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Women's Experience of Psychological Homelessness and Identity Management:

A Portfolio of Research and Therapeutic Practice

Yasmin Fulder-Heyd

A portfolio submitted for the degree of DPsych

City University, London

Department of Psychology

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents 2

List of Tables and Diagrams 6

Acknowledgements 7

Declaration 9

Abstract 10

Section A: Introduction to the Portfolio 11

Reference List 16

Section B: Exploring Psychological Homelessness through the Experience of Israeli Women Living in the UK 17

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.2 Introduction 18

1.3 Literature review

1.3.1 Theories of Identity 20

1.3.2 Immigration and its Psychological Implications 25

1.3.3 The Jewish Israeli Emigration 29

1.3.4 Israeli Women Immigrants 34

1.3.5 Home 36

1.3.6 Psychological Homelessness 40

1.4 The Aim of this Research Project 43

Chapter 2: Methodology and Procedures

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Research Design 45

2.1.2 Choice of Methodology and Philosophical Considerations

2.1.2.1 Rationale for choice of Methodology 45

2.1.2.2 Overview of IPA 47

2.1.2.3 Epistemological Standpoint 50

2.1.3 Reflexivity 53

2.1.3.1 Epistemological Reflexivity 54

2.1.3.2 Personal Reflexivity 55

2.1.4 Validity 58
2.1.5 The Use of Language 61
2.2 Procedures
2.2.1 Sampling and Participants 63
2.2.1.1 Participants 64
2.2.2 Interview Schedule 64
2.2.3 Transcription 67
2.2.4 Ethical Considerations 67
2.2.5 Analytic Strategy 68
Chapter 3: Analysis
3.1 Introduction 71
3.2 Analysis
3.2.1 Theme 1: Development of Psychological Homelessness 73
3.2.2 Theme 2: Impact of Psychological Homelessness 91
3.2.3 Theme 3: Attempts at Psychological Management 118
3.2.4 Theme 4: “Things are all the time not solved...” 134
Chapter 4: Discussion
4.1 Overview of the Analysis 140
4.2 Transferability – Issues to Consider
4.2.1 Quality Markers 146
4.2.2 Limitations / Challenges 148
4.2.2.1 Methodological Challenges 148
4.2.2.2 Procedural Challenges 150
4.2.3 Personal and Epistemological Reflexivity 153
4.3 Significant Findings and Contributions to the Field 155
4.3.1 Theory
4.3.1.1 Theories of Identity 156
4.3.1.2 Psychology of Immigration 159
4.3.1.3 Israeli Emigration 160
4.3.1.4 Home and Psychological Homelessness 162
4.3.2 Research Process 164
4.3.3 Therapeutic Practice 165
4.4 Areas for Future Research 169
4.5 Conclusion 170

Appendixes:

1. Ethics Release Form 172
2. Research Flier 175
3. Information Sheet and Consent Form 176
4. Biographical Details Questionnaire 178
5. Interview Schedule 182
6. Resource List 183
7. Biographical Details Table 185
8. Case Descriptions 186
9. Importance of Various Identity Components 191
10. Example of Transcript 192
11. Example Theme Table for One Participant 201
12. Example of One Super-Ordinate Theme 205
13. Table of Themes, Subthemes and Quote Locations 207
14. Theme List 209
15. Analysis of Theme: Process Over Time 210
16. Analysis of Theme: Psychological Well Being 213
17. Analysis of Theme: Interpersonal Processes (in 'Impact of Psychological homelessness') 219
18. Analysis of Theme: Interpersonal Processes (in 'Attempts at Management) 227
19. Graphic Depiction of Model 230
20. Short Analysis of Hebrew Sections 231
21. Cross Reading 234
22. Excerpts from Research Log 236
23. Poetic Condensation of Symbols 243

Reference list 246

Section C: Professional Component: Home is where the heart is? The Process of Therapy with Two Women Encountering the Challenge of Redefining Home 266

1. Introduction 267
2. Lamika
    - 2.1 Context, Referral and Setting 268
    - 2.2 Client Profile 268

2.3 Convening the First Session 269
2.4 Therapeutic Approach 269
2.5 Presenting Problem and Formulation 270
2.6 Pattern of Therapy and Therapeutic Relationship 272
3. Eva
3.1 Context, Referral and Setting 272
3.2 Client Profile 272
3.3 Convening the First Session 273
3.4 Therapeutic Approach 273
3.5 Presenting Problem and Formulation 275
3.6 Pattern of Therapy and Therapeutic Relationship 276
4. Thematic Exploration of the Therapeutic Process – Redefining Home and Identity as Women 277
4.1 Formulations and Therapeutic Processes 278
4.2 Expressions of the Identity Management Process 281
4.3 The Therapeutic Ending 282
5. Discussion 284
Appendix 1: Cognitive Formulation – Lamika 290
Appendix 2: Cognitive Formulation – Eva 291
Reference list 292

Section D: Critical Literature Review: Creating Presence from Absence - A Critical Review of the Literature on the Identity Management of Childless Women 296
1. Introduction 297
2. Identity Management 299
3. The Childless woman 301
3.1 Infertility and Involuntary Childlessness 306
3.2 The "Postponer" or “Transitional” Women 311
3.3 Childless by Choice 312
4. Discussion 317
4.1 Implications for the Counselling Psychologist 320
5. Conclusion 323
Reference List 326

List of Tables and Diagrams

List of Tables

Table B.1: Key Biographical Details of the Participants
Table B.2: Sorting Various Identity Components According to Importance
Table B.3: Theme 1 for Ayelet with Subthemes, and Quotes
Table B.4: ‘Development of Psychological Homelessness’ with Subthemes, Quote Locations and Example Quotes (From all Participants)
Table B.5: All Themes with Subthemes and Quote Locations

List of Diagrams

Diagram B.1: The Importance of Various Identity Components
Diagram B.2: Graphic Depiction of Model
Diagram C.1: Cognitive Formulation – Lamika
Diagram C.2: Cognitive Formulation – Eva

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Abstract

This portfolio focuses on the complexities of women's identity management when multiple identity components are being challenged.

The empirical study is titled 'Exploring psychological homelessness through the experience of Israeli women living in the UK'. This qualitative project explores a novel concept which has received almost no attention in the psychological literature. For this purpose, a population with a unique identity construction was chosen. A sense of detachment from both their country of origin and host country leaves these women with the experience of 'homelessness'. In light of existing psychological literature on identity, immigration and the experience of women on the move, the research examines the personal meaning making processes and the implications for research and practice. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to explore several emergent themes which centre on intra-psychic, interpersonal and intergroup processes as well as the subjective understanding of 'psychological homelessness'. In addition, attention was directed to the coping methods which were used in response to this experience. One of the key findings highlights how these women are caught in a vicious cycle whereby their attempts at coping with psychological homelessness lead to further lack of belonging, creating ambivalence and doubt.

The professional component is titled: 'Home is where the heart is? The process of therapy with two women encountering the challenge of redefining home'. It presents the therapeutic work with two immigrant women from very different backgrounds who were both faced with an 'emptied' home. Therapy focused on the ensuing deep doubts regarding their conceptions of home and self, and helped the women reach a more empowered and resilient place.

The last section of the portfolio is titled 'creating presence from absence: a critical review of the literature on the identity management of childless women'. The examination of the research on the subject emphasises the importance of diversity in the ways in which women manage this stigmatised identity.

SECTION A:

INTRODUCTION TO THE PORTFOLIO

> *'As a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world'*
> (Virginia Woolf, 1952, p.197)

The stories of women are complex, and require careful attention in practice, research and theory, in order to give voice to the diversity and individual struggles which women face in their attempts to create a sense of belonging and home, self esteem, and psychological well being. This portfolio tells some of these stories.

In this portfolio I espouse an approach to identity introduced recently into the psychological literature – that of 'decentring identities'. As explained by Henwood (2008), this means that people are viewed as 'multiply positioned, rather than occupying a single, fixed core or centre of identity' (p.46). Regarding women as holding multiple positions allows for a close examination of the ways in which they manage various and sometimes conflicting identity components, in a process of continuous life long identity work. The portfolio looks at how women shift fluidly between these different identities when faced with challenges which touch many aspects of the self. These experiences may also cause a sense of loss of identity or belonging, and lead many women to 'reconsider their roles and re-evaluate their own identities – who were they? What was their role?' (Ahmed, 2005, p. 115).

The three sections within this portfolio all discuss women and their identity work in light of the apparent polarities of place and mobility, home and movement, fixed position and transition. This psychological identity management can be ongoing or

momentary, all-encompassing or focused on one aspect of the self, but in the case of the women discussed here it is pervasive and taxing, often requiring therapeutic help. All three sections demonstrate the creative and diverse ways in which women generate new meanings and create new spaces within themselves to cope with such situations.

Section B is an empirical study exploring the concept of psychological homelessness through the experiences of Israeli women living in the UK, and the identity management processes which they go through due to a deep sense of lack of belonging. Their experience is unique because it involves ambivalent feelings about both country of origin and host country, and requires them to redefine and re-evaluate many aspects of themselves – their identity as Israeli, as women, as mother, wife and immigrant. The study hopes to convey the intricate relationship between these identity components, how they are subjectively experienced, and how the women construct their unique ways of shifting between them in their search for wellbeing and self esteem.

The idea and initial questions which brought about this research project arose while I was entering my second year of living in London. I moved to London from Israel in order to complete my professional training in counselling psychology. As part of a relatively international group of trainees, the challenges of living in London raised some questions for me about the issue of home[1] – what it means for individuals who move countries regularly, and how they incorporate the new surroundings and new home into their identity. This became more of a burning question for me after approaching other Israelis, and realising that they are all struggling with questions of belonging, home, and identity. This led me to my MSc research project, in which I explored the experience of

[1] Throughout this research I will be using the word home in the lowercase because I am not treating it as an established construct, but rather as a term holding multiple meanings.

Israelis living in the UK, and the ways in which their identity is challenged both by internal conflicts and through external threat or criticism. The findings from my MSc study further confirmed the need to explore the meanings of home for Israeli emigrants, especially women, since the women in that study expressed significant ambivalence about their relationships to home, and described a complex process of interaction between multiple identity components and the feeling of (or longing for) a solid sense of home. They described life in the UK as significantly impacting on their psychological wellbeing, bringing with it a deep questioning about who they are, what are the parts of their identity which are more important to them and how they cope with the new and unexpected internal struggle of self-definition.

At the time I was inspired by the stories of the people I interviewed and those I worked with therapeutically, and their unique ways of managing their internal turmoil. It made me realise that home and belonging are major issues for many cultural groups today. A more in-depth exploration of what it means to feel a basic sense of lack of home for immigrants might yield valuable understandings for practitioners and individuals going through this experience. Through talking to clients, colleagues and friends, I also felt that the discussion about home is becoming more relevant for everyone in this age of mobility, since people on the move often ‘leave behind’ questions of how this impacts on their psychological wellbeing and personal processes. I decided to look at this from the perspective of Israeli emigrant women, since their unique cultural background brings to the forefront many levels of meaning concerning home, homeland, and Diaspora. The ways in which this interacted with the complexities of being a woman today and trying to

manage conflicting roles as wife, mother and career-woman fascinated me, and I wanted to explore this further.

I was also inspired by my clients, participants and fellow counselling psychologists who helped me to develop a belief in the importance of focussing on phenomenological, subjective and unique stories when conducting research in psychology. I found this was a way through which I could meaningfully integrate my therapeutic work with psychological research.

Section C describes my therapeutic work with two women who were both faced with a sudden emptiness of their home as they perceived it. Both women held certain beliefs about what is home, which were largely influenced by their unique culture and biography. When this image of home was shattered, they were left with a desperate need to renegotiate the meaning of home and with it their identity as women, wives and mothers. Although they came from very different ages, backgrounds and contexts, they were both faced with this identity work, significantly influencing their psychological wellbeing. Therapy allowed them to explore alterative meanings and new ways to view themselves and their identity, which ultimately led them to find new meaning of home which centred around their inner strength and resilience.

Section D is a review of the literature on the identity management of women who are without children. Whether this is a conscious choice or a result of circumstance, the research shows these women to be experiencing stigmatisation and feelings of ‘other’, as if their childlessness means they have somewhat failed the image of womanhood. The review shows that these women also engage in a process of identity work, renegotiating some basic concepts such as womanhood and motherhood, introducing new meanings in

striving for positive distinctiveness and self esteem. The review also addresses ways in which therapeutic work can assist in this process.

One of the threads which connect all the pieces of work presented here is the issue of ambivalence. The women in all three contexts where identity negotiation is taking place are faced with varying degrees of ambivalence as one of the main expressions of the identity struggle. Whether these identity challenges are in relation to managing criticism and stigmatisation from society and other external sources (as in the case of women who choose to be childless), or in relation to internal turmoil and lack of a solid sense of where home is, in all cases the women present with ambivalent feelings and a discomforting sense of push/pull towards various aspects of their self concept. This ambivalence need not necessarily be seen as a negative process, since it can in some cases help to generate a process of exploration leading to self awareness and greater insight.

To conclude, this portfolio looks at how women negotiate their journey to finding a home within themselves. I feel that just as the participants in my research, the clients I worked with and the women discussed in the literature review all went through this journey to establish new meanings in relation to their identity and life circumstances, this portfolio allowed me to go through a parallel process of understanding and personal development, helping me reach a more meaningful sense of home within.

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Section B: Research Component

Exploring Psychological Homelessness through the Experience of Israeli Women Living in the UK

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In the past few decades, in the light of various cultural and social changes, identity, along with some other basic concepts in psychological theory, has undergone a re-examination. The rapid growth of immigration and mobility could be proposed as one of the reasons for this re-examination. The management of particular identities for those of us who are constantly on the move raises some basic questions: What are the important dimensions of our identity which we attempt to preserve, and what are we willing to let go of, or alter? When faced with a radical shift in location and culture, how do we manage our basic sense of self and other, and what are the experiences which shape our identities? What is the relationship between place, home and identity? To what extent is our identity attached to specific locations, or do we 'carry our home on our back' like tortoises?

Immigrants' experiences of lack of belonging have been explored throughout the 20th century, and probably more so in recent years, with the rise of globalisation. It has become increasingly common to question and re-examine concepts such as homeland, Diaspora, home, belonging and attachment to place. These issues have been extensively explored in current literature (for example: ‘Lost in translation’ by Eva Hoffman, 1990, and ‘Netherland’ by Joseph O’Neil, 2008).

Concepts such as transnationalism and Diaspora have become core issues in theoretical and applied research in the social sciences as well as in other fields. The ever growing ease of mobility, together with the multiple conflicts and economic crises around the world facilitate migration and have put issues of home and belonging on the agenda (Brown, 2000).

In this research I would like to throw light on these issues by focusing on the subjective experiences of a small group who for various reasons decided to emigrate from Israel to the UK. Within this exploration, feelings of home and belonging (or the lack of them...) will be the focus of attention, looking at the meanings which are created around these experiences, as well as how they intertwine with a deep questioning concerning inner self and identity.

To address these questions, I would like to propose in this research a new concept, namely 'psychological homelessness', a sense of not feeling completely at home in either host country or country of origin. The aim is to explore whether this concept is best fit for, and can capture, the experience of the participants, through letting the meaning of it arise from them. In other words, this research project aims to explore this phenomenon as it is experienced by the participants, rather than aiming to bring forth a solid definition. It examines whether psychological homelessness is a useful construct, both for practitioners and individuals going through similar experiences, to describe states of alienation and disconnection. The study also looks at its implications for our understanding of identity, immigration and mobility, as well as its relevance to counselling psychology. I hope to show that this experience is a novel relevant and interesting psychological phenomena that has been touched on briefly in the literature but lacks proper investigation.

This will be a phenomenological inquiry, adopting a philosophical standpoint which puts at the centre human experiential agency and human meanings. In this perspective there is an inherent challenge, since just by suggesting a topic of research we already make certain assumptions and assume some a-priori definitions. In particular, in this research, a topic or concept (psychological homelessness) was proposed and those who came forward could be regarded as in some way identifying

with this concept. The tension which this poses in terms of directly understanding their experience while minimizing pre-conceived definitions is acknowledged and will be further discussed in later sections.

I would like to present an outline of the prominent research that has been conducted on each of the fields this research project touches upon: theories of identity; psychological implications of immigration; the Jewish Israeli emigration; Jewish Israeli women; sense of home and psychological homelessness. This will provide a contextual framework to the study, as well as highlight gaps in the literature where this project could potentially contribute.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Theories of Identity

The topic of identity has been extensively investigated in psychological research in the past few decades. In fact, as claimed by Gergen, the concern with the self in recent years is 'substantial, persevering and pervasive' (1987, p.54). The definition of identity has been the centre of countless different conceptualizations and theories, depending on the researcher's theoretical and philosophical model (Breakwell, 1992). It seems too that the concept of identity has often been used interchangeably with other closely related concepts such as 'self-concept', the 'self', 'group membership', ' self-identity' to name a few. Furthermore, according to Logan (1987) our understanding of identity and the self is highly influenced by conceptualisations of each particular cultural era. He claims that our current post modern era is characterised by existentialism and the self conscious concern with identity (Logan, 1987). For all these reasons it is important to first present the working definition and the theoretical perspective on identity which is employed within this project.

As will be discussed later in the Method chapter, this research project adopts a 'light' social constructionist epistemology, giving the social context an important role in the construction of the self and our perceptions of the world (Gergen, 1985). Thus, the theories of identity presented here were selected to reflect this epistemological standpoint, looking at the definition, development and maintenance of identity through the lens of subjective experience occurring in interaction with a complex and intricate social environment. In addition, careful attention has been given to those studies which focus on aspects of identity relating to migration, home and womanhood.

This perspective allows for contextual definitions of identity such as that stemming from symbolic-interactionism which suggests that 'identities locate a person in social space by virtue of the relationships that these identities imply, and are, themselves, symbols whose meanings vary across actors and situations' (Howard, 2000, p.371). The structural approach within symbolic interactionism claims the self concept is constituted of role-identities which are organised hierarchically according to their salience to the person (Howard, 2000). These roles are groups of thoughts and actions which the individual manifests according to particular social situations and the cultural context and environment he/she is facing (Breakwell, 1992).

According to Deaux (1992), this model focuses on context and the wider social group, anchoring the person within the surrounding social world, rather than emphasising the (insulated) individual. Deaux brings as an example the Social Identity Theory developed by Tajfel and Turner (Deaux, 1992). Through this social perspective, identity is not viewed as a static, measurable structure that will predict behaviour, but more as a combination of complex processes which orient the individual in the social world (Breakwell, 1983). Brewer & Gardner (1996) stress the

growing attention and significance given to the social dimension of our identity, and how the natural 'need to belong' greatly affects our inner subjective self-representation. Goffman (1959) goes even further, maintaining that the self is essentially and exclusively a social self, constantly moving from one social role or position to the other.

Since we are usually members of numerous social groups, we manage our identity according to circumstance, rather than regarding it as a constant (Bausinger, 1999). Bausinger discusses identity as 'identity potentials' rather than as a stable fixed entity – seeing it as much more dynamic, flexible and subject to change.

The social constructionist perspective claims that identity is in a sense constructed or elicited in every interaction, thus gradually and fluidly changing (Michael, 1996). This means that the person constructs a narrative of the self in response to a continuous process of exchange with her/his immediate but also historical and cultural surrounding (Murray, 1989) – 'What we acquire as individual characteristics…are primarily products of the joint configuration. They are derivatives of the whole' (Gergen, 1987, p.62).

Another important element to consider here is the role of reflexivity and awareness in the understanding of identity. While agreeing that identity can be seen as socially constructed, Giddens proposes that it is also a product of a reflexive process. According to him, identity is 'the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography.' (Giddens, 1991, p.53). This implies that processes of identity management and change occur within a constant process of interaction between the social world and an active, reflexive individual, within a particular cultural context (Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Golledge & Scabini, 2006). These researchers also remind

us that identity should be understood as a subjective psychological experience, rather than as an objective 'essence' of the individual.

However, some might claim that the social perspective is somewhat extreme, as it does not take into account the individual's strive for continuity, and the significance of personal memory and biography in shaping identity. A theory that does address these issues is Identity Process Theory (IPT) developed by Breakwell (1983, 1986, 1992), where attention is given to social as well as personal identity. According to this theory the structure of identity includes its content and the value attached to that content. IPT proposes that identity involves two key processes, namely assimilation-accommodation and evaluation. As summarised by Lyons (1996), 'identity is seen as the outcome of the interaction between biological characteristics of memory, consciousness and organised construal and the physical and societal structure and process along a temporal dimension' (p.34). The interaction between individual and social processes of identity illuminates how identity can be seen as a dynamic process of constant negotiation – between the individual and the social surroundings.

This dynamic process raises some challenging questions, such as how the individual manages situations in which there is identification with multiple conflicting social groups, or situations in which there is a threat to identity posed by the social surroundings. In other words, situations in which there is some disparity between the processes of identity management and the social forces that shape them. This was termed 'Identity Threat', as defined by Breakwell (1986): 'A threat to identity occurs when the process of identity, assimilation-accommodation and evaluation are, for some reason, unable to comply with the principles of continuity, distinctiveness and self esteem, which habitually guide their operation' (page 47). According to

Breakwell (1983), threats to identity vary in the type of threat (challenging the content of the personal or social identity or the evaluation of that identity); the sources of threat (the individual, other people or the material world); and the perception of the threat (the distinction between the subjective experience of threat and the threat as perceived by others). The threat usually takes the form of an attack on self esteem, continuity, positive distinctiveness or self efficacy (Breakwell, 1986).

There are many examples of research exploring threats to identity (e.g. see Coker, 2004; Coyle & Rafalin, 2000; Korf & Malan, 2002; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000). However, due to the focus within this study on the identity processes occurring for immigrant women, the threats to identity posed by immigration will be discussed later.

As demonstrated by Easthope (2009) mobility and place are important in the understanding of identity. In a thorough review of social psychological theories of identity, Howard (2000) claims that when people belong to more than one group, many patterns of identity negotiations occur: some actively identify with both groups; others 'border-cross' by shifting among different identities according to context; others locate themselves on the border between two identities. Research in this domain tends towards the post modernistic conceptualisation of identity as fluid, multiple and changing. It also discusses the person's constant need to negotiate border spaces, seeing identity work as 'tenuous, fragile, and elastic' (Howard, 2000, p. 382).

An additional domain of identity threat is that of conflict between different identity components within the individual. The effects of this type of identity threat, in which different identity components and the values and associations attached to them clash, can have significant psychological effects on well being, as suggested by Stroink & Lalonde (2009). When this threat takes the form of transition, change of

place or an alteration in how the person might experience home, it can have a significant effect on identity processes, such as shifts in the salience of various identity components (Jones, 1997). When moving countries national identity, ethnicity, gender and many other identity components might require re-evaluation.

The research on identity leaves room for further exploration into the subjective phenomenological experience of these identity struggles. More specifically, research is needed on how threats to identity occurring in relation to place transitions are actually experienced and felt. A small number of studies have used qualitative methodologies to explore migration experiences of lack of belonging and their link to identity (e.g. see Magat, 1999; Pratt, 2003; Valentine, Sporton, & Nielsen, 2009). However, little attention has been given to exploring these experiences from a phenomenological perspective.

1.2.2 Immigration and its psychological implications

Immigration can be a profound experience, significantly influencing many different aspects of the self, often requiring a re-evaluation of various identity components and roles (Dovidio & Esses, 2001). The experience of migration has been the focus of extensive research within the social sciences in the last few decades, in light of this growing global phenomenon. The psychological perspective on immigration has focused on a wide variety of elements of the migratory experience: the effects on psychological well being (e.g. see Phinney et al., 2001), on sense of belonging (e.g. see Narchal, 2007), on identity (e.g. see Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000) and on family relationships and roles (e.g. see Leibkind, 1996, Lamb & Bougher, 2009), to name a few. Many of these studies point to the significance of the immigration experience and the profound impact it may have on psychological well being, healthy development, and overall mental health (e.g. see Aroian & Norris, 2002; Imberti,

2008; Noh & Avison, 1996). In this section I would like to focus on the impact immigration might have on identity and belonging.

Immigration may pose a threat to identity by violating one or more of the guiding principles of identity, as they have been proposed by IPT (Breakwell, 1986). When faced with such threat, one of the ways a re-construal of identity occurs is through the process of acculturation, which can be broadly defined as 'the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when individuals from different cultures come into contact' (Gibson, 2001, p. 19).

The debate on the parameters and definitions of acculturation has been extensive, exploring this phenomenon from many theoretical angles (Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). Recent research has called for a more critical discursive approach to this concept, claiming that acculturation research (such as that conducted by Berry, 1997, 2001, 2003) has largely favoured very specific acculturative patterns over others (Boskwill, Lyons & Coyle, 2007). Currently, the process of immigration has been shown to be much more complex and dynamic, involving changes and shifts in the extent to which the individual adopts new cultural values and beliefs or maintains their original cultural heritage (Horenczyk, 1996). My research draws on the perspective of Boskwill *et al* (2007) since it provides a sound theoretical justification for the focus on diversity within the immigration experience, particularly in relation to differing cultural contexts.

An examination of specific cultural constructions of coping with immigration is also important when trying to assist people from that culture in their psychological management of identity threats and the experience of mobility. In addition, different cultures have differing ways of defining their own process of immigration and adjustment. As stated by Magat (1999), for Israelis adjustment on the daily life level

(socially, financially and even in terms of language proficiency) does not necessarily mean that there is also an establishment of a sense of belonging and feeling of home. Therefore, he concludes, the influence of immigration on the original identity should not be taken for granted, or seen as linear, and should be examined through the lens of the specific cultural background and personal history.

More recent thinking on the psychological processes involved in immigration focuses on the affiliation, identification and sense of belonging to (sometimes) multiple locations or settings. One of the leading concepts that has been formulated to represent this is transnationalism, which describes the maintenance of psychological, economic or other connections to more than one nation/place (Vertovec, 2001). Cohen (2008) asserts that it is important to take into account the complex and ongoing psychological ties immigrants may have to their country of origin when exploring their immigration experience.

There have been a number of studies in recent years on this phenomenon (e.g. see Golob, 2009; Leichtman, 2005; Vertovec, 2001). However, the exploration of its psychological dimensions is still rather limited, particularly in relation to the subjective phenomenological perspective, the identity challenges this experience may pose, and its influence on the sense of belonging and home.

There has been little research on interplay between feelings of home and belonging both to the country of origin and the host country, as an expression of transnationalism. However, in recent years a few studies have investigated this relationship in specific cultural groups (see e.g. Abdelhady (2008) for a valuable study exploring the Lebanese Diaspora). Other studies explored how sense of belonging affected wellbeing, linking it to symptoms of depression (Hagerty and Williams, 1999).

For immigrants, lack of belonging can be seen as an obviously central factor in their experience. In one important study conducted by Walsh and Horenczyk (2001), the sense of belonging was found to be an important influence on the adjustment process of English speaking immigrants to Israel, particularly women. This could imply that lack of belonging can be mediated by other identity components such as gender identity. Liebkind (1996) investigated this in the Vietnamese community in Finland. In her study, the women immigrants' identity was impacted by intergenerational conflicts created by differing acculturation processes for each generation. The adult women were reported to be in more distress, often less acculturated than the men or their children, and preferred to adhere to more traditional family values. Although a valuable contribution to the culturally specific perspective on immigration, Liebkind's study did not look at the subjective experience, and is also somewhat out-dated in light of the current changes in acculturation research. This calls for a more subjective experiential exploration of adult women immigrants, especially as Liebkind expresses concern for the psychological well being of this group. It also demonstrates the need to extend research on gender differences and the management of identity in other immigrant groups.

Despite the sense of belonging often being a crucial element in psychological acculturation and adjustment to immigration, it is under-investigated, particularly in relation to cultural and gender influences. Consequently, a more culturally-specific and gender-specific inquiry into the processes involved in developing a sense of home and belonging within the immigrant experience can be a significant contribution to the field.

1.2.3 The Jewish Israeli emigration

A much longer account will be needed to describe the intricate nature of the Jewish-Israeli identity, since it involves a complex integration of religious, ethnic and national identities (for thorough reviews on this subject, see e.g. Bar-On, 2008; Rebhun & Waxman, 2004; Tur-Kaspa, Shimoni, Pereg, & Mikulicer, 2004). The focus here will be on the identity processes of Israeli emigrants.

The Israeli emigration has been largely treated by researchers as a relatively unique case in the immigration scene, for several reasons (Linn & Barkan-Ascher, 1996). Firstly, Israelis living abroad seem to perceive themselves as temporarily residing in their host countries even years after immigration, maintaining the hope that they will return one day to Israel (Gold & Hart, 2009). They often regard themselves as continuously and permanently foreigners in their host country (Linn & Barkan-Ascher, 1996).

Secondly, their relationship with other Israelis has been shown to be relatively ambivalent, since they are drawn to the common cultural heritage and background, yet at the same time some find themselves rejecting the identification with other *yordim* (the Hebrew word for those who leave Israel. The literal meaning is 'those who descend'), due to the negative connotation attached to this term (Shokeid, 1991). Shokeid (1991) explored the Israeli emigration to the US from a sociological-anthropological perspective, and found that Israelis do not readily create cultural and community organisations, and often conceal their identity even when meeting other Israelis, which could cause feelings of alienation and estrangement. Cohen & Gold (1997) found that despite the process described by Shokeid, for Israelis in Toronto the strong Israeli identity maintained even years after immigration acted as a force which helped develop a distinct ethnic community. At the same time, both these studies do

not address the diversity within the Israeli immigrant population, and the possible differing levels of connection and attachment to Israel and their Israeli identity.

An additional unique characteristic of this population is the strong salience of national identity and the internalisation and identification with national and societal values relating to the state of Israel. As a consequence, when a perceived national principal (such as staying in Israel to defend the country) is infringed upon, the individual might feel a strong sense of guilt and self doubt: 'If the nation is part of oneself, then leaving the nation is like losing part of oneself – a very difficult situation to cope with' (Linn & Barkan-Ascher, 1996, p. 8). Furthermore, because of the political insecurity and multiple wars, there is a highly ambivalent approach in Israel towards people who decide to emigrate, who may be seen as 'defecting' and 'running away' (Shokeid, 1991). This can cause a sense of rejection by their families and friends back in Israel, and additional feelings of shame and guilt, perhaps complicating their perception of Israel as a home. However, in recent years, the attitude towards those who emigrated has changed slightly, shifting from rejection and criticism, to active attempts to encourage return, both in terms of state-funded benefits, and social policy, as well as general discourse (Cohen, 2007). However individuals who reside outside Israel still report strong feelings of guilt and rejection (Gold, 2006).

Because of the complex nature of the Jewish-Israeli identity, Israelis living abroad are described as being in a state of constant confusion and contradiction (Gold, 2002). Besides the ambivalence arising from voluntary exile from the State of Israel, there are issues in relation to Jewish identity. It seems that the national Israeli identity is more pertinent for this population than the Jewish component, as most Israeli emigrants are secular Jews (Gold, 2002). In addition, since religious Jews sometimes

consider leaving Israel as against the Jewish law, Israelis leaving the country face criticism both by religious people in Israel, and by Jews abroad (Shokeid, 1991). In fact, according to Gold, Israelis describe mixed responses from the Jewish community, leading them to somewhat prefer the company of their co-nationals. However, Gold's sociological perspective does not address the impact this confusion might have on processes of identity, and the ways in which Jewish, Israeli and other identity components within each individual might interact, conflict or intertwine to create or threaten the sense of positive distinctiveness and self esteem (Breakwell, 1986).

Another important aspect to add here is the effect of the current political situation in Israel. Since the political actions taken by Israel are extremely controversial within the international community, there can be criticism of Israelis as they interact with local people abroad, particularly at times of conflict in the region such as the war in Gaza in December 2008. Some Israeli emigrants choose to leave Israel because of feelings of insecurity or discomfort with the actions of the Israeli government and treatment of the Palestinians. Thus, besides feeling unwelcome in the host country, some are also ambivalent about their sense of belonging and home in Israel, promoting an overall sense of estrangement and homelessness (Fulder-Heyd, 2005).

While the majority of studies concerning Israeli emigrants have been conducted from a sociological point of view, one study did attempt to address the topic from a phenomenological psychological perspective. Linn & Barkan-Ascher (1996) explored the concept of 'non-event' (stemming from existential philosophy) as it is manifest in the dreams of return for Israelis living permanently in Canada. The study found that Israelis were living in a state of 'permanent impermanence', in which

they constantly dreamed of returning to Israel, while realising this is not a realistic or in fact a desired possibility. This caused alienation, depression and strong feelings of guilt among the participants, which significantly impacted on their psychological wellbeing (Linn & Barkan-Ascher, 1996). The participants in this study reported feeling a sense of loss, ambivalence, self-doubt, and moral conflict. They spoke of experiencing temporariness and uncertainty, and reported a 'painful sense of being physically diminished or profoundly scarred' (Linn & Barkan-Ascher, 1996, p.12). However, the study leaves many questions unanswered, particularly in relation to the impact this experience has on identity. They briefly acknowledge identity processes, claiming it can be seen as a threat to a core identity, creating a 'strong sense of uncertain or suspended identity' (p.13). However, they do not develop this idea, and do not address the influences this experience may have on multiple identity components.

An important qualitative study which does address issues of identity more directly was conducted by Ilan Magat in 1999. He compared Israeli and Japanese immigrants to Canada in terms of their experience of home and belonging. He found that the Israelis held a strong territorialized identity. They were unable to call Canada their home even after many years of residing there. Since for Israelis 'Home [sic] is such a pillar of identity, removing it would signal collapse. The idea of calling Canada Home [sic] is regarded with resentment, fear, and distaste…' (Magat, 1999, p.123). It would imply an irreversible change in identity that holds negative attributes and conflicts with holding Israel as their ultimate homeland. Thus the Israelis who left Israel by choice see themselves as 'existential sojourners' who constantly tell stories of return to Israel, and constantly feel a 'nagging sense of partial alienation' (Magat, 1999, 136). This highlights the need to explore further the phenomenological

experience of Israeli emigrants who are unsure of their sense of home in Israel and are unable to commit to developing a sense of home in the host county. They can be an interesting group in which to explore dimensions of homelessness, and the subjective understandings of what home means.

Issues of home and belonging are already engraved in Israeli society, Israel being a country where the majority are either immigrants themselves or second generation immigrants. In fact, Israel has been described by many as initially (after 1948) a melting pot[1] of many immigrant groups, with different languages, cultures and personal histories, creating a sense of lack of shared coherent and established national identity, and at the same time a need to actively engage and create one (Yachtman-Yaar, 2005). This means that for the Israeli leaving Israel there can be many levels of displacement and lack of home, making the exploration of home and psychological homelessness in this population a rich and interesting one that can draw out novel understandings of this concept. This has not been addressed in any previous studies on Israeli emigrants which have consistently taken a sociological perspective. Since Gold (2002) found that Israelis who move to the USA have a greater chance of assimilation compared to their British co-nationals, exploring the British Israeli immigration might reveal different understandings.

Most of the studies were conducted in the late 1990's (with the exception of one sociological study by Gold & Hart, 2009). Some of the many questions which still need to be addressed include, for example: what are the psychological implications for the Israeli emigrant who is ambivalent towards Israel as a home? How would they manage this conflict in the light of a strong need for a sense of home? How does the

[1] It is important to note that the melting pot idea has been largely controversial, since it has been shown by sociologists to be used by policy makers in the early decades of the construction of Israel to try and assimilate large immigrant groups into a new 'Israeli' distinct culture. This has been later disputed and claimed as being a failure, since the immigrant groups preferred to keep their cultural heritage rather than assimilate into the new country (Yachtman-Yaar, 2005)

experience of immigration impact on other identity components? And what are the meaning-making processes attached to these concepts for the individual?

1.2.4 Israeli Women Immigrants

For Israeli women living outside of Israel, there are some additional challenges in terms of building a positive sense of self in their new surroundings, along with the management of gender identity.

The topic of gender identity within various cultural groups in Israeli society has been the focus of a number of recent sociological studies (see e.g. Frenkel, 2008; Moore, 2000). This section will focus only on research which explores the unique tensions that are implicit in the experience of Israeli women, particularly in response to the management of multiple identity components.

The status of women in Israel has long been considered as complex and somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, there exists a strong ‘myth of equality’, which has been fully described by various researchers (see e.g. Herzog, 2004, Moore, 2000). This belief is fuelled by the prevailing image of the women 'fighter' in the army alongside her fellow men soldiers (Hazelton, 1977), and the women ‘pioneer’ building the first settlements in the new land of Israel (Herzog, 2004). This myth of equal opportunities has, according to Herzog (2004) delayed the perception of women as a distinct group with distinct needs, along with a delay in feminist social action and discourse.

However, as shown by Hazelton (1977) in a strong but now slightly out-dated feminist critique of Israeli society, this was just one of the many myths which served to preserve the status quo of women. Hazelton proposes that another myth which hinders the Israeli woman's ability to change her status and resolve her identity

struggle is the 'biological myth', that of the traditional role of building the family and creating the home.

Today, over 30 years after Hazelton's research, there is little consensus as to whether any change has occurred for women in Israel. It seems though that women by and large are more active in creating an alternative discourse in society, which focuses on alternative means of communication and action (Moore, 2000).

Dahlia Moore (2000) conducted a valuable study exploring the salience of gender identity for religious and secular Jews and Arabs in Israel, and its relation to other identity components, such as being Jewish, being Israeli, and family identity. She found that for Jewish secular women, family, nation, religion and occupation identities are often more salient than gender identity, which is prominent in less than fifth of the secular Jewish women, and much less among religious women. She seems to imply that only a small number of women hold feminist beliefs and most women hold a more traditional domestic gender identity.

This is also set against a background of the continuous presence of war and political insecurity. As stated by Herzog, this focus on war has influenced both masculine and feminine identities, forming a structure whereby ‘army and security form the axis of masculine identity and are perceived as male bastions, whereas the universe of women revolves around family and domesticity’ (2004, p.202). This could partially explain the strong pro-natal values held in Israeli society, both in more traditional and religious groups, as well as in the secular majority (Azmon & Izraeli, 1993).

Research seems to suggest that Israeli women live with two conflicting images: that of the active soldier/pioneer, and that of the home-creator and mother. However, it does not seem to address how these conflicting forces might influence the

experience of Israeli women living abroad. In fact, numerous searches did not yield any research studies dedicated to Israeli women emigrants. It is interesting to consider how the Israeli woman's experience of this debate on her status in a conflict-ridden country might have an impact on her decision to leave it, or on her feelings of belonging to Israel as a home when living abroad. In addition, it would be worth exploring how she might experience the virtual synonymy between 'woman' and 'home', and how that resonates in her understanding of the concept of home and psychological homelessness.

1.2.5 Home

The sense of home could well be one of the most basic elements of our daily life experience, touching multiple aspects of who we are. It concerns people globally over almost all places and cultures. If we have a place we can call home, and perhaps even more so when we do not, it will have a major influence on our sense of security, stability and well being, wherever we are (Rapoport, 1995). As a complex concept with multiple levels of meaning, attempts by various disciplines to define it have faced a difficult challenge. As asserted by Leith, this concept is 'complex and incorporates many dimensions. It must be understood as dynamic and context bound…' (Leith, 2006, p. 318).

Within this review, I would like to concentrate on research which addresses the link between home and identity, particularly from a psychological point of view.

When attempting to understand the concept of home, many researchers have pointed to the centrality of this concept in human experience. For example, Lewin claims that: 'A home is for the soul. Home does not only mean a residence, but also mental capacities, emotional relationships and social ties. The home resides at the

centre of our psyches'. (Lewin, 2001, p. 356). One of the reasons for this centrality is the link this profound feeling has to our basic sense of self and identity: 'Home [sic] [] often becomes a symbol of the self, a place in which we can be more ourselves than any other' (Leith, 2006, p.318).

Two theories which explore the links between home and self are the Theory of Place Attachment, established by Low & Altman (1992), and the Theory of Place Identity, proposed by Giuliani & Feldman (1993). These theories together claim that people establish strong attachments to places through the development of significant relationships with them over a life time. Similarly to other strong attachments developed in childhood, home can be perceived as the secure base which is associated with positive self esteem and a sense of wellbeing, as claimed by Matri (2005). Eventually, the place becomes an important source of meaning and is incorporated into the person's self and identity. The theories of Place Attachment and Place Identity have been the basis for numerous research studies (see e.g. Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Manzo, 2003; Moore, 2000). However, these theories overlook the symbolic nature of home, the meanings it might hold as symbol, internal state and source of well-being or vulnerability, which may not necessarily be connected to a specific location. Consider, for example, the meanings attached to homeland for Diasporic communities, or the image and dream of home for a homeless person.

In an attempt to explore this concept from a more symbolic perspective, and bearing in mind the difficulty of arriving at a clear definition of this experience, Brink suggests that one can only turn to oneself for an understanding of the meaning of home, and it is best understood on the subjective and individual levels (Brink, 1995).

Home has been brought into the academic discourse in a wide range of disciplines, such as architecture, environmental studies, cultural studies, sociology

and anthropology. It is surprising that research on the psychological elements of home-feeling or experience is relatively thin although the importance of this concept from a psychological viewpoint is obvious, particularly since home represents the place of birth and growth, the place of our childhood memories and attachments, the primary symbol of security, and the reference point for the origin of both pathology and wellness, as asserted by Benjamin (1995). In addition, home serves as the centre of the child's healthy development of a stable secure sense of self, affecting every aspect of the person's later life and identity (Matri, 2005). Therefore it may have a powerful use as a concept in psychological discourse, especially in relation to the development and maintenance of identity.

Matri (2005) wrote an innovative book describing the importance of a sense of home for the healthy psychological development of the individual. He shows the significance to the individual of the experience of a strong sense of home, as a space in which the self and identity can grow and feel present and whole. He highlights the critical importance of the sense of home for emotional and psychological development of positive self worth.

In the attempt to grasp this diffuse subjective and symbolic entity, there have been attempts to break down the broad conception of home into smaller, more manageable conceptual elements. For example, research has been conducted on the concept of 'psychological home' referring only to the psychological aspect of one's sense of home (Sigmon et al., 2002; Polsen et al., 2005). Sigmon et al., (2002) show that psychological home entails a dynamic process in which the person 'manipulates, structures, and maintains an environment to make it reflect one's sense of self (Sigmon et al., 2002, p.39). The researchers found that individuals scoring high on the ‘psychological home’ scale also scored high on measures of psychological well being.

This is an important groundbreaking work, but, as the researchers admit themselves, this is a preliminary study and more culture specific and gender specific (they found that women consistently scored higher than men on the scale) research into this construct is needed.

There is very little research into the concept of home from a phenomenological experiential perspective. However, two recent studies explored the concept of home from an existential phenomenological point of view. Hayes (2007) and Madison (2006) both conducted qualitative studies into the meaning of home for voluntary migrants. Hayes (2007) sees home as a place of paradox, since for the migrant it holds multiple meanings attached to past and present – the home that is left behind and the current home in which the person resides. Both studies describe how the migrants used their experience of mobility as a path towards self actualisation, and as a way of understanding their sense of belonging and home in the world generally. However, these two studies explored the experience of migrants who actively chose to migrate, and do not seem to express complexity or ambivalence about this decision. In addition, the researchers assume homogeneity in terms of gender, country of origin and culture, thus not accounting for the unique constructions of meaning which can exist for women or men, and for particular cultural groups.

However, several researchers presenting studies on the psychological aspects of home do relate to gender differences. They have generally called for further research into the particular, different ways women and men attribute meanings to the concept of home and construct their experience of home; and how it impacts on their psychological well being and identity (Leith, 2006). Leith (2006) claims that 'for women, the meaning of home as a central concept may be particularly salient to the self-identity' (p.319).

Poulsen, Karuppaswamy and Natrajan (2005) discussed the meaning of home for women, using their own narratives of immigration to the US in differing stages in their life. All three describe an ongoing struggle to understand and reflect on their sense of home, both physical and psychological. They described a strong sense of ambivalence towards this issue, and talk about the personal as well as social and cultural beliefs which served as a lens through which the experience of building a new home in the US was understood.

In light of the complexity of the concept of home as a psychological entity and its significance to our sense of self and well being, the experience of psychological homelessness, in which this basic sense of home is uncertain, might well have powerful negative consequences for the individual.

1.2.6 Psychological Homelessness

What happens when this feeling of home is challenged by novel environments – by mobility, or constant change of home? How does change in physical location affect our sense of psychological home, if at all?

In the literature on immigration, various studies looked at the sense of belonging as one aspect of the immigrant's experience, as discussed earlier. However, very little has been said about the experience of psychological homelessness, in which the immigrant does not feel at home in the host country nor too, to some degree, in their country of origin. As a distinct experience, this has received very little direct attention in the literature, even outside the topic of immigration.

The terms ‘psychological homelessness’ has been suggested in the literature only twice. The first time it appeared was in a case study by Iain Dresser from 1985. This was a psychoanalytic case study exploring the experience of a nine year old girl

who moved numerous times from one foster home to another. Dresser showed that the impact on the girl was profound, causing severe psychological damage. He showed that psychotherapy can assist in cases of children constantly moving homes, both in management of the process for the child and the foster family, and as a preventative measure for future greater difficulties (Dresser, 1985). However, Dresser does not provide a definition of the term, and does not look at how the child perceives or understands this experience herself. A more clear definition of the term is needed, as well as a more subjective understanding of what meaning it may hold for the person experiencing it.

