	R:	... ready. You're ready as opposed to feeling in a state of you definitely have a mind shift? Your actions help	Parallel w/ dressing up = transformation Mikvah = transformation
	904	R:	pretty much to shift your state of mind, without a doubt.	
	905	R:	You know and we all know that. You get dressed up	Changing personas
	906	R:	and you feel like disgusting during the day and then	Return from mikvah
	907	R:	you go to a wedding at night and you can get dressed up	
	908	R:	you suddenly feel like a queen now. And you're ready	Shame of appearance
	909	R:	to be regal and engaging and enchanting, whereas	Purify self b4 exposed
	910	R:	you know, during the day you're kind of like I cant	Physical prep=mental prep
	911	R:	see anybody, I can't look at anybody, because you just	
	912	R:	feel that you haven't gotten yourself to look the part and	
	913	R:	you haven't done the action to put yourself	
	914	R:	in that mind-set. And I think even when you are with ...	
	915	R:	when you can be with your husband the whole time	
	916	R:		
Sense that during the day not enough time to look the part Need to cleanse b4 seeing ppl, fear of judgment				

During periods of no f.p.	917	R:	you're pregnant and nursing and you haven't gotten your period, I think it's kind of ... also we do sort of say	No framework
Still put in periods of separation	918	R:	to each other, you know what lets have periods of time where it's not always you know, he's not always thinking	Need some boundary/sep
So its not expected	919	R:	100% this should be happening. And I don't always think that ah, I feel guilty because you know, I'm not with him.	Guilt of rejection
Guilty for rejecting him	920	R:	and I kind have no interest because I'm exhausted and then when I see that bed all I think of is that pillow. And	Exhaustion
Lack of sexual desire	921	R:	my eyes being closed on it and snuggling up against it and forgetting about everything you know? And you	Managing both needs
Exhausted	922	R:	know he's not thinking that all. Um and there are periods of time when we say you know, there's some	Removal of sexual pressure
Hard to feel sexual if exhausted	923	R:	nights when we know whether it's the right time together and there are certain nights, where we know that those	Sexual pressure/expectation
Expectation of his constant desire	924	R:	are not our times together. And that's just something different ... [overspeaking]	Negotiate boundaries
In sync	925	R:	And how do you communicate that	
Sense of awareness beyond laws	926	I:	By speaking. By talking. By saying you know, and I do I say to him, you know, we did this once I think after my third child. Where I realised that things were just not	Communication
Strong communication	927	R:	a 100% - meaning, I was spending I was spending	Childbirth changes
Sense things were not good	928	R:	years of just not having this mikvah, originally. And feeling like things were not as good between the two of us as they should have been you know. We were	Loosing sexual excitement
Lack of mikva/seperation	929	R:	nice to each other and we were very kind and generous and very thoughtful and we spent time together in a certain way. But a. I certainly also felt I felt being pregnant for three years means you, you ... you know	Lack of f.p.
Feeling of loss	930	R:	I gained weight when I was	Need for cycles
Still sexual – kind, generous	931	R:	pregnant I felt very heavy and very not attractive in general. Even though he certainly didn't	Loss of spark
Lower self esteem	932	R:		Pregnancy impacts sexual self
Body changes due to preg	933	R:		Changing relationship with body
	934	R:		Gaining weight
	935	R:		Loss of confidence

'understood what I looked like'	948	R:	make feel that. But I felt that for myself. I would look in	Unhappy w/ body image Lower sexual interest Space for Communication
	949	R:	the mirror and I understood what I looked like. And	
	950	R:	you know, but then I was able to ... we were able to ...	
	951	R:	I was able to say to him, listen things are not as I would	
	952	R:	like them to be, let's talk about it. And we did. You know	
Openness for communication Open communication	953	R:	we were able to talk about lots of different things. We	Prioritising others needs Adjusting sexual cycles
	954	R:	were able to talk about everything.	
	955	I:	You were able to negotiate between the two of you?	
	956	R:	And we were able to ... and it wasn't ... you know what?	
	957	R:	It wasn't even a matter of negotiation. He is ... he just	
Even when the 2 week routine is not enforced, desire for it	958	R:	says you tell me what you need you know and lets just take it	Desire for cycle Awareness of no boundaries
	959	R:	from	
	960	R:	there. And I say well I want to think about your needs	
	961	R:	as well you know. I say for me I don't know, it just would	
	962	R:	be great to have two weeks on, two weeks off. But at	
'not appropriate' b/c relig accepted	963	R:	the same time. I know that's not great for you at this	Acceptance of freedom Self boundaries
	964	R:	point in time and it's a little bit ... you know, it's not	
	965	R:	appropriate 100% because there's no need for it you	
	966	R:	know. That's not what my body is saying then, it's	
	967	R:	obviously not what we need at this point. And so we just	
Importance of planning a good night Relaxed, prepared	968	R:	sort of thought, you know, this would be a lovely night	Planning intimate evenings Shifting mindset
	969	R:	where we know that we can all ... just in terms of our	
	970	R:	Schedules you know that this is a good date night for us.	
	971	R:	And a time were we are ... things are more relaxed and I	
	972	R:	can be more relaxed and I can put more effort in to some	
Sense that nightly obligation = pressure, planning takes pressure off and allows it to be special	973	R:	things and not feeling ... you know, and another night	Safety, meeting needs Benefits of structure/routine
	974	I:	you know and just thinking how this would work for us.	
			[Inaudible 0:49:29:] in a way.	

Social comparison Critique others, likes routine not spontaneity	975	R:	To plan it in a way, yeah. And I always feel that you	Social comparison
	976	R:	know people who say well that's so unromantic, have lost	
	977	R:	the plot. Because that is the most beautiful thing is to think	
	978	R:	about other people's needs. There is nothing more	
Romantic – working out how to coordinate needs	979	R:	romantic than saying well I want to be there for you.	Beauty in structure Need for structure
	980	R:	I want to make sure that you are okay. You know	
Lack of sexual terminology Sense of relationship being superior	981	R:	there's nothing more romantic than that. And we're	Desire to meet needs
	982	R:	special in that in terms of building a relationship.	
	983	R:	So that's how we work it out.	
	984	I:	Interesting. And how is it for you the actual process of	
Comfort with body/gynaecology	985	I:	going to the mikvah. Preparing yourself and checking	View of relationship
	986	I:	and the whole ...?	
	987	R:	Um so I find, I find it absolutely fine. The checking is not	
	988	R:	a problem for me whatsoever. Like I am a nurse so, I'm	
Positive thinking/mindset	989	R:	you know anything medical or physical in that way, doesn't	Mikvah prep – checking Comfort versus adjustment
	990	R:	really bother me. I think I was always very interested in	
	991	R:	general in terms of the you know, gynaecology. That was	
	992	R:	totally a part of me that I was you know, I was always very	
Social comparison, portrayal of comfort Sense of 'grossed out', uncomfortable	993	R:	Interested in anyway. I found it amazing when I learned	Shift, science to sex
	994	R:	about you know reproduction and me learning about	
	995	R:	you know all these things and some of my friends were	
	996	R:	totally grossed out by it. I was very fascinated by it.	
Practical difficulty of mikva childcare	997	R:	so I didn't ... and in some ways I was grossed out by it,	Checking ease Social comparison
	998	R:	but in other ways I was very fascinated by it. So I don't	
	999	R:	find the checking hard at all. In going to the mikvah, the	
	1000	R:	one thing that is a little bit difficult is just the child care.	
	1001	R:	It was difficult you know, just organising it. But it became	Social comparison
				Challenging aspects
				Comfort with checking laws
				Privacy of mikvah
				Mikvah timing challenges

Husband shared responsibility	1002	R:	you know but again he was very good about it, my	Husband support
	1003	R:	husband and he very much made sure that he said you	Equalising responsibility
	1004	R:	know if there needs to be a time where I need to be home	Importance of mikvah
	1005	R:	I will be home or if even if ... you know, if he needs to	
Sense of support	1006	R:	call a babysitter and make sure that that's my job in	Equalising role
	1007	R:	terms of making sure that this can happen for you. That	Sense of support
	1008	R:	you can feel that you can go off and do your thing and I	Importance of time/space
	1009	R:	can you know, I can make sure that I can facilitate that for	
Managed it over the yrs Sense of luck Appreciation of ease	1010	R:	you. So that was good and again, you know, it just	Reconciling gender diff
	1011	R:	somehow worked out over the years. There are	
	1012	R:	nice mikvah's here. So we're very lucky where we don't	Mikvah enjoyment
	1013	R:	have there's nothing grubby, we need to go through.	
Mikva preparation Independence from kids	1014	R:	You know preparing for it and there is something very, very	Mikvah preparation
	1015	R:	wonderful about being able to say, mummy's going out	
	1016	R:	now. Where are you going? I don't have to tell you.	Independence from kids
	1017	R:	You know, sometimes mummy's just go out. And I don't	
Freedom to have privacy	1018	R:	do it all ... only when I'm going to the mikvah.	Privacy of topic
	1019	R:	Sometimes you know they say ... they always want	Cutting out personal private time for self
	1020	R:	to know, mummy where are you going? What are you	
	1021	R:	doing? Where are you going? Without me? You know	Independence
Sense of 5 mins peace	1022	R:	and I say sometimes mummy's just go out. Sometimes	
	1023	R:	mummy's need to spend time with themselves and need to	Personal time
	1024	R:	go out and do things. But mummy can't I come with you?	Children questioning
	1025	R:	No not this time. Sometimes I take you with me, you	Independence
Clear w children	1026	R:	know sometimes I go shopping at night and I take one	
	1027	R:	child with me. Sometimes I don't, because I need time	
	1028	R:	on my own. And sometimes I go to mikvah on my own	Personal time
	1029	R:	always I go to mikvah on my own you know and that's it.	Time off from kids
Shut off from responsibility Appreciation of personal time and space	1030	R:	So it's ... that's ... it's very nice to be able to close the	Mikvah time
	1031	R:	door and I go, and I used to try ... I mean again it	

Negotiating timing and preparation	1032	R:	depended again, summer, winter getting ready here or getting ready there. Ideally I like to get ready there,	Mikvah preparation
Mikvah prep, appreciation of personal time	1033	R:	because you have an hour to just spending your own	Personal time out
	1034	R:	in the bathtub. As long as I make myself you know	Husband support
	1035	R:	available for that hour, which again he is very good with,	Wonderful time out
	1036	R:	in trying to help. And it worked out over the years and	Personal space
	1037	R:	i was being able to do that. And it's a very wonderful	
	1038	R:	thing being able to just spend time on your own. And	
	1039	R:	I would try very hard to get myself excited for it you know.	Struggle to shift mindset
Need to 'try very hard' to shift mindset 'get excited'	1040	R:	there's something you can ... you can you might you know, you	
Stumbling on words	1041	R:	can help yourself in many ways and you can hurt	Choice of happiness
Help or hurt self = choice	1042	R:	yourself in many ways. And you can either view it as	Gaining control
	1043	R:	this is such a pain and I can't believe that I have to do this	
Choice of mindset, power of +ve thinking	1044	R:	more than he has to do this and you know, this is crazy	Difficulty v benefit
Pushing of -ve thoughts	1045	R:	and this is ridiculous and I don't have this. Or you can	Negative emotions spin
Crazy, ridiculous	1046	R:	view it as this is a wonderful gift that I've been given, to	Gift of time out
Shift mindset to appreciation of time alone	1047	R:	have an hour to myself to just spend time, making sure	Positive spin
	1048	R:	that every little bit of my skin is smooth. When do I get	View of mikvah
Time for pampering	1049	R:	to do that? And making sure that my nails are perfect and	Pampering time
Nails, hair, fresh etc	1050	R:	making sure that everything is clean and fresh and ready	Cleansing process
	1051	R:	and wonderful. And there's nothing ... it's all about our	
	1052	R:	mind-set and I have a lot of friends who find it very difficult.	
Choice of mindset, social comparison w -ve experiences	1053	R:	and I always say to them, but what's the point of finding	Mindset shift
	1054	R:	it difficult? And like what do you mean? What's the point of	Social comparison
	1055	R:	it?	
	1056	R:	It just is. And I say but don't make it difficult, make it great.	
Questioning friends	1057	R:	You know and some of them say well that's amazing.	Mindset shift

Strength of mind control	1058	R:	You know that mind-set shift is an amazing gift to be able to have. I'm not sure if I can do that. And I say well	Choice of viewpoint
Feeling that she needs to motivate and empower everyone around	1059	R:	everybody can do that. Everybody has a mind, you know what that's like, you know what it means to be in a position of weakness or in a position of strength, you know what that feels like, and you know what it means to have a different perspective on things. You know what it's like ... and I always say to people that the greatest ability ...	Encouraging others positive perspective Saving them from pain
Persuading others/herself to choose b/n negativity of positivity	1060	R:	everybody can change their mind- their mind-shift, and people say no you cant. And I say well you know that time where your kids are screaming at you and everybody needed something and everybody was saying oh I need this, I need this, I need this, I need this you know, and you think I can't, I can't! Get me away! Get me away!	Sharing mind-set shift
Personal choice/ability/freedom over mindset	1061	R:	I can't, I can't deal with anything, I've no time, I'm nothing, I've no patience for you. I hate all of you. I have to get out of this and whatever. I say well? And they say yeah.	Pay it forward Shifting mind-set – power
Methods of cognitive control	1062	R:	And I say well now remember that horrible feeling. And they say and I say well now in your mind, put yourself in a box car going to Auschwitz. With your three children. And they're calling to you and they say I need food, mummy I'm hungry, mummy I haven't eaten, mummy I'm tired, mummy I need the toilet, mummy this, mummy that	Inspiring others Method of cognitive control Overwhelmed by kids needs
When feeling overwhelmed, children's needs become overpowering and desire to get out	1063	R:		
Feeling of being trapped	1064	R:		Gaining control Trapped
Loss of coping resources	1065	R:		Loss of control Unable to cope with kids
Anger	1066	R:		
Stories of what she says to others, inspire others to inspire self	1067	R:		
Put frustration into perspective	1068	R:		
Place self in a trauma	1069	R:		
When you cannot meet your children's needs	1070	R:		Shock method – Auschwitz Downward comparison Unable to gain control

