5-21-2011

# Action Research on Creating a Dialogue Between Jewish Israeli and Palestinian Israeli Women Through Expressive Therapies

Irit Halperin
*Lesley University*

# ACTION RESEARCH ON CREATING A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JEWISH ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ISRAELI WOMEN THROUGH EXPRESSIVE THERAPIES

A DISSERTATION

Submitted by

IRIT HALPERIN

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

LESLEY UNIVERSITY

May 21, 2011

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at Lesley University and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgement of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the head of the major department or the Dean of the Graduate College when in his or her judgment the proposed use of the material is in the interests of scholarship. In all other instances, however, permission must be obtained from the author.

SIGNED: _____

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank the wonderful women who accompanied me in this study. When I started this journey, I did not know what lay ahead. The fears and worries were numerous. If not for my friends on this journey – first and foremost, Dunia Massalha, the Palestinian therapist who facilitated the workshops, was a real partner, good friend, a guide for me – I would not have finished this project. To the participants, I really have no words to express my respect for their devotion and their belief in the way, even when there were many hurdles and even when the demons came out and threatened to take all the hope and faith. I do not exaggerate by saying that each one of them is wonderful and brave and is a model for imitation and inspiration.

To my family, for supporting me in so many loving ways. To my husband, who is the rock and base to which I always return. To my daughters, three young and magnificent women, each one of them was there for me all the way, in her special way, with a kind word, listening, encouraging and believing in the justness of my way. To lior my eldest daughter and final editor who has all the qualities that I miss as a scholar, you are a gift from god!

To my teachers in Lesley, who taught me and enriched my insights and discoveries along my way. I wish to especially thank my former committee members: Prof. Julia Byers, Prof. Eleanor Roffman of Lesley University, who did not follow me through the whole process of the dissertation, and my current committee members: chairman Prof. Michele Forinash, Prof. Robyn Cruz of Lesley University and Prof. Robert Landy of New York University. To all my friends in Lesley, too numerous to be named here, who were all good friends to me and special people that supported me all the way.

To the friends in Boston and in Israel, Jewish, Palestinian, and American, who always showed interest, wanted to hear details and expressed their confidence in me and in my way and capabilities, even when I myself had crises and doubts.

And, last but not least, to the community of peace activists in Israel and Palestine, especially the women, who inspired me, were a model for learning, and reinforced in me the notion that there is no other way but struggling for peace. I am unworthy next to you and I thank you endlessly; be strong and courageous, you carry the light of us all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES ……. 7

1. INTRODUCTION ……. 9

Personal Background and Context ……. 10

2. LITERATURE REVIEW ……. 13

Peace Education ……. 14
What is Peace Education? ……. 14
Different Approaches to Peace Education …… 14
Summary ……. 19
The Feminist Approach to Psychotherapy …… 19
Women and Peace in Israel ……. 23
The Jewish Feminist Narrative of the Occupation ..…… 23
After the Brussels Conference …….. 25
The Narrative of Palestinian Women in Israel …….. 28
Expressive Therapies in Service of Social Justice and Conflict Resolution ……... 31

3. METHOD ……. 36

Research Methods ……. 36
Research Design …… 38
Participants …… 39
Procedure …….. 39
First workshop – November 2006 ……. 40
Second workshop – February 2007 ……..…….. 40
Data Analysis Method ……..…….. 40
Discussion ……..…… 41

4. RESULTS ……. 43

Description of Participants …… 43
Themes of the Sub-group of Palestinian Participants …… 45
Background …… 45
Palestinian Identity as the *Other* in a Jewish State …… 46
Language as an Expression of Identity ……..…… 48
The Palestinian Naqba ……..…… 49
The Grandmothers – the Generation Who Experienced the Naqba ……..……. 50
A Story within a Story within a Story …….. 51
Double Oppression …… 52
The Lesson Learned from the Naqba …… 54
Conclusion …… 55
Themes of the ‘Zionist Jewish’ Sub-group …… 56
Background …… 57