Matri (2005) in his book about the relationship between feeling at home and healthy psychological development, looked at what happens when a strong sense of home is lacking for the individual, such as constantly moving in childhood, or when the childhood home was abusive or emotionally inconsistent. He revealed the extent to which this sense of psychological homelessness (although he does not use the term) can impact on the person's basic well being, causing depression, anxiety and low self esteem. It can lead people to seek therapy in an attempt to rebuild this sense of existential alienation or lack of belonging and home. He demonstrated how therapy can help the client rebuild this sense of home in him/herself, by creating a sense of security and home within the therapy room, thus helping the client build a new more stronger sense of self (Matri, 2005).

However, the studies described above concentrate primarily on the effect of psychological homelessness in relation to childhood trauma and developmental difficulties. They focus on the individual developmental process as if in relative isolation from the cultural and wider social world (outside the family context). What does psychological homelessness mean in the context of the social world surrounding

the individual, assuming the crucial role this environment has in shaping and influencing the individual's identity and self concept?

In a paper presented at the International Conference on Conflict Resolution in 2003, Betty McLellan explored the sense of psychological homelessness and alienation felt by Australian women as a result of the Australian government's decision to join the allied forces in Iraq (McLellan, 2003). In this paper McLellan defined psychological homelessness as the 'estrangement from society; feelings of being an outsider, foreigner or outcast'. She showed that women in particular can feel this sense of alienation in their home country because 'the masculinist world of violence and conflict and war leaves us [women] with "no place to call home"' (McLellan, 2003). However, McLellan's study has numerous methodological weaknesses. Firstly, she does not explain how she chose her interviewees or what questions she asked them in the email-based study she conducted. Secondly, it seems that she only presented responses which fitted her hypothesis, discarding or choosing not to present those which were contradictory. And thirdly, she does not explain how she reached this particular definition of psychological homelessness, and how her participants understood its meaning.

Greg Madison (2006) explored the effects of voluntary migration, particularly on those who have resided in many countries. He found that people develop an existential sense of not belonging anywhere, of not being at home in this world. He termed this deep existential state 'existential migration', and described how it actually provided the individual with an opportunity to explore new experiences and thus new aspects of their self and identity. He described these individuals as open to new experiences and longing for the freedom which the re-location allowed. At the same time, he acknowledged the paradoxical nature of their experience, particularly when

they attempt to simultaneously build a sense of belonging and home, and free themselves from these feelings.

While his research raises some valuable points regarding this under-investigated experience, Madison does not look at the impact this experience has on people's identity processes beyond the opportunity to discover new aspects of the self. More specifically, he does not address the impact this experience can have on the management of multiple identity components, such as identity as a woman, as a spouse, a national, or a parent. In addition, all the participants in his study actively chose to migrate, which as he acknowledges is crucial to the understanding of their experience. This calls for an exploration into the phenomenological experience of those who see the choice to migrate as a much less straightforward process, involving more ambivalence and complexity.

1.3 The Aim of this Research Project

The concepts of home and psychological homelessness have been noticed as clearly potent psychological constructs, but have not yet become the subject of systematic research in general, nor in particular as phenomenological experiences. A much more thorough investigation into the concept of psychological homelessness is needed, especially at the subjective level. Some of the many questions still remaining to be addressed, which this research is attempting to explore, include: what meanings and experiences do individuals attach to this concept? How does it impact on identity? How is it managed in the context of multiple identity challenges? How is it related to the processes of assimilation, acculturation and other psychological processes involved in immigration? How do individuals manage and cope with psychological homelessness, and how do they differ in their sources of resilience? How is it

experienced by particular cultural groups holding different meanings and importance to the concept of home? And are there any unique aspects to the ways in which women experience psychological homelessness?

All these questions are part of one overall aim of this research: **to explore the novel concept of psychological homelessness as a subjective experience of a group of Israeli women living in the UK.**

Chapter 2

Methodology and Procedures[1]

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research design. The data was gathered from a small sample by means of a semi structured interview schedule. The data was then analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

2.1.2 Choice of Methodology and Philosophical Considerations

2.1.2.1 Rationale for Choice of Methodology

Qualitative methodology seems most appropriate for this particular research, since it attempts to catch a glimpse of the sense the participants are making of the experience of psychological homelessness and what it means to them. This methodology also helped the participants expose and express how they managed feelings of lack of home and belonging in daily life. In addition, according to Smith (2004), qualitative methodologies in general, and particularly IPA, are the most appropriate analytic strategies to use when researching issues of identity, since they look at the self as a whole unique entity. In this way individuality is not lost or reduced to specific variables, as in quantitative methods, but rather becomes the prominent focus of the study.

A phenomenological approach can allow the participant and researcher to explore their own process in a reflexive manner. Since questions of identity and self-

[1] This chapter was written in the first person in order to express the reflexive nature of this research and address the reader directly when describing the research stages and process.

process are essentially reflexive, this strategy seems most appropriate for this particular inquiry. Furthermore, this research attempts to explore a novel construct which raised many varied and complex themes for the participants. As stated by Smith & Osborn: "IPA is especially useful when one is concerned with complexity, process, or novelty" (2003, p. 53).

IPA was also chosen because of its focus on meaning making processes, both for the participant and researcher, which are crucial to this research. In addition, as will be described later, my position in this research was a complex and delicate one, warranting an approach which fully acknowledges and brings to the forefront the researcher's place in the research process.

It could be suggested that Grounded Theory might have been a useful method for this project, particularly if the aim of the project would have been the development or construction of a theory which strives to explain psychological homelessness (Charmaz, 2006). However, rather than developing a theory about psychological homelessness, thus assuming it is a defined and clear construct, this research aimed to take a more exploratory approach, looking at psychological homelessness as an undefined novel experience which will be attempted to be revealed and understood as an experience of this particular group of participants. Instead of a theory, IPA enables the development of a tentative model which can illuminate the participants' experience, presented as relationships between themes (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In addition, the pluralism and freedom of IPA allows openness to multiple levels of interpretation, as well as to various theoretical underpinnings and methodological procedures (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006). This allows the research process to be flexibly guided by the ongoing interaction between the researcher and the data.

Another qualitative method which, like IPA recognises the importance of language within qualitative analysis is Discourse Analysis (DA) (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Since this project paid close attention to language and discourse (see section 1.5 for further discussion), it is important to explain the choice of IPA over DA. IPA differs from DA in its focus on cognition: 'DA regards verbal reports as behaviours in their own right which should be the focus of functional analysis. IPA by contrast is concerned with [] understanding what the particular respondent thinks or believes…' (Smith, Flowers & Osborn, 1997, p.70). Furthermore, unlike DA, IPA hopes to reveal internal processes which the participants might not necessarily be aware of (Lyons, 2007). Since this project aims to get a glimpse of the internal thoughts, beliefs and meaning making process of the participants rather than the ways in which social constructions could be drawn from the accounts, IPA was chosen as the preferred method of analysis.

2.1.2.2 Overview of IPA

IPA was developed in the mid-nineties by Jonathan Smith as a method which aimed to explore how individuals make sense of their experiences within their life (Smith, 1996). Continuing the tradition in psychology established by William James at the beginning of the 20th Century, which focused on subjective and personal accounts, the researcher in psychology can focus on the exploration of human experience, looking at experiential material in its own terms, rather than trying to conceptualise and minimise the experience as predefined theoretical and abstract concepts (Eatough & Smith, 2008). In a way, this approach aims to focus attention on the experiential rather than the experimental (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

IPA is a qualitative method which draws on three main philosophies – Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Idiography.

IPA is phenomenological in that it is primarily concerned with a deep exploration of an individual's life-world and lived experience. Influenced by phenomenological philosophers such as Husserl (1927) and Heidegger (1927/1962), IPA aims to conduct a systematic exploration of the content of our consciousness – our personal and social experiences and our own process of understanding and reflecting on them (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). IPA takes on board Husserl's proposition that experience involves first order activity as well as second order reactions to that activity in the form of mental and emotional processes (Husserl, 1927).

IPA acknowledges, however, that direct access to pure experience is not possible, and therefore our attempts to explore experience are mediated through the process of making sense of that experience – by the participant and then by the researcher. As stated by Smith, Flowers and Larkin: "IPA is concerned with human lived experience, and posits that experience can be understood via an examination of the meanings which people impress upon it" (2009, p.34). This implies that the phenomenology adopted by IPA is not purely descriptive as some other approaches within phenomenological psychology aspire to (e.g. see Giorgi, 1992). Rather, in accordance with Heidegger's approach to phenomenology, IPA also draws on Hermeneutics, proposing that it is through the lens of our interpretation (in Heidegger's language: how things *appear* to us) that we can investigate and understand lived experience (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

This hermeneutic position, following Heidegger and Gadamer (1990/1960), involves a cyclical process. The researcher intentionally brackets her/his own

experience in order to pay careful attention and engage fully with the participant's account. This is followed by a process of analysis of that account from the perspective of the researcher, acknowledging their particular standpoint. Subsequently, the researcher will return to the participant's material to reflect on how they made sense of this material and whether this endeavour closely relates to the participant's narrative (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

IPA attempts to 'know' the participants life-world, to the extent that is possible, in a similar fashion to knowing the client in a therapeutic encounter Child (2007). Thus, during the process "a double-hermeneutic is involved. The participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world" (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 51). Within this double hermeneutic, the researcher is both empathic - trying to adopt an insider's perspective, and questioning – trying to illuminate the experience using psychological knowledge and theory (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

IPA is also idiographic. This means that it is concerned with understanding the particular rather than attempting to make claims about a large group or population. This implies that the focus of research is on the *detailed* accounts and specific occurrence of lived-experience. At the same time, idiography means that the process of analysis draws on particular experiences and unique processes, which can then tentatively inform us about wider experiences (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). As stated by Smith, Flowers and Larkin: "Only through painstakingly detailed cases of this sort can we produce psychological research which matches and does justice to the complexity of human psychology itself" (2009, p.38) (for examples of IPA case studies see Eatough & Smith, 2006; Shinebourne & Smith, 2009).

As mentioned earlier, IPA is claimed to be particularly suited for the investigation of novel topics which concern the subjective experience of individuals, are multi dimensional and contextual, and involve an exploration of the process of sense-making of issues which are significant to the individual. This means that IPA often touches upon issues of identity and the self concept (Smith, 2004). For IPA studies directly exploring issues of identity see e.g. Chryssochoou (2000) who looked at European social identity, Coyle & Rafalin (2000) who explored sexual and religious identity, and Timotijevic & Breakwell, (2000) who explored identity threat in the context of immigration.

Limitations of IPA, with particular focus on those relevant to this research project, will be discussed in the Discussion chapter.

2.1.2.3 Epistemological Standpoint

IPA permits a relatively wide range of epistemological standpoints to be taken while conducting a research study. This was termed by Larkin, Watts and Clifton (2006, p.114) as 'epistemological openness'. I would like to describe here the epistemological standpoint which I took within this research study, which is grounded in the research undertaken by some IPA theorists.

The focus of this study is on experience, and the ways in which the participants make meaning of their experience of self and the world. This means that no direct proposition is made about whether what they are reporting is 'true' in the 'outside world'. This means that this study assumes a relativist ontological position (Willig, 2001).

At the same time, the social context is acknowledged as an imperative within human experience. I adopt Coyle's conceptualisation of context as 'the social systems

and feedback loops in which an individual is embedded and through which they make sense of, construct and are constructed by their worlds' (Coyle, 2007, p.17). Thus, in accordance with social constructionism, I believe that sociocultural and historical processes are central to our ways of experiencing our world, and are intertwined with the way we interpret and understand these experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2008). Social constructionism in this form sees the self and identity as constructed within social situations. However, through ongoing reflexivity, the person constructs meanings and reviews their patterns of thought and feelings, creating new meanings and personal transformations. Thus individuality and the self are not lost within the social context (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

In line with Virginia Eatough's standpoint on IPA, I believe language is an integral part of the way individuals experience the social world. As suggested by Eatough & Smith 'reality is both contingent upon and constrained by the language of one's culture' (2008, p. 184). This implies that when looking at the participants' accounts I paid careful attention to the way they chose to express their experiences and their reflections on those experiences (see page 47 for choice of IPA over DA).

This approach has been described as lightly social constructionist, since it does not assume that reality is completely constructed through conversations and social interactions. Rather, while assuming a 'real world out there', each constructs their version of it in the process of perception and communication (Eatough & Smith, 2008). This can be termed a critical realist position (Willig, 2001). This position also gives a vital role to the particular context within which the individual is attempting to understand their experience. This is still within the phenomenological stance, as the phenomena are viewed as happening in a certain place and time, and in a certain cultural personal context (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

I aligned myself within this approach since I believe that each phenomenon will evoke specific meanings in different times and places. This approach is followed by many IPA researchers (see e.g. Eathough & Smith, 2006) since it places great importance on the contextual setting of their participants, yet at the same time attempts to explore the deeper sense-making process they engage in with regards to their lived-experience.

Taking a symbolic-interactionist perspective within social constructionism (Blumer, 1969), I support the notion that human beings are seen as "creative agents who through their intersubjective interpretative activity construct their social world….creatively involved in the development of a sense of self…" (Eathough & Smith, 2008, p.184).

While it is obviously a struggle to identify where description ends and interpretation begins, various IPA researchers have tended to be more or less interpretative in their approach to the participant's accounts (e.g. see Bramley & Eatough, 2005; Shinebourne & Smith, 2009). In accordance with Larkin, Watts & Clifton, (2006) who advocate the interpretative possibilities within IPA, I believe IPA goes beyond description because it aims not only to describe what it is like to be experiencing a certain phenomenon ('the insider's perspective'), but also what it means for the participants to experience it. This interpretative position has been termed by Paul Ricoeur 'hermeneutics of meaning-recollection' (1981), since it draws out or discloses the meaning of the experience for the participant and for the researcher.

Langdridge (2007) also claims that this is in fact more faithful to the initial aims of IPA, which has 'sought explicitly to be more interpretative', and attempts to 'work more interpretatively with the data' (p.158). Within this research I aim to align

myself with this interpretative position while at the same time staying as close as possible to the participants' accounts (please see epistemological reflexivity section).

In addition, I believe that the interpretative position is one that can be particularly useful in the context of counselling psychology, since this is one of the implicit activities conducted by counselling psychologists all the time, and it therefore should be acknowledged and reflected in research. In this sense, I would agree with Lopez & Willis (2004) who claim that 'the interpretive approach is useful in examining contextual features of experiences that might have direct relevance to practice.'(p. 734)

2.1.3 Reflexivity

In order to establish integrity and trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry, the process of research should coincide with a process of self-awareness on the part of the researcher. This entails a constant examination of personal and professional influences on the research process – both in terms of collection of data and analysis (Finlay, 2002).

IPA acknowledges that research is a dynamic process, and the participants' experiences are seen through the interpreting eyes of the researcher (Smith et al. 1999). Constant reflexivity, attentiveness and sensitivity to the influence of my particular point of view were engaged with throughout the course of my own research.

Using Willig's (2001) distinction between two types of reflexivity, I will address both personal reflexivity and epistemological reflexivity within this section.

2.1.3.1 Epistemological reflexivity

I would like to continue to address in this section the issue of description vs. interpretation within phenomenological research. The debate on description versus interpretation has been a long standing one in the history of phenomenological philosophy, and its application in research. It moves from the Husserlian perspective of seeing things 'as they are', in a pure descriptive sense, to the Heidegger's interpretative perspective of representation. This could be also seen as an ongoing tension between understanding and explaining, between attempting to display the parts of a phenomenon and making sense of it.

Some researchers see these two positions as different alternatives, in which the researcher should choose either a purely descriptive position, aiming (as much as it is possible) to reach the experience of the participant without adding any interpretations of the researcher (Giorgi, 1992), or to acknowledge and explore the function of an interpreter and 'translator' of the reported material. Other researchers claim that these two positions can be seen as two points on a continuum, in which there are many levels of interpretation going further and further away from the participants' pure experience (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

When reflecting on the process of this research project, I realised that there has been a creative tension between these two approaches. My position shifted a number of times in the process of trying to make sense of the raw data and establish my standpoint in relation to IPA.

At first, I aimed for a more experience-focused perspective, trying to present my participant's voice and stay as close as possible to their reported experience. This was partly because I set out to try and represent what I believed as an underrepresented group – aiming to give voice and acknowledge their experience.

Later, throughout the process of analysis, I began to appreciate the extent to which the participants themselves are leaning towards a process of meaning making and interpretation, trying sometimes intensely to make sense of their experience of confusion and contradiction (see Analysis chapter). It seems that the voices of the participants were constantly inviting me to take a more interpretative position, which was gradually extended until the final write up stage. In a sense, I felt I was urged by my participants, and influenced by them, to provide some kind of explanation or interpretation. This was also an invitation to anchor their experience in psychological literature, as well as to acknowledge my own position and commitment as a counselling psychologist and explore helpful interpretations. In other words, I sensed that acknowledging their confusion and psychological difficulty was not enough – they wanted me to help them feel their experiences can be more defined and explained, providing them with a framework of knowing.

This led me to shift my position gradually on the descriptive vs. interpretative continuum. I felt the need to strive towards a position which is perhaps more definite, explained and justified with theory. Overall, upon reflection I believe this research process was characterised by a continuous tension between these two positions – the experiential and abstract, and the theoretical, defined and explained.

Please see discussion for further reflections on this matter.

2.1.3.2 Personal Reflexivity

Looking back, I realise various parts of my own identity shaped the direction of the study, as well as the interview material that was generated and my analytic standpoint. In particular, I was concerned with those aspects which were apparently similar to those of my participants, because my own material might lead me to seek out those

elements in my participant's experiences which reflect or even confirm my own experience. This has been described by Ranti Oguntokun as 'the seduction of sameness' (Oguntokun, 1998). In these instances, as advised by qualitative research theorists, it is important to look at the places in which to bracket my own experiences in order to give voice to those of the participants (Elliott, Fischer & Rennie, 1999).

I can describe myself as a British-Israeli woman who has lived in the UK for 6 years and is now living in Israel with my husband and two young children. Having been born in the UK and having moved to Israel in childhood, and maintaining ties with both countries throughout my life, I see my national identity as complex and multifaceted. In addition, immigration and Diasporic experience can be seen as a theme deeply threaded in my biography, since all four of my grandparents, my parents and I all migrated at some point in our life. At the same time, when embarking on this research project, I was able to see my time in the UK as temporary, and 'sheltered' by defining myself as a student. This, as well as my transnational identity as British-Israeli, allowed me to separate myself from my participants. The task of bracketing my own material did not seem too much of a problem.

However, as a mother, woman, researcher, therapist and immigrant, the issue of juggling many identity components is poignantly familiar to me. In addition, as the research project progressed, my own circumstances shifted, causing me to doubt the gap I had conveniently placed between myself and the participants.

Initially, I believed that I was setting out to explore this group due to my feeling that they were relatively unknown and underrepresented in British society and in social research, positioning them as 'other', for whom the representation in research can be an important avenue for expressing their unheard voice (Oguntokun, 1998). However, this otherness served for me personally as a form of solace.

Later, as I settled down more in the UK and my encounter with the participant's material deepened, and influenced me, I realised that there was more 'sameness' between myself and the participants than I originally was able to accept. Another way to put it is that in my attempts to stay away from the seduction of sameness, I fell into a 'seduction of otherness'. This realisation points to the relevance of this research in addressing the psychological impact of qualitative research in general, and IPA in particular, on the researcher, a topic which is often overlooked.

Reflexivity allowed me to maintain insight into how my own process was influencing the research. It could be said that the similarity with the participants allowed them to feel more comfortable sharing certain aspects of their experience with me, and allowed me to apply my cultural and historical knowledge to place their material into context. At the same time, my position as 'other' (at least initially) helped me to hold a place of not-knowing in relation to what the participants were going through.

My professional identity as a Counselling Psychologist should also be recognised here, since it inevitably led me to attempt to understand my participants' experiences through the lens of my professional background. Reflecting back, I am able to say that this perspective shaped my attitude towards my participants and the relationship that developed with them during the interview. It also triggered psychological knowledge which I needed to put aside in order to let my participant's voice be heard. In addition, upon reflection I realise that my professional background led me to make certain assumptions about my participants, some of which I am probably not aware of. For example, I became aware that in the interview process as well as throughout the analysis I had made assumptions with regard to how the

feelings or thoughts described by my participants were linked to their psychological well being – a process which as a counselling psychologist was routine.

Relating to the issues discussed in epistemological reflexivity earlier, I realise that on a personal level I was drawn towards certainty, clarity and definition, rather than just staying with the unexplained and undefined 'raw' experience. During the period of the research my identity changed and shifted in many different ways – the most important of them being motherhood. This was an extended period of doubt, confusion and transition in my own life. Upon reflection I realise that this process could have elicited in me a need for clarity and definition, drawing me towards adopting a more interpretative, 'explained' position in relation to my participants' material. In addition, the participants' confusion and sense of 'stuckness' influenced me as well, causing me to feel a strong need to explain, define and help them make meaning.

Throughout the research I have tried various ways to manage these issues. First and foremost, I tried to expand awareness as much as possible – this meant awareness to how my own material, assumptions and experiences are influencing and directing the research process, but also self awareness in a more general sense. This is because I felt that the more I am aware of my own process, the more I will be able to bracket my experiences as well as acknowledge where that was not possible. This was partly achieved by keeping a reflexive research log throughout the research process. Excerpts from this log can be found in appendix 22.

2.1.4 Validity

Being qualitative, this study will be evaluated using concepts which are different from the validity and reliability of positivistic research (Lyons, 2000). According to the

conceptualisation of validity proposed by Cho & Trent (2006), validity in qualitative research is about "determining the degree to which researchers' claims about knowledge correspond to the reality (or research participants' constructions of reality) being studied" (p.320).

My research attempted to follow the guidelines for validity proposed by Lucy Yardley (2008): sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, coherence and transparency, and impact and importance. It is important to acknowledge here that Yardley claims these criteria should be adjusted to the particular qualitative method as well as the particular project evaluated. I will detail these below, however it will be for the reader to judge if I have managed to fulfil these guidelines.

I aimed to achieve sensitivity to context by thoroughly examining the theoretical literature (see Introduction chapter), and being aware and knowledgeable of the social and cultural context within which the participants' experience, as well as the research process itself, took place. In addition, throughout the process I aimed to develop awareness as much as possible of the context in which the participants' material was understood and analysed, namely the influence of my own assumptions and specific point of view (see reflexivity section).

Commitment and rigour were addressed by ensuring that the analysis stayed as close to the data as possible, constantly giving explicit examples from the transcripts, and repeatedly returning to the transcripts and checking if the analysis stays close to the participants' story. In addition, the collection of data was conducted carefully and thoroughly, and I attempted to fully immerse myself in the analysis. Yardly mentions 'methodological competence' as one of the criteria under this section. I hope I was able to demonstrate this through the analytic strategy which is described later, as well as the analysis itself presented in the following Analysis chapter.

I aimed to achieve Coherence and transparency primarily by ensuring full transparency of the analytic process – which I hope was demonstrated within this chapter and throughout the study. In addition, reflexivity was a key component of this project throughout. Various measures were used, such as keeping a reflexive diary, and exposing and being aware of my own assumptions and beliefs about the issues raised by my participants (see reflexivity section).

To this end, a detailed account of all stages of the analysis is presented below. In addition, in order to further enhance the validity, cross reading of the transcripts was used to evaluate the quality of the findings (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992). Two other researchers read the analysis and examined trustworthiness, coherence and vividness – I asked them to evaluate whether the analysis made sense to them, fitted together and felt authentic. This was carried out at a number of stages within the analysis: I asked one colleague to go through my theme list and see if the theme title does indeed reflect what is described in the quotes. I then also asked two other colleagues to go through one transcript and the final written analysis, to examine whether the analysis could be seen as a trustworthy and valid representation of that transcript. Overall, the researchers agreed with my interpretation. In some places where comments were suggested, these were incorporated and the text was changed accordingly. Please see appendix 21 for their comments.

I hoped to achieve Yardley's last criteria, impact and importance, by discussing the relevance of this project to counselling psychology (see Discussion chapter). I have tried to introduce a novel concept which would be useful to counselling psychologists in understanding the experience of Israeli women, as well as possibly other immigrant women.

2.1.5 The use of Language

As mentioned above, I espouse the approach to IPA which sees language as an important vehicle through which the participants communicate and at the same time construct their reality. For this reason, close attention has been given to the choice of words and style of speech the participants have chosen to describe their life-world.

An example of this is the metaphors participants used, since the interviews revealed frequent use of this tool of expression. Research shows that the use of metaphor allows expression of complex and indefinable internal processes, which do not lend themselves to description alone (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The richness and texture of the participants' experience can be uncovered through engaging in and unpacking their metaphoric language (Shinebourne and Smith, 2009). In the analytic process, I aimed to pay careful attention to the use of metaphors, specific images and cultural references. This also helped me as analyst to enter the participants' world, since their use of specific images, as well as their reference to certain cultural stories, created a feel for their frames of reference. It illustrated and helped me engage in the essence of the participants' accounts, rather than getting lost in content. For this purpose, a small analytic exercise of poetic condensation of metaphors was conducted, which can be found in appendix 23.

At the same time, this emphasis on language could be questioned in light of the choice to interview the participants in a language which was not their mother tongue. It could be hypothesised that the richness of language and expression would be limited when using a language that has been learned in school and later in life, and was not the natural immediate cultural and national language of the participants. In addition, choosing a language which was part of the host-country cultural context

could possibly limit the freedom of the participants to express their feelings and experiences of hardship in the UK.

However, the decision to conduct the interview in English was taken for a number of reasons. Firstly, conducting the interview in Hebrew could promote a feeling of 'sameness' with the researcher. This could cause participants to hold back difficult feelings or critical attitudes about their Israeli identity, while at the same time facilitating the influence of the researcher's own experience on the research (Bhopal, 2001; Fine & Addleston, 1996). Please see reflexivity section above for further discussion on sameness and otherness.

Secondly, I was concerned that translating the interviews into English would raise issues of representation, since the analysis would be further removed from the original interview and participants' experience (Temple & Young, 2004). At the same time, leaving the interviews in Hebrew could jeopardise the transparency and trustworthiness of the study for the reader.

In order to address the difficulty that some participants might have had in expressing themselves in English, they were given an opportunity at the end of the interview to switch to Hebrew. Not all the participants used this opportunity, but for some this was a chance to add certain aspects which they found difficult to express in English, and they seemed to 'relax' when I gave them the opportunity to switch languages (particularly Edna, Ofra and Rachel). The material elicited in these sections of the interviews seemed to be richer in feelings, sometimes showing more distress, and generally more open and free flowing. I have included this material in the overall analysis. However, a small analytic description of the sections in Hebrew can be found in appendix 20.

A further discussion about this decision and its implication and limitations in the light of the themes which emerged in the interviews themselves can be found in the discussion section.

2.2 Procedures

2.2.1 Sampling and Participants

Israeli society consists of many culturally distinct groups. The two main groups, which are very different in culture, history and experience, are Jewish Israelis (the majority) and Arab Israelis. This study focused on the particular experience of Jewish Israeli women only, although it is acknowledged that an exploration into the experiences of other Israeli populations living abroad could be valuable. The study specifically sought Jewish-Israeli women, and no further restrictions were made on the sample (in terms of marital status, age etc). However, a minimum of two years of stay in the UK was required (Hart, 2004).

Early in the recruitment process, it emerged that the population chosen was relatively difficult to access, leading to the use of multiple recruitment strategies. A flier was produced (see appendix 2) and placed in multiple locations within as well as outside of the Jewish community and areas of London commonly chosen by Israelis. These included shops, gyms, libraries, schools and nurseries. The flier was also placed in synagogues, the Israeli embassy, and major Israeli companies such as the Israeli Airline El Al. Fliers were also distributed on flights between Israel and the UK. A small notice was placed in a magazine for the Israeli community in London named 'a-London'. In addition, the advert was posted on various online Israeli-community websites and mailing lists. The fliers and adverts were all written in both English and

Hebrew. This was done in order to permit Israelis who feel more comfortable in both/either languages to come forward.

Since the first four participants were married and/or mothers, the question arose as to whether and in what way single Israeli women experience psychological homelessness. Therefore, theoretical sampling was conducted, focusing on single Israeli women. This led me to turn to online dating agencies as well. An attempt was also made to recruit outside London in order to see if the experience of people living outside of the capital was in anyway different. Two participants responded who were based in towns outside London.

Out of the nine who responded, one interview was unusable due to the participant's refusal to be taped.

2.2.1.1 Participants

The participants were eight Jewish-Israeli women living in the UK for at least two years. The women each came from a different background, age group, marital status and personal history. The biographical details of the participants are summarised in table 1 (see appendix 7). Since it is important to see the participant's material in the context of their unique life story, short case studies have been drawn out for each participant (see appendix 8). It is recommended that the case studies are read closely before the analysis as a way of contextualising the analysis, and placing it in the framework of the participants' background.

2.2.2 Interview Schedule

In this study, the main method of collecting data was a semi structured interview conducted separately with each of the participants (Kvale, 1996). As stated by Smith

(1995), semi structured interviews are one of the most useful methods for qualitative research in general and IPA in particular, since it maintains the guidelines of the interview schedule while allowing for change and variation for each participant according to their own experience.

The interviews were conducted at the participants' homes or work, and were between 50-80 minutes long. Though the length of the interviews seems to be relatively short, the material generated in such a short time was surprisingly (and I must admit, also overwhelmingly) rich. This may reflect the participants' real need to share and disclose an issue which is constantly present in their awareness, yet difficult to articulate (see example of interview in appendix 10).

In addition to the interview, the participants were asked to fill in a short questionnaire (see appendix 4). Part of it asked for basic demographic information (age, education, employment, marital status, children etc.). In addition, there was a brief question regarding their reasons for coming to the UK, as well as questions asking them to rate the significance of different components of their identity (Jewish identity, Israeli identity, British identity and identity as woman). The rating was on a five point Likert scale ranging from one (*least important*) and five (*most important*). In addition, the participants were asked to order the above identity components according to importance. These questions aimed to bring thoughts and feelings to awareness, in preparation for the interview schedule (see Appendix 9 for results).

The interview schedule was developed using the guidelines offered by Smith & Osborn (2003). They were designed to be neutral rather than one-sided in order to tap on the participants' experience, while staying as close as possible to the research agenda. The questions were not designed to lead the participants, rather to elicit their own process of meaning making. They were also informally tested in advance on a

number of Israeli female friends, to receive feedback on their clarity, meaningfulness, neutrality and focus on the topic. The interview schedule attempted to focus on the participant's own personal experience rather than their perceptions of others' experience (their children for example).

The interview schedule started with a relatively broad opening question about the meaning of psychological homelessness, intended to invite any material which first comes to mind for the participant, and to help them feel comfortable approaching the topic (Smith & Eatough, 2006).

This was followed by questions and prompts relating to expressions of psychological homelessness, and influences of this experience on their life, in terms of relationships, daily life, and emotional processes. In addition, the participants were asked how they managed this experience. These questions together aimed to elicit a detailed picture of what psychological homelessness meant to them. For this reason, the question posed at the start of the interview – "What does psychological homelessness mean to you?" was asked again at the end to allow the participants to revisit their response and add anything which was raised while reflecting on the topic. Please see reflections in research log in appendix 22 for further details.

The interview schedule was not designed to test or explore theory. However, my theoretical knowledge and standpoint did inform me while building it (see research log in appendix 22).

The specific questions in the interview were aimed to elicit material which corresponds and stays close to the phenomenon explored, yet allowed the participants to feel comfortable sharing their experience in their own way. Consequently, the interview changed from one participant to the other, and the interview schedule served as a framework. The interview schedule can be found in appendix 5.

2.2.3 Transcription

The interviews were recorded on a digital device and then transcribed verbatim. The transcript included any vocal utterances (such as hmmm, ahh), broken words or sentences, and non-verbal communications. This was in order to create a text which was as close a representation as possible.

2.2.4 Ethical Considerations

The ethical implications of this research study were carefully considered at the initial stage of the development of the project. Ethical guidelines proposed by the British Psychological Society code of conduct (2006) as well as those proposed by City University were adhered to. The proposal for this research project was granted full ethical approval by the Department of Psychology at City University (see appendix 1). Three issues were particularly important to consider – informed consent, confidentiality and debriefing.

Informed consent was achieved using a consent form which was signed by the participants before starting the interview procedure. A clear account of what the study explored, what to expect within the interview and their rights (e.g. confidentiality, right to withdraw and contact details of researcher and supervisor) was outlined at the start, both verbally and in writing, and the participants were given ample time to consider the task and whether they were interested in participating, and to ask any questions. See appendix 3 for consent form.

Confidentiality was strictly followed throughout the study. The recorded interviews and questionnaires were kept in a locked cabinet in my home. In addition, all names and identifying details were changed while transcribing, and the questionnaires were numbered only. The consent forms which had the participant's

real names, as well as the list which relates pseudonym to real name were kept separately from the data. All computer files with identifying details (such as digital recordings of the interviews) were kept under password.

I did not foresee any risk of physical or mental harm to the participants in the process of data collection for this study. Nevertheless, to manage any emotional issues arising during the interview, debriefing was conducted in a number of ways. At the end of the interview, a discussion was initiated as to how the participant felt and they were asked if they needed additional emotional support (see interview schedule in appendix 5). This was to gauge whether the interview had any negative effects on the participants. In addition, a list of sources for emotional and psychological support, as well as other relevant resources was offered to the participants at this point (see appendix 6).

A final report detailing the main findings of the study was offered to the participants in order to inform them as to how their material was used. All eight participants expressed interest in receiving it.

2.2.5 Analytic Strategy

The analysis developed through concentric layers of interpretation which moved from looking at what the participants were saying on a descriptive level, to their use of metaphor and language, to the relationship between different accounts within the same interview, and finally to the identity processes which were revealed in the process of thematic exploration of several interviews. These levels of interpretation corresponded to the hermeneutic circle of movement from ‘part’ to ‘whole’ described by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009).

Initially, the interviews were listened to a number of times (including during transcription), and any observations were noted down. Then, once transcribed, the transcript was read and re-read carefully, in order to fully immerse myself in the data. The interviews were also listened to at the same time as reading the transcripts so as to have an image of the person talking while reading the text. At this stage, tentative ideas, thoughts and reflections were written on the left hand margin of the transcript. This stage could be described as relatively fluid, since comments were made on anything which seemed significant – important words, reflections on manner of speech, repetition, hesitancy, emotional reactions and so forth.

Subsequently, in the first stage of thematic analysis, themes, concepts and higher-order ideas were written on the right hand side of the transcript (Smith & Osborn, 2003). See appendix 10 for an example of interview with left- and right-margin text.

The process of delineating emergent themes can be seen as the first stage of higher-order interpretation, involving insight into and focus on the psychological content of the participant's material. These themes were then listed separately, connections sought between themes and clusters of themes were formed, constantly referring back to the text to check that the meaning stays as close as possible to the original (Langdridge, 2004). A table was constructed for each participant with themes, subthemes, and their corresponding line numbers and quotes. An example could be found in appendix 11.

The stages above were conducted for each individual transcript separately. Following this, the themes from the different transcripts were grouped together, connections between them drawn up, and commonalities and differences between participants were sought. This stage was aimed at finding patterns across cases, and

the product of this process was a tentative model or larger picture which linked the participants in their relationship with psychological homelessness. A graphic depiction of the model can be found in appendix 19, and will be discussed in the Discussion chapter. A table of one theme with quotes can be found in appendix 12, and a table of the overall themes and subthemes for all participants can be found in appendix 13.

At this stage, a sifting, thinning and refining took place, both on the level of themes and sub-themes, as well as on the level of quotes. Some of the slightly less relevant themes and quotes were put aside to maintain coherence and brevity (for example acculturation of children). In addition, certain issues which have been widely explored in many immigrant groups have been excluded, in order to present what is unique to this population. See Analysis chapter for further details. Throughout the process of analysis, various measures were taken to ensure rigour and trustworthiness, as described above in section 2.1.4.

Within the write up stage which followed, a re-evaluation of theme labels was conducted, and the final choice reflected the immersion in the data and reflection on relationships between the themes, quotes and overall transcripts. The writing up also involved a refinement of the quotes by cutting out what could be dispensed with, for example hesitancies, without jeopardising the meaning and intention of the quote. At this stage the analysis started to take shape, and final decisions, based on an extensive process of distillation, were made as to what would be included in the final draft of the analysis.

Chapter 3

Analysis

3.1 Introduction

This analysis follows a number of themes which together attempt to present a glimpse into the participants' experience of psychological homelessness, and the identity management processes involved.

The interviews generated a very large amount of data, perhaps because of the all encompassing nature of psychological homelessness. During the process of analysis and writing up, painful decisions to prune the material had to be taken, restricting the themes presented here to those directly related to the research question and unique to this population. Other themes are only very briefly described here and a more detailed analysis of these is included in the appendix. See appendix 22 for reflections on this process in my research log.

The material is clustered into four major themes, which are then divided into sub themes. The major themes are organised around the process of meaning making, namely the participants' attempts to understand what psychological homelessness means to them and how it impacts on their life. Accordingly, there are two threads connecting the themes. Firstly the exploration of the experience of psychological homelessness – its development and definitions, its impact on the participants' life, attempts at management, and the process of re-negotiation of identity in light of this experience. Secondly, on a narrative level, the themes follow the participants' chronological life-experience or time line – starting from the initial arrival in the UK, through the gradual development of psychological homelessness and the continuous attempts to manage its impacts. This thematic but also narrative approach to the analysis follows the theoretical standpoint of some IPA researchers (e.g. Smith,

2004). See appendix 14 for the list of themes and subthemes which will be discussed in the analysis.

Data in the form of direct quotes from the interviews are used. In order to preserve anonymity, the participants were all given pseudonyms, and any other identifying details were changed or omitted. When quoting from the transcript, the pseudonym and the location in the text are mentioned. Each quote can be located through a three number system, referring to participant, question and paragraph number respectively (e.g. 1.7.2.). Omitted text is indicated by: [ ], and identifying details are indicated by: _____. Pauses and silences are indicated by: … and non verbal reactions are placed in parentheses [ ]. Words in bold were stressed by the participant.

The text of the transcripts was left completely un-edited, and presented in the participants' language and expression, including grammatical errors, in order to stay as close as possible to their story. When the participant used a word or sentence in Hebrew, it was translated and indicated by: [H]. In cases where it was absolutely necessary, a word was added {in brackets} to make the participant's point clearer, or text was omitted. This was used in particular where language difficulties reduced the clarity of the account.

The analysis also incorporated some of the literature and research where it seemed particularly necessary to ground the data in psychological theory. This method was used in order to maintain a continuous narrative, rather than presenting the themes first, followed by a separate theoretical discussion (for examples of IPA studies following this format see Coyle & Rafalin, 2000; Sinclair & Milner, 2005).

3.2 Analysis

3.2.1 Theme 1: Development of Psychological Homelessness

Most of the participants viewed the experience of psychological homelessness as a process rather than a static defined state. This research therefore emphasises its dynamic nature. The process over time will be described first, leading to the definitions and meaning making processes, followed by the manifestations of psychological homelessness.

Process over time

This theme concerns the changes leading to psychological homelessness experienced by the participants during the initial period of their stay in the UK. It is only briefly described here, as it does not directly explore the phenomenon of psychological homelessness itself. The full theme can be found in appendix 15.

As revealed in the case descriptions (see appendix 8), most of the participants regarded their original arrival to the UK to be more or less accidental, which then became more permanent for reasons often beyond their control. Their ensuing experiences of lack of belonging were partly influenced by the lack of control or choice which some of the women felt about their life situation. Since in some cases the husband played an important role in the decision to leave Israel, the relationship between their identity as wives and their identity as immigrants was implicated in the sense of psychological homelessness and set the scene for the ensuing multiple identity challenges they faced. During the interviews, the participants describe a process of change in their attitude towards their stay in the UK, as well as their general psychological well-being:

> To be honest, I'm quite feeling this with the time. I didn't feel that in the start. (Liat,3.6.9)

It really got worse. (Edna,5.3.3)

They experienced initially a period of excitement, elation and curiosity, a sort of 'honeymoon' period. It could be that at this stage, as with travellers, home is not yet an issue – there is a perception of temporariness. The women do not yet experience any threat to their identity, since they are able to maintain their original identity as Israelis intact. However, the experience of psychological homelessness crept up on them gradually, the longer they stayed in the UK. There seemed to be an increasing inner sense of loss of home that was 'blamed' on disconnection in both locations.

The participants describe a feeling that not only involves being on unfamiliar ground, which requires adjustment and assimilation (in the same way that many immigrant groups experience upon immigration, according to Phinney et al., 2001), but also involves a deeper sense of displacement, or longing for a home. Home gradually becomes something that can no longer be taken for granted, or ignored, and there develops a need to understand and give meaning to the emerging sense of psychological homelessness.

Exploring the meaning of psychological homelessness

Definitions of psychological homelessness

Throughout the interviews the participants attempt to define and explain what psychological homelessness means to them. Attempts to clarify or even label their experience seem to serve the function of collecting together diffused feelings into an explanatory concept which could be a useful cognitive process that provides meaning to an otherwise relatively ambiguous yet pervasive experience. In addition, since they all responded to the advert and came forward to be interviewed, they identified

themselves as psychologically homelessness. This in itself is a possible indicator for their motivation to explore and establish the meaning of this experience for them.

However, despite attempting to conceptualise how they were feeling, very few are sure about their definition of psychological homelessness. Rather, most of them describe a sense of doubt. There is a palpable hesitancy in their speech, expressed by many pauses and a frequent tentative tone of voice. This hesitancy can itself be seen as an expression of their sense of 'homelessness', since they describe the experience as confusing, creating self-doubt and loss of confidence.

Standing in contradiction to this sense of confusion or inability to articulate what psychological homelessness meant to them, the participants find the term itself very fitting to their experience, validating the use and exploration of this concept. The participants seem able to relate to the concept, and find it appropriate, encapsulating how they are feeling:

> That's exactly how I feel and that's why [] I sent you an email because this…this is what it's all about. [] describe exactly the way I feel at the moment. Well, the way I'm feeling the last few years (Ofra,4.6.1)

> Everything that I speak to you about. This homeless. It's…homelessness is, eh…the first time that I…you know, you define it in a very good way. very useful. I didn't think about this word…before but I mean its in your research but its in real terms (Tamar,2.4.19)

From both accounts above it seems clear that suggesting a concept that encapsulates the participant's experience serves as a way to give this experience meaning and validation. It can also provide the participants with a sense of confirmation; that what they are feeling is known and experienced by other women as well. Despite the difficulty of articulating what psychological homelessness means to the participants, they do attempt to define it in various places throughout the interviews. Liat describes psychological homelessness as a sense of not belonging anywhere, coupled with a

sense of lacking ownership of a physical home. For her this came as a sudden realisation:

> Suddenly, I become realise. I don't belong there and I don't belong here. [] so I was like…OK, now its really....I have a room to sleep but it's not **my** room. (Liat, 3.6.3)

Ownership seems to hold a significant meaning for Liat, closely connected to her sense of belonging. Consequently, experiencing her house as not her own seems to imply that she doubts her ability to create a basic attachment to it.

When exploring this further, Liat talks about the process of questioning or doubting her basic sense of belonging. Perhaps this doubt surfaced as a result of a gradual disillusionment – while in the UK, she felt her heart is in Israel, but when she was in Israel, she did not feel at home in the way she expected. This sense that her identity is 'diffused' or scattered in some way is possibly associated with a sense of lack of home:

> You don't know where you belong to…but with the time you're living here and like…your body is here, your heart is there and when your heart and your body is there, the feeling is different. It's like confusing. Where I belong to? So it's…this is the deep feeling (Liat,3.6.9)

Liat asserts here the unsettling nature of this experience. She also hints at a sense of disappointment – when she arrived in Israel on a visit she realised that her longing for Israel while in the UK was perhaps not for the actual experience of being there, but some ideal image of Israel and herself in it.

Describing a sense of lack of ownership as an expression of psychological homelessness, Ayelet adds two important dimensions to the definition. Firstly she talks about distancing herself from her Israeli identity. Furthermore, she hints at her definition of home – a place which she feels she owns and where she can completely relax. Ayelet expresses within the same paragraph that Israel both is and is not a home

for her – this is a good example of the recurrent expressions of confusion and ambivalence throughout the interviews:

> So…in this sense, it's {Israel} still home but I…I hate so much what it has turned into that [] it's not home there. It's not home here because it's not mine (Ayelet,6.2.27)

She continues:

> There is no home anywhere. Right? I mean, in each place there is those great big things which turn the home into a bad home (Ayelet, 6.2.29)

Later she turns to the definition once again, emphasising her uncomfortable realisation that if home is not here and not there it is in no place:

> It just means that there is no place where you can completely relax which is completely yours (Ayelet,6.6.4)

The quote could possibly suggest that for Ayelet, psychological homelessness implies a basic sense of unease and inability to relax anywhere, a feeling of restlessness which has also been reported among physically homeless youth (Riggs & Coyle, 2002), providing some possible support for the choice of the term psychological homelessness for this experience.