Contrast it with death and being unable to save your children	1081	R:	and you can't do anything for them. Nothing to do and you're all about to die. And you can't save them, there's nothing, nothing to do for them. Feel that desperation in your soul, in your heart and then come back to your own house and think, I've got food, I've got toilet, I've got time, I've got energy, and we've got life. There's nobody taking you away from me. You're all mine and the incredible joy and the incredible life you've just been infused to it and being incredibly gratefulness and gratitude that you have towards these wonderful Children and you just hug them and just say, right, what do you need? What do you need? And the joy that you can do that with. You can change your mind, change in one second. One second and it's not hard to do.	Loss of ability Desperation
Feel the desperation	1082	R:		
Return to reality	1083	R:		
Comparison is much better	1084	R:		Return to reality
Have e[thi]ng	1085	R:		
	1086	R:		
	1087	R:		
Appreciate them	1088	R:		Renewed control
	1089	R:		Mind-set shift
	1090	R:		Grateful for kids
	1091	R:		Appreciating what she has
Able to feel enegri[sed] from shift mindset	1092	R:		Renewed strength
Freedom to change	1093	R:		
	1094	R:		Cognitive control
Willing to work at it	1095	R:	it's just a matter of just ... just being smart about it and being willing to do it. That's all.	Choice of cog control
	1096	R:		
	1097	I:	And were you always this way in thinking? Or is it	
Positive mindset from young	1098	I:	Something you developed?	
	1099	R:	I think I was always a positive person. My parents had a very wonderful marriage. I was brought up with um	Positive mind-set Positive parental marriage model Family support
Family upbringing	1100	R:	we had you know a lot of family. A lot of family, a lot of family, a lot of loving family um ... I have an older	
	1101	R:		
	1102	R:	who has CP, who has Cerebral Palsy, whose a very bright, very intelligent woman, who now has her own family.	Family challenges - sister w/ CP
Context of siblings with special needs, therefore always reminded of ppl worse off	1103	R:	Wow.	
Sister w/ CP – family of 6	1104	R:		
Idealizing sister	1105	R:		
Inspired by her attitude towards life	1106	I:		
	1107	R:	She's amazing, she's an amazing woman. Um and she's an amazing sister. We fought a lot, but she was amazing	Inspired by sister
	1108	R:		

Unable to feel/walk etc	1109	R:	in terms of her attitude towards life. She was always a can do kinda girl, even though she was in a wheel-chair and couldn't feed herself, couldn't dress herself, couldn't do anything. Um ... You know, got her master's degree from University you know and very, very bright, but very determined person. I think she always ...	Positive attitude
Able to use her mind	1110	R:	she never let me feel bad for myself. She was always	Sisters challenges
Bright/determined	1111	R:	if ever I said 'argh I can't bear to walk there, I can't bear to go there', she' like 'excuse me? You can't bear to walk?' you know, She's like, 'how about thinking about how grateful you are to be able to walk?'	Overcoming her difficulties
'never let me feel bad for myself	1112	R:	You know she always put me in my place in terms of that. I think I was raised with that um and she's three years older than me, she loves being my big sister you know in terms of that. Um and we always had a good relationship, like we really did. You know we would fight about stupid things but nothing major. She would always end the fight by saying 'right. You know,	Mindset shift
Always reminded of how lucky she is	1113	R:	Now were going to stop fighting and we're going to be normal again'. Um and then I also have a younger brother, has Down's Syndrome.	Learnt to appreciate life
Put in place, reminder Brought up w/ continual reminder and appreciation for what she has	1114	R:	So my parents were always very, very positive people. They'll see the great kid. I mean thank god we ... you know we had ... we grew up with children with special needs but in the end of the day they weren't that special needs. You know my brother was never ill, we never had ... never hospitalised. We never spent time without our parents as a result of ... of having children you know.	Reminder of positive
Good relationship	1115	R:		Constant reminder
Learnt how to stop fights	1116	R:		Mature skills of communication
Youngest bro w/ down syndrome	1117	R:		Family challenges – bro w/ DS
Positive family mindset	1118	R:		Positive parents
High functioning	1119	R:		Special needs = greater appreciation
Always positive spin	1120	R:		View of being lucky
Bro was not ill	1121	R:		Availability of parents
	1122	R:		
	1123	R:		
	1124	R:		
	1125	R:		
	1126	R:		
	1127	R:		
	1128	R:		
	1129	R:		
	1130	R:		
	1131	R:		
	1132	R:		
	1133	R:		
	1134	R:		
	1135	R:		
	1136	R:		

Learnt to help siblings Sense of responsibility	1137	R:	But I had to do ... I like to feed my ... help my sister with	Role of helping sister Responsibility
	1138	R:	eating, which was more than fine for a child to do for their	
	1139	R:	sibling. Um you know, and turn my sisters pages when	
	1140	R:	we were reading a book, so you know. And she can	
	1141	R:	... although eventually she did be able to ... she was	
Avoidance of difficulty Normalising family dynamics Admiration from others Normal for them	1142	R:	able to turn her own pages. That was about it. Other	Sister developed Admiration from others Childhood values
	1143	R:	than that we were all very normal, family and people	
	1144	R:	would say 'you're so special' and we were like 'yeah.	
	1145	R:	We're such special'. We never understood what they	
	1146	R:	we're talking about. Um ... but I was brought up with a	
Positive attitude – family background Always find a way to manage	1147	R:	very positive attitude in life. My parents did not ... did	Positive attitude Everything is possible Similar value to husband
	1148	R:	not take this you know, I cant. It was I can and I'm	
	1149	R:	going to find a way and that's it. So there was a lot of	
	1150	R:	positive thinking in my house. But I think has also	
	1151	R:	grown up with that. His father actually died when he was	
Importance of +ve thinking Life struggles, husbands loss of father	1152	R:	very young. when he was seven and his mother was	Hub-loss Challenges of childhood
	1153	R:	brought up, brought up her three children on her own.	
	1154	R:	Um ... through slightly difficult times but thank god you	
	1155	R:	know, nothing terrible, nothing traumatic, you know, they	
	1156	R:	lived in a lovely four bed roomed house their entire, you	
Positive spin and outlook	1157	R:	know, life. So you know, they had space and they had ...	Positive spin Warmth Food = warmth
	1158	R:	and their mothers an amazing cook. Amazing. So life was	
	1159	R:	very full of wonderful you know, wonderful warmth in the	
	1160	R:	house and beautiful food, which always makes everything	
	1161	R:	tasty and delicious you know. They were brought up	
'brought up in a delicious way	1162	R:	in a very delicious way, of approach towards life. Um and	Positive approach to life Positive upbringings
	1163	R:	very positive and very funny and very gregarious and a	
	1164	R:	lot of laughter. So I think we both you know, had the same	
	1165	R:	mind-set of you can decided to take life hard, or you can	
	1166	R:	decide to make it fun. You know and you can decide to	
Shared outlook on life Choice of viewpoint				Choice of mind-set

<i>Attracted each other b/c of shared mindset</i>	1167	R:	have a goodtime with it. And so we were very much we ... that was very attractive for both of us when we were going out. It was very positive in our mind-sets and I think we just embraced marriage. Not that ... not that I am in anyway perfect and he is much more perfect than I am in terms of that. You know I'm all the men with all the women's flaws. Um say some of my better qualities are male. I can read maps very well, and I'm scientific and quite analytical and mathematical.	Attracted to positivity
Fear of creating perfect image of self	1168	R:		View of husband
Idealizing husband	1169	R:		View of self
Presenting more balanced view of self	1170	R:		Aware of strengths v weaknesses
Admitting flaws, hormonal difficulties	1171	R:		Personal traits
Jealous, anxious, frustrated	1172	R:		Self criticism
	1173	R:		Realistic image
	1174	R:		Challenges
	1175	R:		Work hard to be +ve
Challenged by +ve thinking, works hard on it	1176	I:	[Inaudible 0:59:11] female and hormone.	Husbands support
Support from husband	1177	R:	Female yes. Um where I get jealous, and I get you know, anxious and I get you know, I feel frustrated and overwhelmed and you know and all those female things, that need a lot of work on in terms of my own positive thinking.	Fighting dynamic
'amazing fighter' 'never fights'	1180	R:		Marital challenges
Managing frustration with him,	1181	R:	So through the years, with immense patience, you know we've been able to work things through. Um and he never ever, ever, ever. He is an amazing fighter	Communication
View of husband supportive	1182	R:	do you know what I mean? He never ever fights. He just wont I would say, yell at him, you don't do this and you don't do that, and you don't do this and yada ya and he would just say, I'm sure you know that I don't want to hurt you and if I did any of that it's only because I've made a mistake and, and I will definitely try and be better you know. I ...	Husbands calm
Communication style	1183	R:		Expression of needs
	1184	R:	and sometimes he would say to me 'I would appreciate it if it was said to me in a way that I don't feel hurt by it. But I'm for sure will take everything on that you said.	Relationship strength
	1185	R:		View of husband
	1186	R:		
	1187	R:		
	1188	R:		
	1189	R:		
	1190	R:		
	1191	R:		
	1192	R:		
	1193	I:	Oh!	
Repetition of hub 'amazing'	1194	R:	He's amazing, amazing, amazing, amazing, amazing.	

picture of him being perfect Bringing humour to her story	1195 R: I was like 'sure can!' Surely we're supposed to fight? And somehow then makeup. You know, but he never would.	Fighting/communication
Mature start to marriage, face problems	1196 R: And I was like, that's very mature of you. Okay, fine, let's be mature now okay. And I grew up in a very mature ... I mean	Maturing process
Married young	1199 R: you know and as you know I was twenty one when I got married, I was very young, I don't know how old you are	Young marriage
Comparison to me	1200 R: but you're obviously a little bit older than that, because	
	1201 R: you're obviously doing a PhD programme but ... you know	Comparison w/ rschr
Sense of innocence and feeling v young	1202 R: I was very young. And I was very inexperienced, I came just from my parents' house. You know, never had to do very much you know. I never cooked. My mother ...	Early marriage Innocence
Marital adjustment	1203 R: I had to peel carrots in the kitchen and sweep the floor and wash some dishes. I had to run a home you know. So	Running a home
Household responsibilities	1204 R: running a home was a bit of a ... was a big adjustment.	Early marital adjustment
Adjustment Grew up together, shared adjustment	1205 R: I think obviously we grew up together, you know,	Marital growth
He was more independent	1206 R: and I. He, he did, he was living on his own, when I met him, in a different country you know. He was living in. And had already been a doctor for two years	
Hub as an older figure	1207 R: by then. He was more of a grown up than I was. We grew up together.	Comparison to husband
	1208 R: Amazing. Okay. Um ... Just ... we've covered a lot of things. How would you say if at all um ... keeping these laws have impacted other areas of your life? Kind of um ... of your relationship with yourself or other people or any other aspect?	Early marital adjustment
F.P. laws enhanced self awareness	1209 R: Um that's an interesting question. Um I would say with myself, I am certainly much more aware and as I said,	Enhances self awareness
	1210 R:	
	1211 R:	
	1212 R:	
	1213 R:	
	1214 R:	
	1215 I:	
	1216 I:	
	1217 I:	
	1218 I:	
	1219 I:	
	1220 R:	
	1221 R:	

Aware of bodily rhythms and cycles	1222	R:	I was very interested in gynaecology. And again, I have a medical background in terms of it, so I'm aware anyway of exactly what's going on in my body at different times.	Body awareness
	1223	R:	And... but in general just being able to be so aware of what was going on during my cycle the entire time.	Aware of cycles
Sense of enhanced awareness of cycle 'entire time' control?	1224	R:		
Aware of personal experience 'chart myself' monitor self	1225	R:	and also being able to chart for myself how I responded to different aspects of doing it. Of being ... of observing these laws, meaning how I felt emotionally about one aspect of it and how excited I would get at about something else and how upset I was about one ... another ... not being able to be with him. And it definitely ... definitely impacted on my self-awareness in the context of my being so physically aware of myself.	Aware of experience Observing the laws Emotional experience
Monitor experience of observing	1227	R:	Interesting match for myself, just realising that my emotional state was often impacted by my hormones, or maybe I thought it was and therefore it was, you know	Difficulty of separation
Emotional experience	1228	R:	also I'm interested in thinking 'I'm I really feeling this?' or am I thinking I was supposed to be feeling this, because I know that all my hormones are up to at this point in time.	Enhanced physical self awareness
Difficult not to be able to touch	1229	R:	And again being able to just understand my own needs, my own desires and where they were coming from. And whether they were real or were they manufactured and trying to work that out for myself as well. And, and sometimes realising that it's okay if things are manufactured and that as long as ... as long as you know, things are	
Self awareness	1230	R:		
Physical awareness of body	1231	R:		
Very deep thinker	1232	R:		
Developing insight into hormonal influence on emotions	1233	R:		
Complexity of mind-body understanding	1234	R:		
	1235	R:		
Trying to gain control over moods	1236	R:		Awareness of hormone-emotion link
Desire for insight in personal needs	1237	R:		Mind-body relationship
Desire for personal understanding	1238	R:		Awareness over cognitions v emotions
Questioning self	1239	R:		
Gaining control	1240	R:		
'manufactured' making feelings	1241	R:		
Ambiguous way of talking, sense of guilt about	1242	R:		
	1243	R:		
	1244	R:		
	1245	R:		
	1246	R:		

manufacturing feelings but sense of it being for greater good	1247	R:	moving forward in the right direction that you know,	Sexual desire
Sexual desire often manufactured	1248	R:	desires doesn't have to be 100% coming from somewhere	
Grow into it- perhaps low sex drive, methods to help her 'get into it'	1249	R:	else other than from my own desire to have desire	Control over desire
Justifying to self	1250	R:	you know. and that you can grow in to something,	
Social comparison	1251	R:	through the desire to want to grow in to it, as opposed	Grew into desire
Feeling sorry for those who don't have FP	1252	R:	to just it being a natural uninvolved growth. Um I think	
	1253	R:	that was very interesting aspect of [inaudible 1:03:52].	Social comparison
	1254	R:	In terms of other people, I do ... I have gone through	
	1255	R:	points in my life where I have pity for people who don't	Shame for others
	1256	R:	go and I've moved away from that now. I think it's not	
	1257	R:	for me to pity anybody. You don't pity people, that's not	Pity/fear for others
Self criticism	1258	R:	a mature way to behave. Um ... you know, I certainly	
Critical voice – adult parent v child	1259	R:	don't look down on anybody. I don't like that about	Judgment
Guilt of judgment	1260	R:	myself. I certainly don't want to be judgmental and	
Fighting against judgmental side of self	1261	R:	look down on anybody. Um if anybody asks me, I'm	
Assumption of early experience	1262	R:	sure I ... I don't remember our initial response but I'm	Desire to teach others
	1263	R:	sure I was very excited, I have very busy life, so it's	
	1264	R:	a ... at times it very hard for me to find something, but I	Inspire others
Desire to inspire others	1265	R:	like ... I would very much like the idea of other people	
Giving them the opportunity	1266	R:	having the opportunity to do this and again, when they	
Willingness to teach and put others above own life	1267	R:	asked me to teach in on a Monday night, it's a	Finding time for teaching
	1268	R:	crazy time for me. Crazy, like my kids have football, and...	
	1269	R:	and other lessons and other things going on, um and my	Importance of teaching fp
	1270	R:	husbands not home on a Monday night and it's the	
	1271	R:	beginning of the week and really not la good time, but I ...	

Personal need/significance to inspire others	1272	R:	I said you know what? This is very important to me.	Need to pay it forward Priority of F.P.
'dig deep' go out comfort zone to help others	1273	R:	Again priorities and it's only five weeks you know, I said for five weeks we can all dig in deep and... and dig in and do it. Um and my kids even though I didn't ex ...	Explaining to children Privacy of topic
	1274	R:	100% explain it to them what I was doing they understand that part of what I do, you know, they don't it's [know what taharat hamishpacha is and I don't want them to know	Discomfort w/ topic Privacy of topic
Lack of comfort sharing with kids	1278	R:	At this point in their lives their all boys, you know big ones. Um but you know I told them, teaching everybody	Awareness of teaching others Privacy of F.P. Desire to share
Lack of relevance to them	1279	R:	teach Torah to people who don't know it um and they understand that this anyway is part of our lives. And um ...	Judgement of others
Shame telling boys	1280	R:	I do feel like I want to share it with people, but in terms of ... in terms of other people, again it's always a very interesting thing, trying very hard not to guess whether or not anybody else is ... you know, I've had to learn that over the years, just ... because in the beginning you're ... kind of like umm! You know, you look at somebody else at your table and are they passing things to each other or not? Are they passing things to each other? I mean	Others privacy/sexual cycles Curiosity – privacy/secrecy of topic Judgement/social comp/ privacy of laws Shame Self discipline
Understand its to educate	1281	R:	slapping yourself and thinking how rude! You know, stop that! Don't do that. You know, it's a good game but it's ... it's not a mature game you know. [Laughs]. It's not a nice game. Um you know, and then also you know, at one point I was going to a mikvah where you would meet people in the waiting area and um ... I very much decided that I	Privacy of topic
Sense of less fortunate others	1282	R:	Did not want to go there, even though it was a very nice Mikvah, I didn't want to go there. I'd rather go to a slightly less nice mikvah and make sure that, that was not	Privacy intrusion Anxiety
Desire to share with others	1283	R:		
	1284	R:		
Curiosity about others	1285	R:		
Guessing games about nidda	1286	R:		
	1287	R:		
	1288	R:		
Can decipher based on small interactions	1289	R:		
	1290	R:		
Self criticism – shame	1291	R:		
Parenting self	1292	R:		
Judging self	1293	R:		
	1294	R:		
Need to reinforce privacy	1295	R:		
	1296	R:		
Guilt of curiosity or crossing boundary	1297	R:		
	1298	R:		
Giving others privacy	1299	R:		

Fearful of intruding in others lives	1300	R:	happening. You know, because I didn't wanna ... I didn't	Fear of breaking boundaries
Desire to maintain privacy	1301	R:	wanna engage that way in other people's lives. I felt ...	Intruding
Need to gain control over privacy of others	1302	R:	a ... you know, I don't want you to know about me but even more than that, i don want to know it about you.	Respecting privacy
Need to feel it is private	1303	R:	I don't want people ... I want to feel like this is something	Discomfort knowing about others
Fearful of publicity	1304	R:	that everybody can keep intimate to themselves, intimately.	Control over privacy
Preserving others privacy	1305	R:	Um and i want to be able to preserve other peoples	Privacy of intimacy
Sense of breaching – if sees them at mikva	1306	R:	ability to be intimate and not be somebody whose	Controlling others privacy
Speaks a lot about it to women	1307	R:	breaching that for anybody else. Um ... how else do I feel	Breaching
But less talk of it	1308	R:	about other people? Um ... again, people speak about it	Privacy of niddah
Initial comfort speaking w/ friends	1309	R:	a lot, that's the interesting thing, like women do and I	Teaching others-control
Sharing experience, support, moan	1310	R:	think over the years we've stopped speaking about it.	Privacy/communication w others
Practical difficulties of fri night	1311	R:	you know, in the beginning I think when we were first	Sharing communication
Child care arrangements	1312	R:	Married so a lot of my friends would you know, moan	Menstruation frustration
'not be..would be' sense of disapproval / shock	1313	R:	about having their period or talk about the fact that you	Difficulties with mikvah
Happy to have friends kids	1314	R:	know, going to the mikvah was hard and just in general	Communication
Less communication/sharing	1315	R:	you know, that fri... and... and quite a few of my friends	Practical childcare for mikvah
	1316	R:	quite a few, but let's say two or three of them would end up	Never crossing privacy boundary
	1317	R:	if they had to go in to mikvah on Friday night, I ... I	Supporting others
	1318	R:	never did this, but they would sort of drop off their	Privacy of mikvah/ discomfort sharing
	1319	R:	kids here on a Friday night and would not be would be fine	Become more personal
	1320	R:	to tell me that they were going to mikvah on Friday,	
	1321	R:	mainly because they would need that help in that way.	
	1322	R:	And I was ... I was obviously ... you know wouldnt say no to	
	1323	R:	them if they wanted to ask me again, of course I would	
	1324	R:	do that. And happy to help, but ... but over the years	
	1325	R:	we've kind of moved away from that and a kind of a	
	1326	R:		

Sense of become more personal	1327	R:	feeling of like you know this really is a personal ...	Personal
Strict boundaries, never rely on friends for this	1328	R:	maybe also give them a message, because I would never ever do that. I would never ... I would get a non-Jewish babysitter to come to my house um on a Friday night or my husband would stay home from Shul. It's just not something I would ever do. Um ...but it was okay. You know and... but i think over the years we have ...We have ... we have very much moved away from that and i have no idea about anybody's ... pretty much not ... unless you know, a friend of mine will say you know they've had a baby and things are very, very crazy for them and they're suffering a little bit but that's as far as it goes	Privacy of topic Never share – strict privacy Privacy of topic Husband support
Strong sense its wrong to do, says 'its was okay'	1329	R:		
Shifted to privacy	1330	R:		
Moved away from sharing	1331	R:		
V controlled topic	1332	R:		
Little knowledge of others	1333	R:		
Rare circumstances where friends will share	1334	R:		
If in pain, lack descriptive language	1335	R:		
	1336	R:		
	1337	R:		
	1338	R:		
	1339	R:		
	1340	I:	in terms in of being able to ...	Communication (allowances)
Privacy of topic	1341	R:	It's really a very private kind of area.	Never detailed sexually
Maturing = privacy	1342	R:	It's very private. It has and I think as we've grown up and become more mature, it's become more private, which is interesting, because you might have thought it would be the opposite. You know, people become more relaxed	Private area – no go Privacy of topic Privacy of topic Shifting life cycle
Opposite expectation	1343	R:		
With experience you expect people to become more relaxed/laid back	1344	R:		
Sense that youe become more lax	1345	R:	in that area. I think people realise that it's just incredibly important to preserve the intimacy that that you have with your husband. Um and not to talk about it with your friends. you know inappropriately.	Opposing expectations
But aware of privacy of intimacy or fear of change?	1346	R:		
Sense that it preserves holiness?	1347	R:		
Not a matter of gossip	1348	R:		
	1349	I:	Okay. Um ... I mean it sounds ... one other kind of ... interesting ... it sounds like you've quite got the balance between the times that you are on and off. And	Importance of privacy Preservation of spousal unit Strict boundaries
	1350	I:		
	1351	I:		

Cycles	1352 I: when you are physical how ... like that you ... you kind of where saying quite a bit about that you are very kind and generous to each other and you able to satisfy each other in that time. And do you think that's quite impacted by the ... the different cycles that you know?	Gender bias/differences
Cycles	1357 R: Yes. Um I think it's an interesting thing, we often say ... my husband and I often say that the two weeks when where together physically is kind of more his time and the two weeks that were not together is kind of more my time.	Separation-intimacy cycle Sep = her time, intimc=his time
Physical time = husband Separation time =wife	1360 R: Which doesn't ... which just means that ... what w we mean by that is that I ... I'm ... I'm moving towards him	
Movement of comfort zone, 'moving towards', challenge of overcoming own desire to satisfy the other	1361 R: during his time, and he's moving towards me and like which naturally I'm more in a comfort zone, when we're talking to each other and I want that, that's a part of our relationship that I probably hold most dear you know, is when we sit and we actually have a conversation and we get each other and when we're understanding and we're sharing with each other and the time that he definitely holds more dear is the time when were ... we're ...	Moving out comfort zone Comfort zones
Natural comfort w no touching More emotionally needy Value the talking Need for deep connection Importance of communication Understanding, sharing He values more physical closeness	1362 R: you know, really physically close, close, close. And you know, he feels very emotionally close. He feels most emotionally close, not when we're talking to each other, but when we're physical with each other. Whereas, I feel much closer when we're ...	Need for communication Values separation
Repetition of 'close', perhaps a little overwhelming	1369 R: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	Closeness/understanding
He connects emotionally through intimacy	1370 R: you know, really physically close, close, close. And you know, he feels very emotionally close. He feels most emotionally close, not when we're talking to each other, but when we're physical with each other. Whereas, I feel much closer when we're ...	He values intimacy
Conceptualised in terms of his	1371 R: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	Physical closeness = emotional closeness
	1372 R: you know, he feels very emotionally close. He feels most emotionally close, not when we're talking to each other, but when we're physical with each other. Whereas, I feel much closer when we're ...	Emotional distance during intimacy
	1373 R: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	Emotional closeness during separation
	1374 R: you know, really physically close, close, close. And you know, he feels very emotionally close. He feels most emotionally close, not when we're talking to each other, but when we're physical with each other. Whereas, I feel much closer when we're ...	Different zones
	1375 R: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	
	1376 I: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	
	1377 R: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	
	1378 R: So there's a lot of giving and taking and...? so there's a lot of ... so ... so during the time that we're physically close, I'm very much very aware of the fact that it's	

time and my time			
Desire to please him	1379	R:	his time you know, and I ... I try to make it as ... as you
He pleases her	1380	R:	know ... as special for him as possible. I mean it's not
	1381	R:	he tries to make that as [inaudible 1:10:17] for me as he
	1382	R:	can be. You know emotionally. And it's an interesting
	1383	R:	thing but I would say that when we're physically ... those
Finds it harder to connect emotionally during physical weeks	1384	R:	two weeks when we're physically together, it's harder for us
	1385	R:	to connect emotionally. Meaning not ... Not
Harder for her... repetition, grappling with this idea	1386	R:	To connect emotionally but it's harder, yeah,
Shifting mindset	1387	R:	right for me. I'd say right, right it's harder for me in terms of
	1388	R:	that a. I also feel like maybe I don't feel that there's a need
	1389	R:	I just ... it's just not the right time. I mean in terms of ...
	1390	R:	like ... certain times of the year you get into a mind-set like
Festival shifted mindset	1391	R:	around Hanukah it feels very toasty and yummy and
	1392	R:	warm and oily and it's good, you know whereas in summer
Contrasting enjoyment v distasteful	1393	R:	you know, you'd be horrified to be oily you know and
	1394	R:	horrible you know, and Passover time you just wouldn't
	1395	R:	want oily to be good. Um but you get so into that ... that
Changing zone, mindset, cycle	1396	R:	zone and we kind of get in to those different zones and it's
	1397	R:	just sort of like not the right zone to be in. To be
Not fair to be chatting	1398	R:	like sitting down and having long chats about things like
Sense of zone not matching behaviour	1399	R:	why are we doing that? You know, you just wouldn't
	1400	R:	be doing it. Not that we don't talk at all but it's like
	1401	R:	the time when we're not kind of ... we just we make sure
	1402	R:	that we sit down across the table from each other and just
How they manage those times	1403	R:	chat. So I would say that's kind of how that works.
			Physical = him
			Moving towards spouse needs
			Intimacy cycles = harder to connect emotionally
			Physical times = harder for her
			Barriers / distancing
			Unmet emotional needs during intimacy
			Routine of timing
			Mind-set shifts
			Chanuka – mind-set
			Summer – mind-set
			Passover-mind-set
			Mind-set shift
			Intimacy period = mind-set shift
			Relationship unspoken contract
			Cycles of sep v intimacy

1404	I:	So I guess finally, is there anything that I would have
1405	I:	asked you that I haven't or anything, you think is quite
1406	I:	crucial to touch upon that you kind of haven't really
1407	I:	addressed?
1408	R:	Um ... no but I can think about it and if you ... I mean
1409	R:	if you want me to think about it, I can try and think about
1410	R:	it and...
1411	I:	Well if there's anything you can always ...
1412	R:	... email you, if you want yeah.
1413	I:	Only I mean I feel that we're touched on a lot of different
1414	I:	things. Like it was quite comprehensive. I could ...?
1415	I:	certainly ...
1416	I:	Okay, well if you feel that ...?
1417	R:	Yeah. Yeah.
1418	I:	... that's great. But if there's anything that comes to
1419	I:	mind...?
1420	R:	Yeah. Yeah.
1421	I:	Okay, I'm going to turn this off.

[Transcription ends at 1:12:19]

Appendix 11 - Initial emergent themes for Karen

Initial emergent themes

Marital context
Marriage onset
Prior sexual experience
Initial adjustment
Premarital learning
Challenging early experience
Loosing sexual innocence
Protection
Boundaries
Loss of innocence
Vulnerable
Lack of protection
Early adjustment
Husband support
Panic
Communication boundaries
Relying on Faith
Early marriage experience
Intrusions
Lack of confidence
Need for protection
Wedding night
Bonding
Communication
Husband support
Sharing experiences
Social comparison
Early adjustment
Pre marital learning
Admiration of teacher
Wisdom
Superior treatment
Deep understanding of family purity laws
Building confidence

Premarital excitement
Appreciation of laws
Solid foundation
Early experiences
Rectification
Shame/embarrassment – lack support
Loss of control
Lack of perceived support
Husband support
Husband safety
Innocence
Maturing process
Benefits of innocence
Growing together
Costs of marriage later in life
Adulthood baggage
Attachment bond formed
Husband support
View of husband
Open communication
Empathy
Communication strength
Conflict management skills
View of husband support
Father figure
Sense of safety
Husband support
Need for protection
Disappointment
Early marriage adjustment
Early marriage experience
Regulating menstrual cycles
Irregular cycles
Desire for pregnancy
Escaping work
Problems of infertility
Fear of infertility
Hyper-adherence for protection
Silent promise
Appreciation of laws, protection

Commitment to laws/ making a deal with God
Fear of infertility
Husband support
Menstrual cycle
Loss of control
Difficulty of erratic cycle
Prolonged separation
Disappointment, frustration
Early separation challenges
Husband support
Hormonal challenge
Panicking
Separation: Space for building relationship
Little physical things
Struggle for money
Positive perspective
Controlled mind-set
Appreciation
Struggle of no money
Prioritising needs
Awareness of couple needs
Separation: investing in the relationship
Enjoying time together
Physical separation – view of husband
Early marital experience
Media fears
Fear of separation: husband betrayal
Insecurity
Husband reassurance
Cycle regularity
Joy of pregnancy
Experience of no family purity cycle
Loss of cycles
Early marriage experience = 3yrs off
Lack of comparison
Separation- intimacy cycles
Expectation/pressure to have sex
Intimacy prohibition
Post baby separation: protection
Appreciation of separation