Tamar also describes psychological homelessness as a sense of lack of belonging. However, for her this feels like being a temporary visitor in both places. She uses the image of a person hovering above a stage, not being able to 'land' in one specific place. Symbolically, this image also implies a lack of a specific 'role in the play', a lack of strong sense of self and identity. She emphasises how painful this unsettled feeling is:

> Don't belong here but you don't belong there as well.[] So I feel like a visitor there but also a visitor here. [] So we're…sort of hovering above the stage. [] Not here, not there. Which is [] very very hard. (Tamar,2.1.4)

Ofra also describes psychological homelessness as a sense of 'hanging'. She makes it clear that this is a potent and all-encompassing quality of her experience that touches every aspect of her life:

> It…it means…for me, it means hanging…there's no other way to describe it. That that's…that's exactly how I feel. [] It's confidence, it's, eh…happiness, em…not belonging anywhere, em…language…social life. It's…it's…my whole life is just…there's no life (Ofra, 4.6.1)

It is interesting to note Ofra's seemingly determined definition. For her, 'there is no other way to describe' this experience. However, Ofra's sureness is, earlier in the interview, directed at an altogether different definition:

> I, I believe it's…it's, you know, not feeling connected. That's…this is what it is. It's just not feeling connected. That's…this is what it means for me. There's no no…no other way to describe it. (Ofra, 4.1.10)

These repeated seemingly definite assertions might be understood as Ofra's attempts to grasp or create a meaningful description of how she feels. The ambivalence or lack of clarity is still evident.

Sarah also describes psychological homelessness as a sense of being unable to connect. When asked what psychological homelessness meant to her, Sarah answers:

> Trapped (PAUSE) yeah, of loss…basically. [] Unable to find anything that's…really…connected to your roots, but seriously not. (Sarah,1.1.3)

This sense of feeling trapped is also echoed in Tali's account. Here, Tali seems to be struggling, trapped between two impossible options, since for her neither the prospect of permanently living in the UK nor in Israel are desirable possibilities. Her re-construal of home as life story is interesting in this context, since it reflects the strong link between identity processes and feeling of home.

> Israel no longer really feels like my home but the UK doesn't really feel like my home either [] I sort of lost the feelings that [] somewhere…is totally my…my home. [] you know, if I just try to

> imagine my life as being staying in the UK forever, that feels like…very odd, you know, that feels like that's not quite my life story, it's someone else's (LAUGHS) [] and yet, you know, if I think of going back to Israel and living my life there, that feels somewhat impossible too (Tali,8.1.1)

For Sarah, being a poet and a writer, language was an integral part of how she defines and sees herself, thus serving as a core part of her identity. For her, the feeling of psychological homelessness became salient when she suddenly realised she did not feel comfortable expressing herself in either language. This created an inner identity conflict, since suddenly a core part of herself was questioned:

> The distancing from both languages was a major, major thing. [] I always thought my Hebrew is really fantastic, you know, eh…and I never felt that I cannot express my feelings in Hebrew [] but I started {to} miss words so I felt I was going away…going further away. (Sarah,1.3.4)

Language has been identified as one of the key factors expressing cultural identity. The impact of losing confidence in linguistic ability in both languages can be seen as an unsettling experience for the immigrant (Gonzalez, 2004). For Sarah, who has lived in the UK for almost 40 years, this is perhaps not only unsettling, but can be seen as a threat to her core sense of home and self, thus strongly impacting on her psychological wellbeing.

Using a traditional Jewish story as a symbol, Ayelet describes psychological homelessness concisely:

> There is a story where the further the kid goes the string between the mother's heart and the heart of the kid, then you just feel as if it sometimes is being torn. (Ayelet,6.1.4)

Ayelet poignantly expresses her psychological homelessness as the cutting of an (umbilical) cord that ties her to place. Further, Ayelet's sense of lack of home as an expression of loss of attachment to her mother is an additional dimension,

strengthening the importance and poignancy of this experience, and illuminating the level of distress these women are experiencing (Mukulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Tamar also expresses her sense of psychological homelessness as a loss of attachment – explaining how she feels a growing separation from Israel and her Israeli identity. When reflecting on this experience she realises she may have to say goodbye to that part of her:

> I was trying to analyse what I'm going through, why I'm so depressed. It's like I'm losing something []And then I realise that I'm just separating myself finally from Israel because although I'm Israeli, I came to term with the fact I'm not…I'm not…part of what's going on there. So I'm just a visitor really [] it…it includes lots of pain I think. It's like…give up something…Say goodbye… (Tamar,2.5.16)

Tamar's process of realisation and her process of loss are happening both in the past and in the present, almost as if she is constantly and continuously saying goodbye. This stresses the constant, persistent nature of this process for the participants (to be discussed in more detail later) and its paradoxical nature – as a transient state which is also continuously present and impossible to resolve.

Definitions of home

When trying to express what psychological homelessness means to them, the participants occasionally turn to look at what is missing, or what they are longing for: mostly a sense of home in their life and within themselves. The process of trying to define what home means to them might be an additional attempt at creating meaning and understanding of an otherwise confusing and vague feeling. As discussed in the Introduction, the psychological literature on the sense of home shows it to be a subjective and multifaceted construct that is at the same time a crucial part of human

experience and development (e.g. see Brink, 1995; Rapoport, 1995; Sigmon et al., 2002).

When Ayelet tries to define what home means to her, she touches on some of the key themes which were raised in the literature, namely security, familiarity, stability, comfort, caring, warmth and ownership (Rapoport, 1995). When talking about Israel as a home, her description seems to highlight her desperate wish for all these most basic needs which are perceived as missing in her life:

> After 2 years here I had enough. I was just…I want home, I want the stability and just, you know, getting home at the end of the day, the feeling that it's yours, that everyone really cares, that you care about the place (Ayelet,6.2.4)

> I think it's a place where you're comfortable, completely comfortable. [] not that you feel that it's perfect but [] it's something very familiar [] and it's not because there is never gonna be pain but it's just that it's all gonna be OK. It's cosy and it's warm and it's…it's yours. You have this feeling of complete support and complete security [] which you do miss. (Ayelet, 6.6.1-6.6.4)

There seems to be a slight sense of idealisation here, as if the home she is describing is almost too perfect, even though she describes it as a place where one can have negative experiences too. Her vision is of a 'completely secure' Israel which, as we shall see later, was not the Israel she found when she attempted to return. Her attempts at meaning making in this instance might serve an additional purpose of positive distinctiveness (Breakwell, 1986), since portraying an ideal picture of Israel as her home might buttress her Israeli identity. Regarding Israel as the ideal home may be an additional management process by minimizing the threatening thought of a complete lack of home.

Rachel also stresses this strong sense of Israel as a perceived home, in contrast to the UK:

> Every time when I land in Israel, it's like I can breathe and every time when I land here, it's…it's something close…something within me shuts. [] when I land in Israel with my husband, I'm like…I'm walking and I'm…(breathes /sighs) and he's like, what? And I say, home. I've come home. (Rachel,9.4.46)

In this account Rachel equates the feeling of home to that of being able to take a deep breath. She feels something inside her close up when she arrives back in the UK, perhaps expressing her sense of being trapped, which she mentioned earlier in the interview: *"So you feel like you're trapped..." (9.3.1).* The account also hints at a certain disparity between herself and her husband, in which he does not understand her strong embodied feeling. She continued to assert her strong feelings towards Israel and her Israeli identity, through family background. The constructed meaning and importance of Israel as a home for her parents and ancestors is echoed in her current experience:

> I didn't…I never had…an idea, a wish, willing…something to leave Israel. I mean, I come from…very Zionist family that came from Russia in the 70s and struggled to go out of Russia. So for me, Israel…it's more than a home. It's…I don't know…it's more…I might cry a little bit. [crying] (Rachel,9.3.14)

Rachel stood out in her more definite feeling of Israel as a home, and was the exception among the participants in interpreting psychological homelessness as being away from the place you call home, rather than having no home at all. This will be discussed later.

In Ayelet's previous account, the family does not come up as an important connection to the concept of home. But for both Liat and Rachel (who were married), their original family is:

> My family is my shelter, something that protects me. If anything happens, I've got my father, my mother, my sister and that's it and it's not here, so it's…it's hard. (Rachel,9.1.4)

Liat also explicitly confirmed the positive impact a sense of home can have on psychological wellbeing:

> I know to be around my family, around my friends, around my…space…my natural…natural environment is gonna make me feel good (Liat,3.9.3)

There seems to be a dual process here. On the one hand the description of Israel as a home can be seen as a confirmation for the participants that they have a home somewhere, which is a source of well-being, but on the other hand it can serve to maintain their sense of lack of home in the UK.

Echoing the varied and subjective nature of the concept of home, Rachel described the differences between herself and her husband in their image of what home means to them. This difference, as will be described later, created a rupture in their relationship, as it influenced each one's picture of what they wish for themselves and for them as a couple. For Rachel, home was where her family were living, and for her husband, home was where they as a couple resided:

> Every time when I tell my husband, let's go home and he says, we are home. No, it's not, we're not, it's not home…even though this is my house, this is my stuff [] where my mother is, my father, my sister. This is home. [] (PAUSE) I mean, I always talk to my husband. It's like he always asks me…it's not where I am, it's the home? and I say, no, it's not where you are, I'm sorry. It's just not it. [] You think that where he goes, I'll go because I love him blah, blah, blah. But it's not that. (Rachel,9.4.20)

Having differing ideas on very fundamental questions, such as the perception of what home is can significantly impact on the quality of the relationship in a couple, demanding a process of negotiation or management of differences (Shulman et al., 2008). In a way, this quote by Rachel can be seen as a dialogue which reveals several levels of her identity – she is questioning her identity as a wife and her identity as a woman, since she hints that she questions the cultural assumption that a woman should follow her husband wherever he goes. At the same time, this stands in

contradiction to her decision to follow her husband to the UK and live there for the past 5 years.

The participants seem to portray many different meanings of home – from a very real and concrete home to the more abstract, virtual and symbolic home. Throughout the interviews, they shift between many different levels of abstraction when reflecting on this concept, and on their longing for it.

Why do I feel psychological homelessness?

Another way the participants approach the exploration of what psychological homelessness means to them is to try and understand why this experience is felt specifically by them. Liat seems to show in the quote below how eager she is to know why this is happening to her, perhaps as a way to justify her struggle, (a struggle which she feels has "*no end*"), and give it purpose and meaning. In this attempt, she moves to a more spiritual justification - of destiny. However, she describes conflicting feelings – on the one hand she feel that she should stay in the UK and in her marriage because there is some 'bigger' reason for it, beyond her control, and at the same time she sometimes feels like challenging this 'destiny' and leaving everything:

> There is a meaning, [] I'm here for a reason probably. I didn't find a reason yet (LAUGHS) but I'm here for a reason (Liat,3.1.6)

Later in the interview she addresses this issue once more:

> I want to know why because there is no end. I like to know why. Why I'm here? Why it happened to me? Is it my destiny? [] Sometimes I'm like I want to be…cheeky…I want to like mess with, eh…destiny because they say your destiny is in your hands, so tomorrow I will decide I'm not gonna be here (Liat,3.9.2)

Her need to give a purpose or reason behind her current situation can also be seen as a way to manage her sense of dissonance. To the extent that she views her life as led by destiny it may be able to lighten the burden of absolute responsibility for her choices,

and help resolve a conflict created by her choice to be in a situation which causes her unhappiness and difficulty.

Other participants attempt to give an answer to Liat's question of 'why she is here', mentioning a variety of reasons. When asking Tali, for example, why she thinks Israelis abroad might feel this sense of psychological homelessness, she replied:

> That's really fascinating. [] the fact that we grew up in a society that's attached…this whole Zionism thing and attached to values. [] it was considered to be a terrible betrayal to go…and of course I don't believe that but…something of that…still rubs in, I think. [] I bought into a lot of this ideology and was sort of quite committed to it…and that sort of makes it hard in a way (Tali, 8.9.7)

Tali describes Israeli society as one of strong ideology and cohesiveness, in which those who do not 'buy in' to the ideology are seen as betraying the Zionist endeavour. As described in the Introduction, although this can be seen as slightly anachronistic within current Israeli culture, it still resonates and evidently still exists (perhaps to a lesser degree) in young Israeli emigrants, such as Tali (Bar-on, 2008). For Tali, this sense of cohesiveness and ideology prevents her from fully settling in to the host country, creating resistance to the development of home-feelings in the UK and enhancing inner conflict.

Overall, it seemed that the participants attempt to suggest explanations to the experience of psychological homelessness, but they do not manage to fully explain or encompass it. They seem to have a strong sense of its presence, but when trying to give it definitions or reasons they seem more hesitant or perplexed. Within these attempts at explaining psychological homelessness, they turn to examples of situations, places or encounters where this feeling is expressed or triggered. This will be discussed in the following section.

How does psychological homelessness manifest itself?

Psychological homelessness is expressed and felt by the participants in many situations, places and interactions (with family, friends and strangers). I would like to explore accounts expressing feelings of lack of belonging in the UK and Israel separately, as a way of showing the extent to which the participants are exposed to the 'double' sense of lack of belonging leading to the experience of psychological homelessness.

Not belonging in the UK

The sense of not feeling at home in the UK is both pervasive and persistent. In addition, since it seems slightly less threatening for the participants to discuss, they feel more able to express it numerous times throughout the interviews, sometimes using quite strong and 'dramatic' language. This is also expressed in the participants' use of various images or symbolic expressions when trying to describe the way they were feeling (for a more detailed analysis of the images and symbolic representations of psychological homelessness see appendix 23. Ayelet and Ofra use the image of being like a tree with no roots:

> Being rootless in England, feeling that…it's not home and it will never be home. (Ayelet,6.1.1)

> [H] Here I have no roots, I lost all my roots, and I think this is everything, your roots. The fact that you can't drop the anchor anywhere. [] this image echoes in my mind again and again – you can't move an old tree, because the roots are stuck in one place. (Ofra,4.8.1)

Ofra remembers her grandmother refusing to be moved to an old-age home, claiming that 'you can't move an old tree'. This sentence seems to resonate with her own situation, expressing a longing for this sense of being connected to the ground, rooted strongly to one place. Her account above describes her rootlessness in the UK, but it

simultaneously talks about a more general feeling of 'losing all her roots' and 'not anchoring anywhere'. This suggests that for Ofra, the lack of belonging in the UK does in fact cause a more fundamental psychological homelessness.

Edna uses an old Jewish expression taken from a poem by the 11th Century Jewish philosopher and poet Rabbi Yehuda Halevi (2002) describing the Jewish Diasporic condition[1].

By using this image, (like the quote of Liat 3.6.9. above) she adds an additional dimension to the understanding of psychological homelessness, a feeling of splitting – her body is in the UK but her heart is in Israel:

> So you are not here and not there at the end of the day but you're more there. [] It's like…(H: my heart is in Zion and my feet are in exile) (Edna,5.1.8)

Rachel, and Liat also describe this sense of being split in some way between here and there. It is interesting to note that both Edna and Rachel use the image that their physical body is in the UK, but their heart or soul is in Israel. This could imply that their relationship to Israel has become perhaps a more spiritual one, giving them a sense of longing to something beyond their (often distressing) daily life in the UK:

> It means…(PAUSE)…that part of me is not there. It's like (PAUSE) it's like my body is here, my life is here but maybe my soul is there. But yeah, part of me is not here, part of me is there. Part of me wants to be there (Rachel,9.7.2)

Tamar stresses the extent to which she feels that she has not incorporated British culture into her identity, and how much she really does not feel British. Explaining her subjective meaning of 'immigrant', she classifies herself as one. Interestingly, she is one of the only participants who allows herself to describe her life in the UK as that

[1] In the original eleventh century poem, the wording is "My heart is in the east and I'm at the far end of the west" (Halevi, 2002, p.110).

of an immigrant. The other participants do not share this feeling, perhaps because of its more permanent connotation:

> I don't feel British, eh…the British history and, em…is all very remote for me, It's not part of my identity at all obviously. So I feel like, eh…an immigrant…(LAUGHS)…Yeah, that's probably the essence of being an immigrant (Tamar,2.1.4)

Within this section, the participants describe a feeling of lack of belonging to the host country. They use embodied metaphors to describe what seems like a split – between the physical body (in the UK) and the soul or mind (focused on Israel), and between their daily life reality and what they hope or dream for themselves.

Not belonging in Israel

All the participants describe various aspects of current Israeli society, life and culture which elicit the sense that they do not belong there either. The accounts below seem to suggest that this feeling was very uncomfortable for the participants, as on the one hand it invokes their sense of general lack of belonging, and at the same time it threatens one of the core components of their identity, namely their Israeli identity. Their relationship with their Israeli identity appears very complex, making them feel confused, ambivalent and unsettled, and filling the interviews with contradictory remarks about how they feel about Israel.

Ayelet discovers her lack of belonging in Israel through interactions with Israeli friends during visits. In the quotes below, it seems that Ayelet is wavering between ambivalent feelings: her account suggests a lack of engagement and sense of detachment, which is coupled with a slight awkwardness (describing the experience as 'weird'). In her last comment Ayelet seems to show an air of guilt, stating that she is in someway less worthy to comment on the war in Lebanon, since she was not in Israel to directly experience it. Ayelet also relates directly to her Israeli identity. For

her, being Israeli means living in Israel and experiencing current events and culture as they happen:

> I felt an outsider.[] Which was very weird [] it just felt as if I wasn't there for something that was very constitutive of what being an Israeli today in Israel is (Ayelet,6.2.17)

> I was talking to friends there was such a huge gap between us…but suddenly I felt as if I'm losing on the substance, you know, like I have discussions with them and I'm not interested in what they're talking about (Ayelet,6.2.21)

> I felt as if I don't deserve to make any comments about what's going on because I'm not there. (Ayelet,6.3.3)

Ayelet's account also seems to express a sense of immediacy. Her historical connection to Israel seems, at least on the surface, to be less important, since it appears that the present moment and its challenges were more pertinent to the shaping of her Israeli identity. This reflects an interesting view that Israeli identity is a dynamic and relatively 'young' national identity which is more prone to current political events than to a long-lasting 'solid' past (Bar-On, 2008).

Tamar and Edna also report feeling less belonging in Israel, and more distant. They add:

> Everything there very distant for me now and, em…em…when I visit, I feel like a tourist [] I felt very much, eh…belong in Israel when I was there. (Tamar,2.1.4)

> But now when I'm there, I don't know where I am any more because I'm not completely Israeli now. [] and I have my family here. My close family. (Edna,5.1.8)

Tamar's use of the image of being a tourist in her country of origin coupled with her account above relating to her lack of belonging in the UK highlights the extent to which she feels a lack of home. For Edna, on the other hand, her nuclear family seems to serve as an anchor, perhaps allowing her to regard her residence in the UK as slightly more of a home.

For Liat, leaving Israel also meant leaving her original family home and building her new home and identity as wife. She reflects on this, claiming it causes her to question her feeling of home in Israel:

> I don't feel belong anymore because I left my parent's house. I'm not living with them any more. [] I left there, I got married, I have my own house here (Liat,3.1.3)

Later, she also adds the physical element of not having a house in Israel which is very meaningful for her – she seems to equate the loss of place with a loss of self or identity (*I cant find myself)*. This also causes her to feel like a visitor in Israel:

> I feel homeless…quite. Because when I'm going to Israel, I can't find myself really because I don't have my place, [] I really want to buy a flat in Israel to make [] this homeless feeling made less. [] it's a feeling like [] I am a visitor. (Liat,3.6.2)

Sarah describes the pain of a changed view of Israel. She suddenly realises Israel, her ideal home, is 'empty' and 'hollow', reflecting on the significance of this to her sense of home, as well as the distressing nature of the experience. Her quote seems to express a sense of disenchantment, which was repeated by most of the participants and will be discussed in more detail in the section about relationship with Israeli identity:

> Israel was suddenly physically small, the roads were too small, the cars were too small, was small…the houses…was small. [] I felt like my house was empty, was hollow…you know [] It was a very, very strange, eh…feeling there and obviously I was upset about it because I loved it and here I'm feeling all these, eh…things. (Sarah,1.2.16)

The participants often address lack of belonging in Israel and the way this relates to their Israeli identity. However they simultaneously bring up many other aspects of their identity to which this relates – such as motherhood, social-circle, family of origin etc. This suggests that for these participants the different identity components are closely linked and constantly in interaction, influencing each other.

The above two sections together reveal the extent of the discomforting sense of psychological homelessness. The participants do not feel at home in the UK, nor do they feel completely belong in Israel. Liat's account below summarises this experience, showing it to be very unsettling. She seems to express a confusion of feelings – on the one hand deeply questioning her uncomfortable situation, on the other, seeing it as continuously there, 'in the back of her mind':

> I'm like a visitor here and a visitor there. Where am I belong to? I don't belong anywhere suddenly, because in the back of my mind, I don't belong here because I want to go back to Israel. And when I'm coming to Israel, [] I'm visiting, I'm sleeping in different places, I am on suitcase all the time. It's quite shitty. (Liat,3.6.6)

3.2.2. Theme 2: Impact of Psychological Homelessness

The participants describe psychological homelessness as an all-encompassing feeling which impacted on many aspects of their life. In this section, I would like to examine how this experience manifested itself and was expressed, and in what ways it might have influenced various aspects of the participant's life. This could shed some light on their lived experience, and enable a deeper exploration of the nature and meaning of psychological homelessness for them. This section will look first at psychological wellbeing, including symptoms of anxiety and depression, and then move to an exploration of intra-psychic, interpersonal, and group identity processes.

Psychological wellbeing

The impact of immigration on psychological wellbeing has been well established in the psychological literature (e.g. see Phinney et al., 2001; Zalokar, 1994). Therefore, this is only an overview of a theme that is presented in full in appendix 16.

The participants speak about various ways in which the experience of psychological homelessness affects their psychological well being. Many of the participants describe various levels of low mood and symptoms of depression, tearfulness, lethargy, lack of motivation and self care. Tamar, for example, reports that the experience of psychological homelessness, intertwined with being a young and relatively isolated mother, causes feelings of depression and even suicidal ideation. For Liat and Ofra, the feelings of low mood are coupled with lack of confidence, sadness, and emptiness. The lack of confidence was also linked to the insecurity resulting from being on unfamiliar ground, reported in other immigrant groups (see e.g. Narchal, 2007). However, for these women it is not only the unfamiliarity which creates a sense of lack of confidence, but also a deeper feeling of self-doubt, perhaps linked to their deeper identity struggles. Some of the participants seem to be experiencing a sense of overwhelming psychological angst, which has been found to be linked to inner identity conflict (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009).

Another dominant feeling which is shared by most of the women is loneliness. Most of them found themselves living a relatively isolated life. It is apparent that perceived loneliness is a major expression of these women's distress, corresponding to the work done by Beal (2006) who shows that there is a two way relationship between depression and loneliness.

Edna uses a strong image to describe this loneliness:

> Like sitting on a cloud and looking at them and isolated. Different.
> (Edna,5.6.9)

This can be seen as a sense of distance from the people around her. At the same time, her choice of the image of the cloud may hint at qualities of floating, transience and lacking the solid ground and stability of a home.

Other strong feelings that some of the participants describe are anxiety and fear. They felt anxious in unfamiliar surroundings, and a general sense of uneasiness and inability to relax. The participants talk about feeling unsafe in London, but also in Israel as a result of the terrorism threat inherent in Israeli daily life. The anxiety and worry are also expressed with regards to family in Israel – feelings which are linked to a sense of guilt for not being there, for the lost time or missed opportunity.

Liat reports a multitude of strong negative feelings throughout her interview. She expresses her sense of lack of control over these feelings:

> It's all the feeling. It's all about how you feel. I wish I could control…control how I feel. [] To take something that make me don't care. Like a liquid or something I can drink [] But I really over care. (Liat,3.6.29)

Her powerful use of the image of a potent liquid which could lull her strong feelings could perhaps indicate her helplessness in the face of her internal processes, and her longing for empowerment and relief. This sense of being overwhelmed by different manifestations of psychological homelessness was echoed by many of the participants, and will be discussed in more detail later.

Intra-psychic processes

Sense of loss of self / identity

Some of the participants report feeling a basic doubt about who they are, commenting that before feeling psychologically homeless they held a clearer and more solid sense of self. This then changed, leading to a deep sense of loss of identity:

> I feel like, em…I've lost my [] Identity. Yes I really feel like I've lost it (Ofra,4.2.20)

Tamar adds a comparison with how she used to be in Israel, as a way of highlighting her self-doubt and loss of identity in the UK, which she describes as a slow process of 'fading away':

> I came with a very strong identity, em…what I want to do in life. I was very sure of myself. And this sureness, eh…fades away (Tamar,2.4.2)

Later she attempts an explanation for this process:

> It's just, em…losing your…previous identity (PAUSE) and forming a new one but you are still forming it. (Tamar,2.6.1)

Here Tamar seems to suggest psychological homelessness involves some form of transition in her identity process. It is important to point out that for the participants the difficult state of change and transition is apparently maintained as an open wound rather than reaching, at some stage, healing or resolution. Tamar asserts this further:

> It's temporary everything here and I don't know who I am. I'm no longer Israeli and I'm still not British. (Tamar,2.4.2)

This account demonstrates Tamar's ability to provide herself with a tentative explanation of her current situation throughout the process of the interview, which helped her make sense of her psychological distress.

Liat and Ofra view this change in identity as occurring within social situations, describing themselves as different, not behaving in a way that matches their self-perception:

> I'm not the real me because if I want to be the real me, it's not gonna work. [] I can't be myself. (Liat,3.3.28)

> If I meet with English people, I…I stay very quiet…very, very quiet. Not…not who I am. (Ofra,4.5.12)

This hints at the identity threat these women experience since both quotes seem to express some apprehension or fear of criticism if they do act 'naturally'.

Another expression of the feeling of loss of identity is a sense of being invisible, unnoticed and a 'nobody'. This reflects how they felt in relation to others (in the UK), as well as their own self-concept, their low self esteem and self worth. For example, Edna states:

> You're nobody here in a way because in Israel maybe I'm somebody [] they expect more out of me. Here, nobody expect anything out of me. (Edna,5.2.4)

And later she adds:

> I feel here that I am nobody. [] it's not important if I'm here or not here. (Edna,5.4.17)

Her sense of being present, noticed and significant is compromised. It seems to reflect her feeling about her own identity as she sees it in the UK – she is nobody, she lacks the positive distinctiveness and self esteem a solid identity could provide her with (Breakwell, 1992).

Liat shares these feelings. For her the sense of being noticed seems important, perhaps impacting on her self-worth and self esteem:

> I think it's affecting me here because no one is seeing me [] I'm here working and then like I'm coming home and that's it. (Liat,3.4.2)

This stands in contrast to her descriptions of herself in Israel, where she feels she is constantly watched and noticed, making her feel more 'alive':

> When I'm in Israel, I'm like alive, I'm like dressing, putting make up on. [] in Israel everyone is looking at you (Liat,3.4.2)

The quote suggests that Liat thrived on this feeling that she was noticed and watched and therefore felt more motivated to invest in her appearance. However, as will be shown below, this image of Israel and her perceptions of herself in Israel can be seen as a form of management of her feelings of lack of belonging, as an idealisation of Israel and her sense of being fully 'present' there. In fact, contrary to this, when she

discusses actual relationships with her friends in Israel, she talks about the disappointment of not being noticed, of not being missed.

"Not here and not there" – ambivalence, doubt, contradiction and disparity

Throughout my contact with them the women repeatedly express being in a persistent state of confusion and contradiction. Their sense of loss of identity and feelings of belonging and home cause them to lose confidence in their decisions and feel very confused about their choices, perceptions and judgment about their life and what was important to them. As discussed earlier one of the factors which is connected to their experience of psychological homelessness is whether or not they actively chose to leave Israel, and to stay in the UK. If they felt led into their current life situation, it generated an additional struggle in which their identity as wives stands in some conflict with their need for a sense of home. This can also contribute to their feelings of ambivalence, since both these identity components seem important to them.

There are multiple expressions of ambivalence throughout the interviews – conflicting feelings or attitudes towards their partner, towards certain aspects of their experience in the UK, and their relationship with Israel. The ambivalence seems to be linked with uncertainty and doubt regarding basic inner constructs as well as the ability to make judgments about their life. One of the participants who expresses this most powerfully was Ayelet. When talking about the possibility of return to Israel, her confused train of thought is evident in her hesitant and 'back and forth' manner of speech:

> I don't want to go back really, not just yet. But I can't bring myself to say, no I'm not gonna look out there but I can't tell you that I really want to go back. I want to in the sense that, yes, I'm still connected and it's my people and it's my culture...but I also don't want to...its all...(Ayelet,6.2.26)

The confusion is also evident in numerous contradictions within the interview. The following two statements are said almost directly one after the other – the proximity, as well as the ostensible conviction create the impression that Ayelet is still unsure of her approach and feelings towards Israel as a home, as if in the midst of an unresolved process:

> Part of the reason that it's {Israel} home is that it really bothers me that things have changed. It really…it gets under my skin. (Ayelet,6.2.26)

> But I…I hate so much what it has turned into that [] it's not home there. (Ayelet,6.2.27)

Later she explicitly expresses the general doubt and perplexity she feels about some most basic concepts, as a result of this experience of psychological homelessness:

> There is sometimes this feeling [] what is it that I want? And I'm not sure I have an answer [] Just answer to yourself, what is it that you want? What are you looking for? Can you find it? And I'm not sure I can find it now anywhere, So it's like…it's hard (Ayelet, 6.2.29)

The quote above could suggest that moving to the UK initiated a deep questioning and reflection process for Ayelet, perhaps causing her to doubt many 'givens' in her life – including her concept of home, her relationship with Israel and her Israeli identity.

This doubt is shared by other participants as well. Liat for example, points to the continuous nature of this questioning:

> To be honest, like, it's always on the back of my mind. It's like, what I'm doing here? [] for what and for who? (Liat,3.3.1)

Tamar also shares this feeling of being confused and divided. Just like Ayelet, she reflects on the restraining effects this had on her life, and relates her experience in the UK to past similar experiences, incorporating it into her self-process:

> I found like, eh…many times in my life I…I felt divided…part of me wants one thing, part of me [] another…and it's conflicting and contrast [] it holds me back this contrast. (Tamar,2.2.24)

These participants seem to maintain this state over many years, and describe it as constant and unresolvable (see page 134). It can perhaps be suggested that the feeling of lack of belonging can also cause a sense of lack of internal 'place' to store thoughts and feelings. In that case the confusion might be a result of not being able to fully process what they are going through.

The confusion and contradiction also leads to an apparent sense of disparity. The participants found themselves holding numerous 'gaps' or internal disparities, in which they experienced a dissonance due to the gap between their picture of their situation and the reality of their life. One of the examples of this was the gap between the ideal home and the reality of what home was (or was not) for them. This led to further questioning, doubt and disillusion for Ayelet:

> It's really disturbing because [] it made me question [] Right? It's a question of…is there really a home? Am I [] just creating this idea, fantasy of home but that's not reality. So how…how much Israel is really important to me today…Israel that exists…not the Israel that I want it to be. (Ayelet,6.2.22)

This quote as well as the one described earlier, demonstrates Ayelet's high degree of insight into her own processes as well as her ability to articulate her insight. It seems that Ayelet describes an experience of deep doubt and questioning which she relates to her experience of psychological homelessness. Liat also describes holding contrasting ambivalent feelings towards returning to Israel:

> Although it's my dream, although I really want to go and live there [] I'm like quite scared to go back. [] I became more worried. Like, what is gonna happen? (Liat,3.3.14)

Later, Liat expresses an underlying fear of being disappointed when returning to Israel, and wanting to return to the UK. While she describes herself in the UK as *suffering* (3.6.18), the prospect of returning to Israel and being disappointed seems

even worse. This could be because it brought to the foreground the threat she was experiencing to a core part of her identity:

> The worst thing that really scares me is I will leave everything here, I will go back to Israel and I will want to come back here [] that I will go back there and then I will regret that.[] what have you done?[] Why didn't you suffer for a little bit more? (Liat,3.6.19-22)

Here Liat expresses her contradictory feelings – the longing for Israel and thus the protection of her Israeli identity, and the fear of returning there and finding her connection to Israel is, in reality, not as strong. This highlights the cognitive dissonance for Liat, and links it to the continuous identity conflict she is experiencing.

Life feels temporary and 'on hold'

Some of the participants, while reflecting on their life in the UK, describe a discomforting sense of temporariness – in which they constantly 'live out of packed suitcases' and do not invest in anything long-term. However, as will be discussed later, this also could be seen as a way of managing psychological homelessness, perhaps a way to maintain their identity and resist seeing the UK as a permanent home (see page 121). Most of the participants describe their life in the UK as temporary, 'on the move'. Edna and Tali express this feeling of temporariness which is strongly related to the sense of psychological homelessness:

> I'm living on the suitcase. As if I'm going to go back there tomorrow. I always want to go back. [] It's always temporary here. (Edna,5.1.6)

> I feel like I've reached…there's this big decision to be made where I want to live (PAUSE) long term and I feel like I haven't really made it and that's making a huge impact on my life because I'm kind of neither here nor there. [] I feel like it makes my life very transitional. (Tali,8.4.2)

This sense of temporariness is coupled with an inability to advance, develop and move forward towards fulfilment of hopes and dreams - a feeling as if life is on hold, waiting for the next move. As Tamar explains, this brings her back to the image of hanging:

> Sometimes…it feels like it holds me back…this homelessness because I'm not sure I'm going to stay here. So why…why should I invest in what's happening in my life if it's going to end for me? [] It's all very…hanging in the air (Tamar,2.4.5)

Ofra adds to this a more general sense of lack of purpose, meaningfulness and substance in her life. Her struggle to articulate how she feel is also evident here:

> There is no substance, I don't have any other way to describe it…I don't have any substance to my personal life, I don't exactly have a word for it. (Ofra,4.6.2)

In a sense this puts the participants in a vicious cycle, since their sense of temporariness and lack of motivation to change, coupled with their feelings of life being 'paused', perpetuates the situation, and reduces the motivation to be pro-active in bringing change into their life.

Rachel adds an additional dimension. She describes her life as not moving much in any direction, particularly not in the direction she wishes for herself, thus making her feel disempowered and helpless. This particularly relates to the decision to have children:

> [H] I never wanted to have children here, but now I feel like I have no choice. I feel like it is all closing in on me. It looks like my life is on hold. [] sometimes I do feel like I am in this 'waiting' state [] And this pisses me off! And my husband is really advancing in his life and his career. (Rachel,9.8.1)

For Rachel this seems to raise feelings of anger and frustration. Her mention of her husband as advancing in his career might suggest that some of this anger is also directed towards him. This quote can be seen as an example of different identity

components being linked and interconnected for Rachel; her lack of belonging in the UK affecting all of them at once – as wife, mother, and immigrant.

Interpersonal processes

This theme is presented only briefly here due to the considerable research already published on the impact of immigration on family relationships, particularly on marital relationships and roles (see e.g. Lamb & Bougher, 2009). The theme is presented in full in appendix 17.

Many of the participants report that the sense of psychological homelessness penetrates through most of the participants' social relationships and interactions. The participants reflect on a general sense of difficulty in building relationships, and feeling close to others. This influences their ability to both give and receive love, care and support (*Not caring, eh … not receiving and not being able to give love – Sarah,1.1.1*). In addition, the participants report a sense of reduced motivation to create social interactions thus perhaps enhancing social isolation.

For most of the participants, there seems to be a double-sided or close link between the experience of psychological homelessness and marital relationships. In most cases, where the participants feel they were in the UK due to their husband's career/interests, this seems to evoke feelings of anger, passivity and lack of control over life decisions. At the same time, they describe close and supportive relationships with their husband/partner. These ambivalent feelings reflect the complex perceptions of themselves as wives and women – taking on a relatively traditional wife role, yet at the same time struggling with it (which corresponds to research on Israeli women discussed in the introduction chapter). This might serve as an additional source of ambivalence and identity conflict. Some of the participants regard psychological

homelessness as a sort of sacrifice or price which they have to pay in order to maintain their marriage, or their family life. However, this was not without ambivalence, and seemed like a dialogue between resignation and resistance. They seem unsure whether the sacrifice is 'worth it', again somewhat challenging their own perception of their identity as wives and as women:

> We're really happy together. I can't see my life without him so maybe…it's like a price you have to give, but sometimes you're asking if the price is worth it. It's your life. You're giving up your life basically. (Liat,3.6.13)

Overall, the women who were married and had children, describe themselves to some extent as isolated within their own family, since often their children had adjusted well to life in the UK and their husband was working and wanted to stay.

For the women who were single, such as Tali, psychological homelessness also impacts on their ability to find a suitable partner, since they feel unable to identify both with Israelis and non Israelis.

In accordance with sociological research on Israeli society, which shows that individuals maintain strong ties with family of origin (Lavee & Katz, 2003), the participants here also describe their family of origin as a constant source of support, a secure home. However, now when living in the UK, this relationship has become more complex. The closeness is also mingled with feelings of guilt for leaving, of being left out of the family system, and a growing distance. This is all compounded with the basic pain of separation from a strong core attachment (supporting the findings of Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). This distancing from the family can be seen as an additional dimension to the general 'push/pull' attitude towards Israel, enhancing the sense of confusion and conflict.

The participants' relationships with friends in Israel are also depicted in the interviews as very close. Yet it also seems that friends have become less accepting, and the participants often feel more rejected by them:

> I want them to miss me and with time…they find their own way [] my friends, they're not calling me anymore (Liat,3.9.21)

The move to the UK created various ruptures or difficulties in these relationships. The participants describe a process of distancing from friends in Israel after living in the UK for a long period of time. This distancing is associated with feelings of frustration and disappointment partly, it seems, as it reminds of the weakening ties to Israel. This adds to the difficulty arising from the lack of social support and relative isolation in the UK. Many of them were working in relatively isolated working environments, which together with the alienation and lack of adjustment to British society, resulted in a lack of opportunity to create new social interactions.

Social contacts are mostly with other Israelis, and with the Jewish community. However, this too was not an easy and straightforward process. Some of the participants describe ambivalent push-pull feelings towards the Israeli community, needing the source of support but at the same time actively distancing themselves from other Israelis.

Thus in general, the participants portray a relatively isolated and withdrawn social environment. They seem to find it difficult or impossible to create attachments and meaningful social interactions which are not contaminated by reservations or obstacles. This lack of social support has been found by numerous researchers to significantly impact on psychological wellbeing (e.g. see Schaefer, Coyne and Lazarus, 1981).

Social identity and group processes

Being Israeli

As described earlier, the relationship of the participants with their Israeli identity was complex, including many strong and conflicting feelings. Many of the interviews seem to reveal a process in which the women first describe quite a positive image of Israel and a seemingly strong Israeli identity. Then, gradually, they allow themselves to be more critical of Israel, and show a more shaky and uncertain picture of their national identity and perception of Israel as their ultimate home. This could be because as the interview progressed and a good rapport was built, they felt more comfortable to disclose more painful and threatening material.

In the initial stages of the interview, the participants wanted to stress how attached they felt to Israel, and how they were keeping themselves informed and involved in what is going on there:

> I feel really involved and I really get angry with things…that happen there [] which I don't here [] it doesn't touch me…it's not mine. (Ayelet,6.1.4)

The feeling of caring and being informed of what is happening in Israel is coupled with direct expressions of closeness, loyalty and connection to Israel and their Israeli identity:

> I feel Israeli. [] so it's harder, yes. So when you take the Israel from me, it's harder for me. (Rachel,9.5.10)

Ofra explains that her sense of being Israeli prevents her from feeling at home and developing strong ties in other places:

> I just believe that because I feel so much, eh, part of the Israeli nationality, em…there is no way I would be able to feel at home any where else. (Ofra,4.1.2)

This partially explains the participant's resistance to regarding UK as home, discussed later (see page 135).

Using an embodied metaphor of 'getting under her skin', Ayelet describes how her sense of caring and involvement in events happening in Israel indicates to her that to some extent she still feels it is home:

> Part of the reason that it's {Israel} home is that it really bothers me [] it gets under my skin. (Ayelet,6.2.26)

When I ask Ofra if she feels at home in Israel, she hurriedly replies:

> Yes. Completely. I have to just step in the area of the airport [] I hear the Hebrew I feel more relaxed with myself, more connected (Ofra,4.2.4)

Yet this certainty is inconsistent with other places in the interview, where Ofra indicates a process of distancing herself from Israel, illustrating contradiction and confusion. For example, she says:

> After being in UK for a while [] I, I didn't feel secure in my own country. I felt like the country is…is going to, em…places where I'm not sure if I, eh…want to live with. (Ofra,4.2.8)

This quote seems to imply a dilemma and sense of ambivalence for Ofra. On the one hand she reports feeling at home in Israel, but at the same time she expresses reservations about living there and making it her real and concrete home (rather than an imagined one).

As the interview progresses, perhaps due the rapport built with them, the participants feel more comfortable to share their criticisms of Israeli society, politics or culture. Tamar describes this explicitly:

> There's lots of things in Israel that I don't like. (Tamar,2.2.12)

Soon after, she elaborates, reflecting on why in her opinion certain cultural patterns have emerged in Israel:

> The heat, you know, the bad manners…(LAUGHS) [] There's no boundaries in Israel. I think [] it's such a small place, you know, em…all the borders are… difficult, you know, we are [] Fighting on the safety of the borders and in a way we stick together []

> We've no borders at all. [] we interfere with everything, we ask too many questions. (Tamar,2.2.18)

In this quote Tamar includes herself as part of Israeli society (***we** are fighting on the borders, **we** stick together*). However, this was articulated alongside other statements which indicate her growing distance and reservations about her Israeli identity (such as '*everything there very distant for me now [] I am not part of it*', 2.1.4), supporting the sense of confusion and contradiction in relation to her national identity.

Distancing from Israeli identity

Together with criticisms of Israeli society and culture, the participants occasionally seemed to actively distance themselves from Israel, describing how they now felt different, less 'Israeli', as a result of their stay in the UK. Ayelet expresses this while criticising a certain behaviour which she sees as characteristic of Israelis:

> I really think I've tuned down while I was in England. I've opened up. I'm not now sure that everything I say is automatically right just because I'm thinking about it. (Ayelet,6.2.20)

Tamar also describes feeling different from Israelis in Israel, instigating her move to the UK:

> I…wouldn't leave Israel if I didn't have a problem with, em…Israeli manners (LAUGHS) (Tamar,2.2.19)

Overall, the participants describe a complex relationship with their Israeli identity, shifting from attachment to distance, an expression of their conflicting feelings of belonging and their sense of psychological homelessness. As a summary, I would like to bring a quote from Tali, which indicates her incremental process of distancing from her Israeli identity alongside her emerging identity as British:

> There are things that I didn't like about Israel [] there's a lot of racism, there's a lot of…you know, the way people speak to each other []but it felt like something I didn't like about **my** society and now I feel like it's…"them"[] it's easier to handle that not like by

> saying, you know, **my** society talks this way but it's just like I can't believe **they** talk that way, you know. [] I have the reverse thing about England [] when it's sort of positive things about here, I say things like, you know, **we** recycle our garbage (LAUGHS) but when it's…you know, negative things, it's sort of, you know, **the British** don't know anything about plumbing (LAUGHS) (Tali,8.3.5)

Tali's quote seems to imply a distancing from negative characteristics of the in-group while strengthening positive self esteem drawn from positive qualities of the in-group, one of the principles of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). However, Tali indicates that there are certain aspects in which both Israel and Britain are in-groups. This could suggest a slightly more complex, fluid, re-evaluated concept of national identity for Tali, which changes according to circumstance. This will be further discussed in the Discussion chapter.

Feelings of guilt

Feelings of guilt are reported by all the participants. These feelings seem to be an integral part of their experience in the UK particularly when relating to their family and friends back in Israel. It seems that their feelings of guilt are an added burden to their feelings of living as 'fish out of water' in the UK. For some, the feelings of guilt are coupled with an even stronger sense of betrayal – betraying their country and deserting the Zionist endeavour. This seems to be linked to their perceptions of their parents sacrificing much for the state of Israel and the Zionist dream. Edna comments on this sense of guilt and betrayal, seeing it as a unique experience for Israelis:

> It's to betray my country more than anything else. [] There's so much blood, you know, we got to belong there because it's a special…it's a special country, it's not a normal country. [] It's haunting you. [LAUGHS] (Edna,5.1.11)

As described in the Introduction chapter, various researchers have described Israeli emigrants as regarding themselves as 'deserters' (e.g. Gold, 2002, Shokeid, 1991).

However it appears that even today, when it is increasingly common for Israelis to emigrate, the uncomfortable feeling of betrayal is still a strong experience for these women.

Tali tells the story of her grandparents who came to Israel in the 1930s and how their efforts and sacrifice serve as reminders for her, making her feel guilty for 'breaking the chain':

> Some bit of it is definitely some sort of…Zionist passion…I do think that's in the background {of} why I feel uncomfortable leaving. [] in the case of all 4 of my grandparents, they sort of moved to Israel in the sort of beginning of the 1930s [] their families then told them not to go, and it turned out to be the sort of crazy move that saved their lives and my parents [] built up a very successful life in this new country [] this is kind of cutting [] this endeavour, yeah. (Tali,8.3.22)

This account suggests the extent to which historical and familial narratives play an important role in an individual's current identity work and psychological processes. This would tend to support the view of the psychology of immigration as a subjective and unique experience which needs to take the contextual and cultural background into account (Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000).