Exhaustion & pain labour
Post Protection
Healing time out
Labour pain
Recovery space
Fear of intimacy
Protective space
Renewal – Return to mikvah
Scheduling mikvah difficulty
Privacy of mikvah
Mikvah timing, inconvenience
special intimate time
Fear of period
Denial
Flow of blood
Break through
Painful experience, prolonged separation
Mind-set shifts
Renewal return
Fear
Hindsight
Separation- Enhanced desire for husband
Husband support
Husbands support
Ability to work through issues and take positive
Renewal excitement
Strong memories
Menstrual discomfort/ emotional pain
Hormonal challenges
Experience of intimacy
View of laws – beauty
Desire to teach the laws
Pride
Pay it forward
Sympathy for others
Social comparison
Laws instil newness/excitement
Benefits of laws
Experience of no observance cycle
Benefits of separation

Enhanced intimacy joy
 Benefits of family purity laws: foundations for intimacy
 Relationship needs work
 Provides positive framework
 Lack of understanding
 Family purity laws benefits: wise and intuitive
 Family purity benefits: beyond human conception
 Desire for intimacy
 Western values = act on feeling
 Society lack boundaries
 Lack of boundaries = frightening
 Fear of feelings
 Lack of control=overwhelming
 Feeding addictions
 Lack of boundaries in society
 Marriage = feed addiction
 Addiction burnout
 Fear of sexual burnout
 Addiction = danger
 Need for structure/self control
 Fear of unlimited desire
 Need for newness
 Key to life = newness
 Depression = old
 Happiness = newness
 Expectation of burnout
 Newness = breakdown
 Wisdom of laws
 Safety/ containment
 Need for boundaries/restraint
 Value of observance
 Appreciation for laws
 Family purity laws framework for newness
 Containment over fears
 Beyond human ability
 Fearful of burnout
 Family purity laws instils healthy newness – framework
 Values of healthy newness
 Beauty of newness
 Healthy newness

Beauty of change
Joy of healthy change
Social comparison
Appreciation for life
Beauty of children development
Convincing self – strong tones
Family purity laws newness = benefits
Benefits of protective framework
Pain of separation
Appreciation of boundaries
Separation benefits = no rejection
Renewal of interest
Boundary for intimacy
Renewal desire
Renewal of newness
Appreciation on laws
Social comparison
Fear of betrayal: containment through laws
Convincing self
Need for containment
Peace in the home
Family purity laws framework for peace/purity
Story of women's experiences
Jewish approach to affairs
Gaining control
Positive thinking
Goal of marital happiness
Cognitive control
Choice of happiness
Desire for happiness
Cognitive control: Value of positive thinking
Acceptance of challenges
Boundaries – safety
Pursuit of happiness
Pain and happiness intermingled
Greatest pain and joy = children
Investment in kids = enhanced emotion
Belief in god
Framework: safety
Bible fit with human psyche

Intimacy – separation cycle
View of separation
Early separation benefits
Relationship foundation
Value of separation
Separation benefits
Building relationship
Psychological space
Developing understanding
Desire for physicality
Developing communication skills
Developing communication skills
Separation benefits – miscommunications
Feeling hurt angry
Husband saviour from pain
Desire for protection
Hurting
Relief
View of husband
Emotional comfort not through physicality
Physical barriers
Seeking validation
Opportunity for communication
Desire for comfort
Shame
Drawn out descriptions
Self focus
Intense emotions
Learning about each other
Miscommunications
Lack of support
Unmet needs
Fear of abandonment
Resentment
Empathy
Understanding
Emotional space
Misunderstanding
Husband superiority
Loss of control

Husband support
Comfort
Developing communication skills
Gender differences
Different needs between genders
Distinct coping behaviours
Emotionally smothering
Need for emotional connection
His need for emotional space
Communication strength
Physicality removes verbal communication
Separation = developed awareness of needs
Gender differences
Husbands need for emotional space
Rejection
Learning about the other
Reappraising behavior
Communication
Growth together: containing emotions
Fear of ending/breakup
Changing perceptions
Resentful
Separation laid foundations
Priority of relationship
Limited distractions
Early adjustment
Separation: fights
Tension
Lack of insight
Sexual tension
Early adjustment
Restraint
Holding back
Fear of sin
Managing early tension
Learning process
Household chores
Frustration, lack of support
Separation = addressing disputes
Separation space

Physical times = focused
Physical priority
Separation benefits
Separation = growth oriented
Separation investment
Separation benefits
Intimacy periods positive
Physical closeness
Intimacy benefits
Separation strain
Strict adherence
Separation = communication
Psychological bonding
Developing emotional awareness
Foundations being built
Early adjustment
Post birth hormones
Labour resentment
Lack of understanding
Need for empathy
Desire for comfort from similar others
Lack of connection
Communication needs
Support/comfort
Validation
Seeking approval
Early adjustment = learning curve
Enhances closeness and intimacy
Privacy of topic
Special secret
Shame in front of others
Mikvah preparation
Privacy of topic
Avoidance of topic
Lacking assertiveness
Intrusion of others
Mikvah stories
Planning mikvah attendance
Need for privacy
Negotiating needs: gender roles

Return from mikvah – greeted
Positive renewal
Renewed desire for spouse
Early adjustment
Renewed desire
Developed marital confidence
Privacy of intimacy
Renewed sexual chemistry
Secret club
Enhanced desire
Arousal
Renewed passion
Privacy of intimacy
Desire for intimacy
Intensity of emotion
Fear of rejecting others
Renewal of intimacy
Social comparison
Sympathy for others
'Wooden spoon' effect
Marital energy
Framework protection: safety
Marital energy
Potential marital energy
Complete together
Social comparison
Power of destruction
Power of partner
Power of parent – attachment pattern
Strength of relationship
Power of couples
Social comparison
Need to save others
Lack of control
Family purity laws: only one component
Marital needs
Kind, understanding, prioritise
Not a magical power
Family purity: marital tool
Family purity: not a cure

Family purity laws: support framework
Limited tool
Tool for power or destruction
Force +/-
Sexual control
Mikvah refusal
Sexual power
Sexual rejection
Marital needs
Relationship development
Communication development
Relationship priorities
Relationship challenges, life cycle
Social comparison
Marital Priorities
Social comparisons
Lack of time for spouse
Male priorities
Marital investment
Prioritising the other
Comparison to family purity laws
Mikvah comfort/cycle
Space for priority
Social comparison
Sexual frequency
Social comparison
Lack of sexual framework
Life cycle impact
Childcare
Priorities change
Sexual honesty
Expectation of marital breakdown
Control over sexual cycle
Framework/routine
Physical preparation
Gender difference
Reconciling v oppression
Mikvah preparation
View of women's benefits: oppression
Mikvah prep

Preparation benefits
 Obligation of sex
 Sexual avoidance
 Sexual preparation
 Physical preparation
 Enhances desire
 Convincing self of women's needs :oppression
 Male preparation/ role. Equalising across gender
 Reconciling gender distinction in her mind
 Husband greeting
 Gender: Giving him a role – equalizing
 Husband understanding
 Return from mikvah
 Emotional/physical transition
 Husband understanding
 Sexual expectation
 Life cycle challenges
 Sexual drive differences
 Sexual drive comparison
 Sexual drive changes
 Life cycle – responsibilities
 Hormonal changes
 Body changes: breastfeeding
 Relationship with body
 Awareness of lower libido
 Mikvah support
 Separation benefits: enhanced desire
 Separation benefits: Health/menstrual bleeding
 Seven clean days
 Benefit of countdown
 Shifting mind-sets
 Desire build up
 Achieved excitement
 Transforming time
 Hormonal synchrony
 Separation benefits
 Mind-set shift
 Transformations
 Mikvah = transformation
 Return from mikvah

Purify self before exposed
Physical preparation=mental preparation
No framework
Need some boundary/separation
Guilt of rejection
Exhaustion
Managing both needs
Sexual pressure/expectation
Negotiate boundaries
Communication
Childbirth changes
Lack of family purity laws
Loss of spark
Changing relationship with body
Gaining weight
Loss of confidence
Unhappy with body image
Lower sexual interest
Space for communication
Prioritising others needs
Desire for cycle
Awareness of no boundaries
Acceptance of freedom
Self boundaries
Planning intimate evenings
Shifting mind-set
Safety, meeting needs
Benefits of structure/routine
Social comparison
Need for structure
Desire to meet needs
View of relationship
Mikvah preparation: checking
Comfort versus adjustment
Shift, science to sex
Social comparisons
Challenging aspects
Privacy of mikvah
Mikvah timing challenges
Husband support

Importance of mikvah
Sense of support
Importance of time/space
Mikvah enjoyment
Mikvah preparation
Independence from kids
Cutting out personal private time for self
Personal time
Mikvah time
Mikvah preparation
Husband support
Personal space
Struggle to shift mind-set
Choice of happiness
Gaining control
Negative emotions
Positive spin
View of mikvah
Pampering time
Space for mind- set shift
Social comparison
Gaining cognitive control
Choice of viewpoint
Saving them from pain
Sharing with others mind-set shift
Personal power
Method of cognitive control
Gaining control
Trapped
Loss of control
Shock method
Downward comparison
Unable to gain control
Loss of ability
Desperation
Return to reality
Renewed control
Mind-set shift
Renewed strength
Choice of cognitive control

Positive mind-set
Positive parental marriage model
Family support
Family challenges
Inspired by sister
Positive attitude
Mind-set shift
Learnt to appreciate life
Reminder of positive
Mature skills of communication
Family challenges
Positive parents
Special needs = greater appreciation
Lucky
Availability of parents
Role of helping sister
Responsibility
Sisters developments
Admiration from others
Positive attitude
Everything is possible
Similar values to husband
Challenges of childhood
Positive spin
Warmth
Positive approach to life
Positive upbringings
Choice of mind-set
Attracted to positivity
View of husband
Personal traits
Realistic image
Work hard to be positive
Husbands support
Fighting dynamic
Communication
Expression of needs
Relationship strength
View of husband
Fighting/communication

Maturing process
Young marriage
Comparison with researcher
Early marriage
Innocence
Early marital adjustment
Marital growth
Comparison to husband
Early marital adjustment
Enhances self awareness
Aware of cycles
Aware of experience
Observing the laws
Emotional experience
Difficulty of separation
Enhanced physical self awareness
Awareness of hormone-emotion link
Mind-body relationship
Awareness of own needs
Desire
Gaining control
Manufacturing desire
Acceptance of feelings
Sexual desire
Control over desire
Grew into desire
Shame for others
Judgement
Desire to teach others
Inspire others
Finding time for teaching
Need to pay it forward
Priority of family purity laws
Explaining to children
Privacy of topic
Discomfort with topic
Privacy of topic
Awareness of teaching others
Privacy of family purity laws
Desire to share

Judgement of others
Others privacy/sexual cycles
Curiosity – privacy/secrecy of topic
Social judgements
Shame
Self discipline
Privacy of topic
Privacy intrusion
Anxiety
Fear of breaking boundaries
Intruding
Respecting privacy
Control over privacy
Controlling others privacy
Teaching others-control
Privacy of topic: communication with others
Sharing communication
Menstruation frustration
Difficulties with mikvah
Communication
Practical childcare for mikvah
Supporting others
Privacy of mikvah/ discomfort sharing
Becoming more personal
Privacy of topic
Strict privacy
Privacy of topic
Husband support
Becoming more closed
Lack of sharing
Communication (allowances)
Never detailed sexually
Privacy of topic
Shifting life cycle
Opposing expectations
Importance of privacy
Preservation of spousal unit
Strict boundaries
Gender bias/differences
Separation-intimacy cycle

Timing for him/her
Moving out comfort zone
Need for communication
Closeness/understanding
Physical closeness = emotional closeness
Emotional distance during intimacy
Emotional closeness during separation
Different zones
Physical times are for him
Moving towards spouse needs
Intimacy cycles = harder to connect emotionally
Barriers / distancing
Unmet emotional needs during intimacy
Routine of timing
Festival Comparisons: mind-set shift
Relationship unspoken contract

Appendix 12 - Table of clustered themes for Karen

Separation Experiences		
Sub Theme	Page/Line Number	Themes
Initial experience of prolonged Separation	134.145-149	Challenging early experience: Disappointing, Frustrating
	135.172-182	Investing in non physical activities
	150,151.555-562	Sexual tension
Opportunity to build the relationship	146.435-442	Developing communication skills
	135.155-156	
	147.462-465	
	146.442-444	
	149.521-532	
	151.572-579	Learning about each other
	153.631-632	
	135.172-175	
	150.547-551	
	160.802-803	
	146.434-443	Prioritising the relationship
	150.539-541	
	152.584-585	
	153.602-607	
		Growth
Fear of betrayal	136.182-186	Husband might look elsewhere

Personal Protection: Post baby recovery	137.209-215 137.214 181.1364-1369 142.349-364 159.769-774 164,165.916-924	Psychological and physical recharging: Healing time out Emotional needs are met Relief: no rejection
Benefits: Renewal of desire	143.362-365 156.702-712 137.218 163.878-880 163,164.883-893 160.804-806 139.269-270 141.326-348 142,143.356-364	Sexual renewal Enhanced desire Longing for spouse: Absence makes the heart grow fonder Renewal Newness
Benefits: Appreciation of boundaries	160.804-806 164,165.915-927	Appreciation of sexual structure Removal of sexual pressure
Relationship cycles	181.1358-1360 181.1363-1372 138,139.252-255 176.1232-1236	Sexual cycles Male v female time Hormonal Synchrony

View of the laws of Family Purity		
Sub Theme	Page/Line Number	Themes
Premarital Learning	130,131.68-79	Safe and containing
Psychological Messages: Adherence as protective from punishment	133.126-136 133.140-141 134.153-154	Fear of infertility Strict adherence Relief of adherence
Time off the laws	138.272-279 135.197-199 139.281-284	Pregnancy = no observance Foundations built for intimacy
Value of observance	138.265-267 176.1265-1267 177.1283 139.286-288 139.292-302 139,140.304-310 144.413-420 141.328-332 141.309-324 141.327-329 159.773-778	Paying it forward Wisdom of laws Framework for healthy newness

	144.380-382 144,145.405-406	Framework benefits: safety and containment
	134.126-135	Fear of infertility
	159.769-774 158.759-764 157.725-728 158.756-760 158.761-765 157.720-721	Marital tool: power/destruction
	139.268-270 157.729-731 160.806-815	Social comparison
	177.1254-1261	Pity/Fear for others lack of adherence
Gender Differences	162,162.857-871 161.828-829 162.846-849 162.852-857	Reconciling gender difference Equalising responsibility

Mikvah Experiences		
Privacy of mikvah	154.647-651 155.664-669 155,156.685-698 180.1329-1332 153,154.635-637 156.702-711 178.1285-1292	Shame of others knowing Intimacy privacy