Rachel also describes similar feelings of guilt as a result of leaving Israel and the Zionist endeavour. For her this seems to be coupled with guilt towards her parents who saw Israel as a place of refuge from anti-Semitism experienced in Russia:

> I was always raised as I should be thankful to my parents who brought me to Israel because there is [H: non-Jews] in Russia and we were suffered anti Semitic [] I should be thankful to say that…to be Jews…between Jews…among Jews, you know. [] So this sense was always very strong to me [] But, yeah, then I left…(LAUGHS) (Rachel,9.4.50)

Her incongruent laugh at the end of the quote seems to hint at both the acknowledgment of her situation as well as the pain caused by the disparity between

her beliefs and how she was raised, and her action of living outside of Israel. In her attempt to show me the extent or intensity of this inner conflict, she adds:

> But to go out completely of the country is something that is unforgivable (Rachel,9.4.53)

Her account indicates that she manages this conflict by separating herself from those who 'completely' leave Israel, thus perhaps containing her feelings of guilt and making the threat less prominent:

> What keeps me is like I'm not doing that, I'm not really out of the country, I'm just a couple of years here. [] I'm not doing something not good. (Rachel,9.4.57)

This can perhaps be another motivation to resist fully adjusting and assimilating to the UK and seeing it as a home, which in turn would make it one of the factors which maintain the sense of psychological homelessness as continuous, constant and unresolved for this unique population.

The participants also report feeling guilty for not providing help and support to their parents. This sense of guilt seems to be coupled with the anxiety that something will happen to their loved ones while they are away.

The guilt itself appears to be an expression of the identity threat felt by the participants for leaving Israel. Even though not all Israelis living abroad necessarily feel this guilt, for these women it appeared prominent and pervasive.

Being Jewish

The participants overall describe their Jewish identity as strong, but embedded within the more salient Israeli identity. All the participants describe themselves as non-observant, and most of them felt ambivalent about connecting to the British Jewish community. Ofra describes this, hinting at her disappointment when realising that she does not belong to the Jewish community, that she is very 'other' to them:

> I'm hanging all the time and I'll tell you why. [] I went there {Jewish celebration} and it's…and I felt very excited before but when I sat there I was…I was crying the whole evening because [] I felt like I don't belong to this Jewish community. This is not me. I'm an Israeli, I'm not Jew…yes, I am Jewish but first of all I'm an Israeli. (Ofra,4.3.2)

Ayelet views her time in the UK as enhancing her awareness of the different components of her identity. The possibility of separating religious and national identity is a novel concept for her, coming from a place where these are combined into one:

> When I came here and…and you can be Jewish and you can be British and it was weird because for me [] being Jewish Israeli, it's not {like} I'm Israeli but then I'm also Jewish.[]now that I've stopped observing, I don't go to the synagogue at all [] I don't need this mirroring of being Jewish. It's not split for me. [] It's who I am. Being Israeli is first and foremost being Jewish. I'm more aware of the 2 different identities since I got to Britain. (Ayelet,6.7.2)

Ayelet's account indicates that for her, being Jewish is an integral part of being Israeli. Rachel, like Ofra, seems somewhat resistant to this idea, since for her Jewish identity is an unquestioned yet less important part of her identity:

> So it's hard. Because I feel more Israeli…if I felt more Jewish, which I feel Jewish, I am Jewish, em…so I think it will be…would be easier for me [] but I'm Israeli. [] I'm first Israeli. (Rachel,9.5.9)

The participants here, who were secular, seem to be describing a process in which the move to the UK made explicit an otherwise obvious link between the two components, since in Israel their Jewish identity is expressed as part of their culture as Israelis. The significance of this to their daily life appears to manifest in their ambivalent relationship with the local Jewish community, which often amplified their isolation and denied a potential source of support, as asserted by Gold (2002).

Sarah appears to be slightly different in this respect – she describes her Jewish identity as being strengthened by the move to UK, which, as will be seen below, allows her to seek support from the orthodox community in her neighbourhood.

Being a woman

Most of the women do not address this directly, even though it is in the background of many of the issues discussed – their relationship with their husband, motherhood, their hopes and dreams for themselves and their concepts of home and psychological homelessness. Liat and Rachel were both married to husbands who wanted to stay in the UK for their jobs. They both make general statements in the interview regarding how they think all women are or should be – yet at the same time express a disparity between this image and their own life. They seem to negotiate the meaning of this while they are reflecting on it. The women show a wish to be seen as strong:

> But I think I am affecting him…because like you're a woman (LAUGHS) [] you have to have like influence on your…husband [] if he's not gonna think like you in all things…Y: (LAUGHS) It's not good? L: Yeah. (Liat,3.3.32)

> It annoys me because we are a family of very strong women. [] I also want to be a strong woman like everyone…(Rachel,9.8.1)

After making the more generalised statement above, Liat turns to portray how she sees her own identity as a woman, within the context of her beliefs about womanhood:

> I think with men it's different than a woman. [] A woman's more sensitive, more thought, more needs her family, her mother around her. I think mentally the man is strong. It's like…he don't need his family. [] It's harder because you are the woman, you are the mother, it's all on your shoulder [] like 90% of raising children and everything is the woman. This is the nature. This is how the world is…in the kitchen. I know it's annoying. [] but this is how it is. I love it. And I'm happy it to be like that, not because this is how everyone expects me to be. I like it. I would like to be at home with my children [] but in Israel. (Liat,3.9.3)

In this quote multiple and contradictory voices can be heard – of weakness and strength, of responsibility and control (choosing a role regardless of expectations) and of helplessness, hardship and pleasure. Expressing what is described in the literature as a dominant discourse in the perceptions of womanhood in Israel (Azmon & Israeli, 1993), Liat also expresses her relative lack of threat or internal conflict. At the same time, her last comment, that she wants all this idyllic picture to be in Israel, expresses the place where possibly this positive image collapses, since being away from her family could be seen as challenging her image of a perfect woman. This hints at the disparities within her current situation, adding to other conflicting feelings she expresses in the interview.

Rachel relates her perception of womanhood to the meaning of home, and the connection between home and women's role:

> I don't want to be stereotyped as saying we're crying, we're too sensitive, we are…{but} home for us is more important than to guys…this is a fact. I mean, for me, home and family is more important than my husband. [] But, em…I don't think it's because I'm a woman. I don't **want** to think that it's because I'm a woman (Rachel,9.5.16)

Similar to Liat, Rachel hold strong beliefs about women's role and identity, seeing it as relatively traditional (strongly based on home and family). However, Rachel seems to be expressing a certain resistance to taking on this role, both in the beginning of the quote and at the end. In a sense, her quote includes significant contradictions – refusing to be stereotyped and then generalising, taking on the concept of woman attached to home and then refusing it. This could express a greater internal conflict regarding this identity component for Rachel. There is also a hint of sacrifice – both women seem to be sacrificing their own needs and sense of belonging for the building of a family home with their husband.

Tali expresses an even stronger resisting voice, when she describes herself as confronting the traditional woman's role and seeing it as oppressive. Being a single woman in a relatively traditional and pro-natal society, Tali seems to be resisting the stigmatisation. She even claims it is one of the reasons she is inclined not to return to Israel:

> Being a single woman in Israel is very, very socially unacceptable and that's something I very strongly resent. [] all these expectations of women and all these very fixed ideas about family and I came here and this was a very pleasant surprise to me to find out that this actually really wasn't over here. [] it's not assumed that you must want or (LAUGHS) have a relationship. It's not assumed that if you have a relationship you would want kids. [] I think it's one of the big factors that makes me hesitate about going back. [] In Israel, even having…being very successful in my profession [] I'm gonna always be tagged like a bit of a failure (Tali,8.10.9)

This account echoes the literature on Israeli women – showing the tension between the traditional role and the strive for equality (e.g. see Azmon & Izraeli, 1993). Tali's account seems to imply that she experiences this as stigmatisation, giving rise to a strong motivation to emigrate. Tali's sense of identity threat strengthens even further the view presented by the married women, of the tension between the traditional and the novel, and between commonly held views and the individual trying to resist them. This may also indicate that for these participants the relationship with this identity component, similar to other identity components, can be seen as a complex, conflicting and contradictory.

Being a mother

Motherhood, which seems to be one of the more important identity components for most of the participants, is also strongly and poignantly related to the sense of lack of belonging. Becoming a mother or the prospect of becoming a mother, while not 'at

home', evokes strong feelings and questioning about their life situation and what they hope for themselves. It appears to provoke a stronger sense of psychological homelessness, insecurity and rootlessness. Tamar directly addresses the dual relationship she feels between motherhood and psychological homelessness, and how they both together impacted on her psychological wellbeing, creating a sense of 'loss of identity':

> You feel a little bit of loss of your identity and that's to do with motherhood as well [] So it all…Adds up. homelessness, em…makes it harder to be a mother in a foreign country (Tamar,2.3.5)

Another expression of the identity challenge in relation to motherhood, was the participants' concern about having children in the UK, namely, how to create a world for their children which will fit with their own hopes and dreams. It seems to be an issue which concerns all the participants, both those who didn't have children and were considering the possibility, and those who had children and are raising them in the UK. The feeling of psychological homelessness was provoked whenever the question of children was raised, since this question is closely related to many important aspects of their identity, as women, mothers and immigrants. Ayelet, Liat and Rachel did not have children, but are nevertheless very preoccupied with this question. Ayelet, who was divorced, describes how the question of having children abroad initiated her inquiry into what is home and what she would like to see in an ideal home. It also made her realise the need of a home, which she equates with having children. She describes the importance of a sense of familiarity and support which she needs in order to consider having children:

> Being abroad, the notion of a family was very hard. [] I wanted to do it in a place where I know the culture and I know what I'm looking for and I didn't want my kids to grow elsewhere. So that brought about a lot of feeling of rootlessness, of being away [] It

> initiated a lot of feelings of [] where is home, where should home be, what are we looking for? (Ayelet,6.2.4)

This can be seen as a recipe for inner conflict – she is living and working permanently in the UK, and sees children as an important part of her future and identity as a woman, yet the thought of having children in the UK is threatening. Later in the interview, she describes a dual process of management of this inner conflict. On the one hand she is beginning to doubt her previous certainty – saying that she should not make 'big claims' as this has not proved useful in the past. On the other hand, by reminding herself that at present she is still single and childless, she could allow herself to postpone and perhaps avoid the conflict and the threat, and see the benefits of her life in the UK:

> As long as I'm on my own, I can do whatever I want and it doesn't really matter for anything…Zionism and stuff [] But [] If I have a family, it will be only in Israel I think, you know, I'm not gonna make big claims I have learned that it doesn't work (Ayelet,6.2.15)

In any event, the conflict does not seem to be fully resolved, since even when alone Ayelet experiences a strong and prevailing sense of homelessness.

It seems as if these women develop strong beliefs about where they want to have children, and then change and adjust them in light of their circumstances, in order to resolve the discomfort caused by what seems like a cognitive dissonance, as proposed by Elliot & Devine (1994). For Rachel, this process was even more evident, as she recently decided to try to have a baby, even though she has been delaying this for years as a result of her resistance to having children in the UK. Once more, Rachel describes a process of moving from total certainty to a more powerless position:

> I always said I'm not going to give birth here [] I always wanted to give birth in Israel. I didn't want to be here. That's it. [] {now} I'm in a problem [] So I'm putting the family or the baby issue {on hold} for too much [] I wasn't planning to be here till the age of 30. So because everything changed, I cannot…I'll have no other option but to do it here [] So…by yourself. (Rachel,9.4.27)

Almost confirming Ayelet, Liat and Rachel's fears, those participants who already had children in the UK describe the process of becoming a parent as one of the major triggers for the feeling of psychological homelessness:

> Especially if you bring…bring up children in a foreign country. [] I only started to feel this homelessness, eh [] after my first child was born, em…because then I was…I felt very…very…like very helpless in a way. (Tamar,2.2.2)

> It gets worse. I think when you have the children. (Edna,5.1.4)

The prospect (and reality) of raising children in the UK touches upon many different parts of their identity, sometimes also raising certain conflicts between different identity components. This should be understood within the context of their cultural background, a relatively pro-natal society where having children is perceived as an integral part of womanhood (Azmon & Izraeli, 1993). Their hope to be near the extended family when becoming mothers corresponds to the findings in the literature about the strong links often maintained with extended family in Israel (as asserted by Lavee & Katz, 2003). Coming from this type of society might affect the women's perceptions of themselves as women and as Israelis when considering the prospect of having children abroad. This also highlights the link between psychological homelessness and identity threat, since for these women the identity conflict arising out of the question of having children is an integral part of their sense of psychological homelessness. Indeed, for Tamar, Edna and Sarah, who all became mothers while in the UK, the transition to motherhood can be seen as a profound additional life transition which in itself may have a major impact on identity (as expounded by Smith, 1999).

Being an immigrant

While talking about psychological homelessness, the participants describe many experiences which could broadly be categorised as common immigration experiences and feelings. The literature on the psychological struggles and acculturation stress for immigrants is vast (e.g. see Berry, 2001; Lydon, 2002; Noh & Avison, 1996; Phinney et al., 2001; Yakushko, Watson & Thompson, 2008), and so those common experiences will not be addressed here in detail. Such experiences, reported by these participants include a sense of cultural differences, differences in communication styles, being misunderstood, and language difficulties. All these together create a sense of an unbridgeable gap between the participants and the community of the host country, creating further isolation and alienation. However, it was quite easy for the participants to discuss these experiences, which is illustrated by the numerous quotes relating to the experiences of this cultural gap. It could be hypothesised that this was because distancing themselves from the host society was the least threatening aspect of their current situation, in contrast, for example, to their reservations about their relationship to their Israel identity.

An additional experience reported by the participants is the feeling of being criticised by people and society around them, adding to their general sense of alienation. They perceive British society as largely anti-Israeli, and sometimes anti-Semitic as well. The experience of threat causes some of the participants to feel '*on guard*' and requires them to be '*under defence all the time*' *(Ayelet, 6.1.5).* This experience echoes literature on immigrant groups who have to face the sometimes critical and prejudiced beliefs about them held in the country they arrive at (e.g. see McLaren, 2002). However for the participants in this study the sense of threat from British or 'other' sources is sometimes intertwined with that from those who were

'same', namely society in Israel, creating a seemingly discomforting sense of identity threat which is double-edged.

3.2.3 Theme 3: Attempts at Psychological Management

The participants employ a variety of strategies for alleviating the psychological distress caused by the sometimes overwhelming thoughts and feelings associated with psychological homelessness. To some extent, these management techniques could be seen as 'ways out' – attempts to break the vicious circles that sustain the pain. However, these attempts often only reduce the discomfort for a short period of time. Living with psychological homelessness as an ongoing, constant experience, they often find themselves 'pulled back' into the turmoil. In this section the internal processes of adjustment and management are described first, followed by interpersonal attempts. Implications for counselling psychology will be considered where relevant.

Internal processes

Avoidance and distraction

One of the ways participants choose to manage the experience of psychological homelessness is to avoid directly thinking about it. When commenting on how the interview went for her, Ofra mentions that she found it difficult to reveal and talk about issues that she normally tries to keep out of her awareness. Her account seems to express this well with the word '*cover'*. Her quote reminds us of the value of debriefing because of the hidden and difficult material that may be uncovered:

> You go deep to…to…to where you're trying to…to cover and not really face it, em…my whole body's shaking actually, so, em…it wasn't easy. (Ofra,4.9.1)

Liat expresses her wish to avoid the difficulties raised by psychological homelessness by wanting to run away, to leave everything behind:

> Sometimes I'm thinking, just fuck it, you know, just leave everything. Just leave everything and that's it, you know. (Liat,3.3.20)

This need to escape or avoid directly confronting psychological homelessness is also to some extent fulfilled by some of the participants through their use of various methods of distraction. Travelling to Israel, for example, helps the participants push aside their difficulties in the UK, and may be a search for confirmation or reassurance that Israel was still important to them as 'home'. Ofra and Liat both describe flying frequently; however they both express reservations as to the real usefulness of this technique in managing their sense of psychological homelessness when in the UK:

> I go 5, 6 times a year to back home, em…but still I don't feel at home here. (Ofra,4.2.11)

Ofra claims here that she goes back 'home' to Israel frequently, and at the same time wants to feel at home in the UK (*but still I don't.*…). She somehow hopes her frequent travelling will help her establish a sense of home in the UK; however, it could perhaps have the opposite effect, of keeping alive her Israeli identity, thus maintaining her transitoriness in the UK.

Liat cannot help using the same strategy, but realises that frequent travelling as a way of coping is not practical. The difficulty of this way of escape may pressure her to reach some resolution rather than avoiding the decision:

> I'm going like in…generally like every 2 or 3 months. But I can't live like that anymore. It's a lot of money, a lot of time. My work want to kill me. [] it's not normal. [] So…now I'm like living the real life basically. I need to deal with the situation. (Liat,3.6.11)

The realisation that a final decision is needed, a growing urgency to face the facts and either accept life in the UK as a permanent reality or alternatively leave everything

and return to Israel, is also shared by other participants. Some are aware that a final decision might provide relief and put an end to the continuous uncomfortable wavering. For others, a sense of inevitability that their stay in the UK was probably permanent is reflected in their accounts but they are still resisting fully accepting this, perhaps due to the psychological implications which it would possibly entail.

For example, Tali:

> I just feel like I can't sort of…make any…I can't do things that really require a long term…commitments in one place…and sometimes I really, really wish that I were able to either decide to go back there or to just let go of that idea. []I think it's coming very close to the point where I'll have no choice but to really…really decide to commit myself. (Tali,8.4.4)

Tali's quote here implies that she hopes she could reach a final decision (*I wish I were able)* before circumstances will make the decision for her (*I'll have no choice*). Yet there may be a tone in Tali's words that this is still unreachable. This could possibly show her internal sense of powerlessness, since she is aware that her chances of taking active steps are slipping away, but she is not yet able to decide.

Alternative methods of distraction used by the participants relate to focussing on daily tasks, work, or entertainment. Liat spoke about how the distractions serve to slightly reduce the sense of psychological homelessness, but not remove it entirely:

> When like everything is OK and I go on vacation and you see the luxury things, and like…the good side [] It's {psychological homelessness} down, yeah. But still [] It's always there. (Liat,3.3.2)

This quote could suggest that Liat is attempting to gain something more positive and sustaining beyond mere distraction, which might be termed a weighing of advantages – an appreciation of the possibilities life in the UK offers her. Rachel too makes use of this strategy. Rachel presents her life in the UK as financially secure, and includes material comfort which she acknowledges as an advantage over life in Israel:

> I've got a nice salary. My husband's got a nicer salary. [] I mean, we live very good. [] my life here is simpler, easier, better, financially better. From all those aspects it's nice. (Rachel,9.4.33-4)

It seems that some of the participants seek to focus their attention on the 'here and now', perhaps using that as another way to explain and make meaning of their continuing residence here. By doing this, they seem to be able to shift their focus momentarily from the confusion, doubt, ambivalence and difficult feelings associated with psychological homelessness. However, it seems that these attempts at management are short term solutions which do not provide a full answer, but rather a temporary break, since the thoughts and feelings associated with psychological homelessness persist.

Temporariness and the dream of return

As mentioned earlier the participants feel that being unable to fully commit to their residence in the UK makes their life uncomfortably 'on hold'. But at the same time, it also served as a coping mechanism, since it helped them avoid the psychological consequence of admitting that their stay in the UK was permanent, a threatening prospect for most of them. Rachel describes this:

> This is what [] keeps me going [] I wasn't meant to be here, I'm not staying here, I'm temporary (Rachel,9.4.19)

Tali talks about changing her perspective on her current life story, seeing it as a temporary adventure rather than a more long term plan. This may help her to avoid the uncomfortable reality of considering the permanence of her stay in the UK.

> That sort of brings me back to the life story where what I'm doing now is just a temporary adventure. (Tali,8.5.7)

Together with this sense of emphasising temporariness, the participants also describe dreaming and hoping to one day return to Israel as a way of managing the threatening

possibility of fully settling in the UK. For some, such fantasies could also serve to reduce their feelings of alienation in the UK. For Edna for example, exercising the thought that one day she might return, seems to help her through times of transition in other areas of her life. She describes hoping for return while realising her transition to old age:

> Dreaming about going back. Maybe I do it. I hope I will still do it…because I'm not getting younger. I suddenly look in the mirror and say, who is this woman, it's not me (LAUGHS) (Edna,5.5.2)

Later in the interview, she recalls how during her pregnancy she would dream of tiles, which are the usual floor covering in Israel. For her, tiles could represent her longing for the sense of home and solid ground:

> You know, when I was pregnant, [] I used to dream of tiles. I used to close my eyes and dream of having tiles, not carpet. [] It's funny. [] It's the ground and it's clean. Carpets are never really clean. (Edna,5.5.14)

Edna's use of metaphor here gives a powerful account of her embodied sense of lack of solid and familiar ground, as well as the link of this experience to times of identity challenge such as the transition to motherhood.

Some of the participants, like Tali, Liat and Ofra, are aware of their tendency to dream of returning, yet at the same time acknowledge this is an impossibility. For example, Tali is fully aware of how this serves the purpose of reassuring herself that she is still free and able to make the decision to return, that at some level, even though partly 'make-believe', the control over the decision is still in her hands. When asked what helps with the feeling of psychological homelessness, she replies:

> Making a tentative decision that I would go back to Israel [] if I wake up in the middle of the night thinking, what have I done? You know, I just think, OK [] I'll go back [] deep inside, I know that I'm not gonna wake up the next morning and sort it all out but [] I can sort of imagine… (LAUGHS) imagine myself having really made that decision, that sort of makes it feel…that I can make it (Tali,8.5.6.)

This quote indicates that this way of managing psychological homelessness, similar to other ways discussed here, is not one-tracked, and may have unexpected outcomes. Thoughts of returning do provide the participants with a 'way out', a way of asserting their sense of control. This may be at the cost of idealising Israel in order to fend off their sense of lack of belonging there. On the other hand, they seem to some extent aware that this is only a 'trick', a way of imagining possibilities – a dream of return which never materialises. To some extent the participants here seem to be knowingly creating an illusion, and are aware of the self-deception. This might suggest that the participants are showing high levels of awareness and introspection as well as skill at engaging in these internal processes. It could be suggested that these abilities are an outcome of their persistent turmoil and insecurity. Perhaps psychological homelessness can be seen as a kind of 'hothouse', forcing the participants to repeatedly and somewhat restlessly focus inwards, and so develop awareness of intra-psychic processes.

Along with dreaming of return, the participants also dream of the possibility of maintaining full ties with both the UK and Israel. This can be seen as an attempt to change perspective – instead of focusing on the lack of belonging to the two places, it is a dream of a life in which 'hopping' between them would permit fully belonging in both. As they admit below, this is often not practically possible, bringing them back to the uncomfortable need to fully settle in one place:

> I said to my husband the perfect situation would be live in Israel in…in the winter and come to England in the summer. (LAUGHTER) Eh…but that's not possible. (LAUGHTER) (Ofra,4.2.14)

> I wish I could combine the things that I like here with the things that I like in Israel but unfortunately it's not…it's not, eh…can't happen (LAUGHS) (Tamar,2.2.12)

Both Tamar's and Ofra's accounts are accompanied by laughter, which seems to show they acknowledge the impracticality of such a hope, and the deception involved. Liat is also aware of the need to keep her ties strong in both places, expressing the fear that psychological homelessness will grow if she stops:

> I'm like half here, half there. I'm living in two countries definitely. So I want to know…be involved, be part of [] I'm not gonna be more homeless. If I'm not gonna be part of something, part of…a group…part of…part of people, part of everything…I'm not…I don't belong anywhere! The homeless feeling would be bigger. (Liat,3.9.17)

She expresses the desperate need to '*be part of*', to belong, and her determined attempts to reduce psychological homelessness. In this account Liat, like the others, shows again both dependence and awareness of it. She holds on to a dream of attachment to two places in order to fend off some of the feelings of psychological homelessness, but is able to reflect on herself as she does it. So she too demonstrates high awareness of the processes she employs in her specific attempts at management.

Being aware of process

Ofra offers an insightful perspective on what helps her manage feelings associated with psychological homelessness. She describes her growing awareness of her inner world which helps her cope with the uncertainties of her life:

> It's all coming out now [] I'm aware…really aware of what is going on. [] And that's the one thing that maybe is not hanging, that I'm aware of what's happening to me (Ofra,4.4.11)

> The biggest help is [] being aware of what's going on and trying to make a change, em…what kind of change, I'm not sure yet (Ofra,4.5.3)

Here Ofra recounts how developing higher levels of awareness actually serve as a useful coping mechanism in itself. This is a reminder that the apparent need by the

participants to find meaning, understanding and awareness of what they are going through, is itself an attempt at coping with psychological homelessness.

Redefining concepts

One of the main internal methods that the participants seem to use is a shift in some of the basic concepts which are challenged by the experience of psychological homelessness, in particular the concepts of home, host country (UK), and the Self. By re-evaluating and redefining these concepts the participants were able to reconstruct their relationship with them, and perhaps see new ways of approaching what otherwise felt stuck, confused and ambivalent.

Redefining home

In their constant search for home the participants are often faced with the question of what they actually associate with this term, namely, what they are missing. As described earlier, within the interview the participants present a vague idea of what home means to them. However, when talking about ways of coping with psychological homelessness, some participants spoke about new emerging understandings of the concept of home. Seeking such 'new' meanings in their current life in the UK, may possibly help them to feel more at peace, more settled and a sense of improved well being.

Throughout Ayelet's interview, it is evident that the exploration of the meanings of home interested her, and she is engaged in it intensively. She first describes how the meaning of home is deeply questioned, as if her experiences in the UK changed the meaning of home irreversibly, which seems heavy to bear:

> The sad part is that I think that even if I ever get home eventually [] it will never be getting back home, [] it's never the same, [] It's

> the feeling that there is always gonna be there something…something heavy. (Ayelet,6.5.9)

Being so multifaceted, the concept of home can lend itself to multiple meanings. Ayelet, for example, chooses to bring out the aspect of comfort associated with her new emerging image of home:

> Just…you know, to be where I feel comfortable and where it's good to me (Ayelet, 6.2.23)

Another way to reconstrue the concept of home is to focus on the family home – to see home as the place of the children and husband. For Ofra, who was a mother of two, her way of construing the meaning of home was by seeing her children as her home. She first describes how she sees her children as 'roots' which connect her to the UK. Her account seems to imply that even while stating definitively that she has no roots, she was able to shift slightly, and see her children as her roots:

> [H] yes, I really feel like I don't have any roots. I don't even feel like I have one root, not even one. I set some roots here – my kids. (Ofra,4.8.4)

Soon after, she adds:

> [H] This is my home, my children are my home. [] This is the place I am at now in my life. Will I be able to take my two children, the biggest treasure I have in the world, and build for them the same home in Israel, together with me? And this is my psychological homelessness, the feeling that I don't know if I will manage to do that. (Ofra, 4.8.11)

However Ofra also hurriedly admits that this does not fully help her resolve her sense of psychological homelessness which is still associated with the lack of belonging she feels in Israel. It seems that she is able to describe her home-life in the UK in a positive light, but that this did not necessarily reduce the deep sense of psychological homelessness she is feeling. This implies that perhaps the sense of psychological homelessness is persistent in the background, somewhat below the immediacy of daily life.

Another way to re-evaluate the concept of home is expressed by Ayelet, in what she terms 'the small home'. This is the attention to daily activities, to the here and now, to the physical house in which she lived. Ayelet explains this shift:

> Trying to create my small home rather than the big home in the sense I just make myself comfortable. [] It's not completely logical because part of it is based on the big home and being in the society and the place where I feel home but it's just like I'm going for the more limited option (Ayelet,6.5.4)

This shift to focusing on 'the small home', the centre of daily activities, can be seen as a way of establishing a new relationship with the concept of home. This might minimise the painful feelings associated with the lack of 'big home', allowing for a more localised meaning to emerge and bring satisfaction and well being (Magat,1999). Metaphorically, it may be as if the direct engagement with daily life, the context, expands, and so reduces the internal space taken up by the 'big home'. This could also point to the intuitive understanding of the participants that they can reduce the feelings of psychological homelessness by more immediate engagement with their moment to moment experience, which has been proposed by Brown & Ryan (2003) as generating a sense of belonging and well-being. Counselling psychologists working with this population could also focus on the exploration of new meanings of key concepts, in the attempt to re-evaluate the sense of home and re-focus on the immediate, 'small home'.

Redefining UK

Another concept which is re-evaluated by the participants was that of their host country – Britain. Within the interview, most of the participants point out certain positive aspects of their life in the UK, which upon reflection they realise helped them cope with the feelings of psychological homelessness. Some of the participants report

that they actually enjoyed certain aspects of the alienation the big city provided. (Tamar (2.2.22) claims it means *'no one will interfere with myself'),* or a sense of living in *'the big world'* (Liat, 3.5.2) exposed to other people and cultures. Other participants spoke, for example, about feeling more comfortable with difference and diversity in UK culture (Tali for example discusses this with regards to being single – see page 113). This appeared to somewhat justify their stay in the UK, as well as re-framing their otherwise negative view of their life here. It could perhaps be the starting point for the construction of a new narrative, of an additional identity component, that of life in Britain. It may also have the benefit, as discussed earlier, of direct engagement with the surrounding life, thus contracting the inner space taken up by the issue of 'big home'.

Redefining self and identity

An additional way in which the participants attempted to manage multiple identity conflicts was to re-negotiate their self concept and identity by diverting the focus away from a threatening identity component to one that provides them with more positive distinctiveness and self esteem. For example, they move away from their struggle with their Israeli identity and focus instead on their career. Tamar asserts how much she draws from her career as a teacher:

> So last year was better and this year I'm sure it's going to be even better because the more I'm working, the better I feel (Tamar,2.3.5)

Later she adds:

> I need…really…the {work} for my sanity, for my soul I guess. Food for soul…yeah, totally. (Tamar,2.3.17)

Edna, explicitly discusses how her work and her professional life becomes her home. Using symbolic language, she shows how focusing on her work directly helped her

with the feelings of psychological homelessness, since it enabled her to create a new home and identity regardless of her physical location:

> When I started working here…and I had this desk [] and I said, this is my kingdom, doesn't matter where I am [] If I can…do my things…that's my home. (Edna,5. 7.1)

To conclude the theme 'redefining concepts', there seems to be an active attempt to reconstrue or reframe certain concepts which seem to be strongly linked to the identity challenges they were experiencing and so discover new avenues through which they can perceive and make meaning of their situation. It can be suggested that flexibility at the level of basic concepts might gradually encourage flexibility at the level of identity. This might be important for counselling psychologists to consider when working with such populations. Helping the client examine and re-evaluate certain key concepts, particularly those which have direct relevance to identity components which are important to them can lead to further positive distinctiveness and self esteem. However, it is important to note, that for these participants, tentativeness and ambivalence remained, and the new meanings did not seem to be solid enough in order to make a substantial change in the women's experience of psychological homelessness.

I have to carry on hanging

Another process some of the participants describe when facing the continuous and prevailing nature of psychological homelessness was what might be described as a yielding to reality: 'allowing things to be the way they are', or 'just living with it'. As the extracts below show, the participants seem to develop this way of managing psychological homelessness because they perceive their situation as ongoing and relatively fixed. When asking Ayelet how she coped, she replies:

> In some ways you don't cope. It's just there [] it's part of the sense that it's always there. [] There are great things in England [] But it's just there is a part there that is sad that I don't think I can cope with it. It's just…it's there [] I can't fight it. (Ayelet,6.5.4)

Ayelet's account seems to show that despite the attempt to change the way she feels, and some positivity about life in the UK, some part of her will always stay 'sad'. She relates this to the way psychological homelessness has become part of herself, her concept of who she is:

> You go with this and it's painful and it's sad but it's…it's part of who I am. I mean, it's part of what my life has become because they're my choices and they'll be there forever. (Ayelet,6.9.1).

This could be interpreted as some sort of surrender. However in Ayelet's statement, surrender to an inevitable and persistent condition of life can also be seen as the beginning of a healthy adaptation, and is to some extent, paradoxically an act of taking charge.

Liat shares this need to accept some degree of psychological homelessness. Her account below seems to portray a calculated decision, 'to make the best of it' rather than 'sit at home and cry'.

> You're getting used to it. Like everything, you're getting used to it. You know this is your home, this is your house, this is your life, you need to try to make the best of that. [] I can't just sit at home and cry (Liat,3.6.18)

Liat seems to imply that living and functioning on a daily basis in the UK involves a conscious decision ('to make the best of it') rather than a more passive resignation, and this seems to suggest some level of empowerment rather than helplessness. Soon after, she explains that this 'making the best of things' involves suffering, and that there is a limit, which she can foresee in the future, when this attitude will no longer be a possibility. At that point, a more final action would be necessary, although she does not comment what it would entail:

> It's like there is a level of suffering I can take and when [] I'm gonna like come to that level, I'll say, that's it. In the meantime, it's OK, I can suffer. I can like…I can manage, I can live like that. (Liat,3.6.22).

Sarah shares this feeling, mentioning that *"I knew there was nothing I could do, so you had to … get over the feeling and go on" (Sarah,1.2.4).* All the accounts above seem to suggest a grey area between surrender and regaining control, a boundary between helplessness and empowerment in the face of their life circumstances. Ofra, on the other hand, describes a more active process, in which she attempts to face the issue, to deal with it, which she describes as a positive process, leading her to consider the possibility of being happy and perhaps more settled in the UK:

> At the moment, I must try to deal with it. I am trying to face…face my fears and face my, em…future, em…and face…face life I suppose, em…so I'm trying…I'm trying to deal with…with it and I'm…I'm feeling towards, you know, I'm getting towards the point where I…maybe I will be able to be happy here. (Ofra,4.2.23)

This extract seems to indicate that rather than resignation, Ofra is struggling to make a real change, a positive acceptance of a new set of circumstances. However, this is still partial – it is preceded by her mention that *'I believe I have to carry on hanging' (Ofra, 4.2.19)* which implies that part of her way of 'dealing' with the situation is staying with the 'hanging feeling' rather than reducing or changing it.

The participants here seem to portray psychological homelessness fatefully, as a fixed reality which is not amenable to change, and which they have to learn to live with and accept. Perhaps the participants are somewhere midway on a journey from letting go of the old home, to surrendering into the new. This can be rephrased as a struggle with agency and control over their life, which is discussed in various sections in relation to their identity as wife, woman and mother.

Interpersonal processes

This theme is presented only briefly due to the substantial research already published on the ways in which close relationships can provide an important source of support for immigrants (see e.g. Inclan, 2003). This theme is presented in full in appendix 18.

The participants turned to significant interpersonal relationships for support. Among them were family and friends in Israel, Israeli and non Israeli friends in the UK, and the orthodox community in the UK. These sources of support were mainly within the family and/or the familiar local community, which can be seen as a commonly practiced way of drawing support in other immigrant populations as well, particularly for women (as suggested by Vega, Kolody, Valle & Weir, 1991). Additionally, the participants report that communicating psychological homelessness in both verbal and non verbal ways served as a useful coping method. Some talk about crying as a way of relief (*crying sometimes because…it gives…a bit of relief – Tamar,2.5.3),* while others seem to struggle with explicitly expressing their feelings, finding more indirect ways (such as complaining about small daily life matters). For those, the interview seemed to be somewhat therapeutic, since it served as a platform from which to reflect upon and realise certain aspects of their experience. However, whatever the source, the support drawn was not wholehearted and simple, but conditional, and associated with many ambivalent feelings, creating a more complex picture.

Attempts at management – concluding notes

In this section, various attempts at managing psychological homelessness have been explored. The participants manage to some extent to avoid and push away the painful thoughts and feelings associated with psychological homelessness, for example

through dreaming of home in Israel, while at the same time intending a partial acceptance of things as they are. This is typical of the dilemmas and contradictions the participants find themselves in while attempting to manage their stress. They seem to be shifting between polarities, expressing different sources of ambivalence and wavering. For example, some of the participants focus on material comfort to emphasise positive aspects of their life in the UK, but it could also be seen as a form of denial, partially shifting their awareness from uncomfortable thoughts and feelings. While the participants tend to regard life in the UK as temporary and dream of return, they also engage in their daily life or work as the 'small home' and seek support from family and friends. These uncertainties may encourage a constant thinking about alternative possibilities, and a heightened awareness of their internal processes, reminders of their sense of uprootedness. Furthermore, the participants try to re-evaluate certain concepts and construct new meanings, perhaps as a way to put to rest the ambivalence and inner conflict, caused by the identity challenges present in their life.

However, it seems that these attempts to cope are often only partially successful or very short lived. As will be discussed in the following section, the participants seem to experience psychological homelessness as a never-ending unresolved state which is there to stay, while their attempts at management provide only relief and amelioration. Their accounts seem to suggest a cyclical process, almost like a whirlpool, which repeatedly pulls them back in to the turmoil.

3.2.4 Theme 4: "Things are all the Time not Solved..."

Alongside the participants' descriptions of ways of coping and managing psychological homelessness, the interviews are filled with accounts expressing the ongoing, unresolved and persistent nature of this experience. It is described as a constant presence in their life, a 'background' accompanying everything that they do:

> It's just in the background always for everything that I'm doing, [] it's always there. It's present. (Ayelet,6.4.2)

For Liat, it was an embodied sense, which she shows me where she felt in her body:

> It's always on the back of my mind [] Here. On the back. [Pointing her finger to the back of her head] It's sitting there (Liat,3.3.2)

Tamar, Edna, and Sarah also all share this same feeling. Tali describes how certain situations provoke the feeling, although she also asserts that it stays with her all the time, a source of worry:

> I think I have it all the time and some things…make it…sort of more salient. Yeah. I mean, I do feel that I think about this a lot and it does bother me [] I was thinking about this a lot and worrying about it a lot. (Tali, 8.3.14)

Rachel, on the other hand, who feels very strongly about Israel as a home, uses a metaphor to describe the nature of her experience:

> [H: a wound that is always there, that does not develop a scab]…and this is the sense I've got. I can live here, I can be here, I can do again whatever I want. I'm free, {but} it's there. This is…I think this is, em…the whole sense [] A wound that never heals. Never. (Rachel,9.7.8)

The metaphor of an open wound suggests a sense of continuing trauma and pain for Rachel. It is also an embodied metaphor, a painful experience which cannot be healed, and is felt physically.

4.1 "It will Never be Home, I don't Want it to..."

Given the profound impact the experience of psychological homelessness has on the participants, including the clear negative effect on their psychological wellbeing, as well as their extensive attempts at managing and coping with this experience, it may seem quite surprising that they still hold it as a persistent feeling which is unresolved. The participants, who were living in the UK for many years, are still convinced that they will never be able to change this deep sense, it will stay with them forever. Along with their disconnection from Israel, they express a strong assertion that the UK can never be seen as home either:

> It will never be home. [] it will never be mine (Ayelet,6.1.1)

Sarah also asserts that the UK will never feel like home. In her account, she comments on the embodied experience of home for her, the tastes and smells:

> The day I…will step…in England on [] the ground…and know what it smelt like, and know what it tastes like that would be the day that I feel complete as well in England and I don't think it will ever happen. (Sarah,1.3.8)

Tamar explains how the continuing inability to feel at home in the UK promotes the confusion she feels about where is home for her, and where she belongs:

> It's not clear to you and I think it will never be, em…cos I don't think I will ever feel part of…this place (Tamar,2.6.1)

For Ofra, the realisation that she could never feel at home in the UK, not even in the Jewish community, which she hoped would provide her with a sense of belonging and home, significantly impacts on her well being, and represents a moment of truth, a turning point:

> When I went to…to this party (Jewish) I think this is when I… em…there was a big turnover then for my life. This is when I…felt like I cannot handle it any longer, because I felt like as much as I'm trying here, I still don't feel at home, I still feel hanging, em…and yes I feel it all the time. [] I feel I don't really belong.

> But if I go to a Jewish, em…party or celebration, I also don't feel I belong. So I feel very confused and very lonely. (Ofra,4.3.4)

As well as indicating the disappointment Ofra experiences when coming to realise that one of her attempts at management failed, this account also shows that psychological homelessness is a continuous struggle which persists despite various attempts at change. This quote also depicts Ofra's desperation to feel belonging, part of a community, and at home. When she feels this will not happen, her isolation and confusion seem to be intensified.

One of the ways to throw light on the participants' inability to fulfil their need to feel at home is to look at how they describe their strong resistance to turning the UK into their home. The participants feel the need to assert that they do not wish to settle and see UK as their home:

> So this is not home and it's not mine and I don't want it to become mine. I really…I actually have very strong feelings that I don't want it to ever become really home (Ayelet,6.2.27)

Tamar talks about her resistance to becoming British (even though she admits this is not fully successful), and what that entails in terms of culture and identity.

> I don't want to be British but I am a bit because I'm influenced…by the culture (Tamar,2.4.2)

Edna, on the other hand, expressed deep anger and resentment about the prospect of feeling at home in the UK. She mentions that this would imply a 'betrayal of herself':

> I always resent it. I don't want to belong here. I feel I'm betraying myself. I don't let it go. (Edna,5.1.10)

Edna's account hints at an important psychological process which seems to occur for most of the participants. Acknowledging the permanency of their stay in the UK can be seen as a direct attack on their identity as Israelis. This threat keeps surfacing, for example even in the realization that they have been living in the UK for so many

years. Liat mentions this, explaining that she does not want to invest energy in making her house in the UK into a home, because:

> The more you do it, almost like the more you feel…far away, yeah (Liat,3.3.18).

Rachel explains the threat which is involved in accepting life in the UK as permanent. In the quote below she talks about how she apologetically presents her life to Israelis in Israel as well as to herself, admitting that this is a technique that is protecting her from the possibility of betraying herself, her family and her country:

> It's like you don't want to [] consciously say that you're living…that's it, this is your life. So you…you're making those, you know, statements: no, it's not going to be like that. [] when I come to Israel and everybody…'ah, you're from England' No, no, I'm coming home. [] no, we're not English, we're…we're not Yordim [H:Israeli emigrants]. Just a couple of years and we go home. I mean, it's not…we're not planning to be here or something. Yeah, it's basically to protect myself [] (LAUGHS) this is not home. (Rachel,9.4.19)

Rachel goes on to explain why she resists feeling 'the whole person' in the UK, which implies a threat to identity even at the cost of 'happiness':

> Maybe I'm a little bit afraid [] if I'll be a whole person, that means I'm not going back and I'm happy here and I'm settled here (Rachel,9.7.2)

Soon after, she suggested that making the UK into a home will imply that:

> I'm abandoning Israel, I'm abandoning my family (Rachel, 9.7.8)

These quotes show the extent of the resistance to settling in the UK. In addition, seeing their arrival in the UK as by chance or an unplanned short trip (as mentioned earlier) also adds to their resistance to the permanence of their stay in the UK. Together with this resistance which seems a powerful attempt at protecting their Israeli identity, we have seen that the participants also openly question their Israeli identity, creating opposing and contradicting forces. It seems as if the participants find

themselves trapped in a struggle on many levels of identity, with limited possibilities of exit.

4.2 Feeling Trapped, Unable to Move

Some of the participants are able to express the aforementioned sense of being stuck or trapped in a situation with no visible way out. This is a very difficult realisation for them, endorsing the feelings of hopelessness and low mood. Sarah expresses this, showing some degree of resignation:

> Where I am now, it's even taking away the choice. [] now I don't have a choice, even thinking about going to live there which was, for a long time, an option…It stopped being an option [] its too late, I have no choice (Sarah,1.6.1)

Liat explains that she feels trapped between two impossible options, each requiring a huge sacrifice for her:

> It could be two things. I'll get used to it and I will forget that. Just gonna get used to that because this is my life and I will accept it as it is. Or I am just going to say that's it, I've suffered enough [] it can attack me anytime. [] and then that's it. (Liat,3.6.22)

For Liat accepting things as they are involves an inherent suffering. At the same time, leaving the UK and her life here would mean leaving her marriage, which would be a huge sacrifice. She describes herself as at mercy of this urge to leave, an urge which she can suddenly act upon with little control ('it can attack me anytime').

Ayelet explains that she also feels trapped, since psychological homelessness will accompany whatever she does. She uses the metaphor of stones to describe the heaviness which is associated with psychological homelessness:

> It's gonna be there whatever I do because if I choose to go back to Israel, there is always gonna be this little stone about the choice that I made, especially if things are going…going to go in Israel as bad as they currently are. [] But if I stay here, there is gonna be a different stone of why I'm not back there (Ayelet,6.5.11)

This quote expresses one of the core features of the participants' experience of psychological homelessness, in which both options of home (Israel and UK) are accompanied by many reservations and confusion as to their ability to 'qualify' as the perfect, longed for home.

An exploration into the participants' definitions of psychological homelessness reveals that this experience is central to their psychological well being, influencing many aspects of their life, and lodging as a persistent presence in their awareness. This generates a significant hindrance to actively changing the situation, such as home-making in the UK, thus maintaining it as open and unresolved. The implications of this to their internal processes of identity can be profound, as their attempts at management of this experience become an ongoing struggle. As described by Sarah:

> Things are all the time not…all the time…not solved [] so it's something that, you know, it's just going to go on forever (Sarah,1.6.1)

To summarise, the participants' accounts show psychological homelessness to be pervasive, continuous and directly linked to multiple identity processes which are fundamental. This supports the literature on identity conflict, showing it to be persistent and difficult to manage (Vignoles et al., 2006). Ofra's description below stresses the all-encompassing nature of her feelings of psychological homelessness, touching many aspects of her life and creating for her an image of her life as being 'a mess'. It creates a sense of loss of direction, like a person standing in a maze and unsure where to turn:

> At the moment, my life is completely a mess, em (PAUSE) em…I'm not sure how I can, em…how I can change it [] I don't meet hardly any people at all [] I've lost confidence. [] so I don't know where I'm taking myself over here to be honest.(Ofra,4.4.2)

Chapter 4

Discussion

The content of this chapter is structured as follows: It starts with an overview of the analysis presenting a tentative model of the super-ordinate themes and how they relate to each other, creating a 'bird's eye view' of the participants' experience as it has emerged through the analysis. Then some transferability issues are raised, which the reader should bear in mind when considering the significance of this research. The next section describes the contributions of this research to the field of counselling psychology in terms of theory, research and practice. Finally, some areas for future research are highlighted, and some concluding notes and reflections presented.

4.1 Overview of the Analysis

In the attempt to understand what psychological homelessness means to them, the participants engage in a process of reflection and self exploration, touching upon many aspects of their lives. The analysis endeavoured to capture this exploration and bring it to light. See appendix 19 for a graphic depiction of the thematic model.

The analysis seems to reveal an interesting, somewhat cyclical process which the participants went through. Most of the participants describe their arrival in the UK in terms of a sense of elation and curiosity for the new place and the new opportunity – a 'honeymoon' period during which their identity did not yet seem challenged by the move to the new country. After living in the UK for a while, when they seemed to have reached a (painful) understanding that they were not going to return to Israel in the foreseeable future, various identity components started to be questioned, and the experience of psychological homelessness started to emerge.

They describe life in the UK at that stage as challenging, and a sense of alienation and lack of belonging rising to the forefront of their awareness. At the same time, doubts about their Israeli identity and their sense of belonging to Israel also seem to emerge, creating a strong internal threat due to the importance, salience and core nature of this identity. This possibly means that in their search for a place to call home, they were faced with negative and confusing feelings about both the UK and Israel. Psychological homelessness, being a strong and pervasive experience, which at the same time appears somewhat elusive and confusing, necessitates exploration and understanding. This possibly leads the participants to focus on the meanings and definitions that home holds for them, as well as to question why this experience occurs and how it manifests in their daily life.

In their attempts to make meaning of, and explain this experience, the participants use metaphors of hanging, wavering, hovering above a stage, and not belonging in either place (see appendix 23). Psychological homelessness, from this perspective, seems to imply a lack of solid ground, an internal sense of no home, no roots, and no place to settle and feel secure, even when physically they have been living in the UK (and often in the same house) for many years.

In addition, the question of choice and control over the decision to leave Israel seems to be an important factor in the way they colour their interpretation of their situation. They all report that they did not fully and independently choose to stay in the UK, but rather were passively 'placed' in this situation by circumstances, eliciting a sense of helplessness and lack of control. This helplessness is amplified when it dawns on them that their stay is more permanent than they assumed – an understanding which held many implications for their identity. In some cases the husband played an important role in the decision to stay in the UK. This means that

the relationship between their identity as wives and their identity as immigrants is brought to the surface, impacting on the development of their sense of psychological homelessness.

Transitions such as marriage and motherhood seem to add to an uncomfortable sense of a constantly changing self and a dynamic tension between different identity components. For example, some of the participants seem to prioritise one identity component, such as their identity as wife and relationship with husband, as a way of managing the psychological pain involved in the threat of another identity component, such as their identity as Israelis.

In this sense, psychological homelessness challenges many different core identities, creating a sort of 'vague cloud' of uneasiness, confusion, and internal threat, which is managed by negotiating and shifting between different identity components within the self.

The experience of psychological homelessness seems to have a profound impact on the participants' lives. For a start, it seems to bring with it significant psychological distress, both in terms of intra-psychic and interpersonal processes. The participants express feelings of low mood, anxiety, worry and loneliness. They report a sense of loss of self and identity, as well as a feeling that life is 'on hold'. They seem unable and unwilling to proactively invest or anchor themselves in their life in the UK. They describe feeling relatively socially isolated, lonely, and ambivalent about building relationships with Israelis, British Jews, and local neighbours.

In addition, psychological homelessness appears to be a state of conflict with, and threat to, multiple components of the self, engendering fundamental self-doubt and a deep lack of positive distinctiveness and self-worth. In particular, this study found that psychological homelessness has a significant impact on the participants'

identities as Israeli, as Jewish, as mothers, as immigrants and as women. But at the same time, the fragility of these identity components amplifies psychological homelessness, creating a cyclical process which serves to maintain the status quo and makes change more difficult.

One marked consequence of this challenge to multiple identity components is a sense of confusion, ambivalence and doubt. These feelings of shakiness are expressed by the participants not only explicitly but also in their manner of speech within the interview itself, particularly in the difficulty of articulating some of their feelings. They describe conflicting feelings and notions about significant relationships, events and experiences in their life. This possibly suggests that one of the key components of psychological homelessness is this lack of a 'solid ground', both caused by and a consequence of the participants holding ambivalent, conflicting and opposing feelings for long periods of time.

On the interpersonal level, the participants describe complex feelings towards most of the close people surrounding them. Those who were partnered often express mixed feelings of anger and resentment, alongside closeness towards their husband/partner. They describe their family in Israel as supportive but also critical of their move to the UK, and their friends in Israel as close, but similarly critical and 'drifting away', busy with their own life. The participants also describe mixed feelings about their relationships within the UK, particularly with the Israeli community. They mention a sense of push/pull: on the one hand they have a longing for the cultural familiarity which other Israelis can offer, but on the other hand associating with other Israelis serves as a painful reflection of their own situation. Friendships with other communities (such as British Jews, other foreigners, neighbours etc), also seem like a struggle.

The participants use different ways in their attempts to manage this all-encompassing experience, both in terms of intra-psychic as well as interpersonal processes.

On the intra-psychic level, the strategy that the participants seem to find somewhat useful is a redefinition of the concepts which lie at the core of their identity struggle – home, self and life in the UK. This possibly implies a shift in the way they make meaning of certain important elements of their experience, which then creates the ground and possibility of a shift in their identity.

This could be seen as an attempt to generate positive distinctiveness and self esteem by changing the meaning attached to certain identities. However, the attempt is only partially successful, and is described with much tentativeness and doubt. In fact, many of the attempts at management of psychological homelessness seem to be somewhat circular, bringing the participants back into a loop of uncertainty.

One good example of such a loop, is the participants' perception that their stay in the UK is somewhat accidental, lacking conscious choice. For obvious reasons this creates a sense of loss of control and helplessness. Yet if they were to take full 'responsibility' over this choice it would create even more of an inner conflict, since this would challenge their sense of Israel as an ideal home. This means that the issue of control over their stay in UK serves both as a consequence and as a sort of management process of psychological homelessness.

Other attempts at management are avoidance and distraction, which the participants report as providing only very temporary relief, as psychological homelessness constantly resurfaced into their awareness.

Overall, the participants describe psychological homelessness as an ever-present awareness 'in the back of their mind'. In some cases this seems to serve as a

sort of coping mechanism, since it heightens their awareness to internal processes and leads them to further explore and understand their experience. But at the same time it appears to be a frustrating and almost compulsive search for clarity which some of the time produces more confusion and ambivalence. They seem to be preoccupied with trying to give meaning to and make sense of their confusing feelings, which in turn serves as a painful reminder of their identity conflicts. They cannot immerse themselves in daily life in the UK, but rather choose a more 'removed' position. This also creates multiple levels of disparity – between beliefs and practical life decisions, between perceptions of the self and actual outcomes, and between conflicting feelings. An additional management strategy used by the participants is to give up the struggle and yield to the sense of psychological homelessness, accepting it as a constant and continuous feeling. Those who experience this acquiescence do not see the possibility of change, but rather see psychological homelessness as an inevitable presence in their life, which they cannot and would not fight. It leads to a sense of being stuck: there is little indication of a shift or movement out of their sense of psychological homelessness, even though it is described as a distressing and unsettling feeling.

To summarise, the participants seem to never fully leave and never fully arrive. At the same time, they express resistance to resolving this sense of the 'carpet being pulled under their feet' since fully settling in the UK would threaten some of their core concepts of their self and identity. At the same time, they struggle, and largely fail, to use their Israeli identity and their belonging to Israel as an 'anchor' from which they can draw positive distinctiveness and self esteem, since this identity is also challenged. This means that they have become dependent on a painful

transitoriness and pulled into what seems like a constant and pervasive 'whirlpool' which they see as their psychological homelessness.

4.2 Transferability – Issues to Consider

4.2.1 Quality Markers

This research project aimed to follow the principles of 'good practice' in conducting qualitative research set by Elliott, Fischer & Rennie (1999). These, according to Lyons (2007), can be conceptualised as **rigour and quality** as well as **usefulness** of the research. Some of these criteria were addressed earlier in the Method chapter. However, a number of additional issues should be considered here.

When evaluating validity and reliability, some attention should be given to the ways in which these concepts are understood differently in qualitative research. Madill, Jordan & Shirley (2000) claim that reliability in qualitative research should be understood in the context of the epistemological standpoint taken within particular research projects. The epistemological standpoint here (see Method chapter) implies that there is no attempt to achieve reliability in the positivist sense, but rather that 'diverse perspectives can provide a fuller understanding of social psychological phenomena' (Madill et al., p.17). Madill et al. (2000) also claim it is important that the epistemological position is clear and the research is conducted in a way which is consistent with that epistemology. I tried to convey my epistemological standpoint in the Introduction and Method chapters, and I hope I was able to demonstrate transparency about the relationship to the material, as well as grounding the analysis in participants' accounts, thus aiming to achieve quality and rigour.

The process of reflection and clarification throughout the research helped to uncover the various assumptions and perspectives which I brought to the research on

theoretical, methodological and personal levels. As discussed in the Method, my personal background served as an unavoidable 'filter' through which I received and interpreted the participants' material. Awareness of this dynamic tension between trying to bracket my experience and at the same time acknowledging my perspective, together with the ways in which the research influenced me as a researcher, opened many new learning opportunities for me. It also helped me discover new meanings within the participant's accounts. It became clear that my growing appreciation of these women and their individual stories helped me to see empathetically their level of 'stuckness' and suffering.

Acknowledging my position and assumptions as a practicing counselling psychologist also helped me to understand the ways in which I perhaps paid more attention to certain aspects of the interviews and the material and less to others. Constantly reflecting on the research process helped me achieve this (see excerpts of research log in appendix 22).

By providing short case descriptions (see appendix 8) as well as basic biographical details my intention was to situate the sample, in order to allow the reader to place the analysis in the context of the participants' personal stories, as well as allow the reader to 'conceptualize possible alternative meanings' (Elliott et al., 1999, p.228).

Using many quotes throughout the analysis is intended to ground my analysis in concrete examples. This is also to allow the reader to judge the appropriateness and trustworthiness of my interpretations of the data, and to allow alternative understandings and interpretations.

Credibility checks, in the form of cross reading, have been discussed in the Method chapter (see appendix 21).

My aim is to present a coherent story of the participants by connecting the themes to each other and presenting a narrative within the analysis, as well as in the 'overview' section earlier, so that the reader can gain some insight into the participants' stories and their unique relationship to psychological homelessness, as I tentatively interpreted it.

4.2.2 Limitations / Challenges

In this section some issues will be presented, which need to be taken into account while evaluating this research project. Insofar as this research is a process rather than an 'end result' and does not seek to confirm or refute an a-priori theory, these issues can be seen as challenges which have a potential impact on the transferability and robustness of the research process, rather than purely as 'limitations' which obstruct empirical proof of prior hypotheses.

4.2.2.1 Methodological Challenges

The use of IPA is not without its limitations. Some researchers have claimed that IPA is too dependent on language, thus requiring highly articulate participants who are able to communicate the meaning they make of their experiences (Willig, 2001). With regard to this research, it could be that the choice to conduct the interviews in a language which is not the participants' mother tongue could have restricted their ability to fully and freely express themselves. As explained in the Method chapter, this decision was made for a number of reasons, and in any event the material which emerged is still significantly rich. Indeed, this research project could be seen as an exploration of how IPA could potentially yield interesting material even with more limited language abilities (for an interesting review on this matter see Lloyd, Gatherer

& Kalsy, 2006). Moreover, one aim of this research was to utilise the emphasis on language within IPA rather than diminish it. Within the analysis, careful attention was given to expressions, metaphors and ways of communicating experience. This in my opinion brought forth interesting insights about the explored phenomenon.

An additional concern raised about IPA is that it tends to be over-focused on cognition (Willig, 2001). It is claimed that the focus on meaning, thought processes and how the participants understand their experience gives less room for the embodiment of the experience, the ways in which it is implicitly felt in a direct, pre-reflective way (Willig, 2008). However, IPA researchers acknowledge that direct access to these levels is practically impossible, as we can not fully access an individual's experience without the filter of his cognition and expression. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) claim that the degree of phenomenological enquiry within IPA includes many different levels of reflexivity, including the 'pre-reflective reflexivity' (p.189), thus implying that every experience includes some basic level of awareness or reflexivity. However careful attention should indeed be paid to the pre-reflective experiences within interviews, not just to the 'deliberate, controlled reflection' (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.189). This is attempted here by giving voice and importance to any expression of embodiment, feeling, and undefined pre-reflective processes, and by paying close attention to metaphoric and non verbal expressions which are taken into account and analysed alongside the verbal material. See the Method chapter for a discussion on the tensions between the 'need to define/explain' and the 'need to express/feel' which is reflected both by the participants and within my encounter with the material. It should be added here that initially it was assumed that the subject matter would be significantly 'cognitive' since the research set out to explore the meanings attached to a concept. However,

during the process of data gathering, it emerged that this was not the case, and the experience described was one that touched all aspects of the self and was in fact very much ‘felt’ rather than just ‘considered’.

An additional methodological challenge relates to the process of analysis. IPA does not provide clear guidelines on ways of moving from the theme stage to the overall picture (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006). Within this study I try to develop some understanding of how themes relate to each other to create a certain model of the participants’ story. This might be viewed as partly contracting a complex and multifaceted experience into the boundaries of a theoretical model; possibly a slight diversion from the IPA standpoint, perhaps shifting to a more Grounded Theory perspective. The tensions between GT and IPA within this project were discussed in the Method chapter. However, I would like to add here that an attempt is made to present a model which allowed for wide variations and revealed the circularity, uncertainty and ambivalent nature of this experience as it is described by the participants.

4.2.2.2 Procedural challenges

The two main issues to consider in terms of the methodological procedures within this research are recruitment and language.

It could be argued that the recruitment was too focused on the Jewish Israeli community. Further effort to reach Israelis who do not have any contact with other Israelis could have brought up alternative issues and give voice to those who completely rejected their Israeli identity. This could have been done by further investing in advertising in non-Israeli parts of London and the UK. This was attempted to a certain extent, but there was a notable lack of response in those

avenues. Choosing to present the advert in English and Hebrew could have also impacted on the characteristics of the responders.

In addition, due to accessibility constraints I recruited mostly in urban settings. A more extended recruitment process (to rural areas as well) could possibly have allowed for additional perspectives to emerge.

An additional limitation lies in the choice of language (beyond the methodological challenge discussed earlier). Constructivist approaches see language as constructing rather than describing reality. This means that the transcript could be regarded mostly as a reflection of that particular encounter between researcher and participant and of the ways in which the participant talks about the experience (and to some degree also creates or shapes it) rather than the experience itself (Willig, 2001). Other forms of gathering data could have enhanced trustworthiness, such as using diaries, or gathering data from more than one point in time, creating a more complex picture of the experience and the participant's process with it. All these concerns are particularly relevant in this research due to the interviews being conducted in English.

As described in the Method chapter, the choice was made mainly in order to minimise 'sameness' between myself and the participants, to enhance transparency for the English speaking reader, and to stay as close as possible to the participants' words rather than risking that the essence of their experience would be lost in translation. It could be that the participants would have been able to describe their experience more freely in their mother tongue. However, reflecting on the interview process, it seems that the participants were in fact able to discuss uncomfortable feelings in English, such as their difficult relationship with their Israeli identity. As can be seen in the short analysis of the Hebrew sections (see appendix 20), speaking

in Hebrew allowed some of the participants to 'relax' slightly more but did not seem qualitatively different in terms of the content.

An additional potential limitation concerns the presentation of the concept of psychological homelessness to the participants, even in the advertisements. It could be that the fact that the concept was introduced to the participants provided them with a way to organise chaotic thoughts and feelings, which otherwise could have been formulated differently, or remain vague. This raises the question whether this concept was in some way imposed on them rather than coming from them. However, I felt that the women were in desperate need for definition or explanation for their experience, and the introduction of the concept of psychological homelessness provided them with a valuable therapeutic tool to manage their struggle, as well as an intellectual tool to articulate their attitudes.

When reflecting on the experience of psychological homelessness, a wide variety of definitions and meanings were raised for each participant, reflecting their unique construction of identity and personal history. This raises the question whether the large number of participants reduced in some way the richness of the material gathered and analysed for each one. The developers of IPA have recently supported IPA research in the form of idiographic case studies (Smith, 2004), and this could have allowed for a deeper exploration of psychological homelessness as it is presented by one person. The richness of the interviews, such as the one conducted with Ayelet, raises the possibility that an in depth case study would yield deeper understanding of the phenomenon, perhaps allowing for more clarity in places which were expressed with much confusion and contradiction.

An additional limitation concerns the data gathering. The interview schedule and questionnaire were developed early on in the research process and, upon

reflection, could have been designed in a more open and participant-led way (see research log in appendix 22 for further discussion).

4.2.3 Personal and Epistemological Reflexivity

The women in this study seem to be engaged in a process of meaning making, which, as they report, was greatly enhanced by the research interview itself. This could be seen as a further justification for the use of a qualitative interview-based method as well as for the choice of IPA, which allows the participants to make sense of their life-world (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Reflecting on the epistemological standpoint taken in this project, I realise that just as the participants were describing different directions and contradictions, the project itself also held a certain tension between different locations on a number of epistemological 'scales'. There exists a tension between interpretation and description; between a drive to theoretical explanations, definitions and meaning making, and a need to stay close to the participant's raw experience; and between the motivations to explore and the motivations to provide some psychological help. This could reflect the tension within IPA itself between description and interpretation and the need to stay as close as possible to the phenomena yet at the same time acknowledge and even appreciate the interpretative efforts of the participant and the researcher (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006).

Reflecting on the research process, I am aware that I was in some sense pulled back and forth between the defined and theoretical, and the experiential and abstract. This movement between polarities was also expressed by the participants, and one way of managing it was sometimes by the use of definite language for very undefined and vague feelings. In some way the process of research led me to do the same, the

result being perhaps sometimes closer to a Grounded Theory project than to a purely phenomenological one.

This also relates to my position as counselling psychologist, which I acknowledge as influencing my research. I realise that sometimes my 'need to explain', as a therapist, rather than just acknowledge the undefined 'soup' the participants were floundering in, could have influenced my methodological as well as epistemological position throughout the research process.

In this sense, I believe this project might reflect a position of epistemological and methodological pluralism held by some counselling psychologists. This is due to our place as scientist-practitioners who constantly need to be aware and accept the diversity and complexity of human experience, with its contradictions and uncertainties, as it is presented in the therapeutic setting (Rafalin, 2010). As Rafalin (2010) asserts, the appreciation of difference and diversity can be a position which guides and illuminates research activity as well as practice. This research project should be seen as a possible example of such complexity, since in some ways it raises more questions than provides definite answers, and it also brings forward the complexity of the relationship between researcher and participants (as will be discussed later).

Upon reflection, I realise that initially my research question aimed to explore psychological homelessness as a separate phenomenon. However, during the process of analysis it emerged that for the participants the experience of psychological homelessness has a much wider meaning, involving many aspects of their life and identity struggles. This understanding led me to let go of the expectation that psychological homelessness is a solid, separate and well-defined concept. Rather, after the analysis process I now see it more as a psychological process which is

pervasive yet elusive, all encompassing yet difficult to isolate. It is also very useful to the participants to help organize their experience around and give it meaning. At the same time, the research process did reveal that this is a distinct phenomenon, which many people could relate to. Being aware of this tension was a significant learning process for me, influencing my personal and professional development.

On a more personal level, I feel that the unfolding research process somewhat mirrored my own personal journey in the years of conducting it. During this time I went through many transitions and movements of personal development – establishing my professional identity, becoming a mother, and towards the end of the project moving to live in Israel. All these transitions brought me to question and re-evaluate many of my own identity components, resulting in a parallel process for me of awareness to the complexity and ambivalence involved in identity challenges. This could have encouraged the need for definition and theoretical explanation, as described earlier and in the Method chapter.

4.3 Significant Findings and Contributions to the Field

Having considered the aforementioned challenges to transferability and the various constraints which could have influenced the robustness of the study, I would like to present here some areas in which I believe this research project serves as a valuable contribution to the field of psychology in general and counselling psychology in particular. The current project is in many ways an exploration of a novel concept in an under-researched population and thus can add to the current theoretical debate about identity, immigration, home and their relationship to psychological wellbeing. In this section, I would like to present ways in which the analysis and results relate to

existing literature, as well as discuss significant findings which add to theory, research and practice.

4.3.1 Theory

4.3.1.1 Theories of Identity

This research project provides additional support to the body of knowledge which reveals identity to be a multi-faceted and fluid internal process which changes according to circumstance (Ethier, & Deaux, 1994). It also promotes the idea that different identity conflicts within the individual can influence each other and interact in a dynamic way, resulting, possibly, in a general sense of doubt within the self. Different identity components are shown to be strongly linked and in constant interaction and influence with each other, rather than insulated (Howard, 2000). This implies that when one identity component is challenged in some way, it unravels other components, and individuals start questioning many 'givens' about their life, such as what and where is home, what are their basic needs and hopes for themselves, and how they approach important relationships in their life such as those with partner and close family.

The findings suggest that the internal relationship between various identity components is much more complex than perhaps originally thought. Threats to one identity can sometimes fuel threats to other identities, or alternatively threats to one component serve almost as a solace or escape from more painful threats to other components. This implies that the emerging salience of one identity component over another within the changing kaleidoscope of internal identity processes could be intentional, purposeful and meaningful, dependant on an internal negotiation rather than being completely dependant on external contextual changes.

In addition, identity processes have been shown in the literature to be dynamic, and this research highlights the further possibility of identity struggles being maintained over long periods of time, with the participants living in a state of transition and fluidity of identity without necessarily reaching any clear resolution. They may stay in a shifting, transient state, bringing with it the unsettling feeling of psychological homelessness.

To a certain extent, this research establishes the strong link between the processes of identity and the feelings of home and belonging, since for some of the participants, the more time they spend feeling the struggle of identity, the more they feel a sense of lack of home (Wardhaugh, 1999). According to a recent study the relationship between identity and belonging is less straightforward than originally thought, since sometimes the ability to maintain a strong original identity can allow the immigrant to paradoxically feel more belonging and at home in the host country (Valentine, Sporton & Nielsen, 2009). The participants here seem to indicate that when both their original Israeli identity and their identity as British are in some way threatened, the sense of belonging and home is also fundamentally questioned.

The research on the management of threats to identity is extensive and tends to show that such threats are dealt with by intra-psychic, interpersonal and intergroup management techniques (Breakwell, 1986). However, there has been little research linking identity threats to ambivalence and internal discord, with the apparent push/pull of identity components against each other.

It has been suggested that one of the ways to cope with threats to identity is by changing self-categorisation, establishing a less threatening category in order to cope with the psychological effects of the threat (McFadyen, 1995). This was confirmed in this research by the participants' attempts to redefine concepts and important identity

components, such as the concept of home, or prioritising a more positive identity, such as professional identity. A re-construal or re-framing of certain aspects of experience when faced with a threat to identity has been documented by Breakwell as a common way of managing such threats (Breakwell, 1986). It seems that the participants here are struggling with the re-construal of certain identity components (such as their Israeli identity) because of the significant value these components hold for them.

National identity has been treated by the literature as outside the potential for manipulation as it is more constant and strong, so that even when threatened this identity maintains its core status (De Cillia, Reisigl, & Wodak, 1999). The experiences reported here by the participants question this view, since for them, despite its importance and value, national identity seems much more fluid, doubted and re-evaluated according to circumstances, even within the course of one interview. Emerging current literature on globalisation expresses a trend towards a less solid national identity (see e.g. Arnet, 2002), and this research can be seen as confirming this literature. However, the participants here are unusual in the degree of threat and internal discomfort this identity process causes them.

In addition, this research could be seen as contributing to the understanding that national identity is not only more dynamic and fluid than perhaps originally thought, but is also in continuous interaction with other identity components – it is influenced as well as influencing other parts of the self-concept. While being a very important identity component, it is evaluated in relation to other important identities, such as that of wife or mother. This means that, as suggested by Lyons (1996), the principles of IPT which are applied to individual personal identity, can also be applied to social identities such as our national identity.

Easthope (2009) recently proposed that mobility and place are key factors in the understanding of identity construction. Because of this, she argues, research into the experience of immigrants can be a useful vehicle to understand processes of identity. This research can be seen as a contribution to this endeavour, since it draws understandings about identity through the exploration of the participants' relationship to mobility and movement one the one hand, and place and home on the other.

4.3.1.2 Psychology of Immigration

This research supports recent theoretical understandings which see immigration as a dynamic process which should be viewed within the contexts of age, gender, culture, religion, social context, family and historical background (Poulsen, et al., 2005). The complex interplay between developmental stage of the immigrant, issues of choice and control over immigration, social network and emotional investment in both original and host culture all influence the immigration experience and the acculturation process (Poulsen, et al.., 2005). The current debate over the multiple ties immigrants maintain with more than one place (defined as transnationalism) receives attention here, in particular the phenomenological dimensions of this experience. However, the findings reveal that alongside the multiple opportunities which transnational ties may provide for the individual (as asserted by Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007), this may also involve a certain psychological cost when considering the doubts and uncertainties about where is home.

Similar to some other immigrant groups, the participants find it difficult to acculturate to the British culture and identity, creating a sense of lack of belonging to their host country. This experience, as well as its psychological impact, has been documented by numerous researchers (see e.g. Aroian & Norris, 2002; Hagerty &

Williams, 1999; Watts & Badger, 2009). However, for the participants in this study, the lack of belonging in the UK, as well as the inability to fully integrate, was actively maintained even many years after emigration, creating a constant and ongoing rootlessness. A unique aspect of their resistance to develop a sense of belonging, is that it is due to the meaning attached to adopting such an identity – thus complicating even further the acculturation process. This is coupled with ambivalent feelings of belonging to the country of origin, thus leaving the individual with a sense of psychological homelessness.

Overall, the phenomenological perspective taken in this research adds to the body of knowledge exploring the immigration experience from a subjective perspective (See e.g. Coker, 2004, Poulsen et al., 2005). However, this research goes beyond this. Its contribution is its focus on identity, belonging and home within the immigration experience. This research shows that we cannot take for granted labels such as 'immigrant' or simplistic self-categorisations of individuals who move countries, and instead appreciate the complex nature of this experience as it emerges on the individual phenomenological level.

4.3.1.3 Israeli Emigration

This research supports the research on Israelis residing abroad that shows many of them to be very ambivalent about creating ties, loyalties and a sense of belonging to the countries they emigrate to (Linn & Barkan-Ascher, 1996). They tend to view their emigration through the lens of Zionism, thus often feeling guilty for having left Israel, and expressing the wish to return there one day (Gold & Hart, 2009). This often creates a sense of temporariness, 'living out of suitcases', which has been reported in the literature (Cohen & Gold, 1997) and was confirmed in this research too. It also

corresponds to studies showing the discomfort reported by Israelis in stepping away from a society that amplifies and encourages strong ties to family and country (Lavee & Katz, 2003).

Nevertheless, most of the literature describes the image of Israel and the Israeli identity held by emigrants as a strong 'anchor' which is largely unquestioned. The research presented here explored a group who, together with their resistance to creating ties with their country of residence, feel ambivalence and uncertainty about their relationship with Israel and their Israeli identity. The implications of this for the individual (such as the level of involvement with the Israeli community abroad) can be serious: a strong sense of alienation, lack of social support and internal threat.

It has been reported by Gold (2001) as well as by other sociological researchers, that Israelis abroad sometimes struggle to fully identify with other Israeli emigrants, thus resisting the permanency of their own immigration and the label of '*yordim'* (those who descend, go down). Here, the psychological perspective taken explores what this means in terms of identity processes, experience, and psychological wellbeing.

In addition, the unique focus here on the experience of Israeli emigrant women in particular explores how the identity challenge of immigration relates to other identity processes for women. In this respect, the research echoes sociological findings showing Israeli women to be caught between opposing ideologies in terms of their roles and meanings attached to gender identity (see e.g. Herzog, 2004, Moore, 2000, Hazelton, 1977). The women in this study express relatively traditional beliefs on home-making alongside questions and uncertainties about where home should be, what actually constitutes home and how much they really want to invest in creating a home for husband and children. The fact that most of the women followed their

husband to the UK or stayed due to their husband's job opportunities raises questions about their perceptions of issues of agency and control. This echoes current research on gender identity and womanhood within the immigration context, highlighting the question of agency as a focal point in the understanding of women immigrants' experience (see e.g. Espin, 1987, 1999).

4.3.1.4 Home and Psychological Homelessness

This research explores the novel construct of psychological homelessness that has not been previously clearly defined or thoroughly investigated. It shows this concept to be a valid and important one which captures the participants' experience, and gives it voice and meaning. Faced with a broad range of psychological challenges, the participants use this concept to make connections between different and diffused areas of difficulty and make sense of their distress and confusions regarding different identity components. It proved to be important and relevant to them as a way of giving meaning to significant processes occurring both on intra-psychic as well as interpersonal levels in terms of identity and self definition. The research shows that providing internal construal and meaning to an otherwise ambiguous yet overwhelming experience can serve as an important coping mechanism when faced with ambivalence and doubt (Gustafsson, Persson & Amilon, 2002). For this reason, the attempt here was not to establish a list of 'symptoms' which are evident in a person experiencing psychological homelessness, but rather to offer a tentative potentially useful framework.

Psychological homelessness is proposed in this research as a deep sense of lack of belonging and rootlessness. Research has shown that these experiences can cause continuous worry and anxiety, since the individual lacks the security of a

perceived home, or ‘base’, and attachment (Riggs & Coyle, 2002). Riggs & Coyle conducted their phenomenological research on homeless youth lacking a physical home. Similarities between the findings here and their research, in terms of the psychological impact on the individual, serve as a further justification for the use of the term psychological homelessness, since the participants here are describing an experience which is almost parallel to being physically homeless.

Thus this research throws light on the powerful psychological impact of being trapped in a sort of loop – a state of constant focus on the unfulfilled dream or fantasy of home, which is unattainable in reality, since both country of origin and current residence cannot serve or fulfil this expectation. Rather than focusing on the ‘here and now’ – the physical home, daily life and surrounding community - many of the participants choose to focus inwards and seek the unattainable symbolic home. This means that the physical home becomes almost like a ‘stop on the journey’, a temporary pause warranting minimal investment, thus sustaining the state of transitoriness. Brah (1996) captures this shift between symbolic home and real home for diasporic communities: ‘where is home? On the one hand, "home" is a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination. In this sense, it is a place of no return [] On the other hand home is also the lived experience of a locality’ (p.192). For the participants in this study, both these meanings of home are uncomfortable, uncertain and problematic, thus creating psychological homelessness.

This research may contribute significantly to the psychological investigation of the concept of home, which so far is regarded as an important yet vague and multifaceted concept with many various levels of meaning (Leith, 2006). This research stresses the role that identity struggles may have in the processes of creating

or inhibiting motivation and action towards change, particularly in relation to change in core concepts such as home.

An additional point is the relationship between psychological homelessness and ambivalence, discussed further in the section about implications for practice. This research shows the significance of ambivalence as a way of expressing a transitional phase. The research reveals that the participants are experiencing a deep sense of confusion, ambivalence and doubt regarding basic concepts and beliefs about themselves. This may be an important psychological dynamic which is both a consequence and a source of feelings of homelessness.

4.3.2 Research Process

This research has relevance to the discussion on Sameness and Otherness in qualitative research and the various impacts that the research relationship can have on the research findings and transferability. It highlights the dual nature of the relationship between participants and researcher, especially in instances when the researcher is in some ways similar to the participants. As described in the Method chapter, I was confronted throughout this research with the nuances of carrying out research on a topic that was relevant to my own life, with women whom I realised were similar to me in more ways than I was originally willing to admit. During the research, I went through a shift in my personal relationship with the issue of psychological homelessness as a result of my encounter with the women. From concern about the 'seduction of sameness' I moved to a 'seduction of otherness' in the realisation that I was much more 'same' to the participants than I initially thought. This brought to my attention the possible impact of the research on the inner journey and the psychological wellbeing of the researcher, a relatively unaddressed area in

qualitative research. I believe this issue could be further addressed whenever researchers embark upon projects which carry weight and emotional significance for them personally. Further awareness of the researcher's psychological process could enhance the trustworthiness of projects, as well as enable the reader to judge how the researcher managed these personal narratives when engaging in the research. I also feel this could be of value to Counselling Psychologists in training, since they could benefit from bringing more attention to their own psychological wellbeing while engaging in doctoral research, allowing for possible therapeutic assistance if needed.

It is worth bringing awareness to the psychological journey involved in qualitative research, rather than focusing exclusively on the end result. Acknowledging that this type of research is a dynamic process, with many changes, shifts and developments along the way could help researchers appreciate the complexity of the findings and the rich nature of qualitative enquiry. Enhancing awareness and openly discussing the process (see research log in appendix 22) could also improve transparency which itself promotes trustworthiness.

4.3.3 Therapeutic Practice

The population studied here is a relatively under-researched group, which is often socially isolated and rarely actively seeks help. For this reason, counselling psychologists who encounter Jewish-Israelis seeking therapy can use this research as a valuable source for exploring possible areas of difficulty this group may be facing.

One of the issues which practitioners should bear in mind when working with women in similar situations is the multiple levels of identity challenge which can be experienced. The therapist should pay careful attention to the ways in which identity is managed, and how the focus on one identity component might be a way to manage

(or avoid) other identity components. In addition, it is important to explore together with the client what are the meanings held for each identity component, looking at the cultural, historical and biographical contexts and the ways in which these resonate in personal identity processes. It could also be useful for the client to explore with the therapist alternative meanings for key concepts which guide the valuing process of identity, for example, re-evaluating the meaning of home and helping the client shift from the symbolic, national home to the real physical home as a possible source of well-being.

The participants in this study seem to find it useful to talk about psychological homelessness, and most of them report that it helped them make sense of their experience. It can be useful for counselling psychologists to realise the importance of letting the client openly talk about their understanding of their experiences. The client might find this threatening or otherwise difficult to do outside the therapy room due to their sense of isolation or fear of criticism, sometimes from within their own family. In addition, the importance of making sense of an experience which is associated with confusion and doubt can be highly therapeutic (Harrist, 2006).

The participants seem to show high awareness of inner processes and of how they understand, process and experience various reactions to psychological homelessness. This could be valuable understanding for the counselling psychologist working with clients in similar situations, since developing their awareness further can be a significant step in improving psychological wellbeing and helping them reach some resolution of their situation. Utilising this awareness for therapeutic change can make the therapeutic encounter rich and meaningful. At the same time, while the benefits of this are evident, perhaps counselling psychologists should also evaluate how much to emphasise making sense and reflecting on the experience, and

how much to help clients shift their focus to the here and now, to daily life and the ways in which to improve psychological wellbeing on a more immediate level (such as improving social support).

Therapeutic work can also address the ambivalence, unsteadiness and confusion caused by the identity challenges and help the client to fully explore the conflicting feelings and possibly reach some resolution. As stated by Harrist (2006), resolution does not necessarily imply 'complete reconciliation of conflicting feelings' (p.105). Rather, therapy can help the client establish how one feeling "overrides" other feelings to a significant extent, without necessarily implying that other feelings simply disappear. Rather, they may 'recede into the background of the individual's experience and become lessfigural' (Harrist, 2006, p.106). Harrist claims the key to managing ambivalence is developing greater flexibility in the ways in which ambivalence is experienced and dealt with. Rather than seeing it as necessarily negative, clients can be encouraged to develop an appreciation for the complexity of emotion and meaning and use it as an opportunity for growth.

Therapeutic work can also address the process of acculturation which the client might be attempting, by providing the immigrant with the opportunity to tell their story and make sense of their place in relation to both culture of origin and host culture (Poulsen et al., 2005). It is important to realise that the immigration process is not necessarily pathological, and the therapist should pay careful attention to areas of resilience, strength and coping strategies presented by the client, which could be reflected back to them (Espin, 1987). However, the immigration experience can involve significant experiences of loss and grief for women, and therapy can help women go through a process of bereavement or mourning – accepting the loss

involved in moving home and culture, yet at the same time appreciating their acculturative efforts (Espin, 1987).

Furthermore, this research calls for couple-counsellors and family therapists to pay close attention to issues of agency and control for women immigrants and to the processes of decision making and sense of control the women may or may not feel within the marital relationship.

For women who are struggling with their immigration status and identity, a re-evaluation of the connotations and meanings associated with this label can help them to accept their situation. Alternatively, they can be encouraged to accept the transient nature of their life and to explore the possibility of an identity as 'existential migrants' (Madison, 2006), where home as a symbolic entity becomes less important and the home as a dynamic and changing relationship to the environment becomes appreciated. This involves a shift of focus to the present moment and to the internal 'home' in the self rather than the external, tangible one.

Many of the strategies discussed above involve engaging with the client in a process of acceptance. The use of acceptance as a method of coping and working through psychological difficulties has been well documented, particularly in recent years with the introduction of mindfulness and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy into the psychotherapy field (e.g. see Hayes, 2004; Hayes et al., 2006). The participants in this study seem, to some extent, to view psychological homelessness as an unchanged, 'fixed' reality which they have to learn to live with rather than actively change. In addition, they also portray this as accompanied by feelings of sadness, pain and loss. In this sense, acceptance can be seen as an important attempt at managing psychological homelessness, and should be considered by counselling psychologists as a possible avenue of therapeutic work.

This research also has implications for the internal process of the counselling psychologist working with clients going through similar experiences. Enhancing awareness of their own historical and cultural background and their personal identity challenges could help therapists in acknowledging the ways in which this might influence the therapeutic relationship and process. Psychological homelessness may be experienced by the client as such an all-encompassing experience, that it can create possible points of identification or a form of 'vicarious trauma' for the therapist. Awareness of the cultural environment from which the client comes and into which the client enters when they enter the therapy room (including any beliefs the therapist might have about both cultures), can allow the therapist to further understand and appreciate the client's acculturation story, as well as any identity struggles which surface.

4.4 Areas for Future Research

In many ways this research can be seen as a starting point, a preliminary inquiry from which many different avenues can be explored. The concept of psychological homelessness is proposed here as an explanatory concept and requires much more in-depth investigation. It would be worth looking at how it is manifest in other cultural groups, and whether a phenomenological exploration of this experience in those groups will yield similar understandings.

In addition, further research into the experience of women immigrants from a phenomenological perspective is needed to provide awareness into the unique ways in which women experience identity struggles in relation to immigration. This research initiated this line of inquiry, but further exploration can develop and enhance our understanding of the subjective meanings of this experience for women.

Additional research into the role of ambivalence in identity struggles could be valuable, particularly in relation to therapeutic practice with clients experiencing identity threats.

Lastly, I would like to mention here the need for further exploration into the psychological issues experienced by researchers in psychology carrying out phenomenological research. It is important to explore how the research process relates to the researchers' personal life and psychological wellbeing and ways in which researchers can manage the impact of conducting research into areas which are 'close to home'. This could also be useful for counselling psychologists working with trainees on counselling psychology programmes, or with those who are engaged in research projects.

4.5 Conclusion

While carefully considering the issues which might constrain transferability of the findings, I intended to show in this chapter how, despite these limitations, this research may be a valuable contribution to Counselling Psychology – in terms of theory, research and practice. I attempted to show how the open exploration of the experience of psychological homelessness, through a phenomenological lens, both validates it as a potentially novel and useful psychological construct, and provides some valuable insights into the processes of identity and the explorations of meaning for women immigrants from a particular cultural background. Providing the space for the participants to explore the concept of psychological homelessness from their own point of view, together with the researcher, allowed them to reveal an otherwise hidden, vague and confusing mosaic of feelings, thoughts and behaviours, which touched upon every aspect of their life. I hoped to show the complexity of this

process, and the intricate nature of the relationship between different identity components for women who are trying to manage many different and sometimes opposing forces in their life. I believe that counselling psychologists conducting research as well as engaged in therapeutic practice can use this research to gain insight into this unique experience and develop further understanding of the experiences of this population or those going through similar journeys.

Appendix 1: Ethics Release Form

Appendix 6 : Ethics Release Form for Psychology Research Projects

All students planning to undertake any research activity in the Department of Psychology are required to complete this Ethics Release Form and to submit it to their Research Supervisor, **together with their research proposal**, prior to commencing their research work. If you are proposing multiple studies within your research project, you are required to submit a separate ethical release form for each study.

This form should be completed in the context of the following information:

- An understanding of ethical considerations is central to planning and conducting research.
- Approval to carry out research by the Department of Psychology does not exempt you from Ethics Committee approval from institutions within which you may be planning to conduct the research, e.g.: Hospitals, NHS Trusts, HM Prisons Service, etc.
- The published ethical guidelines of the British Psychological Society (2004) Guidelines for minimum standards of ethical approval in psychological research (BPS: Leicester) should be referred to when planning your research.
- **Students are not permitted to begin their research work until approval has been received and this form has been signed by 2 members of Department of Psychology staff.**

Section A: To be completed by the student

Please indicate the degree that the proposed research project pertains to:

BSc ☐ M.Phil ☐ M.Sc ☐ Ph.D ☐ D.Psych ☑ n/a ☐

Please answer all of the following questions, circling yes or no where appropriate:

1. Title of project
   Exploring the construct of 'Psychological Homelessness' through the experience of Israeli women living in the UK.

---

2. Name of student researcher (please include contact address and telephone number)
   Yasmin Fulder-Heyd
   191 Cropley Court
   Cropley Street
   London, N1 7HJ
   Tel: 07973841568

---

3. Name of research supervisor
   Dr Deborah Rafalin

---

4. Is a research proposal appended to this ethics release form? (Yes) **No**

5. Does the research involve the use of human subjects/participants? **(Yes)** No

If yes, a. Approximately how many are planned to be involved? *9-12 Participants*

b. How will you recruit them? *By advertising with a flier in various public contexts (shops, community services, newspapers) and using the 'snow ball' technique.*

c. What are your recruitment criteria? *Participants need to be Israeli women who have been living in the UK for a minimum of two years. See material in attached proposal.*
(*Please append your recruitment material/advertisement/flyer)*

1

d. Will the research involve the participation of minors (under 16 years of age) or those unable to give informed consent?

Yes No

e. If yes, will signed parental/carer consent be obtained? Yes **No**

6. What will be required of each subject/participant (e.g. time commitment, task/activity)? *(If psychometric instruments are to be employed, please state who will be supervising their use and their relevant qualification).*
Each participant will be required to fill a short biographical details questionnaire and participate in a semi structured interview. The time commitment will be one session of approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

---

7. Is there any risk of physical or psychological harm to the subjects/participants?

Yes No

If yes, a. Please detail the possible harm? ----------

b. How can this be justified? ----------

8. Will all subjects/participants and/or their parents/carers receive an information sheet describing the aims, procedure and possible risks of the research, as well as providing researcher and supervisor contact details?

Yes **No**

(Please append the information sheet which should be written in terms which are accessible to your subjects/participants and/or their parents/carers)

9. Will any person's treatment/care be in any way compromised if they choose not to participate in the research?

Yes No

10. Will all subjects/participants be required to sign a consent form, stating that they fully understand the purpose, procedure and possible risks of the research?

Yes **No**

(Please append the informed consent form which should be written in terms which are accessible to your subjects/participants and/or their parents/carers)

11. What records will you be keeping of your subjects/participants? (e.g. research notes, computer records, tape/video recordings)?

Computer records; paper questionnaires and consent forms; audio recordings; research notes.

12. What provision will there be for the safe-keeping of these records? *Questionnaires and audio tapes will be anonymous and kept in a locked cabinet. All computer material will be kept under password lock.*

---

13. What will happen to the records at the end of the project?
Audio material, transcripts and questionnaires will be kept for future reference (anonymous)

---

14. How will you protect the anonymity of the subjects/participants?
Consent forms with names will be kept locked and separate from research material. All research material will be kept anonymous; all names and identifying details will be omitted or changed in the research project for the purpose of preserving anonymity.