Appendix 13 - Clustering the main themes for the cross case analysis

- Key:
- Stacy
- Rina
- Becky
- Katie
- Laura
- Karen

<u>Superordinate Theme</u> <u>Clustered</u>	<u>Sub Theme</u>	<u>Themes across interviews</u> <u>and example from</u> <u>transcript (page number,</u> <u>line reference)</u>
The Period of Separation	Distancing: The Dead Sea	Unmet needs for physical affection (2.30-35) Changing personas: Defences and barriers go up (7.166-169) Early adjustment to separation: strain (2.42-47) Experience of being more lonely (11.296-298) Distancing in other areas of the relationship (10.265-267) Emotional distance along with physical distance

		<p>(11.329-334)</p> <p>Lack of timing choice (10.317-325)</p> <p>Affects on fighting: Cant kiss and make up (6.167- 169)</p> <p>Fear of betrayal (136.182- 186)</p> <p>Early experiences of separation: adjustment (134.145-149)</p>
	Renewal: Passions	<p>Simmering</p> <p>Enhanced appreciation for spouse (2.33-34)</p> <p>Remembering I miss him (17.463-469)</p> <p>Enhanced communication benefits (5.158-159)</p> <p>Renewed sexual excitement and desire (3.71-76)</p> <p>Renewed sexual energy (11.317-318)</p> <p>Absence makes the heart</p>

		<p>grow fonder (163.878-880)</p> <p>Healthy newness (142,143.356-364)</p> <p>Reminder of importance of each other: sexual renewal (6.169-175)</p> <p>Cyclical renewal (9.280- 283)</p>
	<p>Protection: A Healing Time Out</p>	<p>Psychological and physical recharging (137.209-215)</p> <p>Benefits of personal space (3.76-77)</p> <p>Removal of sexual obligation (22.712-715)</p> <p>Time out: relief (6.183- 185)</p> <p>Protection for women (17.478-480)</p>

The Mikvah Experience	<p>Personal Space: Purification and Rebirth</p>	<p>Mind-set shift (164.904- 915)</p> <p>Marital tool: power/destruction</p>
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		<p>(157.725-728)</p> <p>Personal space and time out (9.230-231)</p> <p>Rebirth and purification experience: mikvah immersion (11.320-326)</p> <p>Anonymous space (12.338-343)</p> <p>Personal reflection & the personal relationship with God (3.62-75)</p> <p>Desire to return to mikvah (6.165-173)</p> <p>Personal Space: pampering (6,7.185-195)</p>
	<p>Invasion of Privacy: Shame of Exposure</p>	<p>Vulnerability: exposed self (9.266-270)</p> <p>Traumatic (9.276-277)</p> <p>Exposed: Body image difficulties (9.268-270)</p> <p>Physiologically irritating (5.156-157)</p> <p>Exposed self (14,15.447-</p>

		<p>459)</p> <p>Privacy of mikvah topic(21.657-670)</p> <p>Private relationship with God (3.62-63)</p> <p>Membership to a secret club (21.624-627)</p> <p>Community support (23.672-676)</p> <p>Shame of others knowing (180.1329-1332)</p> <p>Intruding in others privacy (178,179.1297-1304)</p> <p>Time for privacy (12.342-345)</p>
	Return from Mikvah: Adjustment	<p>Positive process (8.220-221)</p> <p>Return: excitement (12.349-358)</p> <p>Removal of sexual arousal (9.266-277)</p> <p>Adjustment (34.1086-1088)</p>

		<p>Resistance to sexual obligation (11.333-338)</p> <p>Switching modes: Difficulties adjusting to intimacy after separation (10.242-247)</p> <p>Mikvah transformation (164.898-901)</p>
Psychological Messages	Fearful Emotions: Guilt and Superstition	<p>Religious fear and guilt (26.812-816)</p> <p>Changes in observance: laxity versus hyper-adherence (4.96-108)</p> <p>Fear of punishment (4.114-115)</p> <p>Fears of pregnancy (11.408-411)</p> <p>Fear of infertility (134.126-135)</p> <p>Pity/fear for others lack of adherence (177.1254-1261)</p>

	<p>The Silent Promise: Containment</p>	<p>Framework benefits: safety and containment (144.380-382 144,145.405-406)</p> <p>Paying it forward (139.265-267)</p> <p>Teaching the laws (26,27.705-718)</p> <p>Monthly reminder: safety and containment (17.552-561)</p> <p>Promotes appreciation and self control (14.413-418)</p> <p>Ensures appreciation/sensitivity (25.734-736)</p> <p>False promises: protection (2.38-42)</p> <p>Commitment to God (20.626-628)</p>
	<p>Gender Bias: Oppression</p>	<p>View of the changing nature of purity: confused (25-724-732)</p> <p>Reconciling gender issues (161.828-829)</p>

		<p>Gender bias/ Resentment towards husband (7,8.219- 231)</p> <p>Restraining desire (17.492- 495)</p> <p>Women's spiritual cycles Versus offensive labelling (7,8.216-222)</p>
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SECTION B - Reflective essay (PYP152C)

Developing my personal identity as a counselling psychologist

At this juncture in my training I have begun to form my personalised identity as a counselling psychologist. My values as a counselling psychologist lie within the humanistic tradition which respects the uniqueness of each individual, placing importance on the subjective meaning of the individual's experience, which is valid and meaningful in its own terms, rather than making assumptions based on objective observable truths. Moreover, at the heart of my practice lies the maintenance of Roger (1957)'s core conditions of empathy, acceptance and authenticity, placing a central focus on the therapeutic relationship.

In this essay I will present my theoretical orientation as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist (CBT). I will elaborate on this model and give examples of how it has fit in with my client work. I will then highlight the limitations I have come across using CBT, and highlight how through learning of alternative approaches and development as a practitioner I have been able to integrate aspects of the psychodynamic approach into my client work. I will present a "clear and internally consistent theoretical framework, which provides a rationale for the way in which concepts and techniques are combined" (Horton 1999). Throughout I will be reflective of the process I have gone through elaborating on how I have evolved as a practitioner and my future directions.

The therapeutic approach I have adopted aligns well with my epistemological standpoint as social constructivist valuing each individual's process of making meaning of knowledge within a social context (Vygotsky, 1978). It also compliments my view of self as a scientist, as scientific method underlies the CBT assessments, formulations, goal setting, treatment planning and interventions. Additionally, I view myself as a reflective-practitioner, as I utilise every opportunity to critically reflect on my client work and value supervision as an essential component of my practice. My aim with CBT is to develop client's knowledge, insight and understanding of themselves providing them with increased capacity for choice and adaptive functioning (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2003).

CBT is an integration of cognitive therapy (Beck, 1976) and behaviour therapy (Bandura, 1977). CBT views dysfunction as a consequence of an individual's interpretation of events, and views resultant behaviours as critical factors in the maintenance of emotional problems. Human experience is considered by CBT to be a result of four interacting elements: physiology, cognition, emotion and behaviour (Scott, 1989; Dryden, 1990).

CBT's diathesis stress model of psychopathology highlights: Predisposing factors which increase an individual's vulnerability to experience difficulty; taking account of bio psychosocial factors, genetic factors, early life trauma, family relational patterns and beliefs. It also recognises Precipitating factors connected to the onset of the difficulty, looking at triggers, stimuli and settings appraised as threatening and the Perpetuating factors which act as maintenance factors for the difficulty, such as feedback loops (Taylor, Thordarson, Sochting, 2002). Change within CBT is reflected by symptom reduction and behavior change (Scott, 1989; Dryden, 1990).

In my experience and understanding of the CBT concepts I have briefly outlined, they take account of the significant factors that contribute to psychopathology, allowing for a deep understanding of each individual presentation. Not only has CBT fit well with my clients to date, it lends well to my understanding of my own difficulties as I can see the clear links and repetitive cycles between my own beliefs, cognitions, emotions and behaviours. Moreover CBT utilises a simple and clear model, which is easy both for me as a therapist to convey and for the client to understand and follow.

In line with my values, CBT prioritises the therapeutic relationship as a central component to the therapy, using the therapeutic relationship as a medium through which the therapist and client can work collaboratively (Beck & Freeman, 1990). The therapist works to understand and respect the client's subjective experience whilst empowering the client to actively collaborate in the process of defining and addressing their difficulties.

The collaborative process of working with clients to help them learn to identify their automatic thoughts and their core beliefs helps create a strong therapeutic rapport (Beck, 1995). I have observed that when my clients become self sufficient in the

process of identifying their cognitions and understand the role of their core beliefs on their automatic thoughts, this gives them a sense of achievement and mastery. Once this stage is achieved I have found my clients become more trusting over the therapeutic relationship, providing them with a safe containing base to explore the impact that their negative automatic thoughts (NAT's) have over their feelings and resultant behavior's. In this way my clients have become more willing to explore the role their dysfunctional coping behaviours play in their presentation and experiment with new behaviours and skills to integrate into their lifestyles.

Through working collaboratively and reciprocally, my clients feel they are the experts of their lives and I am the expert of the approach. I value this atmosphere which empowers my clients within the therapeutic relationship and makes them take responsibility for their improvements, not merely attributing progress to the therapist rather seeing it as their own increased skilfulness.

It has become clear to me that when my clients feel educated about CBT, they feel more competent to identify their own thought and behavioural patterns leading them to practice cognitive restructuring and behavioural change (Bond and Dryden, 2002). The practical focus of CBT: providing clients with skills they can use in daily life is important for me as I like to respond to my own challenges with a 'plan of action' and whilst I feel talking through difficulties is beneficial, I also am motivated by skills I *can utilise to help me get through* the difficulty I am facing. I therefore feel true to my clients when I am preaching an approach that I value as a person. *I also enjoy the* transparency of CBT providing my clients with clear rationales of treatment plans, allowing us to have a focus and goals for the therapy which builds clients self efficacy and agency.

An example of a recent client I have worked with using CBT is Jane (pseudonym) who presented with anxiety problems in the form of panic attacks. In brief Jane got married 6 months ago, following which she found her husband on porn websites and felt that he had a porn addiction. This resulted in Jane becoming increasingly anxious in her relationship, she felt inadequate and that she could no longer trust her husband. Jane expressed that she was having panic attacks and emotional outbursts at her husband, fuelled with anger, rage and threats. This was followed by feelings of

shame, guilt and insecurity. To help Jane understand what was causing her to feel so panicky and untrusting I introduced Jane to the dysfunctional thought record (DTR) (Beck, 1995).

Situation: Jane and her husband had guests for dinner, and she heard her husband mention that a friend of his at work had got a promotion on a deal they were involved in.

Automatic Thoughts: “oh my G-d’ I don’t know about this, what other things is he hiding from me”, “he must be fantasising about other women at work”, “what other things happen at work that I do not know about”, “he cant tell me anything”, “he doesn’t trust me”, “I am not important to him”. “I am not in control, I can’t cope”.

Feelings: shocked, sad, lonely, angry, panic.

Behaviour: After dinner Jane screamed at her husband firing many questions about his worth, trust, work, and followed by threats of divorce.

It was only through completing this DTR that Jane was able to see the impact of her automatic thoughts on her feelings and behaviour. Jane started to understand the impact of her behaviour on both the relationship and her own self worth. Through our formulation it became clear to Jane that her childhood experiences of having emotionally unavailable parents “who were always fine” left her with core beliefs of being a “failure and worthless” she also viewed the world as an “unsafe, uncontainable place”. She did not experience role models who confronted pain and difficulty and who taught her how to face problems and work through them. She therefore developed a very insecure sense of herself and her ability to cope with difficulty. She noticed that whenever threatened in life she would feel very overwhelmed unable to cope and she would ruminate about all her failings resulting in anxiety, panic and emotional outbursts. These outbursts would be in the form of anger, rage, panic, hysterical tears in her “unsafe uncontained world”.

Jane was able to make sense of the repetitive patterns occurring in her relationship and her panic attacks. Through this awareness she learnt how to challenge her

automatic thoughts and modify her core beliefs, thus allowing her to manage her anxiety better and not get into the hysterical rages she usually would get into when confronted with her negative automatic thoughts and feelings of being threatened. Moreover we worked through this particular issue and it became clear to Jane that her husband did not have a porn addiction, but rather frequented porn websites, we worked together to confront her feelings about this and explore functional ways to deal with this difficulty. This was a valuable experience for Jane not only to use the CBT aspects of challenging her cognitions and behavioural change e.g. breathing techniques, attention training etc. but also facing a difficulty that gave rise to anxiety, and finding a way to confront and tolerate these emotions.

Whilst CBT has many benefits, I have also learnt through experience with client work and developing my understanding of other approaches that CBT does not work for all clients, at times persisting with it can reinforce a client's sense of being a failure. For example, my client Rachel (pseudonym) presented with an emetophobia (fear of vomiting). Rachel had been stalked as a child and was brought up by a very "critical unloving father". This led her to seek out unattainable men throughout her life and repeat the stalker like behaviours experienced to her in the past. These relationship difficulties gave rise to her feelings of nausea, severe bowel problems (psychosomatic pain) and panic attacks.

We worked together using Boschen, (2007)'s emetophobia model, which has three components that Rachel felt adequately identified her difficulties: the predisposing factors, the acute factors and the maintaining factors. However Rachel was resistant in therapy, she wanted to do exposure therapy, though was not committed to any task, never did homework, and was too afraid to change. Though we addressed this and developed a strong therapeutic relationship, her goals were not met and the therapy felt stuck. In hindsight as Rachel's difficulties were deeply rooted in her childhood experiences and the emetophobia seemed to be a manifestation of her childhood trauma long-term psychodynamic therapy may have been more suitable to address her longstanding relationship difficulties, dealing with her resistance and her defences that were maintaining her nausea and panic.

The practical focus of CBT allowed for all her unconscious resistance and defences to

be maintained. Alternatively, Schema therapy could have also been considered to help her work through her relationship difficulties (Young, Klosko, & Weishaar 2003). Rachel's schemas were self-defeating patterns that she kept repeating throughout her life, as her core emotional needs were not met in childhood she developed schemas that led to unhealthy life patterns. Through schema therapy perhaps Rachel could have been helped to overcome her maladaptive coping styles, get back in touch with her early core feelings in order to heal early schemas, and learn to get out of self-defeating schema modes in order to get her daily emotional needs met.

Whilst CBT has gained successful outcomes for a wide range of presentations over both short and long term improvements (Butler, Chapman, Forman, & Beck, 2006), there is no approach that fits every client. Moreover, it is questionable in Butler et al.'s (2006) research whether improvements were related to CBT or naturally occurring. CBT has also been criticised for its tendency "to overemphasise the routine, visible aspects of work and to neglect 'under-the-surface' skills like problem solving and information handling" (Field, 2000, p. 168).

A diagnostic approach also warrants criticism for its lack of reliability, as most disorders overlap, it can encourage therapists to ignore individual differences, and it is influenced by what society views as unacceptable behaviour, labelling individuals. Therefore as a Counselling Psychologist I maintain an awareness of the impact of a diagnosis, constantly reevaluating diagnosis and formulations.