15. What provision for post research de-brief or psychological support will be available should subjects/participants require?

A debrief will be included at the end of the interview, and the participant will be offered a recourse list of services which can offer appropriate psychological support in case of need.

(*Please append any de-brief information sheets or resource lists detailing possible support options)*

If you have circled an item in bold print, please provide further explanation here:

Signature of student researcher ---------- Date 11.5.06

Section B: To be completed by the research supervisor

Please mark the appropriate box below:

Ethical approval granted ☑

Refer to the Department of Psychology Research Committee ☐

Refer to the University Senate Research Committee ☐

Signature ---------- Date 15/05/06

Section C: To be completed by the 2nd Department of Psychology staff member *(Please read this ethics release form fully and pay particular attention to any answers on the form where bold items have been circled and any relevant appendices.)*

I agree with the decision of the research supervisor as indicated above ☑

Signature ---------- Date 19/5/06

Appendix 2: Research Flier

האם את ישראלית המתגוררת באנגליה?

האם את חשה לעתים תחושות של <u>תלישות?</u>

מעוניינת לשוחח על החוויות שלך?

אשמח לשמוע!

במסגרת דוקטורט באוניברסיטת City University, אני מבצעת מחקר העוסק בחוויות של תלישות ותחושות של חוסר בית אצל נשים ישראליות המתגוררות באנגליה.

אם את מעוניינת לשוחח על הנושא, אשמח אם תתקשרי לי סמין, בטלפון 07973841568 או באימייל:

y.fulder@city.ac.uk

המנחה היא דר' דבורה רפלין
(טל' 0207-040-0167, אימייל: d.rafalin@city.ac.uk)

Are you an Israeli woman living in the UK?

Do you sometimes <u>feel homeless</u>?

Would you like to talk to me about your experience?

I am carrying out a research project on the experiences of psychological homelessness in Israeli women living in the UK, as part of my Doctorate at City University.

If you would like to chat about it please call Yasmin on <u>07973 841 568</u> or email y.fulder@city.ac.uk

The research is supervised by Dr. Deborah Rafalin
(Tel. 0207 040 0167; email: d.rafalin@city.ac.uk).

Appendix 3: Information Sheet and Consent Form[1]

This research project is being conducted as part of a Doctorate of Psychology in Counselling Psychology at City University. It is carried out by Yasmin Fulder-Heyd, with the Supervision of Dr. Deborah Rafalin. The project is entitled '*Exploring 'psychological homelessness' through the experience of Israeli women living in the UK'.* The aim of this research is to explore the concept of psychological homelessness as it is experienced by Israeli women living in the UK, and the way they manage and cope with any impacts such experience has on their identity.

The research has two parts. First, you will be required to fill in a short questionnaire of biographical details. After that you will take part in an informal interview discussing your experiences of psychological homelessness. The interview will be recorded on audio tape, to enable the researchers to cite specific experiences accurately. The tapes will be kept for the duration of the research process only, and then be discarded.

In order to preserve your anonymity, we will not quote any identifying details about you, such as names and specific locations. In the transcripts, your name will be replaced with a pseudonym, and names of other people and specific places will be changed as well. These confidentiality precautions will be maintained throughout the research, and in any write up of it.

The participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. If you have any questions so far or feel you need further information, please don't hesitate to ask the researcher.

[1] Adapted From (Rafalin, 1998)

Consent Form

Please read the following paragraph, and if you are in agreement, sign below:

I agree that the purpose of this research and the nature of my participation in it have been clearly explained to me, in a manner that I understand. I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any point. I therefore consent to be interviewed about my experiences of psychological homelessness. I also consent to an audio tape being made of this discussion, and for this recording to be transcribed for the sole purpose of the research.

Signed…….. Date…….

_____

As the researcher, I undertake that professional confidentiality will be ensured in regards to any audio tapes made with the above interviewee and that any use of the audio tapes, transcripts of the tapes, and any other material will be for research purposes only. The Anonymity of the above interviewee will be protected throughout.

Signed…….. Date……..

_____

Would you be interested in receiving a report on the results of the project?

If yes, please include your address for receiving a report: _____

_____

_____

The researcher, Yasmin Fulder-Heyd, can be contacted on Tel: 07973 841 568.

The Supervisor of this project, Dr. Deborah Rafalin, can be reached at 0207 040 0167.

Appendix 4: Biographical Details Questionnaire[2]

Participant No. ____

- How old are you? _____
- Please state your highest education qualification:

  (If currently studying, please state the degree you are studying towards)

  _____

- Are you currently employed? Yes No

  If yes, what is your current occupation?

  _____

  If no, have you been employed in the past? Yes No

  If yes, What was your previous occupation?

  _____

- What led you to leave Israel?

_____
_____
_____
_____

- How long have you been living in the UK?

  _____

- What is your nationality?

  (If more than one, please write all nationalities)

  _____

[2] Adapted From Rafalin (1998)

- What is your current relationship status?

  (Please circle the appropriate answer)

Single/ Living with partner/ Married/ Divorced/ Separated/ Widowed

- If you are currently in a relationship, what is your Partner's Nationality?

  (If more than one, please write all nationalities)

  _____

- Do you have any children? Yes No

  (If No, Please skip the next question)

- Please State below each child's age and nationality

  (If more than one, please write all nationalities)

Child	Age	Nationality
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

- How religiously observant would you say you are?

  (Please circle the appropriate answer)

1	2	3	4	5
Not Observant At all	Not very Observant	Somewhat Observant	Quite Observant	Very Observant

- In General, how important is your sense of being Israeli to you?

  (Please circle the appropriate answer)

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important At all	Not very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important

- In General, how important is your sense of being Jewish to you?

  (Please circle the appropriate answer)

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important At all	Not very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important

- In General, how important is your sense of being British to you? *(Please circle the appropriate answer)*

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important At all	Not very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important

- In General, how important is your sense of being a woman to you?

  (Please circle the appropriate answer)

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important At all	Not very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important

- We all hold a number of parts/aspects in our identity, some of them more important to us than others. Please rank in order the following items, from the least important to you to the most important to you. Place a 1 next to the item of least importance to you and 4 next to the item of most importance:

  Being an Israeli [ ]

  Being a women [ ]

  Being British [ ]

  Being Jewish [ ]

  Are there any other aspects of yourself (such as motherhood, work, relationship) which you feel are important to you and haven't been mentioned in the list above? Please add them below.

  Being _____ [ ]

  Being _____ [ ]

  Being _____ [ ]

*Thank You for Your Co-operation***!**

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule

1. What does 'psychological homelessness' actually mean to you?
2. What led you to feel this way? What caused/brought up this feeling in you? [reasons/ aspects influencing this experience, examples, process over time]
3. Some People describe this feeling as an ongoing feeling not associated to specific situations, while others feel it is provoked by certain situations or people. How do you feel about this issue? [Prompt: certain people/social contexts/ situations]
4. How does this experience impact on your daily life and your identity? In what way? [examples: relationships, family, psychological well being, daily activities]

   [Prompts for question3 & 4: What personal circumstances brought you here? What led to your decision to leave Israel? How did you feel when you left? How was it for you when you first got here? How is that compared to now? For example: motivations/reasons for the decision; reaction of family/friends, process over time]
5. What have you found useful to manage this feeling of lack of home? What helps? [Prompt: Group support – which group/community; friends; organisations, Psychological help; Specific examples – what did you do/think/feel in them?]
6. Following our discussion and the process of thinking about this experience, I would like to ask again – what does this experience of psychological homelessness actually mean to you – is there anything you would like to add to your previous description?
7. Any other comments/thoughts/ideas which you want to add?
8. I would like to give you here the opportunity to add anything in Hebrew, if you felt there was anything you found hard to explain in English. After that we will go back to using English for the last question.
9. Debriefing: How was this interview for you? How did it feel to talk about these issues? Do you feel it raised any difficult feelings or issues for you? Offer resource list and discuss options.
10. Do you have any further questions about the interview, the purpose, and process of the research?

Appendix 6: Resource List

Counselling and Psychotherapy services providing therapy in Hebrew:

The British Psychological Society Directory of chartered Psychologists:
http://www.bps.org.uk/e-services/find-a-psychologist/directory.cfm

*****

Careline:
Phone: 0845 122 8622 helpline
Email: info@carelineuk.org
Website: www.carelineuk.org
Address: Cardinal Heenan Centre, 326 High Road, Ilford IG1 1QP

*****

Gateshead Jewish Family Service
Phone 0191 477 5677
Address: 7 Oxford Terrace, Gateshead NE8 1RQ

*****

Jewish Association for the Mentally Ill (JAMI)
Phone: 020 8458 2223
Website: www.mentalhealth-jami.org.uk
Address: 16A North End Road, Golders Green, London N11 7PH

*****

Jewish Marriage Council - Manchester
Phone: 0161 740 5764
Email: info@jmc-uk.org
Website: jmc-uk.org
Address: Nicky Alliance Centre, 85 Middleton Road, Manchester M8 4JY

*****

Jewish Women's Aid
Phone: 0800 591203 (Freephone Helpline), 020-8445 8060 (Office)
Email: info@jwa.org.uk
PO Box 2670
London
N12 9ZE

League of Jewish Women

Mrs Jean Karsberg, 6 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2LP

Phone: 020-7242 8300

Email: office@theljw.org

Website: www.theljw.org

*****

Tipul – a private organization providing therapy in Hebrew

http://www.tipul.co.uk/

*****

Women's Therapy Centre

http://www.womenstherapycentre.co.uk/

Phone: 020 7263 6200

*****

General useful information for Israelis living outside of Israel:

http://www.israelisabroad.com/

http://www.alondon.net

Appendix 7: Biographical Details Table

Table B.1: Key Biographical Details of the Participants

Name	Age	Education	Employment[3]	Time in UK (yrs)	Nationality	Relationship status	Partner's nationality	Children (ages in years)	Religious observance (5 point Likert scale: 1-not at all, 5-very)
Sarah	60	High - school Diploma	No	39	Israeli & British	Single	-	3	1
Tamar	34	Under - graduate	Yes Self-employed teaching professional	9	Israeli	Married	Israeli	2 (4.5,2)	1
Liat	24	High - School Diploma	Yes: commercial sales representative	4.5	Israeli	Married	British	-	2
Ofra	40	Under - graduate	Yes: self-employed sales manager	7	Israeli, British & Dutch	Married	British & Israeli	2 (10,6)	1
Edna	60	Under - graduate	Yes: Self-employed creative artist	26.5	Israeli & British	Married	British	2 (22, 20)	1
Ayelet	33	Post - graduate	Yes: Teaching professional	6	Israeli	Single	-	-	1
Tali	31	Post - graduate	Yes: Teaching professional	5	Israeli	Single	-	-	1
Rachel	29	Post - graduate	Yes: Self-employed sales manager	5	Israeli	Married	Israeli	-	1

[3] For standardisation as well as confidentiality purposes, the jobs described by the participants were classified using the International Standard Classification of Occupations – ISCO-08 (ILO, 2007).

Appendix 8: Case Descriptions

Sarah

Sarah is a disabled older woman living alone in a relatively Jewish area of London. She came to the UK from Israel at the age of 21 to study English, to change some old habits and learn about herself and the world. She had originally also immigrated to Israel with her family at the age of two – the family escaped holocaust-stricken Poland and after moving between various refugee camps, arrived to the new Jewish state in 1948. Sarah claims this has an impact on her current experience of psychological homelessness, for example she says she feels guilty that she had made her children in the UK go through a similar story to her own, as second generation immigrants being disadvantaged or 'second best', as she described it. Growing up amidst a mix of many immigrant groups and multiple languages, Sarah develops a strong interest in language and the ways in which it expresses her identity. She uses writing and poetry as a lens through which most other experiences are perceived and given meaning. She claims that her loss of Hebrew over the years together with her insecurity in English creates a palpable and painful sense of loss of identity, since she suddenly finds herself unable to express herself properly in either language. Sarah did not originally intend to stay in the UK, but then met her husband, an Israeli living in the UK for many years. She has three children who she claims are now not very connected to their Jewish or Israeli identity (do not speak Hebrew and married non-Jewish spouses) an issue which deeply disappoints and concerns Sarah. Wanting to return to Israel, Sarah managed to persuade the family to move back when the children were small. They lived in Israel for 2 years, but her husband could not adjust and find a job, and they returned to the UK. Sarah described this as the prime cause of a 'nervous breakdown' which then led to a divorce. After the divorce her husband became violent and abusive to her and the children, leading to years of trauma and living in fear. Through this time, the Jewish community became an important source of support, leading Sarah to re-evaluate her relationship to her Jewish identity. Though arriving to the UK as a secular Israeli, she became after a while an active member in a synagogue and her surrounding Jewish community. The community also somewhat replaces the extended familial support which she craves for, and is a significant source of aid throughout the difficult period of abuse, single-parenthood and lack of means. Sarah describes feeling 'trapped' in the UK, as her disability means she can no longer consider returning to Israel. However she claims that even if she could move back she would not want to be far from her children, and assumed that she had changed so much in the UK that she would not manage in Israel as it is today.

Tamar

Tamar is in her thirties, a teacher living in the UK for the past 9 years with her Israeli husband and her two daughters, aged 4 and 2. Tamar came to the UK following her husband. He wanted to spend a short time working outside of Israel and ended up liking life and culture in the UK and deciding to stay. Before coming to the UK, Tamar described herself as extremely positive, happy within herself, at peace with her identity, and at home. This accentuated her experiences in the UK which she describes as accompanied by a strong sense of loss of identity, lack of sense of home, and severe symptoms of depression, including low mood, tearfulness and suicidal ideation. Tamar describes long periods of depressed mood particularly since being

pregnant with her first child, during which she was tearful, withdrawn, and unable to work. Tamar links the depression to psychological homelessness, since she claims issues of identity and belonging were brought to the forefront by the process of becoming a mother. She does not feel a sense of belonging to the UK – lonely and isolated from family and friends - but at the same time she feels a growing lack of belonging to Israel, since she distances herself from it and develops reservations about Israeli culture, people and politics. She describes this as a major shift in her attitude, since when living there she felt very 'patriotic' and identified. Nevertheless she longs to one day return to Israel, and sees her stay in the UK as temporary. This means that she constantly finds herself ambivalent and in two minds about what she wants and hopes for herself, leaving her with a painful sense of psychological homelessness. Since her husband was the one who wanted to stay in the UK, she feels she is following him, and is somewhat passive in this relationship ('*my husband is the dominant one when it comes to decisions*'). She develops a sense of resignation although she accepts it, partly because she herself does not want to go back due to her own reservations about Israel. This leads to her feeling ambivalent and indecisive about many decisions she has to make in her daily life, relating to issues of identity, language (with her daughters) and culture. It also causes her to feel detached and somewhat 'removed' from her daily life tasks. Tamar describes shifting between opposing states of mind, such as the pain of not being part of her family and friend's life back in Israel, at the same time as some satisfaction at the idea of actively deciding to stay in the UK. These shifts increase her sense of ambivalence and doubt, and bring back the low mood. For Tamar, motherhood and psychological homelessness were intertwined, and she is constantly reflecting and thinking about the ways in which one identity process influences the other. She seems very aware and reflective, and describes in the interview how the dominant feeling for her is loss of clear identity and 'solid ground', which led her to contact me.

Liat

Liat is in her early twenties living in London with her British Jewish husband. She came to the UK to take a short English course and because she was '*curious about the world*'. In London she met her husband and they decided to stay in the UK due to the husband's job opportunities and his concern that he will not adjust in Israel. Consequently, for her, leaving Israel also meant leaving her family home, and the life-transition of marriage. She is now living in the UK for 4.5 years. Liat grew up in Tel Aviv and when living there, describes herself as being very sociable and having many friends. She particularly enjoyed preparing herself for going out – dressing and putting make-up, her physical appearance being very important to her. In the UK, Liat workes full time as a sales representative in a small company, and describes her life as quite the opposite of her bubbly and lively self in Israel. She reported feeling depressed most of the time, does not pay attention to her appearance and does not care about her looks and her body. Liat spends most of her free time at home, and describes feeling very lonely and isolated. She does not manage to create new friendships with British Jews or Israelis, due to cultural differences or resistance to creating friendships with other Israelis '*just because they are Israelis'*. She describes her relationship with her husband as close, but at the same time during the interview she expresses anger towards him for '*keeping her away from her family*'. At the same time, she feels there is no room for her in Israel – her parents rebuilt their house and demolished her childhood room, which for her symbolises her sense of not having anywhere or anything to come back to (her friends in Israel are also drifting away).

This contrast caused her to feel very ambivalent about what she wants for herself. It appeared as a sense of not feeling at home in the UK but also an inability to see Israel as a home any longer either.

Ofra

Ofra is in her early forties living in a small town with her British-Jewish husband and her two children aged ten and six. She is working from home as a manager of a small company, thus spending most of her time at home. She is living in the UK for 7 years. She left Israel with her husband (whom she met in Israel) due to financial problems, and decided to try a new life in the UK. Her husband managed to find a job, but this means that if she moves back to Israel they will have to live separately (he will stay in the UK). Since Ofra does not want her children and herself to live without her husband, she decides to stay in the UK, although she reports she feels very unhappy here. At the same time, she still keeps thinking and dreaming about going back, even though in actual fact she claims this is not a real possibility. She feels her Jewish identity is not as important to her, which means she is not part of a synagogue or any other Jewish community facility (her children go to a regular local school). In addition, there are very few Israelis in her area, and she does not manage to connect or find Israeli friends with whom she feels comfortable, and is very resistant to creating friendships with Israelis '*only because they are Israelis*'. This means that she does not belong to any community, including the local community, does not have many friends, and feels very isolated and lonely. Though initially very excited about the move, curious to explore British culture, as time went by, she feels a growing sense of emptiness, loneliness and displacement. In relation to Israel, Ofra reveals that she does not see herself ever living there due to her strong sense that politically '*Israel is doing things which I am not sure I can live with*'. For Ofra, like most of the participants, there are many contrasting feelings experienced alongside each other. Her longing for Israel and a sense of home is accompanied by a sense of resistance to what Israel has become. In addition, Ofra reports that her friends and family in Israel discourage her from returning, which leaves Ofra very confused and ambivalent. Ofra grew up in a small village and her parents moved to a kibbutz when she was 9. She describes this as a very negative experience for her, which was another reason for her reluctance to move her children to Israel. Currently, Ofra reports she felt lost, empty and unsure as to '*where she is taking her life*' - unable to make decisions due to the overwhelming feelings of ambivalence and doubt. She relates all this to psychological homelessness and the lack of belonging to the UK as well as the problematic relationship with her Israeli identity.

Edna

Edna is in her early sixties, living with her British non-Jewish husband in London. Her two children (aged 22 and 20) had already left home. She is a self employed artist and works from home. She came for a short visit and stayed after meeting her husband, and is living in the UK for almost 27 years. Edna constantly uses vivid imagery to describe her feelings and experiences. Her sense is of someone who is constantly in a fog or up in between the clouds, where you cannot see clearly but you are also very isolated and lonely. Working from home is isolating, her children had gone, and she has difficulties in her marriage (she claims her husband is depressed and distant ever since losing his job several years ago). In addition, she claims that her husband and children feel completely at home in Britain, and she is the only one who

feels connected to Israel, resulting in a sense of alienation in British society and also within her own home. Edna does not see her departure from Israel as a formal 'leaving' process, but rather as a 'mistake' which had never really happened deliberately. She describes herself in the interview almost as a bystander in her own life story: '*I never really left Israel...things just happened to me*'. She describes her life in Israel as positive and successful, and during the interview mentions several times her wish to one day return there. Like other participants, she sees her stay in the UK as temporary, '*living from suitcases*'. However, at the same time she admits that realistically she does not feel able to move back at this stage in her life, and feels distant from the real Israel as it is today. Edna feels that in all the years living in the UK she had never adjusted in terms of language and culture. This together with her feelings of inability to actively 'take charge' of her life and move back (as well as her reservations about her ability to live in Israel), cause a sense of psychological homelessness. However unlike other participants, she seems less ambivalent about her Israeli identity.

Ayelet

Ayelet is in her early thirties living in a town in the UK and working as a lecturer. She lives alone and describes herself as single. 2 years ago she divorced her husband whom she was married to for 4 years. Ayelet came to the UK for postgraduate studies with her husband. When she finished her studies she returned to Israel for 8 months, after which she came back to the UK and got a job as a lecturer. She is living in the UK for 6 years overall. She describes the 8 months in Israel as a very difficult time in which she realised she was unhappy in Israel, a realisation which was very painful for her. As an outsider, Israel suddenly seemed very aggressive, the people too intrusive, and everyone too stressed. She realises she felt an outsider there and an outsider in the UK, enhancing her sense of psychological homelessness. Ayelet has many friends and is very sociable with colleagues and other acquaintances in the town she lived in. unlike other participants, she does not appear very lonely and isolated. At the same time, issues of finding a partner and where she would like to start a family were her main concern. Ayelet appears extremely articulate and very reflective about her process of psychological homelessness. She describes the importance of having a family and how this impacts on her perception of what home is and where she would like to create her home. Ayelet grew up in an Israeli town in a religious home. She herself was observant but became secular gradually over the past few years. This is an additional significant transition in her identity, together with the change in her relationship to her Israeli identity and her divorce. This means that Ayelet experiences many transitions and changes in many identity components and her self perception, all relating to her sense of psychological homelessness.

Tali

Tali is in her early thirties living in a town in the UK and working as a lecturer. She is single, and lives alone. She came to the UK for postgraduate studies, and stayed after being offered a job as a lecturer in the university from which she graduated. She is now living in the UK for 5 years. Tali grew up in Jerusalem, coming from a secular intellectual background. She saw herself as Zionist and felt very passionate about Israel and her Israeli identity before moving to the UK. After coming to the UK, a sense of doubt and her struggle with psychological homelessness emerges gradually. Tali sees her stay in the UK as unplanned and somewhat out of her control, as if she

went on a trip and never came back. She feels led by life events rather than actively making choices for herself. She finds this unsettling. The longer she stays in the UK, the more Tali feels herself drifting away from Israel and her Israeli identity. She is very close to her family there, and like other participants she travels to Israel frequently to see them. However, she finds more and more things about Israel which disturb her, causing a growing reluctance to return and build her home there. An example of this is the traditional perception of women in Israeli society – Tali feels smothered by the strong pro-natal values and the expectation that as a woman you have to be married and with children. She enjoys the acceptance of diversity in her environment in the UK. At the same time, despite having a good job and many friends, she feels a strong lack of belonging to the UK, and resistance to admitting that her stay in the UK might be long-term. This causes a struggle with major decisions in her life. Issues such as what kind of partner she is looking for raises a discomforting ambivalence – on the one hand she does not see herself with an Israeli partner, on the other hand she finds it difficult to imagine herself with someone who does not share her culture, language and identity. The growing sense of distance from Israel together with the resistance to calling UK home characterises, for her, the experience of psychological homelessness. Like Ayelet, Tali is also very articulate and reflective during the interview, deeply exploring what home and psychological homelessness means to her.

Rachel

Rachel is in her late twenties living in London with her husband. She is working as the manager of her own little company. She moved to the UK following her Israeli husband who got a job contract in London for one year. The job was then extended further, and Rachel finds herself currently living in the UK for 5 years – much longer than she intended. Currently, she is pushing to go back to Israel but her husband wants to stay in the UK, due to better job prospects and financial security. Unlike other participants, Rachel describes few reservations about Israel, and feels completely at home there. However, she also feels very ambivalent about many aspects of her life and her identity. She feels trapped in the UK, since she does not want to leave her husband yet is unwilling to accept living permanently in the UK. She feels her life is on hold, since she is constantly delaying things due the temporariness of her stay in the UK (every year they said they would return the following year, and ended up staying). She is also ambivalent about her relationship, since on the one hand she sees her husband as very supportive and caring, yet at the same time is angry at him for 'keeping her' in the UK. Rachel has many episodes of low mood and tearfulness, and describes her daily life as lonely and isolated, finding it difficult to establish friendships. She enjoys the material gains of living in London, but is worried about time passing and a growing realisation that she might have to give up her plans of starting a family in Israel. She is also constantly feeling guilty for living outside of Israel, since she came from a very Zionist family who escaped anti-Semitic Russia in the 1970's and were extremely critical about the prospect of leaving the Jewish state permanently. For her, psychological homelessness did not mean a total lack of sense of home, but rather the feeling of being uprooted from her home, and ambivalent about her life choices and multiple identity components (as wife, mother and immigrant).

Appendix 9: Importance of Various Identity Components

Diagram B.1: The Importance of Various Identity Components on a 5 point Likert scale (1=not at all important, 5=very important)

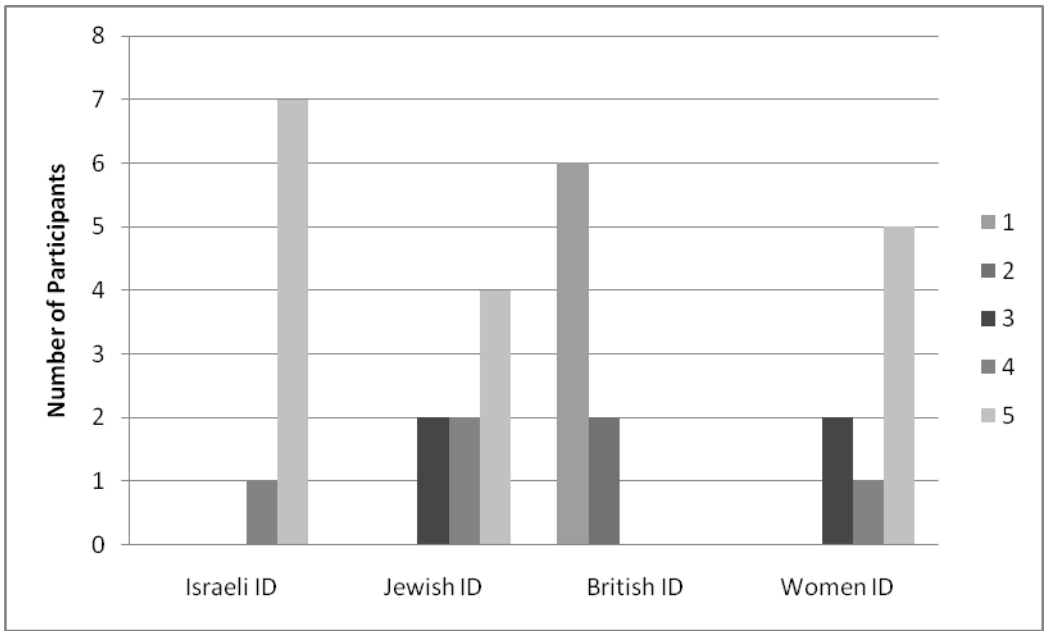


Table B.2: Sorting Various Identity Components According to Importance

Participant	**Most important ID**	→			**Least important ID**
Sarah	Jewish	Israeli	woman	British	
Tamar	Being a mother	Israeli	Woman	Jewish	British
Liat	Woman	Israeli	Jewish	British	
Ofra	Woman	Israeli	Jewish	British	
Edna	My profession	Israeli	woman	Jewish	British
Ayelet	Israeli	Jewish	woman	British	
Tali	Woman	Israeli	Jewish	Profession	British
Rachel	Israeli	Jewish	Woman	British	

Appendix 10: Example of Transcript
Transcript 6 (Ayelet) with notes on left and right margins

Transcript: Participant #6: Pseudonym: Ayelet

6.1. **Y: OK, so, my first question to you is really when I say the words psychological homelessness ...(LAUGHS) ... when I say psychological homelessness, what does that actually mean to you? I mean, what kind of things come to mind first of all when you think of ...**

6.1.1. A: Being rootless in England, feeling that ... it's not home and it will never be home. There are very ... there are many comfortable things in England but it's not mine and it will never be mine and it's the place where I grew up and it's the smells and it's the people and it's the ... it's the language and it's the arts and it's everything, friends. Though, you know, I mean, one of the things that have changed was when I came here I had the feeling that I'll never have friends as good as my Israeli friends. Everyone kept on telling me, oh you'll be abroad, there are good friends and that's not true. I mean, you do end up ... I ended up having very, very good friends who are not Israeli or not Jewish and ... and they are just as good as friends as I have in Israel but ... but they're not part of my culture and it takes more time to explain many things to them because you just need the background, the culture, the home and I am a bit Zionist although I'm here, so ... in spite of it.

6.1. **Y: So what kind of feelings do you ...**

(TALKINGAT SAME TIME)

6.1.2. A: Feelings?

6.1. **Y: ... associated with it.**

6.1.3. A: Like loneliness in some way and ... being away from someone that you love and something that you love and ... I think there is a feeling of idealisation of things of home, of what is home and what will you find when you get back there, which I'm aware that it's idealisation but I think it's bound to be. You tend to cover everything in this very pink coloured, everything is beautiful.

6.1. **Y: Do you mean things back there have this?**

6.1.4. A: Exactly, yeah. Everything back there is really nice and good and you really ... you idealise things although you're aware that they're not always true and they're not always as good and there are problems there more than when I left actually. But it's this very strong feeling, you know, there is a story which I'm gonna say it in Hebrew ... (HEBREW: name of story) ... where there is a story where the further the kid grows, the string between the mother's heart and the heart of the kid, then you just feel as if sometimes is being torn and when things happen ... I keep in touch with what's going on at home. I think I read about 4 times a day the newspaper there ... an online newspaper of what's going on and I feel really involved and I really get angry with things ...that happen there....all the ... the whole range of feelings that are involved in it, which I don't here ... I mean, here things, you know, I'm aware of what's going on, I keep updated on the news but it doesn't touch me ... it's not mine.

6.1. **Y: Yes. You don't have the emotional thing of ..**

6.1.5. A: Yeah. Feeling attached to something. Everything that is attached. The anger and the fear and I think when things get hard home, then it's really stress ... stressing to be away. You feel much more lonely in a way in England because ... well ... at least in [redacted] because most of the people are anti-Israeli. It also involves a feeling of being under defence all the time, you always have to defend yourself and it makes you build those like ... I don't know ... barriers, walls, defence ... to protect this. To defend yourself from the ... from this feeling of ... (TALKING AT SAME TIME) ... defend myself because I am proud of being Israeli, although I'm not necessarily proud of everything Israel does but ... it's just ... it's a feeling of defending my identity. You become in some way a bit more combative than I usually would be. Yeah.

6.2. **Y: OK. So if you kind of think of your time here ... in your 6 years here ... what do you think caused you to feel this way or what led you to this feeling?**

6.2.1. A: I think it has changed over the years, the feelings involved. So when I came here I was ... there was obviously missing home, missing friends because it's hard because, as you know, as Israelis we don't really get away from home until we go abroad. I mean, it's not like when here teenagers ... or in the States ... teenagers just ... when they go to ... at the age of 18 ... they might go to a different state and see their parents only after 3 months at the end of term and in Israel you go every week, every other weekend and so you're much more close and everything is closer. So it's the feeling of suddenly ... I remember the day I got here ... I think only when I landed in England, I understood how lonely I'm gonna be. I'm really ... I've done it but I'm really now on my own, which was really hard at the beginning, first few days. But then it was just ... it's part of the experience. So there was the fun bit. It didn't feel as if it had to be home. I mean, it was just more of ... OK, it's a nice experience, let's see how it is, how it works. But it's weird because on the one hand, I really didn't need this Israeli bit, you know, Israeli connections when I was during the first year or two but on the other hand ... in the first year I think anyone who's Israeli there is like after 5 minutes they get together. It's like a big magnet and that, on the other hand, has changed because now when I see Israelis I don't feel automatically I need to be ... to, you know, to become friends with them just because they're Israelis because obviously in Israel ... I mean, some of them are people I wouldn't talk for a second time. But when I just got here, there was this feeling that I need the connection, although I didn't feel I need the home. I just felt I need the connection with the people, something that is like ... it's from the same culture but it was fine. It wasn't home, it wasn't supposed to be home here but I didn't miss the home bit.

6.2. **Y: It was just looking for something more familiar.**

6.2.2. A: Exactly.

6.2. Y: Rather than looking for the feeling of home.

6.2.3. A: Yeah.

6.2. Y: OK.

6.2.4. A: I wasn't looking for the feeling of home here and it changed in two ways in the sense that I didn't need the familiar any more but I needed more the home. Right? So I wasn't looking for Israeli friends and it has grown into this Jewish friends more than Israeli friends and even that … I mean, it has grown in some ways, it hasn't in others in the sense that it wasn't … I didn't become friends with someone just because he's Jewish or something but that I'm always observing … I was … Orthodox … obviously you've got the Jewish life and you do get to meet Jews and I have many friends who are Jewish because of that. But I wanted more of a home and I think after 2 years here I had enough. I was just … I want home, I want the stability and just, you know, getting home at the end of the day, the feeling that it's yours, that everyone really cares, that you care about the place and … I think it was just time and age and I have settled down in the sense that I got married at the time and I really wanted … and being abroad, the notion of a family was very hard. I think being … I mean, it's easier as a family than being alone I can say now but … but to start a family when we were thinking about kids, it was … I wanted to do it in a place where I know the culture and I know what I'm looking for and I didn't want my kids to grow elsewhere. So that brought about a lot of feeling of rootlessness, of being away and …

6.2. Y: You mean, when you got to the stage where you kind of were thinking about having a family?

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.5. A: When I was … yeah.

6.2. Y: That kind of initiated …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.6. A: That feeling.

6.2. Y: Right.

6.2.7. A: It initiated a lot of feelings of where is home, started to question, where is home, where should home be, what are we looking for. It's the feeling which growing in Israel, you know, when you have kids, families are very close, closer in Israel I think than elsewhere. It's not that I wanted my mum every day in my home but the thought that, you know, you can go for the weekend and you can come and go and have friends and the whole system is just …

this is the place. Then things of familiarity became more important also in the sense that … well, just that you know the system and you know how it works and it works OK and the feeling that you can … things will fall into place whatever happens and here it's just like you're on your own. So at the end of the day, I have to make sure that everything's gonna be there … is gonna be OK and if something goes wrong, there is no one else to … that I can rely on. So all those things. So I think that was the initiation and then it was … after I got divorced … after 4 years I got divorced and then it was just because it's much more lonely because now … I mean, my husband was Israeli so … but now I don't have anyone to talk to in Hebrew during the day and it's really … it's harder and it's just now, you know, it's … you're in some way more … I'm more reliant on the family and friends. I mean, the friends issue is different because friends I do have here but it's … it's different and it's not different type of friends. It's not in the sense that they're just as good but it's different in the sense that they don't come from the same cultural background as me and now that I'm divorced and there are many issues I think that come about single and I'm Israeli, the way that family is important, is not as much as here. So there is this … now I can feel the gaps where I didn't feel them before. So there are changes along the way. I think life has changed what … the feelings of home and what it means to me over the years.

6.2. Y: Mm hmm. Yeah. Just to get the kind of timings right … did you meet your husband here?

6.2.8. A: No, no, no. I met my husband in Israel and we got married 3 months after I got here and he joined me here then. He joined me 3 months later because he needed a work permit, so … so I came here in September, got back to Israel in December, we got married and then he came with me and then we were together for almost … well, 3 and a half, 4 years and then we got divorced and I got back to Israel for 8 months and then I got a job here and I came back to England.

6.2. Y: And he came … he didn't …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.9. A: He came because of me. I was … the reason …

6.2. Y: OK. So you had your studies and things like fixed for you and he …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.10. A: He decided to join me.

6.2. Y: OK.

6.2.11. A: He came to England because of me but he didn't want to leave England again when I did.

6.2. Y: Really?

6.2.12. A: (LAUGHS) Yeah. There was a change at some point.

6.2. Y: So he kind of …

6.2.13. A: He liked it here.

6.2. Y: He liked it here but more than … by then more than you?

6.2.14. A: Yes. Yes. Yeah. I think that something … I think it was a matter of … yes. I think that he just wanted to have a good life for himself and he didn't really care about other things towards the end and I do see myself as a Zionist and I want to get back to Israel if I can ever get a job there. So for me it was important more than … yes, I can live here more comfortable life than in Israel in many ways but … but it's not mine. So to me, it mattered more.

6.2. Y: And when you went back after your studies, it was … was it to go back for good or you …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.15. A: I didn't know. No. I mean, I got the job here because I applied for jobs … (TALKING AT SAME TIME) … I came back, I went back because … because of the divorce, because we split up and since I didn't have a job at the time, then I couldn't stay here, so I went back. And in general … that's the funny thing … I really wanted to go back but when I got back I was so … unhappy with being back that I no longer thought that being back in Israel is that important to me. Or let's put it this way. Change the order, the priority in the sense that my feeling now is … as long as I'm on my own, I can do whatever I want and it doesn't really matter for anything … Zionism and stuff … because I'm on my own. But I can't see myself having a family elsewhere. If I have a family, it will be only in Israel I think, you know, I'm not gonna make big claims I have learned that it doesn't work, those big claims. But I think that it's really important. But I just feel now more free to really be wherever is comfortable for me at the moment, which is easy to say because I was unhappy in Israel, so I got the job here and I'm here and I really feel I want to go back. So …

6.2. Y: Can you tell me a little bit about … I mean, this feeling … I mean, I can imagine, if you are here and feel quite like there's something missing ….

6.2.16. A: Mm hmm.

6.2. Y: … in terms of family and in terms of sense of home and then going back to Israel and not finding …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.17. A: I felt an outsider. I think …

6.2. Y: There?

6.2.18. A: Yes. Which was very weird. I think 4 years is a point where … I think a bit less than 4 years … I think 2 years … after 2 years, you just feel there is … I felt there was a switch and when I was there I was an outsider in the sense that many things that before seemed to be … they seemed to be reasonable like, you know, the way that people intervene in each other's life and … I mean, there are good things about it but suddenly they all … they seem to be intrusive. It's not about being rude but very intrusive and so I think I picked up a bit about … from the English people …so there are many things which suddenly seem to me weird or … not weird but just they bothered me and then there was a feeling of an outsider because the years that I was away … many things have changed in Israel. I mean, first of all, there was … the intifada … and I left 3 weeks before the 3 soldiers in Lebanon in har dov were kidnapped. So I left and Israel was fine and about 3 weeks after I left there was the kidnapping then the … intifada started and then … it just felt as if I wasn't there for something that was very constitutive of what being an Israeli today in Israeli is and I just missed on this common experience that they all had and … and it had many effects and I think I could suddenly see many of those effects from an outsider because I came back after a few years and I could see the differences in behaviour because I think society has become in the last 6 years much more aggressive towards one another on the roads … I mean, things that I haven't seen before. Now, it could be one of two things and I think it's partly the two things together. Partly because I'm more aware of them because I've seen something else but partly because I really think there is a change and I think that there is an influence and people are much more stressed there, so and it comes out everywhere. And I came back and I wasn't part of this, you know, dynamic … what's going on. It was …

6.2. Y: Yes. Did it make you in any way … did it in any way affect your sense …

6.2.19. A: Of home.

6.2. Y: … of home? Did it make you question it in any way?

6.2.20. A: Yeah. No, it did because I felt as if I'm not at home here but I'm not at home there. I cannot find my home anywhere. So there are many things that are common but then again there are many things where I think all Israelis should leave abroad for a few years and then come back because I think they'll get some kind of perspective which is really missing. Many Israelis … the feeling of, you know, I'm the best and don't question and be very sure, whatever your position is, you're always very sure and very … many Israelis are very unwilling to listen, to open up, to really be aware of other cultures and other people and I think I've … I was like that and I really think I've tuned down while I was in England. I've opened up. I'm not now sure that everything I say is automatically right just because I'm thinking about it. And it was missing. So when I was … I can tell you when I started dating again after my divorce, I found it a problem because on the one hand when I was here I thought, oh well now I'll date again, I'm gonna date only Israelis, I don't want to marry anyone else, I don't want to be with anyone else. But then when I

got home, I was like … I can't handle those people any more. That's not the people I want to be with. I'm looking for someone Israeli but he had to have lived abroad for a few years because I wanted something else because home is not the same, you know, that's when I said that I was idealising things. That was exactly the feeling that, you know, I thought Israelis X, Y, Z and then I came back and I was there for 8 months and it was none of those things. It was … much more corruption, much more aggressive and things were really, really hard and it was just like … so it's not really home. So what is this home? This home is this idea that you're creating of what Israel was and what Israel is and what is home but it doesn't … it's not reflected in reality not necessarily.

6.2. Y: So it's more like a place inside that you hold while you're abroad

6.2.21. A: … but it doesn't correspond to the reality. Yeah. Changes are there and I've been abroad for 4 years where in Israel … in Israeli terms, it's a very long time, many things happen, many changes happen and it's no longer … I've missed on some experiences, some good, some bad and I'm not part of the dynamic and I had different experiences and when I was talking to friends there was such a huge gap between us … and between the interests and friends which I think are, you know, just as smart as I am and as educated as I am but suddenly I felt as if I'm losing on the substance, you know, like I have discussions with them and I'm not interested in what they're talking about and it was just … there was a gap there.

6.2. Y: I mean, I can imagine that being … in terms of feeling … quite …

6.2.22. A: It's disturbing, it's really disturbing because it makes … it made me question what is it that I want and what is really this home and does this home really exist. Right? It's a question of … is there really a home? Am I trying to just … I'm just creating this idea, fantasy of home but that's not reality. So how … how much Israel is really important to me today … Israel that exists … not the Israel that I want it to be.

6.2. Y: Not the idealised one.

6.2.23. A: Exactly. But the real one. Do I really want to be there? And I'm saying, I think that's part of my feeling that today what I care more just as long as I'm alone at least, just … you know, to be where I feel comfortable and where it's good to me … well, yeah, I know it's a circular argument but anyways … but it's just the feeling that it doesn't have to be Israel and whatever comes and I think that's partly changed because the experience that I had when I was there was … was really hard. It was hard. It was … so there's the smells which are … I can't … for me, it's the smells, you know. I love hiking so going to the places and smelling and those didn't change. But the people and society have changed tremendously and … and I felt as if I'm looking as if I'm on the outside because I had those stops where I would come, you know, twice a year to visit so you come for a week and you just look at it and you go back and then you come and it's like when you don't see someone for a long time you see the changes more. I think I've seen the changes more and I

didn't like the changes very much. So yes. The question of what is home I'm not really sure I have an answer now.

6.2. Y: Yeah. I mean, I think this is very important what you say because what I'm trying to explore is what is … not necessarily what is home but more, what is the sense of lack of home.

6.2.24. A: Yeah.

6.2. Y: So if this situation was created for you where Israel suddenly … you questioned it as a home …

6.2.25. A: Yeah,

6.2. Y: … so I'm thinking, you know, how …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2. Y: How do you kind of construct this idea of, you know, not home here and not home there and what does that mean? Like how does it … come about in your life? Like …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2.26. A: It's really a feeling that, you know what, now for example, my contract is up at the end of this year, so I'm gonna … I'm looking for another job and I have to figure out among other things where I'm looking for a job. So there is this thing that I'm looking in Israel but it seems to me like more of like … I'm doing it because of inertia rather than because I really want to go because there are so many things … reasons now which I don't want to go back really, not just yet. But I can't bring myself to say, no I'm not gonna look out there and I know that if I get a job there, I'll consider it very seriously and obviously it's compared to if I get a job here, where would it be and everything and like more on a professional basis and if professionally it will be good, I will go back but I can't tell you that I really want to go back. I want to in the sense that, yes, I'm still connected and it's my people and it's my culture and even if it's bad, you know what, part of the reason that it's home is that it really bothers me that things have changed. It really … it gets under my skin.

6.2. Y: Yeah. Which is what you said before about being emotionally attached to the place, so you care more about it.

6.2.27. A: Exactly. So … in this sense, it's still home but I … I hate so much what it has turned into that … I'm not sure I really want to go. I really have this … so it's not home there. It's not home here because it's not mine, you know, and I like the people, I like my friends but … what was it that one of my friends … Israeli friends by the way had said … you know, there will be here anti Semitic … anti Semitism and there will be here, you know, a second holocaust. Then our great friends from college will just send an email … can anyone please help, I have a Jewish friend, can anyone please help and take her because

I've already fulfilled my stint for this term… (LAUGHS) … you know, just like … and it's true and it has this feeling that at the end of the day, you know, this is the email they're gonna send … a very lovely email, very nice but they're not gonna do anything, they're not gonna go out of their skin and I know that in Israel my friends would. Although in other ways, they're just as helpful and when I was going through my divorce and I had really rough times and I had a friend here who's actually American and when she talked to me after one time when I was very down, she suggested to come and visit me just to be with me for 2 weeks, you know, I mean, she's gonna pay for it and she's a student, it's hard for her and I know that and she just wanted to come and be with me and that … you know, that's where friendship counts. Right? That's the test for friendship. What will they do if something bad goes, if something goes wrong? And they were there. So I can't tell you that they're not as good friends as my friends in Israel but it's a different tone. So this is not home and it's not mine and I don't want it to become mine. I really … I actually have very strong feelings that I don't want it to ever become really home because I believe that Israel is the place …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.2. Y: So there's some resistance to …

6.2.28. A: Exactly.

6.2. Y: … building a sense of home here.

6.2.29. A: Yeah. So it feels like I'm always like … you know, on the suitcases. Although I'm not. I'm here for 6 years and it's a long time but I'm on the suitcases. I don't want it to be home so I'm resisting turning it into a home. And Israel is not home and I know it's weird to feel a lack of home without actually now having a definition of what is home for me. But I do feel a lack of home but it's just … it makes it more of a … hopeless situation because there is no home anywhere. Right? I mean, in each place there is those great big things which turn the home into a bad home in a sense. I mean, home obviously have bad things and good things but it just turns it into … when the balance changes, it becomes a bad home and then … and there is sometimes this feeling, so OK, so what exactly do you want out of … you know, what is it that I want? And I'm not sure I have an answer and it sometimes goes get to the point, not very often, but you know, when I'm now thinking about the job, if I did get to a point where I was just like … OK, so what is it? Just answer to yourself, what is it that you want? What are you looking for? Can you find it? And I'm not sure I can find it now anywhere? So it's like … it's hard … yeah.

6.3. Y: OK. I mean, if you look at that feeling like you describe it now … some people I spoke to kind of told me that this feeling was something that was almost provoked by certain situations or certain people, that it suddenly came up for them. And others said that in some way, it's there all the time.

6.3.1. A: It's constant.

6.3. Y: It's constant. So it must …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.3.2. A: It's constant. For me, it's constant. Obviously there are times where it's more emphasised but it's always there, it's always the feeling that, you know, it's not mine. So it … there are situations usually, you know, now Christmas comes and they're all round this Christmas and I'm like … this is not mine and it's not my culture. So I know it's a religious but it's not just a religious. It's almost …it's a cultural thing.

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.3.3. A: That's not mine and I have … Hanuka … and I didn't have …Hanuka … you know, to put up costumes in Purim … I don't think I've done it since High School but then again you're just walking on the streets and seeing the people do that … I don't have it. So I think around holidays which is more, you know, homey times and … then it comes up more. It came up very, very strongly over the summer with the war in Lebanon, which I really felt as if I'm away from home, I'm not there to support but home is not there to support me. So I felt both that I'm not there to support my friends when, you know, their husband went to reserve duty and they had real hard time and I felt that there is no one there to support me and I felt like I'm an outsider and I felt … I felt as if I don't deserve to make any comments about what's going on because I'm not there. It was just like … it was … that was I think the point where in the last year I can tell you was really emphasised because something wrong was going on.

6.4. Y: Yeah. It's hard. OK. My next question I think you kind of touched most of it really but I kind of wanted to know how this has influences or impacts on your daily life and you did mention but is there anything else you want to add in terms of … I don't know … psychological wellbeing, family, relationships …

6.4.1. A: No.

6.4. Y: … job … I don't know. Is there anything else?

6.4.2. A: Well, no. I think … I mean, it comes up now with the job and … no. I mean, it comes up because it's constant, this feeling. It comes up in many … in many places but I can't pinpoint anything specific. It's just in the background always for everything that I'm doing, you know. When I'm dating someone, there is always issues. I need to know that he'll come back to me to Israel, you know, if anything serious is gonna happen. Yeah. I just think that it's always there. It's present.

6.5. Y: OK. And taking you back to what you said just before about how there is this … maybe … I don't know if you would describe it in that way

but that you feel a certain shift as to wanting to feel more comfortable about, you know, living where you feel comfortable in terms of yourself.

6.5.1. A: Yeah.

6.5. Y: So, I mean, my next question is about how … how do you feel you manage or cope with this feeling of homelessness?

6.5.2. A: (LAUGHS)

6.5. Y: And I'm asking maybe if this is one of your ways, like to say … OK, I'm gonna live where I'm comfortable but …

6.5.3. A: Yeah.

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.5.4. A: I think it is in some ways trying to create my small home rather than the big home in the sense I just make myself comfortable. I know it doesn't … it's not completely logical because part of it is based on the big home and being in the society and the place where I feel home but it's just like I'm going for the more limited option. Right? I can't get it all and I have to choose so just do something that you'll feel comfortable enough and you can find your way and I'm also not trying to make … I think one of the changes is not trying to make long term plans. So I'm trying to make it now for the next year and then I'll see what's going on. I'm much more open to changes and to … I'm taking on board the idea that I don't have to make long term plans and that things will change and the point of making very long term plans are a bit stupid in the sense that it's gonna change anyway … (LAUGHS) … so I mean, so there is no point or I can have a big plan but I'm also aware that it's very likely to change and be open for it rather than try to resist it and in some ways you don't cope. It's just there and it's part … you know, it's part of the sense that it's always there. It's just like there are good things. I'm not gonna say, you know, it makes me feel as if like I'm really a sad person because of all the things I'm saying and the truth is I'm not and I'm very happy and I have great friends and there are great things in England and, you know, I have a great job and I really enjoy it but it's just there is a part there that is sad that I don't think I can cope with it. It's just … it's there and …

6.5. Y: But maybe that in itself is a way of coping in the sense that …

6.5.5. A: Yeah.

6.5. Y: … to say … to be able to say, this is part of my life …

6.5.6. A: Yeah.

6.5. Y: … and it's always gonna be there and to kind of accept that in some way, to me sounds like …

6.5.7. A: I'm coping.

6.5. Y: Yeah.

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.5.8. A: My own way I suppose.

(LAUGHTER)

6.5.9. A: Yes. But it's just … it's not something that I can do something with it. Right? I mean, I can't fight it and the sad part is that I think that even if I ever get home eventually and get back to Israel, it will never be getting back home, you know. There isn't … the Lord of the Rings and Frodo … did you read Lord of the Rings?

6.5. Y: Yeah.

6.5.10. A: So when he gets back from, you know, this whole journey and he says, you know, it's never the same, there is always this thing and that's why he ends up going with the elves and Elron and all those things, all those people, magical people. And it's the same feeling. It's the feeling that there is always gonna be there something … something heavy and it's just …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.5. Y: its there sitting…

6.5.11. A: Exactly. And it's gonna be there whatever I do because if I choose to go back to Israel, there is always gonna be this little stone about the choice that I made, especially if things are going … going to go in Israel as bad as they currently are. There is … but if I stay here, there is gonna be a different stone of why I'm not back home.

6.5. Y: Yeah.

6.5.12. A: So, yeah. So I need to live with stones.

(LAUGHTER)

6.5. Y: Yeah. OK. I'm gonna keep that image. I like it.

(LAUGHTER)

6.5. Y: It's a nice image.

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.5.13. A: What? Of Frodo?

6.5. Y: Yeah. And the stones.

(LAUGHTER)

6.5.14. A: Yeah.

6.6. Y: OK. So kind of … in the process of talking about it and thinking about the different aspects of it in your life and so on, I want to take you back to my first question about what does psychological homelessness or תלישות actually mean to you and is the process of talking about it, thinking about it, is there anything else that you feel you want to add to what does it actually mean?

6.6.1. A: I think it's a place where you're comfortable, completely comfortable.

6.6. Y: At home?

6.6.2. A: Home. Not because it's a perfect place and I think that might have not come up at the beginning because it's part of the idealisation but it's not that you feel that it's perfect but it's just that … it's something very familiar, so you can … you know how to deal with everything in some sense and you always have the support and you don't have to have your defences up, you don't have to be on guard. But I mean, it's … it's fine and it's not because there is never gonna be pain or there is never … but it's just that … you know it's all gonna be OK.

6.6. Y: Yeah.

6.6.3. A: It's part of the feeling of home that, at the end of the day, you know, you come home and it's cosy and it's warm and it's … it's yours.

6.6. Y: And so lack of home or …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.6. Y: … homelessness means the opposite of that or?

6.6.4. A: Yes. It just … it just means that there is no place where you can completely relax which is completely yours and I think that's part of what I said when I was trying to build my little home rather than the big home. This place where, you know … just relax for the moment. I mean, don't try to think very big, very wide, just … you know, within … within the 4 walls, just be OK and it's … it's exactly this. It's the feeling that there is always something that you have to be on guard, from criticism from others, from lack of culture, cultural differences, from what's going on, different things. It's just … all that is … the feeling of the lack of complete support that you get at home, you know, with bad and evil but at the end of the day, you have this feeling of complete support and complete security that you have … which you do miss.

6.6. Y: Yeah. And also, I mean, you mentioned the word … own it or it's mine or it's not mine.

6.6.5. A: Yeah.

6.6. Y: So…

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.6.6. A: It is.

6.6. Y: … that's another thing, like …

6.6.7. A: Yeah.

… not feeling that you own the …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.6.8. A: Yeah. It's always … yes. It's always feeling as if you're on the move, that you're in between, someone is doing you a favour in some way. Right?

6.6. Y: Like in between homes.

6.6.9. A: Exactly. Exactly. You're … yeah, you just … you haven't found your place. It's not yours and it's not just what you get, it's also what you give others. I mean, I don't think it's all about the support you get. It's also the support that you give and there is always something that is gonna stop. It's this … it's your place in the world, it really is.

6.7. Y: Yeah. OK. Basically that was the questions I had but …

6.7.1. A: You just wanted to say … I wanted to ask about Israeli dressed as Jewish.

6.7. Y: Yes. I wanted to come back to that.

6.7.2. A: Yeah. I mean, the idea is this. When you grow up in Israel, Israel being a Jewish state, it's not separated in a way. You're Jewish and you're Israeli, it's one identity. I mean, for me, it always was. I was orthodox, I grew up in an orthodox house and (HEBREW) … it was just … it's one thing. You don't split. It's part of … you know, it's like splitting between … well, I don't have a good example, so I'll skip that one. It's just … it's one thing, it really is connected and in the army I was … I was an education officer … (INAUDIBLE) … it sounds horrible … and I would give … (LAUGHS) … seminars to cadets and Jewish identity … their identity. And one of the first things that we tried to do is distinguish in what way they feel Jewish and what way they feel Israeli and it always came up as they feel Jewish … and they found it really hard actually and they always said that they felt Jewish in holidays, they felt Israeli when they went … I don't know … on the trip to Auschwitz and all those places and they felt Israelis … and I think this division

exists more in secular people rather than in orthodox because it's not divided in this way, it wasn't divided in this way for me and when I came here and … and you can be Jewish and you can be British and it was weird because for me, being proud and being Israelis, being Jewish Israeli, it's not I'm Israeli but then I'm also Jewish. And I think … you know, I think it comes up for Israelis here, even with the relationship to the synagogue. For the Jewish here, it's … it's part of their culture. It's not that they go because they necessarily observe or … many of them don't … but they go to the synagogue at the weekend because it's part of their culture. It's for much more than that. It's to get the sense and smells of Judaism and Israelis don't. Secular Israelis, even if they have kids, they don't go to the synagogue because, for them, synagogue is like this religious thing. It's not a Jewish thing and they're Jewish but they don't need this element of Judaism, they don't need the mirroring, the reflecting of their Judaism. And so … and for them the synagogue is just … so the split … I think in the synagogue, it was very clear because when I … I went for the first 4 years to the synagogue and it was very clear that … that my Israeli friends who were secular never came, even if they had small kids and for the kids it's lots of fun. They didn't come because they didn't need this mirroring because, for them, I think it's the same and I think it is the same for me because now that I've stopped observing, I don't go to the synagogue at all, not even in high holidays and it's not because I'm trying to … I don't know … rebel against God. It's because I don't need this mirroring of being Jewish. It's not split for me. So trying to split …

6.7. Y: It's still there for you and you don't …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.7.3. A: Yeah. It's who I am. Being Israeli is first and foremost being Jewish. That's like the first stone. The corner stone for the whole building. I'm not Israeli. So this split … I'm more aware of the 2 different identities since I got to Britain but I'm aware of it more in the intellectual level rather than …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.7.4. A: … it's one. It's really completely one.

6.7. Y: The other thing that came up in some of the interviews was how the issue of being a woman fit in to all this. I mean …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.7.5. A: I have nothing to say about that. I mean, you don't … it doesn't … the only thing is when you are looking for a partner but I think it would come up as a man looking for a woman partner. I don't think it's because I'm a woman. No. Really. My … woman … the feminine identity … it's there … I don't know … I've got nothing … I don't think …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.7. Y: It doesn't feel to you like it has something to do with …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.7.6. A: Homelessness. No.

6.7. Y: … it relates in any way to … OK, that's fine. That's fine.

6.7.7. A: I know it's fine. (LAUGHS)

6.7. Y: I'm asking because I want to hear, you know, all the different perspectives.

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.7.8. A: Yeah, I know. My feeling of being a woman doesn't matter at all. It really doesn't.

6.7. Y: OK.

6.7.9. A: Obviously I've got experiences as a woman here but they're not related to the feeling of homelessness and being Israeli away.

6.7. Y: OK, that's fine.

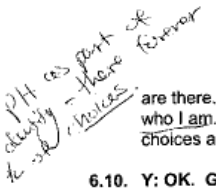
6.7.10. A: Yeah.

6.8. Y: OK. I normally give an opportunity here to switch to Hebrew for people who find it difficult but it doesn't seem to be your problem.

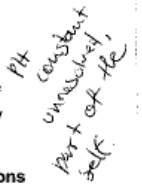
(LAUGHTER)

6.9. Y: So yeah, so finally just to ask you how was the talk about this.

6.9.1. A: It … (LAUGHS) … it brings up the feelings obviously but … I talk about it with friends. I mean, it's not something that I hide or that is … first of all, with Israeli friends, though I must say I don't have that many Israeli friends at the moment. But even with friends who are not Israeli because I think, to some extent, everyone who is living here who comes from a different place and most of my friends cos I'm in the university environment here, most of my friends do come from different countries. They have similar experiences in a weird way because for me it just seems … but the culture is similar in so many ways, more similar to you than it is to me because you're all Christian and they tend to give me similar feedback. So … so yeah, I guess they do see the differences. I think that … OK, I think that here being Jewish makes it a bit harder in the sense that it does single me out because I'm not gonna date someone who's not Jewish, you know, I want to have a Jewish family and for them it's easier because, at the end of the day, they can marry whoever they want and … but I bring it up elsewhere and it's … I have no problem talking about it. It is really … you know, it's part of the stones that



are there. You go with this and it's painful and it's sad but it's … it's part of who I am. I mean, it's part of what my life has become because they're my choices and they'll be there forever. I mean … yeah.



6.10. Y: OK. Good. So I mean, do you have any …at this point, any questions for me?

6.10.1. A: No. How are your homelessness?

6.10. Y: Well, yeah, that's …

(LAUGHTER)

6.10. Y: … a different story. OK. So just really, thank you.

6.10.2. A: You're welcome.

6.10. Y: Everything you said is extremely important and valuable for me.

6.10.3. A: Good. I hope I helped.

6.10. Y: Helpful as well.

6.10.4. A: Yeah.

6.10. Y: Normally I offer this list of sort of resources. They're more London based, so I don't know if it will be relevant for you, if you want them.

6.10.5. A: OK.

6.10. Y: For some people … some people, as a result of the interview, felt like it brought up a lot of issues for them.

6.10.6. A: No.

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.10. Y: So if you want to …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.10.7. A: Don't worry, I'm not gonna go funny afterwards.

6.10. Y: OK.

6.10.8. A: No, I mean, because I'm very aware of what's going on and I'm talking about it with friends, so it's not something new that is suddenly I'm …

(TALKING AT SAME TIME)

6.10.9. A: It's not gonna bring up now new feelings, I mean ..

6.10. Y: OK.

6.10.10. A: But thanks anyway.

6.10. Y: I think we can close this anyway.

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix 11: Example of Theme Table for One Participant

Table B.3: Theme 1 for Ayelet with Subthemes, and Quotes

Theme	Sub Themes			Quotes
Development of Psychological Homelessness	Process over time			6.2.1 So there was the fun bit. It didn't feel as if it had to be home. I mean, it was just more of … OK, it's a nice experience, let's see how it is, how it works 6.2.1 when I just got here, there was this feeling that I need the connection, although I didn't feel I need the home. I just felt I need the connection with the people, something that is like … it's from the same culture but it was fine. It wasn't home, it wasn't supposed to be home here.
	Exploring the meaning of psychological homelessness	Definitions of psychological homelessness		66.1.4 there is a story where the further the kid grows, the string between the mother's heart and the heart of the kid, then you just feel as if it sometimes is being torn. 6.2.20 I felt as if I'm not at home here but I'm not at home there. I cannot find my home anywhere. 6.2.27 So … in this sense, it's [IL] still home but I … I hate so much what it has turned into that [] it's not home there. It's not home here because it's not mine,.6.4 … it just means that there is no place where you can completely relax which is completely yours [] 6.6.8 It's always feeling as if you're on the move, that you're in between, someone is doing you a favour in some way.[] you haven't found your place. 6.2.29 I do feel a lack of home but it's just … it makes it more of a … hopeless situation because there is no home anywhere. Right? I mean, in each place there is those great big things which turn the home into a bad home in a sense.
		Definitions of home		6.1.1 it's the place where I grew up and it's the smells and it's the people and it's the … it's the language and it's the arts and it's everything, friends. 6.2.4 after 2 years here I had enough. I was just … I want home, I want the stability and just, you know, getting home at the end of the day, the feeling that it's yours, that everyone really cares, that you care about the place 6.6.1 I think it's a place where you're comfortable, completely comfortable.6.6.2 Not because it's a perfect place [] but it's just that … it's something very familiar, so you can … you know how to deal with everything [] it's fine and it's not because there is never gonna be pain [] but it's just that [] it's all gonna be OK. [] it's cosy and it's warm and it's … it's yours. 6.6.4 with bad and evil but at the end of the day, you have this feeling of complete support and complete security [] … which you do miss.
		How does psychological homelessness manifest itself?	Not belonging in UK	6.1.1. Being rootless in England, feeling that … it's not home and it will never be home.
			Not belonging in Israel	6.2.17-18 I felt an outsider. I think …[] Which was very weird [] there was a feeling of an outsider because the years that I was away … many things have changed in Israel. [] it just felt as if I wasn't there for something that was very constitutive of what being an Israeli today in Israeli is and I just missed on this common experience that they all had 6.2.21 I was talking to friends there was such a huge gap between us …but suddenly I felt as if I'm losing on the substance, you know, like I have discussions with them and I'm not interested in what they're talking about and it was just … there was a gap there. 6.3.3. I felt like I'm an outsider and I felt … I felt as if I don't deserve to make any comments about what's going on because I'm not there. [] that was I think the point where [] was really emphasised because something wrong was going on. [2006 war with Lebanon] 6.2.15 that's the funny thing … I really wanted to go back but when I got back I was so … unhappy with being back that I no longer thought that being back in Israel is that important to me.

The impact of Psychological Homelessness	Intra-psychic processes	Psychological wellbeing	Loneliness (and ID threat)	6.1.3 being away from someone that you love and something that you love [] You feel much more lonely in a way in England because []… because most of the people are anti-Israeli. 6.2.1 I think only when I landed in England, I understood how lonely I'm gonna be. I'm really … I've done it but I'm really now on my own
		"Not here and not there" – ambivalence, doubt, questioning, contradictions and disparity		6.2.22 It's disturbing, it's really disturbing because it makes … it made me question what is it that I want and what is really this home and does this home really exist. Right? It's a question of … is there really a home? Am I trying to just … I'm just creating this idea, fantasy of home but that's not reality. So how … how much Israel is really important to me today … Israel that exists … not the Israel that I want it to be. 6.2.26 There are so many things … reasons now which I don't want to go back really, not just yet. But I can't bring myself to say, no I'm not gonna look out there but I can't tell you that I really want to go back. I want to in the sense that, yes, I'm still connected and it's my people and it's my culture 6.2.29 there is sometimes this feeling, so OK, so what exactly do you want out of … you know, what is it that I want? And I'm not sure I have an answer and it sometimes does get to the point, [] … OK, so what is it? Just answer to yourself, what is it that you want? What are you looking for? Can you find it? And I'm not sure I can find it now anywhere, So it's like … it's hard … yeah.
	Interpersonal Processes	Giving/receiving support		6.6.9 I don't think it's all about the support you get. It's also the support that you give
		Friends and family in Israel		6.2.1 as Israelis we don't really get away from home until we go abroad. I mean, it's not like when here [] in Israel you go every week, every other weekend and so you're much more close and everything is closer. 6.2.7 growing in Israel, you know, when you have kids, families are very close, closer in Israel I think than elsewhere.
		Friends and social circle in the UK	Israeli friends	6.2.1 It's like a big magnet and that, on the other hand, has changed because now when I see Israelis I don't feel automatically I need [] to become friends with them just because they're Israelis because [] some of them are people I wouldn't talk for a second time.
			Social circle/friends	6.1.1 … I ended up having very, very good friends who are not Israeli or not Jewish and … and they are just as good as friends as I have in Israel but … but they're not part of my culture and it takes more time to explain many things to them because you just need the background, the culture, the home
	3.4 Social Identity and Group Processes	Being Israeli		6.1.4 I keep in touch with what's going on at home. I think I read about 4 times a day [] an online newspaper of what's going on and I feel really involved and I really get angry with things …that happen there….all the … the whole range of feelings that are involved in it, which I don't here … I mean, here things, you know, I'm aware of what's going on, I keep updated on the news but it doesn't touch me … it's not mine. 6.1.5 Feeling attached to something. Everything that is attached. The anger and the fear and I think when things get hard home, then it's really stress … stressing to be away 6.2.26 part of the reason that it's home is that it really bothers me that things have changed. It really gets under my skin.
			Distancing self from Israeli habits /behaviour/ID	6.2.20 I think I've … I was like that [like Israelis] and I really think I've tuned down while I was in England. I've opened up. I'm not now sure that everything I say is automatically right just because I'm thinking about it. 6.5.9 the sad part is that I think that even if I ever get home eventually and get back to Israel, it will never be getting back home, []it's never the same, []It's the feeling that there is always gonna be there something … something heavy.
		Being Jewish		6.7.2 when I came here and … and you can be Jewish and you can be British and it was weird because for me, [] being proud and being Jewish Israeli, it's not I'm Israeli but then I'm also Jewish. [] it comes up for Israelis here, [] now that I've stopped observing, I don't go to the synagogue at all [] I don't need this mirroring of being Jewish. It's not split

				for me. [] It's who I am. Being Israeli is first and foremost being Jewish. I'm more aware of the 2 different identities since I got to Britain
		Being a woman		6.7.5 I don't think it's because I'm a woman. No. Really. My … woman … the feminine identity … it's there … I don't know … I've got nothing … I don't think … 6.7.8. My feeling of being a woman doesn't matter at all. It really doesn't [] Obviously I've got experiences as a woman here but they're not related to the feeling of homelessness and being Israeli away.
		Being a mother [also ambivalence, being single]		6.2.7 now that I'm divorced and there are many issues I think that come about single and I'm Israeli, the way that family is important [] … now I can feel the gaps where I didn't feel them before. 6.2.4 being abroad, the notion of a family was very hard. [] but to start a family when we were thinking about kids, it was … I wanted to do it in a place where I know the culture and I know what I'm looking for and I didn't want my kids to grow elsewhere. So that brought about a lot of feeling of rootlessness, of being away… 6.2.7 It initiated a lot of feelings of where is home, started to question, where is home, where should home be, what are we looking for. 6.2.15 as long as I'm on my own, I can do whatever I want and it doesn't really matter for anything … Zionism and stuff … because I'm on my own. But I can't see myself having a family elsewhere. If I have a family, it will be only in Israel I think, you know, I'm not gonna make big claims I have learned that it doesn't work, those big claims. But I think that it's really important. But I just feel now more free to really be wherever is comfortable for me at the moment, which is easy to say because I was unhappy in Israel, so I got the job here and I'm here and I really feel I want to go back.
		Being an immigrant – cultural barrier		6.1.1 but they're not part of my culture and it takes more time to explain many things to them because you just need the background, the culture, the home
		Being an immigrant - Being on guard – ID threat		6.6.2 you always have the support and you don't have to have your defences up, you don't have to be on guard. 6.6.4 It's the feeling that there is always something that you have to be on guard, from criticism from others, from lack of culture, cultural differences, from what's going on, different things. It's just … all that is … the feeling of the lack of complete support that you get at home
Attempts at Psychological Management	Internal Processes	Focus on the present (also temporariness as coping)		6.5.4 I think one of the changes is not trying to make long term plans. [] I'm much more open to changes and to … I'm taking on board the idea that I don't have to make long term plans and that things will change and the point of making very long term plans are a bit stupid in the sense that it's gonna change anyway … (LAUGHS) []rather than try to resist it
		Redefining concepts	Redefining Home	6.5.4 trying to create my small home rather than the big home in the sense I just make myself comfortable. []it's not completely logical because part of it is based on the big home and being in the society and the place where I feel home but it's just like I'm going for the more limited option [] I can't get it all and I have to choose so just do something that you'll feel comfortable enough and you can find your way 6.6.4. I mean, don't try to think very big, very wide, just … you know, within … within the 4 walls, just be OK
		Acquiescence/resolving to the fact that things are not going to change/resignation		6.5.4 in some ways you don't cope. It's just there and it's part … you know, it's part of the sense that it's always there. It's just like there are good things. [] there are great things in England [] but it's just there is a part there that is sad that I don't think I can cope with it. It's just … it's there [] I cant fight it [] so I need to live with stones… 6.9.1 . You go with this and it's painful and it's sad but it's … it's part of who I am. I mean, it's part of what my life has become because they're my choices and they'll be there forever.
"Things are all the time not solved..."	Continuous feeling			6.3.2 It's constant. For me, it's constant. Obviously there are times where it's more emphasised but it's always there, it's always the feeling that, you know, it's not mine. 6.4.2. It's just in the background always for everything that I'm doing, [] it's always there. It's present.

		6.3.3 So I think around holidays which is more, you know, homey times and … then it comes up more.
	Resistance to turning UK into home	6.1.1 it will never be home. [] it will never be mine 6.2.27 So this is not home and it's not mine and I don't want it to become mine. I really … I actually have very strong feelings that I don't want it to ever become really home because I believe that Israel is the place … 6.2.29 I don't want it to be home so I'm resisting turning it into a home.
	5.2 Feeling trapped, unable to move/change	6.5.11 it's gonna be there whatever I do because if I choose to go back to Israel, there is always gonna be this little stone about the choice that I made, especially if things are going to go in Israel as bad as they currently are. [] but if I stay here, there is gonna be a different stone of why I'm not back home.

Appendix 12: Example of One Super-Ordinate Theme

Table B.4: 'Development of Psychological Homelessness' with Subthemes, Quote Locations and Example Quotes (From all Participants)

Theme Title	Sub Themes			Location of Quotes	Examples of quotes
Development of psychological homelessness	Process over time			6.2.1, 2.5.3, 2.5.6, 9.3.1, 6.2.1, **6.2.4**, **3.6.9**, 5.1.4, 5.3.3, **8.3.17**	6.2.4 '[at first] I wasn't looking for the feeling of home here and it changed [] I needed more the home' (Ayelet) 3.6.9 'To be honest, I'm quite feeling this with the time. I didn't feel that in the start.' (Liat) 8.3.17 Things had changed in the way that I sort of realised that I feel … enough not at home in Israel and slightly at home here [] and I've definitely noticed a … interesting … how this slightly shifted over time' (Tali)
	Exploring the meaning of psychological homelessness	Definitions of psychological homelessness		6.1.4, **6.2.20**, 6.2.27, **6.6.4**, 6.6.8, 3.1.4, **3.6.3**, 3.6.9, 3.6.16, **2.1.4**, 2.2.25, **1.1.3**, 1.3.4, 1.6.1, 8.1.1, 8.3.4, 4.1.10, 4.4.10, 4.6.1, 9.1.4, 2.4.19, 2.5.16	6.2.20 'I felt as if I'm not at home here but I'm not at home there. I cannot find my home anywhere' (Ayelet) 6.6.4 'It just means that there is no place where you can completely relax which is completely yours' (Ayelet) 3.6.3 I don't belong. I don't … like suddenly, I become realise. I don't belong there and I don't belong here. [] I have a room to sleep but it's not my room. (Liat) 2.1.4 You don't belong here but you don't belong there as well.[] So I feel like a visitor there but also a visitor here. (Tamar) 1.1.3 'trapped … (PAUSE) yeah, of loss …basically. [] Unable to find anything that's … really … connected to your roots, but seriously not.' (Sarah) 8.1.1 'Israel no longer really feels like my home but the UK doesn't really feel like my home either [] I sort of lost the feelings that [] somewhere … is totally my… my home.' (Tali)
		Definitions of home		6.1.1, 6.2.4, **6.6.1**, 6.6.2, **6.6.4**, 3.9.3, **9.1.4**, 9.4.20, 9.4.36, 9.4.46, 9.3.14	.6.1 'I think it's a place where you're comfortable, completely comfortable. (Ayelet) 6.6.4 'you have this feeling of complete support and complete security [] … which you do miss.'(Ayelet) 9.1.4 My family is my shelter, something that protects me.comfortable, completely comfortable. (Rachel)
		Why do I feel psychological homelessness?		**8.9.7**, 3.1.6, 3.9.21	8.9.7 The fact that we grew up in a society that's attached, this whole Zionism thing and attached to values. [] And all these value judgments. [] it was considered to be a terrible betrayal to go and of course I don't believe that but … something of that … still rubs in
		How does psychological homelessness manifest itself?	Not belonging in UK	**6.1.1**, 5.1.6, 5.1.8, 5.6.12, **5.1.10**, 4.8.1, 9.7.2, **2.1.4**	6.1.1. Being rootless in England, feeling that … it's not home and it will never be home. (Ayelet) 5.1.10 But I more not belong… here, especially when Christmas comes and all these sort of things which are nothing to do with me. (Edna) 2.1.4 I don't feel British, eh … the British history and, em … is all very remote for me, It's not part of my identity at all obviously. (Tamar) 4.8.1 [H] Here I have no roots, I lost all my roots,

					and I think this is everything, your roots. (Ofra)
			Not belonging in Israel	**6.2.17, 6.2.18**, 6.2.21, 6.3.3, 3.1.3, **3.6.2**, 3.6.4, 3.6.6, **2.1.4**, 2.2.25, 5.1.8, 1.2.16, 8.3.11, 9.4.33, 9.4.39	6.2.17-18 I felt an outsider. I think …[] Which was very weird [] it just felt as if I wasn't there for something that was very constitutive of what being an Israeli today in Israeli is (Ayelet) 2.1.4 everything there very distant for me now and, em … em … when I visit, I feel like a tourist (Tamar) 3.6.2 I feel homeless…quite. Because when I'm going to Israel, I can't find myself really because I don't have my place (Liat)

Appendix 13: Table of All Themes

Table B.5: All Themes with Subthemes and Quote Locations

Theme	Subthemes			Quote locations
Development of Psychological Homelessness	Process over time			6.2.1, 2.5.3, 2.5.6, 9.3.1, 6.2.1, 6.2.4, 3.6.9, 5.1.4 5.3.3, 8.3.17
	Exploring the meaning of Psychological Homelessness	Definitions of Psychological Homelessness		6.1.4, 6.2.20, 6.2.27, 6.6.4 6.6.8, 3.1.4, 3.6.3, 3.6.9, 3.6.16, 2.1.4, 2.2.25, 1.1.3, 1.3.4, 1.6.1, 8.1.1, 8.3.4, 4.1.10, 4.4.10, 4.6.1, 9.1.4, 2.4.19, 4.6.1, 2.5.16
		Definitions of Home		6.1.1, 6.2.4, 6.6.1, 6.6.2, 6.6.4, 3.9.3, 9.1.4, 9.4.20, 9.4.36, 9.4.46, 9.8.1, 9.3.14
		Why do I feel Psychological Homelessness?		8.9.7, 3.1.6, 3.9.2
		How does Psychological Homelessness manifest itself?	Not belonging in the UK	6.1.1, 5.1.6, 5.1.8, 5.6.12, 5.1.10, 4.8.1, 9.7.2, 2.1.4
			Not belonging in Israel	6.2.17-18, 6.2.21, 6.3.3, 3.1.3, 3.6.2, 3.6.4, 3.6.6, 2.1.4, 2.2.25, 5.1.8, 5.2.13, 1.2.16, 8.3.11, 8.5.8, 9.4.33, 9.4.39
The impact of Psychological Homelessness	Psychological wellbeing	Feelings of Low mood		3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.10, 3.3.7, 2.3.3, 2.3.5, 2.4.19, 2.5.3, 4.2.20, 9.4.11, 6.2.29, 3.6.13, 3.6.23, 4.4.7, 4.1.7
		Loneliness		6.1.3, 6.2.1, 3.3.21, 3.3.30, 3.6.13, 2.2.1, 2.3.3, 5.6.9, 1.3.13, 4.1.7, 9.8.1
		Feelings of anxiety		3.6.13, 3.6.16, 6.1.4, 6.2.18, 6.2.20, 6.2.20, 3.6.25, 3.6.26, 2.2.23, 5.8.1
	Intra-psychic processes	Sense of loss of self/Identity		4.2.20, 2.4.2, 2.6.1, 2.4.2, 3.3, 4.5.12, 3.4.2, 3.4.2, 5.2.4, 5.4.17
		"Not here and not there" – ambivalence, doubt, contradiction and disparity		6.2.22, 2.5.5, 6.2.15, 6.2.23, 3.3.14, 3.6.19, 3.6.22, 6.2.26, 6.2.29, 3.3.1, 3.3.17, 2.2.24, 4.2.11, 9.4.9
		Life feels temporary and stuck, on hold		2.4.5, 4.6.2, 9.3.6, 9.8.1, 6.2.29, 6.6.8, 3.3.13, 2.4.1, 5.1.6, 8.4.2
	Interpersonal Processes			6.6.9, 3.4.2, 2.2.2, 1.1.1, 4.6.2
		Nuclear family – husband and children		3.1.6, 3.3.20, 3.6.13, 2.2.16, 5.5.11, 4.5.6, 4.8.6, 8.4.2, 3.6.13, 2.4.1, 5.2.3, 1.2.4, 9.4.11, 9.8.1
		Family and friends in Israel	Family of origin	6.2.1, 6.2.7, 2.2.2, 2.2.9, 2.2.25, 2.2.26, 8.3.11, 9.4.9
			Friends in Israel	3.9.21, 1.2.20
		Friends and social circle in the UK		6.1.1, 8.3.5
			Israeli community in the UK	6.2.1, 3.3.23, 2.3.3, 2.5.4, 2.5.16, 5.8.1, 4.1.4, 4.5.2, 9.4.35, 9.8.1
	Social Identity and Group Processes	Being Israeli		6.1.4, 6.1.5, 6.2.26, 3.4.9, 3.3.23, 3.6.29, 3.9.13, 3.9.17, 2.1.4, 5.2.4, 5.4.10, 1.3.10, 1.4.1, 4.2.4, 9.4.37, 1.1.3, 8.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.3.3, 9.5.10, 4.2.8, 2.2.12, 2.2.18
			Distancing from Israeli identity	8.3.5, 8.3.9, 6.2.20, 3.5.3, 2.5.12, 2.6.3
			Feelings of guilt	3.6.26, 3.9.2, 5.1.11, 5.2.5, 5.8.1, 8.3.117, 8.3.22, 9.4.9, 9.4.11, 9.4.50, 9.4.53, 9.4.57, 9.7.8
		Being Jewish		6.7.2, 5.8.1, 1.5.6, 4.3.2, 4.4.1, 9.5.9, 1.2.1, 4.1.4
		Being a Woman		6.2.7, 3.9.2, 8.10.9, 3.3.32, 3.4.9, 3.6.13, 3.9.3, 9.5.16, 9.8.1
		Being a Mother		6.2.4, 6.2.7, 6.2.15, 3.6.22, 2.2.2, 2.2.17, 5.2.7, 1.2.4, 9.4.23, 9.4.27, 2.3.5, 2.3.15, 4.8.7
		Being an Immigrant		6.1.1, 3.9.6, 2.2.3, 5.6.5, 1.3.7, 4.2.3, 5.8.1,

				5.1.3, 6.1.5, 5.4.3
			Communication and relationship styles	2.2.2, 2.2.9, 2.2.25, 2.2.26, 8.3.11
			Language barrier	5.4.10, 5.1.3, 8.3.11
			Being misunderstood	8.6.1, 8.9.3, 9.8.1
Attempts at Psychological Management	Internal Processes	Wish to escape, avoid or distract		3.3.2, 3.4.4, 3.5.1, 9.4.15, 9.4.33, 9.4.34, 6.5.4, 8.4.4, 8.4.6, 4.9.1, 3.6.11, 4.2.11, 9.4.11, 3.6.11, 8.5.6, 3.3.20
		Temporariness and the Dream of return		5.5.2, 5.5.14, 8.5.6, 4.2.9, 8.5.7, 9.4.19, 3.9.17, 2.2.12, 5.5.7, 4.2.14
		Being aware of process		4.4.11, 4.5.3
		Redefining Concepts	Redefining Home	6.5.9, 2.7.9, 4.8.4, 4.8.11, 6.2.23, 6.5.4, 6.6.4, 2.6.1, 5.5.1
			Redefining UK	2.2.22, 3.5.2
			Redefining self and identity	2.3.5, 2.3.17, 5.7.1
		'I have to carry on hanging'		6.5.4, 6.9.1, 3.6.18, 3.6.22, 1.2.4, 1.3.8, 4.2.19, 4.2.23
	Interpersonal Processes	Communicating psychological homelessness		2.5.3, 3.9.2, 3.6.18
		Social and familial support		4.4.14, 9.5.4
"Things are all the time not solved…"				6.3.2, 6.4.2, 6.3.3, 3.3.2, 2.3.2, 5.3.5, 5.9.1, 1.3.4, 8.3.14, 9.7.8
	"It will never be home, I don't want I to…"			4.3.4, 6.1.1, 2.6.1, 9.8.1, 6.2.27, 6.2.29, 3.3.18, 2.4.2, 5.1.10, 9.4.19, 9.7.2
	Feeling trapped, unable to move			4.4.2, 1.6.1, 3.6.22

Appendix 14: Theme list

1. Development of Psychological Homelessness
    - 1.1 Process over time
    - 1.2 Exploring the meaning of psychological homelessness
        - 1.2.1 Definitions of psychological homelessness
        - 1.2.2 Definitions of home
        - 1.2.3 Why do I feel psychological homelessness?
        - 1.2.4 How does psychological homelessness manifest itself?
            - 1.2.4.1 Not belonging in the UK
            - 1.2.4.2 Not belonging in Israel
2. Impact of Psychological Homelessness
    - 2.1 Psychological wellbeing
        - 2.1.1 Feelings of low mood
        - 2.1.2 Loneliness
        - 2.1.3 Feelings of anxiety
    - 2.2 Intra-psychic processes
        - 2.2.1 Sense of loss of self/identity
        - 2.2.2 "Not here and not there" – ambivalence, doubt, contradiction and disparity
        - 2.2.3 Life feels temporary and 'on hold'
    - 2.3 Interpersonal processes
        - 2.3.1 Nuclear family – husband and children
        - 2.3.2 Family and friends in Israel
            - 2.3.2.1 Family of origin
            - 2.3.2.2 Friends in Israel
        - 2.3.3 Friends and social circle in the UK
            - 2.3.3.1 Israeli community in the UK
    - 2.4 Social identity and group processes
        - 2.4.1 Being Israeli
            - 2.4.1.1 Distancing from Israeli identity
            - 2.4.1.2 Feelings of guilt
        - 2.4.2 Being Jewish
        - 2.4.3 Being a woman
        - 2.4.4 Being a mother
        - 2.4.5 Being an immigrant
3. Attempts at Psychological Management
    - 3.1 Internal processes
        - 3.1.1 Avoidance and distraction
        - 3.1.2 Temporariness and the dream of return
        - 3.1.3 Being aware of process
        - 3.1.4 Redefining concepts
            - 3.1.4.1 Redefining home
            - 3.1.4.2 Redefining UK
            - 3.1.4.3 Redefining self and identity
        - 3.1.5 I have to carry on hanging
    - 3.2 Interpersonal processes
        - 3.2.1 Communicating psychological homelessness
        - 3.2.2 Social and familial support
4. "Things are all the time not solved…"
    - 4.1 "It will never be home, I don't want it to…"
    - 4.2 Feeling trapped, unable to move

Appendix 15: Analysis of Theme: 'Process Over Time'

During the interviews, the participants reflect on their time spent in the UK so far, and describe a process of change in their attitude towards their stay in the UK, as well as their general psychological wellbeing. The process seems to be quite similar for most of the participants. They experienced initially a period of excitement, elation and curiosity, a sort of 'honeymoon' period:

> So there was the fun bit. It didn't feel as if it had to be home. I mean, it was just more of…OK, it's a nice experience, let's see how it is, how it works. (Ayelet,6.2.1)

> When I came here to England in the beginning, when I made a decision to come here after we got married. I was really high (Tamar,2.5.3)

> At the beginning, it was nice. It was for a short period of time coming here and basically enjoying the experience. (Rachel,9.3.1)

It could be that, as with travellers, home was not yet an issue for these participants. There is a suggestion here, as mentioned above, of a perception of temporariness about the initial visit to the UK. It might be suggested that the women did not yet experience any threat to their identity, since they were able to maintain their original identity as Israeli women intact. However, this positive and exciting period did not last for long, and the experience of psychological homelessness creeps up on them gradually, the longer they stay in the UK:

> To be honest, I'm quite feeling this {psychological homelessness} with the time. I didn't feel that in the start. (Liat,3.6.9)

Some of the participants are able to articulate the initial thoughts and feelings which promoted or gave rise to the feeling of homelessness. Tali reflects on the change over time which occurred in her feelings of home. For her, the longer she stays in the UK, the less she feels at home in Israel, and essentially there is a growing inner sense of loss of home that is 'blamed' on disconnection in both locations:

> Things had changed in the way [] I feel…enough not at home in Israel and slightly at home here…[] I've definitely noticed [] how this slightly shifted over time (Tali,8.3.17)

On the one hand it could seem self evident that the longer they stay, the further away from Israel they feel, similar to other immigrant populations going through the process of acculturation (Berry, 2003). However for some voluntary migrants the feeling of detachment from their country of origin can be present from the start, which in this context could also be a strong possibility, given the political situation in Israel. Here the participants are describing a gradual and somewhat ambivalent experience which could possibly be an expression of the complexity of their relationship with their original Israeli identity.

Ayelet adds an interesting dimension when describing the development of her sense of psychological homelessness. In her early days in the UK, she feels the need to socialise with Israelis, to surround herself with a familiar and habitual cultural context of language, food, and basic sense of connectedness. At the same time, the fact that she does not feel at home in the UK does not bother her, since this fits her expectations. Over time, she realises her needs change – she does not need to be surrounded by the familiar, but at the same time she feels a growing need for the feeling of home:

> When I just got here, there was this feeling that I need the connection, although I didn't feel I need the home. I just felt I need the connection with the people, something that is like…it's from the same culture but it was fine. It wasn't home, it wasn't supposed to be home here.(Ayelet,6.2.1)

Soon after that, she added:

> I wasn't looking for the feeling of home here and it changed in two ways in the sense that I didn't need the familiar any more but I needed more the home. (Ayelet,6.2.4)

Ayelet's need for a surrounding Israeli community can be seen as an expression of the salience of her Israeli identity at the time, as well as her relative lack of conflict in relation to this identity component. Gradually, it seems that her relationship with her Israeli identity is threatened as doubt arises concerning belonging to Israel. This may cause her to feel a stronger need for a sense of home and belonging. aking this distinction between the feeling of home and the connection and cultural familiarity can shed light on the experience of psychological homelessness discussed here, showing it to be more complex and multifaceted. The participants describe here a feeling that not only involves being on unfamiliar ground, which requires adjustment and assimilation (in the same way that many immigrant groups experience upon immigration, Phinney et al., 2001), but also involves a deeper sense of displacement, or longing for a home. After the initial honeymoon period of arrival, home becomes something that can no longer be taken for granted, or ignored, and there develops a need to understand and give meaning to the emerging sense of psychological homelessness.