Counselling Psychology and Psychodynamic Therapy

As a result of at times feeling stuck with CBT as depicted in the very brief example above, and developing my understanding of other therapeutic approaches, I started integrating aspects of the psychodynamic approach into my therapeutic practice. Though these two approaches do not necessarily fit well, I have taken psychodynamic concepts and developed an understanding of them to allow for them to influence my way of thinking with some clients. In this way my theoretical orientation is distinguished more by the meaning the intervention has rather than the specific use of the intervention strategy (Posnanski and McLennon, 1995).

My approach to incorporating other techniques has been based on the “common factors” approach to integration (Garfield, 1992). This involves learning about other models and noticing that many concepts and techniques overlap with those of CBT and bringing those common factors together within my use of CBT.

Psychodynamic therapy sees a large component of mental life as unconscious, where unacceptable aspects of the self and experience are banished to the unconscious (Jacobs, 1999). These unconscious processes feel threatening and defense mechanisms are used in attempt to avoid this threat. Psychodynamic therapy views this resistance as key in the therapeutic process; it can serve as a protective function (Huprich, 2009) and can be indicative of “how vulnerable a person feels” (Hycner, 1993, p. 138). Resistance may act as a way to not uncover feelings or thoughts, or might reflect ones anxiety to change.

Rachel’s resistance may have been due to her fear of change or hatred of the negative parts of herself and she may have benefited from the opportunity to bring forth her unconscious experiences. Therefore now I am more mindful of resistance in therapy and more able to gently identify the resistance and invite my client to confirm or reject my interpretations or explore what feelings or thoughts they are resisting.

Whilst some may argue CBT does not necessarily create space to bring about these unconscious processes, I am now more mindful of the unconscious in my practice and am more flexible allowing some clients to have more space in the therapy, by stepping back and sitting with the silence more.

The central focus of psychodynamic work is how the past presents itself in the here and now. The therapy is the living example of the client’s internal and external world through which the therapist can re-experience with their client aspects of the presenting past to be more adaptive for the present and future (Jacobs, 2006).

As a more experienced therapist now I would be able to be use the here and now more by addressing aspects of transference-countertransference interaction at play. I now critically reflect more on how my client relates to me, what they expect from me, having an awareness of non-verbal communication, seating, eye contact, posture, to

help me understand more about their past experiences. Moreover reflecting on how I feel with my clients is crucial. E.g. with my client Rachel (with the emetophobia) I had felt a strong sense of being a failed therapist, and therefore perhaps did not persist and motivate her enough with the skills we were practicing, rather I looked to other alternative techniques in my desperate attempts to help her. Perhaps sticking with the exposure tasks but also exploring the difficulties we were experiencing within our therapeutic relationship may have been more reparative.

In the situation of my client Jane, in one particular session Jane was bubbling with anxiety and panic about her ability to manage her emotions and feelings of jealousy and mistrust with her husband. After this session I left feeling very anxious about my own relationship. The feelings of panic and anxiety bubbling inside myself were very intense and it was very clear that this was part of my own countertransference reaction. This was imperative for me to reflect upon and work through within supervision and my own therapy, so that I was able to see the aspects of myself that identify with my client, but also to ensure I did not project any of these anxieties back onto Jane.

In the therapy with Jane I used the CBT to help her address her dysfunctional cognitions and behaviours, and the psychodynamic use of the therapeutic relationship to create the reparative re-parenting experience, using the transference-countertransference interactions to create a stronger therapeutic relationship and work through the relationship difficulties of the past. Through this Jane was able to manage her emotions better from a cognitive perspective, but also address the deep root of the problem from her childhood experiences, which left her fragile and insecure. In this way hopefully in the future Jane will continue to be able to adopt a position in her relationship with her husband where she will be able to distinguish between her own dysfunctional cognitions and interpretations which did not reflect reality and also what parts of the past she is bringing to the relationship and projecting onto her husband.

Other aspects of the Psychodynamic approach that I am mindful of within my practice are the use of 'abstinence'. This has been very useful for me within my own therapy (which is psychodynamic) and has given me the space to explore myself without my

therapist intruding on my space and sharing much of herself. It has also been at times very uncomfortable and anxiety provoking, which I am aware, is also important to process and work through. Interestingly Bateman & Fonagy (2004) suggest that now practitioners are moving away from neutrality and transference interpretations and are becoming more collaborative, standing closer to CBT, with the aim of helping clients expand ability to create a meaningful narrative from disorganised experience.

In addition to my own personal psychodynamic therapy informing my practice, I have benefited greatly from having a CBT supervisor in my first two years of training, I feel I have had a good opportunity to develop my competencies and confidence in practicing CBT. As a developing practitioner, for my final year of training I have sought out a CBT supervisor and a Psychodynamic supervisor for my two third-year placements. This will allow me to continue to develop my understanding and skills of different practices and continue to enhance my integrative position.

In conclusion, the practical, simplistic and effective focus of CBT sits well with me as a Counselling Psychologist. Through my university learning, client experience and supervision input, I have developed a more integrative stance whereby I am mindful of aspects of the psychodynamic approach when using CBT in order to enhance the therapeutic process. There is no one size fits all approach, Psychodynamic therapy would be inappropriate for various presentations, such as alcohol or drug abuse and CBT has been found unsuccessful for presentations like Borderline Personality Disorder (Bateman & Fonagy, 2004). Therefore as a developing practitioner I need to continue learning and have an open mind to new methodologies in order to enhance my ability and flexibility to judge and apply the most suitable approach for each individual client.

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SECTION C - Theoretical essay (PYP048C)

With reference to two theoretical models, compare and contrast process and content interventions in working with a group. Use clinical examples to illustrate the theory.

A group is made up of individuals who are connected either physically, being in the same place at the same time, or in their minds, sharing a common aim, purpose or function (Barnes, Ernst and Keith, 1999).

This essay will compare and contrast the Psychodynamic and the Cognitive Behavioural models of group therapy. I will present the theory underpinning each model and analyse their individual therapeutic approaches, followed by an exploration of how each model applies to group processes and to depression and social phobia. In this way I aim to shed light on the similarities and differences between the approaches with a specific focus on the process and content of the interventions.

Psychodynamic Group Therapy (PDGT)

Freud, (1917) proposed that unconscious psychological forces influence thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Freud sought to bring unconscious activity of the psyche to consciousness. These internal aspects of the psyche evolve during early child development, and therefore comprise aspects of the child's relationship with parents (Jacobs, 2004). The child's early environment is a crucial force in the development of personality strengths and vulnerabilities (Jacobs, 2004). Therefore the psychodynamic understanding of adult stress and vulnerability link with problems in their early relationship models.

Foulkes, (1948) extended the psychodynamic concepts and therapeutic techniques of individual psychoanalysis to the group, providing group analysis with theoretical justification and treatment methodology. He suggested that the unconscious, defence mechanisms, repression, transference and counter-transference, projection and projective identification apply within the context of the analytic group.

Foulkes, (1948) proposed that individuals in the group react and interact as a whole network, each member influencing the other. He conceptualised this network as a matrix, the group becomes a transpersonal network, whereby it reacts and responds as a whole, the verbal and non-verbal communication is the basis of intraphysic and interpersonal relationships.

The group circle, which includes participants and the therapist, encompasses both physical and psychological space, bound by members sharing the same space (Pines, 1981). This process of sharing space creates the group atmosphere that Winnicott, (1965) explains facilitates transference experiences and the resultant perceptions and responses from the group members. Within the group, the members 'transfer' unacceptable repressed elements of the past onto other group members. In turn these experiences are modified, revised and used as new experiences of the self in relation to others. Foulkes, (1948) suggests that neurosis is a by-product of being 'at odds with our group' we were born into, the family. The process of group therapy proceeds by translation of neurotic phenomena into shared communication through verbal exchanges.

The group analyst is named the 'conductor' who remains in the background rarely exercising his therapeutic authority, providing space for the group to take its own course (Foulkes, 1948). On occasion when the group becomes stuck the conductor may 'nudge' the group along, although the group usually is able to negotiate through the blockage (Foulkes, 1948). The conductor retains a passive detached stance and remains neutral in his own views, though makes interpretations of the members' experiences. The conductor begins by making observations, without being concerned by theory (Balint, Courtenay, Elder, Hull, Julian, 1993). The observations made rely on two observational traditions mother-baby and participant observation (Barnes, Ernes & Hyde, 1999). The conductor analyses the interactions between group members, helping members become aware of their unconscious needs, motivations and concerns. Through analysis of members experience of authority (group members relationship with the therapist) and members experiences of affection (group members relationships with others group members) the therapist can use these rich sources of information to help members understand their relationships and themselves.

Cognitive Behavioural Group Theory (CBGT)

Similar to individual CBT, CBGT focuses on the interaction of thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Beck, 1976). CBGT is fundamentally a phenomenological approach (Mahoney, 1991), following the momentary experience of each individual. How do the phenomena of an experience register with each individual? The focus is on the present moment, the past and future is valuable, though it is explored through the present. For example, a therapist would ask a client 'when you just had that memory of the past, what thoughts does that trigger for you now?' CBGT relies on the belief that individuals are able to become aware, reflect and alter their cognitive and behavioural processes, it intends to directly target symptoms, reduce stress, and restructure cognitive behavioural responses in order to alleviate symptoms (White & Freeman, 2000).

CBGT educates clients about their cognitive processes; core beliefs, conditional assumptions and automatic thoughts (Beck, 1995). Developmental processes and other life events shape core beliefs; these are the way the individuals view themselves concerning their lovability and competence. The subsequent conditional beliefs are 'if then' statements, which infer cause and effect. These become the rules for living and are learned and accumulated throughout life. The automatic thoughts are the immediate cognitive responses to various triggers.

The group process aims to help the individual test out their dysfunctional beliefs and directs them towards cognitive restructuring (Meichenbaum, 1974), providing the individual with a variety of alternatives or modified beliefs. CBGT also helps to reduce the influence of dysfunctional cognitions on behaviours and facilitates behavioural modification or change. A variety of CBT tools are used to achieve these goals: automatic thought records; arousal hierarchies; activity monitoring; problem solving; relaxation methods; behavioural experiments; risk assessments; and relapse prevention methods (Williams & Garland, 2002).

The group setting provides a safe space for members to explore, challenge and test the validity of their cognitions. It also facilitates a supportive environment for behavioural responses to be identified and modified (Clark, 1989). The process of

sharing thoughts within the group can result in a very lively group exchange (White & Freeman, 2000). One of the strengths of CBGT is that it creates a collaborative relationship between the therapist and group members (Beck, 1995; White, 2000). The emphasis placed on agenda setting (Wright, Thase, Beck, & Ludgate, 1993), feedback (Beck, 1995) and goal setting (Beck et al, 1990) are crucial aspects of the collaborative relationships within the group (White & Freeman, 2000).

The therapist uses an inductive method known as 'socratic questioning' to help members determine their own assumptions and beliefs. Following the downward arrow technique members learn to identify their core beliefs and explore their underlying assumptions (Beck, 1995). The aim is for members to learn to become their own therapists, whereby they continue the process of self-questioning, identifying and challenging and modifying thoughts, feelings and behaviours once therapy is complete (Young, 1990). The therapist provides psycho-education presenting rationales, skills and techniques. They also guide members through in session practice and setting homework tasks, rehearsal of new skills provides members with a sense of mastery (White & Freeman, 2000).

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Groups vs Psychodynamic Therapy Groups

Group process consists of all the elements basic to the unfolding of a group from the onset to its termination: group dynamics; levels of cohesion; trust generated; resistance manifestation; conflict emergence; healing forces; inter-member reactions; stages of the group and the unspoken messages of how members relate to each other (Corey, Corey & Corey, 2010). Yalom, (1995) identified key therapeutic principles derived from self reports from individuals in group therapy: the instillation of hope; universality; imparting information; altruism; corrective recapitulation of the primary family group; development of socialisation techniques; imitative behaviour; interpersonal learning; group cohesiveness; catharsis and existential factors. These 'processes' exist and determine success independent of the therapeutic content adopted (Grohol, 2009).

Planning

Corey, (2008) suggests, “if you want a group to be successful, you need to devote considerable time to planning”. Pre-group planning considers: size; group structure; session length; location; frequency; time span; membership criteria and screening protocol. Both approaches value the importance of the group planning however they differ in their group choices due to their distinct theoretical perspectives.

Timing

An example of how the groups vary in planning can be seen in their differing approaches to time span. PDGT generally opposes the idea of time limited therapy, arguing that the time limit cannot be predetermined due to the nature of analysis. Addressing the unconscious cannot be restricted by time and rather utilises a long term model spanning from six months up to two years (Behr & Hearst, 2005). The PDG runs as a slow-open group, where members join and leave in their own time, or as a closed group where all members start and end at the same time (Behr & Hearst, 2005). Whilst the open group is useful within specific settings, such as a drop in service and it models life groups most closely (Behr & Hearst, 2005) it does not provide the opportunity to achieve a sense of safety, trust, and containment and ensure group cohesion between members occurs.

The longer time frame utilised by PDG's pose challenges for services that have financial restrictions, or long waiting lists, favouring CBGT. CBGT lends itself well to a short-term model of between six to twelve sessions (Hazlett-Stevens, Craske, 2002). This provides time for the often highly structured approach to be taught and cognitive and behavioural patterns to be identified challenged and modified. Moreover only half the work occurs within the session; the rest occurs in between-session homework (Cook, 2006).

Content v Process

Symptom relief is the goal of both groups however the theoretical basis and methodological interventions are strikingly distinct. CBGT has a specific content

focus on problem resolution (White & Freeman, 2000) utilising tangible skills to achieve this goal. For example, the therapist in a depression group would focus on common negative themes from members thought records, identifying common triggers for their depressive reactions and set goals to initiate activity between members, this in turn enhances group cohesiveness (White & Freeman, 2000).

The PDG achieves problem resolution through interpersonal group processes. The therapist by and large does not 'lead' the group in the same way as the CBG therapist, this creates a degree of anxiety within the group until they establish unspoken rules. The neutral stance of the therapist allows unconscious dynamics to play out between members and resolution or change is acquired through new understandings within transference and countertransference material (Montgomery, 2002). The psychodynamic process oriented therapist would focus on the interpersonal conflict between group members in order to enhance cohesiveness (Behr & Hearst, 2005).

A strong therapeutic alliance is the most significant predictor of symptom relief in psychotherapy (Clemence, Hilsenroth, Ackerman, Strassle, Handler, 2005). Perhaps the CBG therapist can create a strong alliance with members as there is a clear structure and active involvement between the group members and the therapist, however in a psychodynamic group, the conductor remains outside the group, refraining from engaging with individual members (Bion, 1961). Therefore it is questionable whether the PDG can achieve this strong alliance necessary for successful outcomes.