Appendix 16: Analysis of Theme: 'Psychological Well Being'

Feelings of Low mood

Many of the participants describe various levels of low mood and symptoms of depression, relating these feelings to their sense of psychological homelessness. Liat, for example, describes throughout her interview feelings of depression, lethargy, lack of motivation and self care, and low mood:

> It's like I'm always tired. I feel like I don't want to do anything. [] I don't put any effort in myself…look [pointing at her clothes] [] In Israel, it would never ever happen [] I'm not gonna look like…garbage. [] I don't have enough energy to make myself look beautiful, [] For what and for who? (Liat,3.4.2-4)

She also describes a process whereby losing the motivation to invest in her appearance and self-care causes her to withdraw socially, which in turn remindes her of her unhappiness in the UK, leading her to care even less and withdraw even more, creating a vicious cycle:

> It's like a chain and then I'm eating something fattening, then I don't care, then I'm putting on weight, [] you're like…ugh, I don't want to look at myself…ugh, I don't want to go out tonight, ugh, its shit here (Liat,3.4.10)

Tamar relates the low mood to her difficulties of being a young mother with very little support from her extended family. However, she asserts that the feeling of psychological homelessness was in itself a cause of her low mood, coupled with the sense of loneliness as a first time mother. At a certain point her depression reached a critical level when she developed suicidal ideations:

> Well, it's started…as post natal depression but I think it's more than that, its also because of this homelessness, that we are talking about[] last year I felt terrible, I felt depressed [] I mean, at least 2 years of depression really and I feel now that I can come out of it but it's still very hard. Sometimes I fall into it again. (Tamar,2.3.3)
>
> I felt very depressed. I even felt suicidal at one point…(2.4.19)

Later, when talking about coping with psychological homelessness, she adds:

> I can tell you what didn't help…(laughs nervously)…to think of [] suicide plans…(Tamar,2.5.3)

For Liat and Ofra, the feelings of low mood are coupled with other feelings often associated with depressive symptoms. These include lack of confidence, sadness, and emptiness. The lack of confidence they both share is also linked to the insecurity resulting from being on unfamiliar ground, reported in other immigrant groups (Narchal, 2007). However, for these women it is not only the unfamiliarity which creates a sense of lack of confidence, but also a deeper feeling of self-doubt, perhaps linked to their deeper identity struggles:

> I feel like less confidence. Like I'm saying, right, I'm not…I'm not…I'm not happy in my job. [] And if I would be in Israel, straight away I will leave. I don't care. I have like a confidence there. (Liat,3.6.13)

This account, coupled with other quotes throughout her interview, demonstrates Liat's perception of herself in Israel as confident, secure, free, outgoing and happy. It could be hypothesised that this reflects an internal management process whereby she idealises her life in Israel as a way to escape from or manage her difficulty in the UK. Ofra directly links her lack of confidence to her psychological homelessness:

> I believe I lost my confidence because I don't…I don't feel at home here. I don't feel good enough with myself at the moment or with the life here…(Ofra,4.4.7)

In addition, when I ask Ofra what feelings are associated with the experience of psychological homelessness, her first response is "*Sadness. A lot of sadness" (4.1.7).* However, later she describes a sense of emptiness as the dominant feelings for her, which develop and grow over time:

> I feel empty. Very, very, very empty. To begin with, when we first moved here, it was all very exciting [] but the more…the more the year goes by, I feel very, very, very empty, em…now…I don't feel at home at all, em (LONG PAUSE) (Ofra)

Ofra's experience of emptiness can be seen as a way of expressing her sense of lack of a solid sense of self and identity – no place within herself from which to draw energy and motivation, or perhaps no sense of home within herself. In addition, Ofra's use of many different feelings to describe her experience (lack of confidence, sadness, and emptiness) might itself be an expression of her confusion, and sense of overwhelming psychological angst, which has been found to be linked to inner identity conflict (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009).

The experience of psychological homelessness creates a sense of hopelessness for Ayelet:

> I do feel a lack of home but it's just…it makes it more of a…hopeless situation because there is no home anywhere. Right? I mean, in each place there is those great big things which turn the home into a bad home (Ayelet, 6.2.29)

In this powerful quote Ayelet seems to feel a sense of despair - in a sense she has given up trying to fight or manage it, since it feels impossible to solve. It almost feels as if Ayelet is expressing some form of learned helplessness (a term suggested by Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978), since she feels that wherever she turns to seek a sense of home, there are 'great bad things' which stop her. This also helps to throw light on some of the participants' inability to proactively change their situation.

Loneliness

Another dominant feeling which is closely related to these feelings of depression is the participants' feelings of loneliness. This feeling is shared by most of the women, who for a variety of reasons live a relatively socially isolated life. They link their loneliness to different issues.

For Liat, the social isolation is related to cultural gaps and communication issues. In her experience, in order to communicate with people in the UK, she has to mask her

true self, her identity. However, she is resistant to continuously 'wearing the mask', and this causes her to withdraw socially:

> Very hard for me to mix here with people. I can't find like…like friends. It's hard. [] I'm not the real me because if I want to be the real me, it's not gonna work.[]…I can't live with this mask any more so [] I am ending with no friends. (Liat, 3.3.21)

When asked to explain what she means, she relates to the different styles of communication and cultural gaps she experiences with non-Israelis, coupled with her feelings of low mood and lack of motivation.

Tamar, Sarah, Ofra and Rachel all describe various levels and expressions of loneliness. In contrasting herself to those who are 'all in their own home' Tamar amplifies her sense of homelessness:

> I feel very lonely, when I feel like everyone is in their own home, I feel like I don't have any friends, you know. (Tamar,2.3.3)

> Y: what does it bring up for you?
> Ofra: loneliness. Very, very lonely, em (PAUSE) I suppose I don't have any family in England as well [] so I think very, very, very lonely. Very alone. Not being able to, you know, share feelings… (PAUSE - Crying) (Ofra,4.1.7)

It is evident that perceived loneliness is a major expression of these women's distress. This is demonstrated in the choice of some participants to highlight this feeling as the first thing that comes to mind prompted by my (very general) question. Most of the participants relate their low mood to their perceived loneliness. This corresponds to a vast body of literature showing the two-way strong relationship between feelings of loneliness and depression (see e.g. Beal, 2006).

Edna used an image of sitting on a cloud in the distance and watching everyone around her:

> Like sitting on a cloud and looking at them and isolated. Different. (Edna,5.6.9)

This can be seen as a sense of distance from the people around her. At the same time, her choice of the image of the cloud can possibly hint at images of floating, transient and lacking the solid ground and stability of a home.

Feelings of Anxiety

Other strong feelings which are described by some of the participants are anxiety and fear. Lacking the confidence and strong sense of belonging and home, they feel anxious in unfamiliar surroundings, and a general sense of uneasiness and inability to relax. Liat in the quote below describes this general sense of anxiousness and worry, linking it with her experience of lack of belonging:

> I'm worried, I'm more worried. I'm more like scared that something bad will happen. [] I'm like, oh be careful, be careful. [] Like I'm scared, I'm like powerless. [] So I think more because you're far away, you worry. (Liat,3.6.26)

This feeling is also expressed in the participant's sense of safety in London:

> I am scared to go out at night to walk on the street at night. I'm…I was really suspicious. [] back there I wasn't that scared. Here, I'm looking all the time behind me. (Liat,3.6.13)

It is interesting to note how their feelings of being unsafe in London perhaps relate to their sense of feeling unsafe in Israel as well, as a result of the terrorism threat inherent in Israeli daily life. For example, Liat, after mentioning above that she feels safer in Israel, recounts a traumatic memory from childhood, which she experienced during the Gulf War, and was brought up again in the 2006 Lebanon War:

> There was a war and I was like…12…I think… or 11. I was scared and it's still inside me. [] the war now in Israel… [] with the Lebanon and like it was on the TV the alarm, [] when you need to go to the safe room and like suddenly I went…I was like shivering. Oh my God. It's like coming back…like I heard that before and it's not nice.[] I'm worried all the time (Liat).

This experience as a child can be one explanation of her current general high levels of anxiety and hyper-vigilance. However, paradoxically, living in the UK ignites these feelings even further, as she reports feeling more unsettled and anxious here compared to her time in Israel, where she felt more relaxed:

> In Israel I used to go back home 4 o'clock…alone, in the night… [] I didn't feel scared. Here I feel scared, I will never go back at 4 o'clock. Never. Alone. Never. Never. I will stay at home. (Liat,3.6.16)

In addition, these feelings of anxiety extend to worrying about her family in Israel, which for her is also mixed with feelings of guilt for not being close to them. Through her words it seems as if her guilt is about lost time, or missed opportunity:

> I'm scared if something will happen and I'm not gonna be there and then like I'm thinking…although…even like someone will die, God forbid. [] sometimes I feel like I'm a little bit going crazy but I'm thinking about like something will happen to my family and my friends and I will regret that because I'm not there. It's like…how come I didn't spend time with them before. (Liat,3.6.26)

Liat's accounts suggest that she is experiencing strong negative feelings, both of low mood and of anxiety and fear. Her interview includes many emotion-related comments, and in some places she refers to psychological homelessness as "the homeless feeling" (3.9.18). It seems that for Liat, feelings are an important avenue through which she attempts to understand and make sense of her experiences. She asserts this, expressing her sense of lack of control over strong feelings:

> It's all the feeling. It's all about how you feel. I wish I could control…control how I feel. [] To take something that make me don't care. Like a liquid or something I can drink…[] But I really over care. (Liat,3.6.29)

Her powerful use of the image of a potent liquid which could lull her strong feelings can perhaps indicate her helplessness in front of her own internal processes, and her longing for empowerment and relief. This sense of being overwhelmed by different manifestations of psychological homelessness was echoed by many of the participants.

Appendix 17: Analysis of Theme: 'Interpersonal Processes'

(In 'Impact of psychological homelessness')

Many of the participants report that the sense of psychological homelessness penetrated through most of the participants' social relationships and interactions – from their close family, through their extended family and friends. The participants reflect on a general sense of difficulty in building relationships, and feeling close to others. According to them, this influences their ability to both give and receive love, care and support. Sarah starts the interview by saying that for her, psychological homelessness means:

> Not caring, eh…not receiving and not being able to give love. (Sarah,1.1.1)

Ayelet and Ofra talk about the change in their ability to give to others:

> I don't think it's all about the support you get. It's also the support that you give. (Ayelet,6.6.9)

> [H] I feel completely drained, I don't feel able to give any more, and those who know me will find that shocking [] I am a very giving person, [] and now I feel like I can not give any more because I have nothing inside left…I feel completely empty (Ofra,4.6.2)

Ofra's account portrays the emptiness and lack of energy she feels, influencing her ability to interact with others. At the same time, she describes how psychological homelessness alters her self-concept, particularly her perception of herself as a giving person. This indicates the significance of psychological homelessness which can cause the need for a re-evaluation of various aspects of identity.

Liat attempts to explain her process of inability to care, support and feel attached to people in the UK:

> I don't care about other people here. [] maybe because no one is looking at you. No one cares []…if you're gonna go naked on the tube, no one will look [] If other people care, you care. If no one cares, you don't care. It goes together. (Liat,3.4.2)

Liat seems to experience alienation in the UK, feeling unnoticed and uncared for. Her quote hints at a sense of reduced motivation to create social interactions ('if no one cares, you don't care'), thus perhaps enhancing her social isolation. The next three sections discuss in more detail the impact on social relationships in the participant's life – husband and children, family of origin, and friends - in the UK and in Israel.

Nuclear family – husband and children

All the participants discuss their current or past relationship with husband/partner as an important factor in their experience of psychological homelessness. In most cases, where the participants feel they were in the UK due to their husband's career/interests, this seems to evoke feelings of anger directed towards the husband:

> Sometimes I feel very angry with my husband, you know, why did you bring us here? It's so away from everything. (Tamar,2.4.1)

Tamar's choice of the words 'bring us' can be her way of acknowledging that she does not see herself as an active figure in the decision-making process, and appears frustrated at this lack of control.

Rachel feels similarly angry towards her husband and also expresses a less-active voice in terms of the decision whether to stay in the UK. She describes ambivalent feelings towards him:

> [H] I am very happy with my husband, but… it used to be that wherever he is that is home. But it is not like that any more…[] I even told him, I don't care if you want to be in your work etc, that's fine, just bring me back home, and I use these terms – return me back home[] because you took me from my home.
> Y: do you feel any anger towards him?
> R: yes, yes, to be honest, yes I do. [] there is a sense of accusing him… (Rachel,9.8.1)

Perhaps due to her ability to distance herself from the active process of leaving Israel, she is still able to maintain her image of Israel as a perfect home intact.

The two quotes above also shed some light onto the participants' complex perceptions of themselves as wives and women – they seem to take on a relatively traditional wife role, yet at the same time struggle with it (for research on gender-identity and role-identity among Israeli women see e.g. Azmon & Izraeli, 1993; Hazelton, 1977). This might serve as an additional source of ambivalence and identity conflict for them.

The participants seem to describe mixed feelings about their relationships, talking about the support they are receiving from their husband:

> I'm also very lucky because my husband is…is completely there for me [] when I have bad times and he's…you know, picking up the pieces (Ofra,4.4.14)

As well as difficulties in the relationship:

> I don't feel I've got the basic ground, [] because maybe I'm not happily married, which is something as well to do with it [] He can't show love (Edna,5.2.3)

Edna mentions that her marital relationship is also somehow interconnected with psychological homelessness ('*is something to do with it*'). For most of the participants, there seems to be a double-sided or close link between the experience of psychological homelessness and marital relationship: the marriage appears to be an important factor in modulating their sense of belonging and home, and at the same time is strongly influenced by it. This might suggest that for these women, the multiple identity conflicts are interlinked subjectively, in a way that creates a general sense of confusion, doubt, and internal turmoil.

Some of the participants regard psychological homelessness as a sort of sacrifice or price which they had to pay in order to maintain their marriage. Liat describes this concisely:

> You think, you would be OK, it will be OK, it will be OK but with the time nothing is getting OK, it's getting worse. Although with all the love and support and we're really happy together. I can't see my life without him so maybe…it's like a price you have to give,

> but sometimes you're asking if the price is worth it? It's your life. You're giving up your life basically. (Liat,3.6.13)

Ofra shares this sense of sacrifice, seeing it as a sacrifice for her whole family. However both women show ambivalence, perhaps a dialogue between resignation and resistance, and seem to be somewhat unsure whether the sacrifice is 'worth it', again somewhat challenging their own perception of their identity as wives and as women:

> I'm the only one who's really keen to go back.[]This is what I realised in the last few months, that I am sacrificing my own personal life for my family, for the happiness of my family. And if I am right or wrong to do that I am not sure. And it really scares me, really. (Ofra,4.8.6)

Overall, the women who were married and had children, describe themselves to some extent as isolated within their own family, since often their children, being second generation immigrants, have adjusted relatively well to life in the UK (Harker, 2001), and their husband is working and wants to stay.

For the women who were single, psychological homelessness also makes an impact on their ability to find a suitable partner. Tali describes this process:

> For a long time…I was trying to go out only with Israelis because there was this feeling that if I get into a serious relationship with a non Israeli then…although I wasn't 100% sure I wanted to go back [] someone who was a non Israeli would just never want to go to Israel [] but it goes the other way around too. Right? I feel like… (LAUGHS)… if I go out with Israelis[] I'm not that connected to them any more or if they're very keen to go back to Israel… (LAUGHS)… then [] I'm not sure I want to do that… LAUGHS) (Ofra,8.4.2)

Research has shown that people sometimes seek partners who are similar to them in certain identity dimensions (Harris & Kalbfleisch, 2000). However, here Tali is describing her inability to identify both with Israelis and non Israelis, significantly restricting her ability to find a partner.

Family and friends in Israel

Family of origin

In accordance with sociological research on Israeli society, which shows that individuals maintain strong ties with family of origin (Lavee & Katz, 2003), the participants here also describe their family of origin as a constant source of support, a secure home. Ayelet asserted this:

> As Israelis we don't really get away from home until we go abroad. I mean, it's not like here [] in Israel [] you're much more close and everything is closer. (Ayelet,6.2.1)

She later adds:

> Growing in Israel, you know, when you have kids, families are very close, closer in Israel I think than elsewhere. (Ayelet,6.2.7)

However, now when living in the UK, the relationship with family of origin has become more complex. The closeness is also mingled with feelings of guilt for leaving, of being left out of the family system, and a growing distance. This is all compounded with the basic pain of separation from a strong core attachment (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). These feelings are especially exaggerated on family occasions and important events, such as births, deaths, weddings, festivals etc. Thus the participants' accounts seem to suggest a strong attachment and closeness to their family, which is intertwined with many painful feelings. This can be seen as an additional dimension to the general 'push/pull' attitude towards Israel, enhancing the sense of confusion and conflict.

Friends in Israel

The participants' relationships with friends in Israel share some of the closeness and strong attachment described earlier with regards to family. Yet it also seems that friends are less accepting, and the participants often feel more rejected by friends.

Thus, on the one hand relationships with friends are described as close and long-lasting, and a source of support:

> My two best friends are in Israel [] my soul mates. (Tamar, 2.3.3)

> I'm always on the phone with my old friends from Israel. (Liat,3.3.23)

But at the same time, the move to the UK creates various ruptures or difficulties in these relationships. For example, Sarah feels her friends can not accept that she has changed over the years in the UK:

> when I went to Israel []to my old friends [] my holidays there became more and more difficult,[]I said, look I'm different, I've changed, you know, they just wouldn't accept it. (Sarah,1.2.20)

Liat wants her friends to miss her, to feel her absence, thus keeping her in mind and simultaneously resisting her own sense of being distant. Nevertheless she realises the distance from her friends is growing:

> Its hard for me that they can find their way without me [] I want them to miss me and with time…they find their own way… [] I need them more than they need me suddenly. [] my friends, they're not calling me anymore (Liat,3.9.21)

The participants describe a process of distancing from friends in Israel after living in the UK for a long period of time. This distancing seems to be associated with feelings of frustration and disappointment as it serves as a reminder of the weakening ties to Israel. In addition, this can be seen as a background to their additional difficulty with the lack of social support in the UK, which will be discussed in the next section.

Friends and social circle in the UK

The participants report feeling lonely and isolated in the UK, significantly lacking in social support. Many of them are working from home or in relatively isolated working environments, implying a lack of opportunity to create new social interactions. This is

often mentioned together with a sense of alienation and lack of adjustment to British society, which means that they have very few friends in their daily life. Their social contacts are mostly with other Israelis, and with the Jewish community.

The Israeli community in UK

The participants often turn to other Israelis in search of support and friendships. However, this was also not an easy and straightforward process.

Ayelet talks about initially having a strong pull to befriend other Israelis, and later becoming more selective:

> It's like a big magnet {but} now when I see Israelis I don't feel automatically I need [] to become friends with them just because they're Israelis [] some of them are people I wouldn't talk for a second time. (Ayelet,6.2.1)

Liat reflects on her desperation which leads her to be in touch with Israelis, with whom she would not otherwise be friends with:

> It's hard for me [] it's like a default, it's not a choice. [] I need to be friends with them because I need friends not because I want to be friendly with them. (Liat,3.3.23)

Ofra on the other hand feels very resistant to befriending Israelis just because of their nationality:

> I'm not gonna, em…be hypocrite with myself and [] meet Israeli people just because they're Israeli. (Ofra,4.1.4)

Some of the participants describe ambivalent push-pull feelings towards the Israeli community, needing it as a source of support but at the same time actively distancing themselves from other Israelis. The participants seem to be reluctant to fully engage with other Israelis yet at the same time, the need for the familiarity and mutual cultural experience is evident:

> The tone of voice of the Israeli person…I have Israeli friends [] just because they are Israeli. I wouldn't have been in touch with these people in Israel. (Edna,5.8.1)

Thus in general, the participants describe a relatively isolated and withdrawn social environment. They experience some dependence on connection with Israelis and what it means for them, but seem to find it difficult or impossible to create attachments and meaningful social interactions which are not stained by reservations or obstacles. This seems to result in stress and a relative lack of social support, which has been found by numerous researchers to significantly impact on individuals' psychological wellbeing, often enhancing existing symptoms of depression and anxiety (see e.g. Schaefer, Coyne and Lazarus, 1981). However, for these participants the lack of social support is multi-levelled, since they show difficulties connecting to friends in the UK – both Israeli and non-Israeli, their relationships with friends and family in Israel are problematic, and some of them also feel isolated within their own family, as the only one that is experiencing psychological homelessness.

Appendix 18: Analysis of Theme: Interpersonal Processes

(In 'Attempts at Management')

In addition to internal processes which the participants use to attempt at managing psychological homelessness, the participants turn to close family, relatives and friends for emotional support. This is addressed here briefly, first discussing how expressing and sharing their feelings helps, and then looking at familial and social support.

Communicating psychological homelessness

Some of the participants discuss how they express their difficulties, mentioning both direct verbal communications and indirect verbal and non verbal expressions. For example, some participants such as Tamar, described crying as a useful coping method, providing a sense of relief:

> Crying sometimes, because…it gives… a bit of relief.
> (Tamar,2.5.3)

Liat mentions her suffering is mostly hidden, but is then expressed indirectly through moaning to her husband about 'little things'. While denying this to her husband, she realises the moaning serves a purpose:

> Suffering quietly inside…I'm moaning a lot, complaining on anything. I feel I'm complaining a lot on little things [] he's always saying, why are you moaning like that? And I say 'I am not', but I know it is like that [] Maybe it's my way to get it out.
> (Liat,3.6.18)

From this extract it appeared that Liat does not easily and openly talk about her feelings, and needs alternative ways to show them to her husband. However, later, in the process of debriefing, Liat mentions how helpful it was to talk about how she feels explicitly, feeling she might otherwise 'blow up'. She expresses a real need to make sense of her experience and 'realise things'. This process within the interview elevated her mood:

> I don't want to keep that inside because I know if I will keep it inside, I will blow up and it will be worse. I love to talk about it because then I will like realise things, like today. It's made me feel good, it's made me feel better (Liat,3.9.2)

Liat indicates here that the process of interview is somewhat therapeutic for her, since it serves as a platform from which to reflect upon and realise certain aspects of her experience. The implications of this for counselling psychology is discussed in the Discussion chapter.

Social and familial support

The participants mention a number of external sources of support. I would like to briefly mention them here, giving some limited examples. As these experiences were mostly equivalent to other immigrant groups, this section is brief.

Some, such as Ofra and Rachel, mention their husband as their main source of support and help:

> I'm also very lucky because my husband is…is completely there for me [] he's there when I have bad times and he's…you know, picking up the pieces (Ofra,4.4.14)

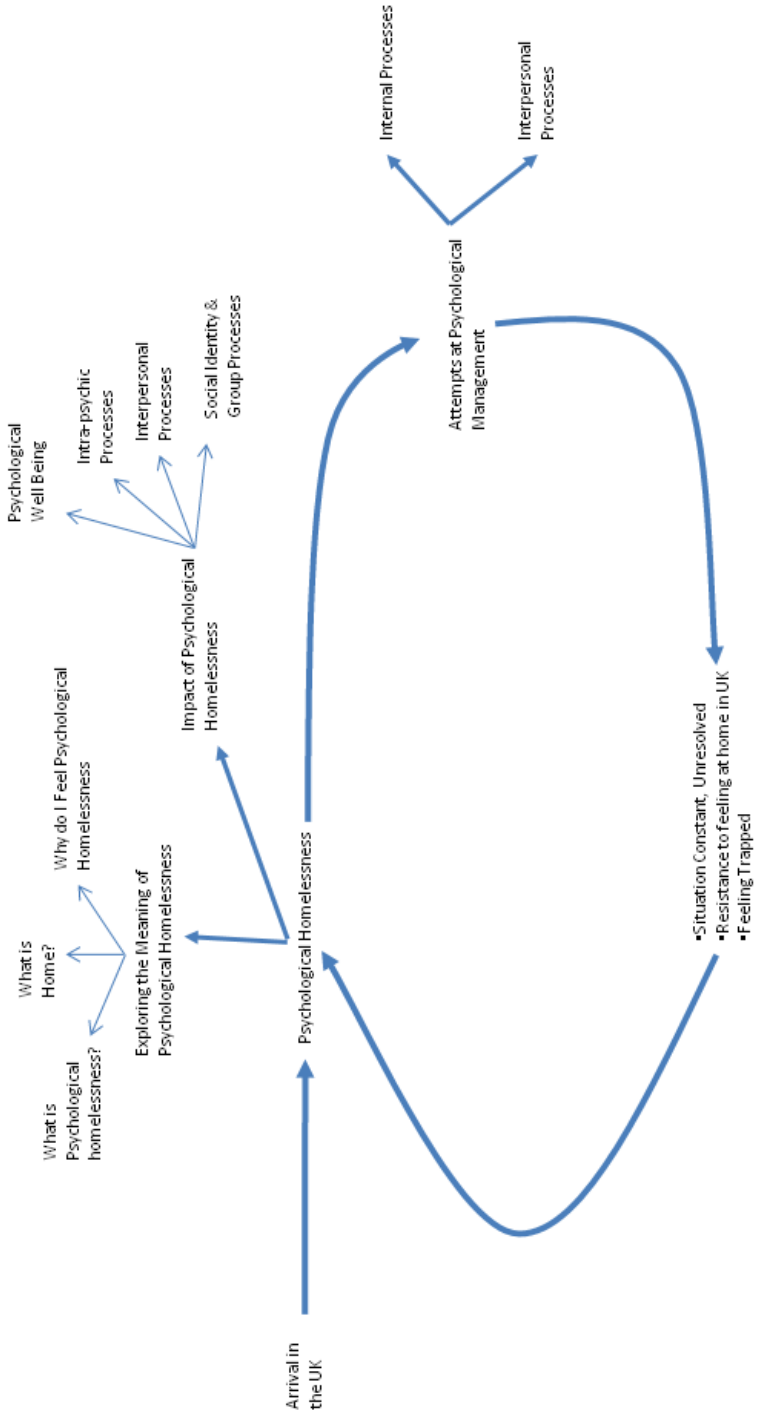
> I've got support from my partner to fly whenever I want. He understands my pain, which is…which is great because [] it could be much harder for me, you know, to cry about something and he says, shut up or stop (Rachel,9.5.4)

Rachel account seems to imply a sense of relief that her husband gives her permission to fly frequently, as well as allowing Rachel to freely express her feelings. It could be suggested that the shifts in context and location allow Rachel to maintain simultaneously two conflicting parts of her identity, since her identity as wife could be less threatened while in the UK, and her Israeli identity when in Israel with her family.

Other participants mention drawing support from their family and friends in Israel, from Israeli and non Israeli friends in the UK, and from the orthodox community in the UK. These sources of support are mainly within the family and/or the familiar local community, which can be seen as a commonly practiced way of drawing support in other immigrant populations as well (e.g. see Vega, Kolody, Valle & Weir, 1991). Vega and his colleagues (1991) found that for women in particular, this type of support helps to alleviate symptoms of depression. For the participants in this study, these sources of support are helpful to a degree, allowing them to share their difficulties and providing them with emotional support. However, when reflecting on the complex relationships the participants describe as having with their husband, family in Israel and Israelis in the UK, it can be suggested that the support drawn from these sources is not wholehearted and simple, but conditional, and intertwined with many ambivalent feelings; creating a more complex picture with regards to the level of support these women felt they were receiving.

Appendix 19

Diagram B.2: Graphic Depiction of Model



Appendix 20: Short Analysis of Hebrew Sections

Towards the end of the interview the participants were given the opportunity to move to Hebrew, to allow those who felt constrained by English to fully and freely express any further material. Only four out of the eight participants used this opportunity and switched to Hebrew, and among them two (Tamar and Edna) only added a short comment. The other four reported that they felt comfortable enough in English. In the process of analysis of the transcripts I noticed that some of the material in Hebrew was slightly different from the English sections, and may have indicated that those participants felt slightly more comfortable to discuss certain issues in Hebrew.

I would like to present here a short analysis of the Hebrew sections, to point out some themes which were discussed within those sections, and any changes in tone from the English quotes. Tamar, Edna, Ofra and Rachel were the participants who chose to switch to Hebrew.

One of the issues which seem to emerge is the focus and concern with motherhood and raising children. When I offered Tamar the opportunity to move to Hebrew, Tamar asks if she could summarise a short paragraph out of a book. The book is very meaningful to her, since she claims it reflected her feelings of psychological homelessness:

> The Jewish child being the continuation, the earth – everything was dependant on the child. The child is the replacement of a land and of continuity of the people. For the Arab the connection to a place is what is important. But in the land of Israel everything has been turned on its head, opposite to this, and therefore unstable and unsuitable. There is a strong unconscious process that is trying to pull us back to a diasporic state. (Tamar, 2.8.1)

It seems to me that by choosing to present the claims made by the author of the book, Tamar is also explaining and in a way justifying her own choices and focus in life. She feels Israel for her was ‘unstable and unsuitable’ because she perhaps does not

see it as her earth, land, or home. At the same time, her children are her home and motherhood the most important aspect of her identity.

Like Tamar, Ofra chooses to discuss in Hebrew the relationship between motherhood, home, and psychological homelessness, perhaps reflecting the intimacy of this theme:

> My children are my home. But what I don't know, is if this same lovely house that I have with my children, I will be able to transfer to a different place, and this is where I am at today. [] Will I be able to take my two children, the biggest treasure I have in the world, and build for them the same home in Israel, together with me? And this is my psychological homelessness, the feeling that I don't know if I will manage to do that. (Ofra, 4.8.11)

Ofra seems to suggest here that she manages to build a sense of home in her house with her children. By saying her children are her home, she is reflecting a similar sense described earlier by Tamar – shifting the focus of home from a physical place, to the children and her as mother. Ofra sees herself as an active 'home maker' for her children, but she doubts whether she can make a home for them in Israel, thus Israel is no longer seen as an unquestionable home. At the same time, she sees this effort of building a home for her children as a sacrifice:

> I am sacrificing my own personal life for my family, for the happiness of my family. And if I am right or wrong to do that I am not sure. And it really scares me, really.(Ofra, 4.8.6.)

While telling me this, Ofra seems to communicate a lot of feeling, through her tone of voice and expression. It seems that it is not easy to admit that she is sacrificing her wellbeing for what she believes to be the happiness of her family. Both Ofra and Tamar do not seem to feel uncomfortable doubting Israel as a home when talking in Hebrew. At the same time, they choose to describe this doubt indirectly through reducing its relevance compared to the importance of the children in their life.

Edna and Rachel also talk in Hebrew more directly about their relationship to Israel and Israelis. Talking about her difficulties in the UK, Edna describes her sense of

threat to her Israeli identity, and at the same time mentions her need to be in touch with other Israelis, a need that causes her to build relationships with people she does not necessarily like. When asking her whether she would like to add anything in Hebrew, she says:

> The fact that its not popular and accepted here to be an Israeli. And the tone of voice of the Israeli person…I have Israeli friends and I am friends with them just because they are Israeli. I wouldn't have been in touch with these people in Israel.

Rachel also talks about her need to be in touch with other Israelis:

> There is this feeling that because they are Israelis, and we are Israelis, we have to be together. [] but she is dumb and he is stupid, and you don't really like them... (Rachel, 9.8.1)

Both women seem to describe their relationship with other Israelis as a sort of necessity which has to be endured, not as a real solace. The topic of relationship with the Israeli community in the UK has been discussed by the two women before in English, but here there is a sense of slightly more freedom in their expression.

When switching to Hebrew some of the participants seemed to slightly 'relax' more, and the conversation was more flowing and easy for them. They were able to talk about issues which were perhaps more difficult for them to discuss. For example, Rachel spoke about her anger towards her husband and her frustration about feeling as if her life is 'on hold', and having to give up her hope to have her children in Israel. And Ofra speaks about how she is putting her children first before her husband, and how hard it was to communicate that to him. The switch to Hebrew does not seem to create difficulty in expressing reservations about Israel, which slightly undermines my decision to conduct the interviews in English because of this concern. Yet the participants do not seem to add any significant material when given the chance to switch to Hebrew, and (as discussed in the Method chapter) various other reasons justified the choice to conduct the interviews in English.

Appendix 21: Cross Reading

At two stages of the research process I used various forms of cross reading, in order to understand whether my process of analysis stays as close as possible to the transcripts and reads true to others. For this purpose I chose three colleagues of mine who were all researchers in Psychology, some familiar with IPA and some less so.

Initially, when developing a first initial table of themes, I asked a colleague to look at it (in the table each theme was presented with quotes beside it), and let me know whether they thought the theme title fitted the quotes. She chose to do this by using different fonts. She changed quotes to **bold** when she thought they did not belong to the theme title, and to *Italics* when she thought the theme title could be changed.

This was done on the full initial theme list of all participants. I was able to look through the list and decide whether to incorporate her comments.

Here is an excerpt from the table she sent me:

Theme title	**Comments**	**Quotes**
Hopelessness [?]		*6.2.29 I do feel a lack of home but it's just … it makes it more of a … hopeless situation because there is no home anywhere. Right? I mean, in each place there is those great big things which turn the home into a bad home in a sense.*
Lack of confidence	In UK (P3). 3.6.23 also defending IL ID	3.6.13 ... I feel like less confidence. Like I'm saying, right, I'm not … I'm not … I'm not happy in my job. [] And if I would be in Israel, straight away I will leave. I don't care. I have like a confidence there. 3.6.23 my husband always says to me, you're a really strong person. [] maybe they're expecting me to be strong and I am not that strong and I need to prove I'm strong. It's like … I don't know what to think sometimes. 4.4.7 because … because I've lost my confidence and I … I believe I lost my confidence because I don't … I don't feel at home here. I don't feel good enough with myself at the moment or with the life here…
"life a mess"		4.4.2 at the moment, my life is completely a mess, em … (PAUSE) … em … I'm not sure how I can, em … how I can change it []… **I don't meet hardly any people at all apart from the mothers in school, em … (PAUSE) … em … (PAUSE) …** to go to study, which … that's my … best wishes for myself, I've … I've lost it … I've lost confidence. [] so I don't know where I'm taking myself over here to be honest. I don't know.

During the process of analysis, I asked two other colleagues of mine who have used IPA in their own research to read the analysis and a couple of transcripts, and comment on whether they see the analysis as close to the transcripts and whether it 'reads true'. I used their comments to enhance the quality of the analysis. I am adding here their responses (in the form of anonymised emails):

Hello Yasmin,

I had a thorough read through the transcript and your analysis makes perfect sense to me.
If I may add a little comment, on page 4 of the Analysis chapter it was not very clear to me what the participant (Liat 3.6.9.) was referring to in that segment.
Otherwise, everything else was very clear and straight forward.
Let me know if I can be of further help and good luck with the write up.

Best wishes,
[redacted]

Dear Yasmin,

Thanks for sending me Tali's transcript and your analysis to look at it. I found the transcript very interesting and felt that your analysis captured the essence of her experience of psychological homelessness.

I hope the work continues to go well,

All the best
[redacted]

Appendix 22: Excerpts from Research Log

Throughout the process of research I kept a research log, which was in various formats over the period of research (notebook, computer files, notes etc). The log was the place for any ideas, thoughts, reflections, questions, and personal processes I went through. In the log I did not separate between material which was very personal, and theoretical or epistemological questions/thoughts I was dealing with at the time. The excerpts below are a reflection of this, containing material which I wrote in different stages over the process of research. I chose these excerpts as I feel they represent faithfully the long process I went through, and give a feel for the content of the log. The log was a really useful space where I could reflect, clarify issues, organise my thoughts, and move forward in places where I felt stuck in the research process.

Excerpts:

Recruitment and interviewing stage:

I am struggling with the lack of response to my flier, and am concerned that perhaps my assumption that psychological homelessness is an important experience should be questioned. However, when I meet the women, I am surprised at how isolated and distressed they are, and realise that their access to some of the community organisations I advertised in is limited. Upon reflection, I should have extended the recruitment process to include more varied sources as well as non urban locations.

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The interview schedule and questionnaire were developed very early on, when my knowledge and experience as an IPA researcher was more limited. Maybe I could have constructed an interview schedule which was more open and gave the participants more freedom to talk about anything which is related for them to

psychological homelessness. I could allow for my interview schedule to be more participant-led, so that the unique way of understanding this concept by each participant can emerge even further. I realise now that the interview schedule expressed my theoretical assumptions as well as my personal expectations. Leaving it more open could have possibly allowed for alternative pictures to emerge. In addition, I might have constructed the biographical details questionnaire differently, allowing for a more detailed narrative or life story to be established (for example, discussing further background information about the women before their move to the UK). This could have added context to the material which emerged.

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Reflecting on the interview process, I believe that the fact that the same question was asked in the beginning and towards the end was very beneficial, both to the participants and the research. It added a sense of 'closing a circle', and an additional reflective dimension for the participants – it gave them an opportunity to look back at the process of the interview itself and see how they feel about what they disclosed, and whether they would like to add or indeed change anything. Many of them used this opportunity to add valuable insights with regards to their understanding of psychological homelessness, which they did not think about at the start.

Analysis Stage:

In relation to the analytic process, I realise that I did not envisage such a 'long and windy road'. I am feeling overwhelmed by the amount and richness of data which emerged and finding it hard to see the wood from the trees (as well as valuing each tree!). In addition, at times I feel inexperienced and insecure about my steps in this journey. Perhaps the sample size was too large, which challenges me to maintain

focus on the unique experiences of each woman. If a case study approach was adopted, for example, I could consider interviewing one of the women more than once, allowing for a more detailed account of her understanding and meaning making process, as well as a more rich picture of her life story and its relationship to the development of psychological homelessness.

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My own reflexive process throughout the research is emotionally taxing and I should probably put more emotional support in place for myself, to allow for more space for processing during the research process (such as personal therapy).

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I am concerned about the potential influence of my own assumptions on the research. Despite efforts to bracket my own beliefs and experiences when interviewing and analysing the data, I still believe my assumptions about the women's experiences have shaped my interactions with them, as well as my analytic process. For example, I realise I approached the interviews with the view that psychological homelessness was a more conceptual phenomenon, only mildly affecting psychological well being. I am surprised to discover their high levels of distress, and this surely significantly changed the interview style and manner. This raises an additional and ongoing reflection – the fine line between researcher and therapist in the interview context, and how to utilise therapeutic skills while at the same time preserving the boundaries of my role as researcher. I assume my identity as counselling psychologist influenced the way I approached my participants in this instance, as well as shaping my analysis. This also relates to the question of the research relationship. Overall, the participants seem to feel comfortable in the relationship with me, and I managed to establish rapport with them relatively easily. They all reported that they found the interview

useful. However, I am still wondering whether the fact that I was Israeli caused them to hold back some of their concerns and reservations with regards to their Israeli identity. Or alternatively, whether the familiarity could have caused them to feel almost 'too comfortable' and perhaps avoid accessing thoughts and feelings which were painful. Perhaps too, I colluded in this, by phrasing the questions in a way which was less challenging because the issues concerned were also significant in my own life. This is a question upon which I am still reflecting.

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In terms of paradigmatic or philosophical stance, I feel this research has one foot in a more social constructivist approach, drawing from literature which is based in the world of social psychology, the psychology of identity and the process of adjustment to social groups and cultures. On the other hand, the experience outlined by the participants, as well as the methodological stance, gradually led me to a more humanistic existential point of view, looking at the deep sense of lack of home these women felt, and how it linked to an existential feeling of 'displacement' in the world. From this perspective, the focus on social interaction alone felt a reduction or minimization of their experience. The vagueness and inability to 'put their finger on it' was another reason for me to slightly shift to this direction. Is my research drawing on too many different schools of thought? Perhaps this comes with the compromise that I am not fully and deeply exploring one of these approaches? Have to think about this further...

Writing up stage:

While writing up this project, I am struggling with the issue of temporality and tenses, and it occurres to me that perhaps this could be a reflection of the multiple temporal

levels which are addressed within this research. The participants seemed to place importance on the process over time when describing their experience of psychological homelessness. At the same time, their lived experience at the time of interview and their active reflections within this encounter feel important to me. Other temporal levels are the time of analysis, and my reflective position when looking back at the interview, analysis process and finalising of the project. I realise that further exploration into the different temporal dimensions could have possibly revealed some interesting ideas regarding psychological homelessness and the research relationship and process.

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While writing the introduction to the research section, I am confused as to how to pay head to all the different research topics and theories this research touches upon. I feel that it is so broad, covering everything from social psychology theories such as Social Identity Theory, to existential questions and concepts such as feeling homeless in the world. This reminds me how all encompassing the experience of the women is, and I am struggling to cover all the topics which are discussed by the participants. Reflecting on this issue, I am wondering whether a more focused and 'assertive' theoretical stance is needed when writing a project like this.

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I am at write up stage, and I am struggling to present the women's voice within the parameters of the DPsych word limit. The interviews were so rich with so many different aspects which feel important to me, yet the framework of the research section of the portfolio does not allow me to include everything. I have to stay focused on my research question, yet at the same time I am faced with women who are struggling in so many areas in their life, it concerns me that I am not faithfully

representing their story, but rather showing only a part of it. I hope I will manage to find the opportunity in the future to present other issues discussed by the women.

Writing the critical literature review:

While writing the CLR I am struck by the level of stigmatisation experienced by the women in my review. At the same time, I realise now that motherhood is such an integral part of womanhood these days, even if very implicitly. Somehow I feel very naive, since I understand now how expected it is for women to be mothers, even by me! It didn't occur to me until now that I have these implicit assumptions, and have to think about how this affects my work with clients...

I suddenly realised that this is more complex in terms of the women around me who chose not to mother. I do not feel I am stigmatising anyone in any way, but surely there is something implicit in the social environment which these women feel, and I am part of that environment... also, I was surprised how uncomfortable I felt presenting the topic of my CLR to them. Why? As if I feel it will raise for them the experience of stigmatisation, even just by me making them part of some distinct group – 'childless women'...

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I submitted my CLR and I realise now that I was pregnant while writing it. I was being engrossed in the questions of childlessness, yet I was pregnant and did not know it. I am feeling a little deceived, since I thought I was really identifying with these women, but all this time I was about to become a mother. This creates in me the feeling that perhaps my underlying beliefs are more pro-natal than I thought. I have to think further about how this influences my therapeutic practice with women who are childless.

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My son was born several months ago. I am looking through my log and realising that I am now a working mother surrounded by women who chose not to mother and focus on their career. I am feeling strangely ‘other’ to them, in my struggle to be a part of all worlds, or all identities, in an opposite way to my participants in my study, who were trying to hold many identities but in the end felt the emptiness of no identity, or no home. Suddenly the different pieces of the portfolio are starting to connect to each other for me, as I see more clearly how the issue of management of multiple identity components can become so challenging.

Appendix 23: Poetic Condensation of Symbols

Throughout the interviews the participants use various expressions, metaphors, stories or unique phrases in their attempt to articulate the illusive and indefinable nature of their experience of psychological homelessness. While trying to describe and make meaning of their experience, it seemed that some elements are more difficult to capture, encouraging participants to use many metaphors and symbols. For this reason, a focus on this metaphoric language could be of value, allowing for an additional perspective on psychological homelessness. In order to present this metaphoric language, as well as give voice to a more hidden dimension of this experience, I decided to use the form of a poem. I felt that a poem can sometimes express the fullness of the experience, and communicate to the reader some of the evocative feelings accompanying psychological homelessness. Using the phenomenological methodology of poetic condensation (Öhlen, 2003), I would like to present here a short analysis of the metaphoric language used by the participants. I hope this attempt will allow for their powerful voice to emerge and provide an alternative perspective on the meaning making process of the participants. This form of analysis was introduced to me in an inspiring Phenomenology seminar initiated by Dr Carla Willig, in which we discussed various articles presenting phenomenological research in psychology, particularly those relating to Counselling Psychology.

The analysis below will use Öhlen's (2003) system of extracting meaningful words and phrases from sentences in the interview dialogue. However, only phrases or sentences in which metaphors or symbols appeared will be presented. Each line in the poem represents a sentence in the interview (the location in the transcript appears in brackets), and each verse represents one participant.

Poetic condensation of symbols

Unable to find anything that's … really … connected to your roots	(1.1.3)
Don't belong here but you don't belong there as well	(2.1.4)
felt like a foreigner or a stranger from another planet	(2.1.4)
Hovering above the stage	(2.1.4)
London is heaven	(2.2.21)
My space is very protected	(2.2.22)
it's almost hell…sometimes	(2.2.22)
It's heaven and hell at the same time	(2.2.23)
I felt divided	(2.2.24)
I'm not really here	(2.2.25)
it's just a mask	(2.2.25)
we treat our children as if … as if they were our legacy, our land, the future	(2.7.3)
pictures, things, clothes but still it's not really 100%	(3.1.3)
my body's not there but my spirit is there	(3.9.15)
I'm like a little girl	(3.6.19)
Its on my shoulders: you need to decide where you want to be	(3.6.19)
I know if I keep it inside, I will blow up and it will be worse	(3.9.2.)
you are the woman, you are the mother, it's all on your shoulder	(3.9.4)
and this is how the world is…in the kitchen	(3.9.4)
I feel empty. Very, very, very empty	(4.1.7)
I'm just hanging, you know	(4.5.13)
you can't move an old tree	(4.8.2)
my children are my home	(4.8.11)
I'm cold in here	(4.9.1)
my body's shaking ... you go deep to where you're trying to cover	(4.9.1)
Fog in my mind … fog and cold	(5.6.1)
Fog in my mind	(5.6.2)
Cold in my body	(5.6.3)
I'm living on the suitcase	(5.1.6)
my heart is in Zion and my feet are in exile	(5.1.8)
You feel colder here inside and you go there and you have a massage in your heart	(5.2.11)
the English …can't box me	(5.4.3)
I feel that I am nobody	(5.4.17)
Like sitting on a cloud and looking at them, isolated	(5.6.9)
I used to close my eyes and dream of tiles	(5.5.14)

The further the kid grows, the string between the mother's heart and the heart of the kid is being torn	(6.1.4)
I'm always like … you know, on the suitcases	(6.2.29)
So I need to live with the stones	(6.5.12)

the shelter has gone	(9.1.3)
you feel like you're trapped	(9.3.1)
your heart is not there	(9.3.6)
it's like somebody ruined … ripped my heart out	(9.4.35)
it's like my body is here, my life is here but maybe my soul is there	(9.7.2)
part of me doesn't want to be … a whole	(9.7.2)
I'm abandoning Israel	(9.7.8)
A wound that never heals. Never	(9.7.10)
I feel like I am in this 'waiting' state	(9.8.1)

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