Absences

In a PDG an absence would entail a dynamic interpretation (Behr & Hearst, 2005). The conductor would encourage the group to talk about the absent person and their feelings of concern, anger or indifference and this material would be used for analytic interpretations. For example, a vacant chair may create unease for a member of the group. This member speaking up, questioning where the member is and enquiring about the absence would be encouraged to reflect on this anxiety. The member might then be able to reflect why this absence evokes childhood memories of being left out, feelings induced by the empty chair. In this way his/her unconscious emotional needs

would be expressed through the circle of the chairs. In a CBG if a member misses a session without prior notice, the therapist would generally open it up to the group for a brief discussion, answering questions or hearing members concerns (White, 2000).

Endings

The PDG and CBG end distinctly. Psychodynamic analysis continues right until the end of the final session. The conductor is continually on the 'lookout' for avoidance of sadness, anger, and pain concerning the ending process. Each individual member has his or her own model of ending, loss and separation. The conductor moves to the group as a whole for interpretations to initiate reflections about their experiences in the group. Members predisposed to defences against abandonment will be picked up on and analysed by the conductor in hope to help the individual gain mastery over and deal with the ending process (Behr & Hearst, 2005).

The ending of a CBG focuses on members reviewing, strengthening and joining their learning and skills gained from the group. Members assess how they have met their goals and expectations set at the beginning of the group. The hope is that the process of cohesiveness experienced in the group can be transferred and developed into other areas of life. For some individuals the lift of depression might reveal co morbid problems such as anxiety related problems (Clark, 1989). The therapist therefore facilitates alternative therapeutic opportunities to help the process of recovery. Successful experiences of joining a CBG for depression may leave the client with a greater sense of hope than when they entered; they would generally need to continue to practice the CBT skills to ensure the benefits are maintained and relapse prevention occurs (White, 2000).

Depression

Behr and Hearst, (2005) present an example of PDGT for depression. The conductor first attempts to reframe the depression in an interpersonal context, for example, by looking at the effect it has on others, allowing it to become a dynamic process, in this way repressed emotions are slowly drawn out by the group by helping the member recognise their feelings and redirecting them, this necessitates holding and

containment from the group. By members sharing their own experience of rage and guilt, they help to develop a sense of managing opposing emotions towards a parent e.g. that of anger and feeling compassionate, 'they did their best, they suffered too'. The role of the conductor is to drive the group in the direction of a reconstruction of the past, enabling the member to retrieve both good and bad memories. The unconscious material gets stimulated and amplified through associations. In their example of this process they describe a women complaining of experiencing persistent pain which might evoke anger and frustration in another group member. This in turn might enable the other member to come into contact with his own childhood rage and his adulthood destructive rage. The women may then be able to access her own anger and rage translating her somatic pain, into meaning. This dynamic within the group may provide a more effective way of bringing unconscious conflicts to the surface than any interpretation may have evoked.

The greatest criticism of PDGT is that it is unscientific in its analysis of human behaviour. It is difficult to scientifically test concepts such as transference or the unconscious mind, and therefore no conclusions can be drawn clarifying the role of psychological processes and their impact on symptom reduction.

White, (2000) suggests an alternative stance towards depression, CBGT understands depressive symptoms as a consequence of negative beliefs and self-critical thoughts perhaps in relation to early experiences or specific events. This model focuses on cognitive restructuring and behavioural activation to achieve symptom reduction. The therapist works towards helping members identify and process thoughts and feelings experienced during depressive episodes. One task of the therapist may be to help group members distinguish between functional and dysfunctional feelings, e.g. if anger were a common feeling the therapist would encourage the group to differentiate between functional (standing ones ground for ones values) and dysfunctional forms of anger (violence). As this emerges, the group might begin to experience guilt or anxiety. This would then be explored and challenged by using cognitive restructuring and relaxation training.

CBGT has generally become the more attractive, efficient therapeutic model, it is relatively straightforward to learn, deliver and produces positive findings across many

disorders in contrast to PDGT, which has fewer outcome studies and is perhaps becoming outdated. Whilst CBGT works well in clinical laboratory trials its findings are less secure in the real life clinical settings, and has been criticised as a successful marketing strategy rather than an intrinsically superior therapeutic model to PDGT (Leichsenring, Salzer, Jaeger, Kächele, Kreische, Leweke, Rüger, Winkelbach, Leibing, 2010).

In a comparison of CBGT and PDGT amongst elderly patients with depression positive outcomes were found across both approaches depression (Steuer, Mintz, Hammen, Hill, Jarvik, McCarley, Motoike, Rosen, 1984). This indicates that perhaps group processes are more significant in symptom reduction over and above the group approach selected. However in this comparison no placebo control was used due to ethical restrictions working with elderly, therefore limiting the reliability and generalisability of the findings.

Social Phobia

Another example of these distinct approaches can be seen looking at a model of therapy for social phobia.

Juster and Heimberg, (1994) successfully integrated cognitive and exposure therapy interventions for a social phobia group. Sessions one and two focussed on the CBGT model of social phobia and its rationale, introducing the concept of automatic thoughts, thought diaries and common thinking errors. Sessions three to eleven focussed on cognitive restructuring, where clients confronted feared situations by utilising in session exposure, progressing through their feared hierarchy. This provided a means to access negative automatic thoughts regarding the feared situation, thinking errors were labelled, disputed and alternative responses generated with the support of the group. Throughout the exposure anxiety levels were monitored and rated for subsequent cognitive restructuring. This process lasted for roughly ten minutes, until there was a reduction in reported anxiety levels. Homework exposure tasks and cognitive restructuring tasks were identified individually to meet each client's needs. Session twelve provided the opportunity to conduct exposure and cognitive restructuring followed by a review of members' progress over treatment and

identification of challenging situations that may require continued work.

The CBGT model contrasts the PDGT model, Zippin, Flavio, Eduardo, Eizirki, (2004) studied the efficacy of a short-term group utilising psychodynamic principles for individuals with generalised social phobia. Sessions one-three focussed on the formulation through looking into each member's history. Sessions four to ten addressed the relationship between their symptoms and conflicts within their relationships, analysing specific situations and finding common conflict themes between group members. This was achieved through the therapist encouraging discussion and exploration of member's conflict experiences. The final sessions eleven to twelve identified the separation anxiety members experienced from their own childhood/past experiences. The therapist was active in obtaining data from members individually and as a group, shedding light on formulations through questioning members and transference interpretations, bringing to consciousness the conflicts behind phobic situations. Throughout the therapist attempted to link common aspects between members in an attempt to enhance cohesiveness.

The outcome measures displayed in both groups indicate reduced social phobia and social avoidance. When the PDG was compared to a control group, the PDG was superior in treating social phobia. However the PDG seemed to face their conflicts more directly than the control group who did not have an opportunity to share their feelings and symptoms openly, therefore this may have led to the supposed success of PDGT. The CBGT displayed favourable outcomes when compared with placebo-therapy groups (Heimberg et al., 1990). However, no comparisons can be drawn between the PDGT and CBGT until comparison studies, controlling for the same variable are conducted.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the PDGT and the CBGT approaches appear to offer contrasting modes of treatment, owing to the distinct theoretical and philosophical frameworks. The PDG therapist utilises process-oriented interventions exploring the unconscious, insight, transference, and resistance, contrasting the CBG therapist whom adopts a more content oriented approach, focussing on identifying and modifying cognitive

and behavioural patterns. Despite these divergences the groups seem to take on a life of their own, and both models have shown to produce positive outcomes (Grohol, 2009). “Psychotherapy research and practice must move beyond "brand names" of different therapies to an emphasis on common factors, active ingredients, specific skills, and psychotherapy integration” (Holmes, 2002).

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SECTION D - Process report (PYP047C)

Introduction

I have selected my client Jason who presented with depression, anger management difficulties and a history of childhood abuse. I feel that this therapeutic encounter reflects my competencies as a Counselling Psychologist and the presence of Counselling Psychology's philosophical and theoretical foundations underpinning my work with both Jason and the multidisciplinary team. I aim demonstrate my ability to conduct assessments and provide individualised interventions based on an understanding of the relevant theoretical approaches whilst being mindful of issues of policy, legislation, culture and life span. I will also critically reflect on the therapeutic areas that I could improve on highlighting the interpersonal and contextual issues associated with this client.

I work in a primary care GP service, involving numerous responsibilities: leasing with G.P.'s; managing a large client load, admin, and working within a maximum time frame of six sessions, creating a fast paced enjoyable atmosphere, which inevitably influences my therapeutic practice (elaborated on in the transcript section).

The theoretical model adopted was Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), an integration of cognitive therapy (Beck, 1976) and behaviour therapy (Bandura, 1977). CBT has become the most commonly used intervention for anger management and has presented as an effective therapy for reduction in anger management (Beck and Fernandez, 1998).

The referral came from the clients G.P. briefly stating the client was experiencing depressive symptoms and needed help targeting his negative thought patterns and resultant behaviours.

Assessment

Jason a thirty-year-old white male presented on time and engaged. He appeared well dressed, articulate and spoke with a harsh tone. Jason explained that he abused drugs

for fifteen years and had been clean for nine years. His wife of eight years had also been clean for thirteen years. They had recently completed forty sessions of couple therapy due to their relationship problems as they had “difficult childhoods and therefore brought a lot of baggage to the relationship”. They had two children, a girl aged three and a boy aged six.

Jason described his father as a “secretive, critical, violent man” and his mother as “an addictive woman, be it alcohol, gambling or sleeping pills, she was emotionally unavailable and unloving ...I craved her love”. Jason explained that his parents were unsuited, his mother had extramarital affairs and his father was violent and abusive towards his mother. Jason’s parents sent him to boarding school between age eight to seventeen, rarely returning home and when he did he was met by his fathers violence and his mothers neglect. When he left school he “went off the rails and got heavily involved with drugs”. His parents divorced when he was sixteen and he reported feeling deep anger towards them for being “poor parenting role models”.

Jason had “volatile and destructive” relationships with both parents at the time of therapy. He explained that his parents were interfering and manipulative and their involvement in his life was bitter sweet “I want to be close to them, but they always let me down”.

Jason was made redundant in 2008, which he reported was the onset of his depression, he took “a menial job in WHSMITH” which led him to have suicidal thoughts as he felt he had “lost his self worth”. In 2009 he came to see his G.P. for a counselling referral. Jason refused any medication due to his past addiction. At the time of therapy Jason was no longer having suicidal thoughts, he attributed this lift in mood to his new job as a children’s football coach.

Jason’s goals for therapy were to address his anger problems, understand their historical development, stop criticising and shouting at his kids and control his negative thoughts and behaviours. He explained that his aggressive communication was creating problems in his family life, harming his children and wife’s confidence, he feared repeating his parent’s mistakes.

Jason presented as psychologically minded and insightful. He expressed that he had been emotionally void for so long due to his drug abuse and now was making up for it. I was struck by his strength and ability to reflect upon his experiences considering his past avoidance. After the session I felt impressed with Jason and proud of his achievements, perhaps I was taking on a parenting role compensating for something that his parents did not provide him with (Young, 1999).

Formulation

I utilised Beck (1995)'s Cognitive Conceptualisation Diagram as I felt his difficulties fit well into this formulation. Jason's early experiences (predisposing factors) of rejecting, unavailable, emotionally and physically abusive parents left him with core beliefs of being "unlovable, worthless and a failure".

Jason developed conditional assumptions based on these beliefs 'if I am not rich I am worthless', 'if my children do not achieve at school i am a failure', 'if people know I live in a council estate they will reject me', 'if I do not shout I will not be in control', 'if I am not in control I am worthless', 'if any family member of mine exposes weakness this will reflect my weakness'.

As a result of these assumptions Jason formed compensatory strategies (perpetuating factors) to assist him in managing to avoid his core beliefs. Jason criticises and belittles his children, he shouts, using a loud, harsh and aggressive voice. He does not let school parents drop his children at home so they do not know he lives in a council estate. He sends his children to extra classes and puts pressure on them to succeed at homework tasks. In the short-term Jason's harsh parenting strategies help him avoid feeling like a failure, he feels active in his children's education and feels in control of relieving his anger. However in the long term he never disconfirms his beliefs about being a failure without money, or being valued based on who he is rather than his belongings. He does not learn that he is able to manage his anxiety or stress without getting angry, rather his anger outbursts simply reaffirm his feelings of low self worth, being a failure and loss of control. Jason's recent Job loss and relationship problems have acted as precipitating factors, bringing to surface his core beliefs about being a failure and subsequent feelings of anger and depression.

An example of this dynamic in action: Jason walks into the messy playroom where his wife and kids are talking. His automatic thought is “this place is a mess, no one is behaving, I must gain control”. This activates his core beliefs about being “a failure” as he cannot control the mess. Following this he shouts and criticises his wife and children, they start clearing up, stop playing and begin to cry. Jason is left feeling guilty and a failure as he has upset everyone, thus reinforcing his core beliefs.

Intervention

Jason presented with numerous difficulties in his assessment relating to: his childhood experiences; low self esteem; parenting difficulties; financial/work related stressors; relationship problems and depressive episodes. I was aware of my desire to address each difficulty methodically but considered the time limitations and the need to focus on what my client’s goal was (anger management) and the risk this posed to his children. I adopted a treatment model based on anger management, remaining mindful of the system as a whole considering the family system and how the difficulties arise within his relationships, interactions and language used within his family. This awareness encouraged me to be creative and flexible applying skills that could be utilised when interacting with his children, his wife and his parents.

As Jason took personal responsibility for his anger and desired change the interventions planned were action/change-oriented (Deffenbacher, 1999). My intervention plan was based upon Deffenbacher, (1999) CBT interventions to address different elements of problematic anger.

Session one, the assessment session, reviewed Jason’s presenting problems and goals. I introduced the CBT model and we explored the role of anger appraisals in activating cognitive, emotional, physiological, and behavioral responses. I introduced a Dysfunctional Thought Record (DTR) (Padesky, 1995), at the end of session for homework to review the following week.

Session two began with a review of the DTR, and then an in session mindfulness breathing relaxation training. This is empirically validated for reducing anger, anxiety, stress, and psycho-physiological reactions, reducing initial resistance to

cognitive interventions (Deffenbacher & Lynch, 1998). Following this I introduced Jason to unhelpful thinking habits and we explored which ones he utilised. Homework: DTR, read anger management self help guide.

Session three focussed on communication skills training and role-playing alternate strategies. Jason identified the goal of helping his son with homework without shouting or criticising him.

This skill has also been linked to changing the client's appraisals of their ability to cope and reduce dysfunctional ways of responding to inevitable interpersonal conflict (Deffenbacher & Lynch, 1998).

At this point in session three we were exploring an incident where Jason got angry whilst helping his son with homework.

Transcript

Minutes 34:40 – 45

T1: Okay so in that moment what do you usually say to him?

C1: come on Samuel, alright? you can, you can do this, this is easy

T2: ok

C2: Dunno weather that's bad or not, pah, oka

Here I am drawing out Jason's usual behavioural response to his negative thought about his son's homework. I was aware of Jason's sense of failing as a parent ('pah'). At this point I felt inclined to reassure him, but held back so as not to confirm or disconfirm right or wrong. I wanted him to see that unaided he could recognise positive and negative parenting strategies.

T3: okay so yyouve have had the thought, he cannot spell, this is easy

C3: okay

I focussed back on the thought so we wouldn't get sidetracked as we only had six-sessions, perhaps it would have been more beneficial to offer process direction (Rennie, 2000), asking how he felt in the present moment.

T4: How could you convey that in a gentler, kinder way, that would achieve the same outcome of him trying again?

C4: well I could ask him weather he thinks that's spelt correctly, maybe

T5: okay

I wanted to empower Jason and give him the opportunity to come up with an alternative strategy. At that moment I recall feeling protective over his child and fearful of his critical communication, i therefore took a more direct approach in exploring behaviour change. I was aware that my agenda was both for my client and for his child, bearing in mind my legal obligations to ensure child protection (The Children Act, 1989). This may have aligned me with all the critical people in his life, which was important to reflect upon. Perhaps asking "would there be an alternative way you could communicate that?" could have achieved the same response without implying that he was not gentle and kind.

C5: or is is that negative?

T6: welll it depends how it would come across, how about you would explain to him before

C6: what like set in ground rules

T7: ground rules for the both of you

C7: yeh, that's that's you know so simple, I, when I work I do that, because I work with kids and I do that yet with my own kids I don't.

T8: well that's with everyone we all apply things

C8: I have a group of twenty kids, and the parents are all hovering around me, and I say right before we start these are the rules

T9: Okay

C9: and with him I don't do that, kids love that

Here I was trying to facilitate Jason through the process of setting ground rules, so that they could both have a clear agenda and structure for the task (mirroring a skill

used in our sessions). This intervention seemed to sit well with Jason as he jumped to apply it. However he also became self-critical which I attempted to relieve and normalise 'well that's with everyone'. This perhaps came from my own need to 'save' him from pain. I could have stopped him at this point and reflected on his critical voice.

T10: and perhaps rules you can also take, so lets say, lets say the first thing we are going to look at is spelling, so he knows that the first thing you are going to look at is spelling

C10: ok

T11: and then perhaps asking him, how could you, one option you said, is that spelt right? Okay so lets say, what would the word be?

In my attempt to offer an example I seemed to have taken too much responsibility telling him what to do, I could have asked him what would be useful. This reflects my feeling of being pushed for time and desire to fill every moment productively. I became aware of this and therefore invited him back to select a word.

C11: okay want, its w a n t, he spells it w o n t, well he did yesterday, so wwwhat I said yesterday, I said okay lets gets a scrap of paper out, keep it next to you and if, if we r unsure about a spelling, lets give it a go

T12: mmm that ssounds like an excellent task, excellent

C12: mm yeh

T13: I have a feeling that what you implement is superb; it's the way you explain it or convey it that is crushing

I first praised Jason for his effort and his use of a successful intervention. This modelling was something I tried to do throughout the therapy, so that Jason could learn to praise himself, his children and his wife, a model he deeply lacked in his own experiencing of parenting. I reflected my sense of his ability 'superb' prior to reinforcing that the communication was 'crushing'. Whilst this is a harsh word, it is a word Jason has used before and it seemed important not to shy away from the impact his on his child.

C13: its communication isn't it

T14: and that's what we are going to practice

C14: right

T15: okay so the usual voice? Sounds like what?

C15: loud

T16: Try and

C16: aggressive

T17: try and do it for me?

C17: okay let me think of an example, so it doesn't have to be yesterday does it?

T18: no any, I just want to hear, hear it

My objective was also to help Jason take ownership over his communication strategy (Gonzalez-prendes, 2007). I therefore attempted to draw out his usual tone to contrast it with a more adaptive alternative.

C18: you know actually I , I I have actually toned it down a lot the last few weeks

T19: mmm

C19: because so many people have flagged it up so ive had no choice

T20: okay

C20: to face it, okay so let me think of an example....(15 second pause) yeh maybe its actually nothing, you know maybe how I am actually doing it is is okay

T21: okay but lets try and hear

There is a strong sense of Jason's resistance to facing his communication style, I felt that it was important to encourage Jason to own it within the therapeutic setting. Listening back this evoked a strong sense of guilt that I perhaps pushed Jason to confront something shameful. He may have felt that I too was judging him, and forcing him to change like 'so many people who have flagged it up'. I could have explored how he was feeling and reflected that I sensed this intervention was uncomfortable for him.

C21: you know, um ... okay so his writ, not his actual physical writing because that's really good, but his writing, but the sentence structure because I know that they are working at that, is babyish

T22: okay

C22: so I think I said to him yesterday, 'Samuel this is um baby language', like that
um

T23: okay, so baby language, so your face kind of crinkles

C23: yeh wiwiwiwith the emphasis intentionally on

T24: baby

C24: yeh baby, because I know kids don't like being called baby

T25: mm, so actually taking a real dig at him

C25: ye

I feel my language 'a real dig at him' was too direct and harsh. Perhaps my desire to protect his son was a transference reaction, mirroring Jason's own desire to save his son from his criticism. My protective instinct was elicited, coming from my own childhood experiences of parental criticism (countertransference).

T26: okay, so you've seen that the spelling is wrong and its baby language, how can you stop yourself in that moment and convey something better, what could you say differently?

C26: Samuel, why don't we think about the sentences, why don't we think a bit more about the sentences, tell me the sentences before you write it, possibly

T27: okay

I utilise Socratic methods (Padesky, 1993) to help him come up with alternatives, questioning him in a way that he could model and apply to his son, reflected in his response.

C27: but you know, I also, I al, I am forever saying you know I cant do all your homework for you

T28: it does sound like in a way you feel very responsible to make sure he achieves

C28: ye I know and I, that's right and I I I know for a fact that my dad didn't, I reckon that my dad did a lot of homework for me

T29: mmm and there are many children who's parents don't sit down and spoon feed homework to them, and they survive, they develop the ability

At this point I recall feeling unsure whether Jason was able to break the pattern of criticism and belittling that had been deeply engrained into him by his father. I felt sympathetic towards Jason, feeling great pressure for his child to achieve, perhaps to cover up his own beliefs about being a failure, but also inclined to help distance him from the need to push his child, in order to protect his son. I therefore attempted to normalise the experience of parents who leave their children to develop skills, something I had experienced from my own parents.

C29: so maybe that, maybe that could be the way the way forward, but then do I physically sit with him, but, but not have any input

T30: I think something about questioning

C30: I mean that's difficult

T31: very difficult, but giving him the opportunity, and changing the tone. Do you hear the difference in my tone? Samuel hohowws this sentence, is there anything else you could do with this sentence, or Samuel is there anything else you could do with this sentence?

I tried to mirror the different tones, and help him see how different the loud versus soft tone sound. I feel that this was a creative intervention, which felt natural within the session though I feel uncomfortable listening back to, as it seems too direct, perhaps I could have introduced what I was going to do first. As we had a strong therapeutic raptor, this felt natural and Jason's next response seemed to confirm this strategy was useful.

C31: yeh, yeh, yeh, because often when I do flag it up he realises

T32: so you have got a very intelligent child who actually can respond

I reinforced his success when he provides space for his child to correct his mistake, challenging Jason's beliefs previously expressed 'if I wont help him, he will fail'.

C32: he actually thinks and goes yeh yeh actually

T33: okay so practice to me the gentler voice that you could use

C33: Samuel that sentence that you have just written, do you think that you could write that using different kind of language

T34: okay

C34: longer words and different kind of language, and nine times out of ten he will turn round and say ye

At this point I wanted to make sure Jason was following the intervention, and was able to apply it. He seemed to do a really good job at this. However my intervention seems quite demanding, instead of telling him to 'practice for me', I could have been less authoritative and more collaborative, 'would it be useful to practice different voices?' (Gilbert and Leahy, 2007).

T35: okay, so something else I think would be really beneficial is at the beginning of that sentence to sandwich it, there's something called sandwiching something you say, at the beginning of the sentence saying something positive and at the end saying something positive and then getting your point in the middle

C35: oh right in other words something like, what you have just written is, is fine, um the ideas in it are great, just try try and make it longer, using maybe slightly different words, I mean something is that the kind of thing that you are driving at?

T36: and something at the end? the sandwich, imagine the bun

C36: and then, just try your best, something like that? is that is that the sort of thing?

T36: beautiful

Jason had successfully incorporated the use of a softer tone and managed to find a way he could question his son rather than criticise. Following this I introduced Jason to the 'sandwiching technique'. I felt that this would be a useful strategy for Jason to incorporate into his life in general, starting with his children, helping him compliment his kids more and providing him a structure he could use to critique them without crushing their confidence.

C36: pah, yeh

T37: hard work

C37: its so easy right

T38: its not easy

C38: easy to say it, difficult to actually execute, right, you know

T39: but once you start, once you start prac, for so long you've practiced the louder voice, but actually it could be quite empowering when you do talk with that gentler voice, just think in your head, even what would my voice sound like, what tone? what level? Because you definitely are hearing what im saying and im not harsh with you, I don't shout at you and I don't, and there is a great interaction that we have here, from my end, the way you speak to me, the way I speak to you therefore your able to do it, because you still talk about anxiety provoking things in here, so to try and mirror and remember that gentle soothing voice, and to try start using it a bit more, and the other important thing is the sandwiching, so this week to try and experiment with the sandwiching, when you want to say something to your child about homework tasks or about something your not satisfied with,

At this point I was concerned that Jason was being self-critical and his posture slumped as if he was deflated, he had spoken in the past about his fear of being an awful father and ruining his children. I wanted to empower him at this point to increase his sense of competence, necessary for clients with a failure schema (Young, 1999). I had a strong sense of hope for Jason and his ability to change. I reflected on my own experience of him within the therapy, as I felt that he had displayed self-control, tolerance of anxiety and management of intense emotions. However I think I went on, there is a sense that im rushing and trying to tell him too much at once. This is perhaps a result of my own need to help him and the constraints I felt due to the short time frame. Perhaps I could have slowed down and asked Jason to reflect more on how he felt in the moment and the usefulness of these interventions?

C39: sandwiching, right, so start of with a with a positive affirmation, first slice right?

T40: first slice

C40: the filling is the, the idea of how to improve and the final layer is try you know try your best at it (sigh)

T41: mhu, try your best, your doing great, something that can give him, and there is something also about, sometimes you might have something negative to say, and that does not mean you are a bad parent, but sandwiching it, will mean that you can, you don't crush him at the same time, in a way

C41: yeh I have to be careful of that, crushing him, but then there's its that balance isn't it, between pushing your kid, I mean I had this idea a few weeks ago, this

Chinese women who is a Yale lecturer who's written a book about parenting, it's all over the press at the moment, it's a hot topic and uh I read excerpts from it in the times and a few other papers and um got home at night and I'm like right were doing Chinese parenting (laughing), which is just ridiculous, it's a different culture, it's in their genetics, that's how they do it, and she described what she did and how it might have affected them in later life the kids and all this stuff, so

T42: is it a gentle way of parenting or?

C42: no of course not, it's salvage, um but they do believe it gets results

I wondered at this point whether Jason was projecting his own feelings (Tavris, 2000) of his parenting onto the Chinese culture 'its in their genetics...'. This seemed to remind me of how he spoke of himself and his own fears in previous sessions.

T43: okay, so there is something, I think also about your own belief (client laughs), that you have to, firm is good and too too gentle, kind is going to create failure, when actually for you, you had very firm and it created a lot of difficulties for you

C43: ye ye, but that was, that's just my experience of it, doesn't mean it will go the same way with him, right? But you know, maybe, that's a gamble isn't it?

I picked upon a belief that Jason had identified in a previous session and that fit in at this point. I seem to be talking too much, instead of reflecting back and using Socratic methods to help him arrive at these conclusions. Asking 'how was your own experience of your parents?' may have been more useful. Jason challenges my suggestion, which is a good reflection of his confidence and trust within the therapeutic relationship, as a place where he can be open and honest and question his own beliefs.

T44: and perhaps because of because of where you come from, it will always be something, the tendency to go to the harsher end, so to try and push yourself to the gentler end

C44: yeh yeh, it's against my principles

T45: but it will always, it will always kind of, the fear that perhaps you might go too far and never push them or give your kids structure, boundaries, you know, help them

progress, push them, I think naturally you will because of what you've you've kind of been through

At this point I was trying to increase Jason's awareness of his own propensity and vulnerability to go towards the critical harsh parenting model, as a result of his own experiences and his own personality. I think my use of 'harsher end and gentler end' was my attempt not to label Jason or be too blunt. Therefore my use of loose language created the image of a spectrum that he could move on.

Final Sessions

Session four reviewed previous skills and focussed on thought challenging, thought stopping and gentle voice training.

Session five explored the dysfunctional cognitive and cultural components of Jason's experience of anger, aiming to identify and alter his anger inducing cognitions and schemas, utilising self-instructional training and problem solving skills to assist him in changing his angry critical self-dialogues, learning to guide himself through events in a calmer, more task focussed manner.

Session six reviewed CBT skills and relapse prevention followed by an exploration of Jason's feelings around ending and providing feedback to empower him in his achievements.

Evaluation

Jason reported having a deeper understanding of his past and link to his present difficulties. He also developed skills for change in his cognitive, emotional, physiological and behavioural anger responses, displayed in a reduction in "explosive episodes" from daily to once a fortnight, these episodes were now more controlled and often when he was not practicing the skills he had learnt. We had a strong collaborative relationship, which helped to facilitate his progress and act as a good parenting experience to the inner child in Jason (Freud, 1915). Throughout the therapy I was mindful of Jason's history of abuse and personality characteristics

(Deffenbacher, 1995), for example, to manage his low stress tolerance we incorporated brief relaxation techniques before implementing his cognitive-behavioural strategies, we also utilised cognitive strategies about his past experiences of abuse to help him gain insight into his propensity to parent in a critical way, rather than attributing to his own failings. In this way I was able to fit my client to the model and not visa versa. I was also careful to flexibly review challenging skills, rather than moving on with my session agenda.

The therapeutic relationship with Jason was paramount (Gonzalez-Prendes, 2007), striving throughout to value Jason's subjective experiences, without assuming objective 'truths', maintaining empathy, acceptance and congruence (Roger, 1957).

I thoroughly enjoyed working with Jason, the collaborative fast paced atmosphere was exciting and lent well to Jason a bright, quick thinker. However, I may have at times been too direct and fast paced which I should have identified and reflected more on earlier in this short therapeutic encounter. The supervision input I received focussed primarily on child protection issues, however giving some time to the process and contextual issues should have been incorporated into the supervision I received. The six-session time restriction was also limiting, as Jason needed more time to explore the childhood abuse he endured and it's link with his anger, perhaps this would increase his long term effectiveness in managing his anger.

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