Representations of Internal Conflicts in the Zionist Identity ……. 58
The Grandmothers – Inherited Trauma …… 60
Women in a Patriarchal Society …… 61
Conclusion …… 63
Themes of the 'Radical Jewish' Sub-group ……..…… 64
Background ……..…….. 64
Frustration, Alienation, and Despair ……..…… 65
The Burden of Guilt ……..… 67
The Grandmothers – Trauma Passed from One Generation to Another ……..….. 68
Radical Women Peace Activists in a Militarist Society ……. 69
The Personal is the Political ……..… 70
Conclusion …… 71
The Narrative of the Arts ……..….. 73
Women and Art in a Patriarchal Society …… 74
Art as a Provider of Aesthetic Distance …… 75
Art as an Organizational Experience …… 77
Role-play – One Country, Two Nations …… 79
A Transition from the General to the Personal ……..…… 81
Art as a Dialogue …… 82
Psychodrama as a Corrective Experience ……..…… 84
The *Little Red Riding Hood* drama ……..…… 87
The first stage – choosing a character …… 88
The second stage – free interaction …… 88
The third stage – group interaction …… 89
Summary …… 90

5. DISCUSSION …… 96

Dialogue between Narratives through the Expressive Arts …..…… 96
Findings ……..… 97
Implications …… 105
Future Directions …… 107

APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOPS …… 109

REFERENCES ……..…… 118

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1, Artwork with Materials; First Workshop, Third Hour …….76

FIGURE 2, The Chair Role-Play Activity ……...80

## ABSTRACT

This study used qualitative action research methods describing a meeting between Israeli Jewish and Palestinian women using expressive therapies techniques. It aimed at describing how Jewish Israeli and Palestinian Israeli women used expressive therapies to create a dialogue about peace. Participants took part in two workshops of expressive therapy in Israel, in November 2006 and February 2007. Participants were four Palestinian women and eight Jewish women. The study describes the narratives created in the big group as three narratives – the Palestinian, the Jewish Zionist and the Jewish Radical – and the encounter through the arts as a narrative on its own. The narratives generated illustrate how the various subgroups created separate and shared stories and used arts to create a 'different kind' of communication. The communication established using arts, was characterized by deep attention, authentic speech, empathy, and tolerance. Also, it was characterized by multidimensionality, complexity, and a wealth of emotions and emotional expressions. The current study highlights the need to broaden the experience and to expand the study of using expressive therapy as an alternative means of educating for peace, and in encounters between groups in political conflict. In the context of the Israeli Palestinian conflict, the violent political reality in Israel, and the focus on women only, this research is original in the area of peace education.

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

The continuous Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza has greatly influenced the relations of Jewish and Palestinian people. Questions of identity relating to both Jewish Israeli (JI) and Palestinian Israeli (PI) people are pervasive in this troubled society. The Palestinian citizens of Israel can be torn between the desire to belong to Israel and the wish to identify with those living in the West Bank and in refugee camps in Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The PIs are frequently treated with suspicion by the JIs and are sometimes seen as constituting a security threat. At the same time, Palestinians living outside the borders of Israel perceive PIs as Palestinians cooperating with the Zionist regime.

The Jewish people in Israel also deal with identity issues. There are Ashkenazim and Sephardim, religious and secular, left and right wing, Zionists and Post Zionists, and more. Israeli society is still experiencing itself as a surviving society and the Jewish public many times considers its existence as threatened. Therefore, the general atmosphere in Israel has components of fear resulting in militaristic and power seeking stances.

Women in particular suffer from the violent conflict in many ways, and the current study focuses on the identities of Israeli Jewish and Palestinian women. Theories of peace education, women's studies, and expressive arts therapies provided the background and tools for focusing on encounters between women who have different identities regarding the conflict. Accordingly, following two pilot studies, the current study describes two expressive therapies workshops that took place over a period of four months with a group of JI and PI women participants.

**Personal Background and Context**

1977 – I am 18 years old, a soldier; as part of my army service I am stationed in the West Bank. The residents immediately identify me by my uniform. I feel gazes of fear and hatred. I am too young to wish being feared of or hated. I want to get to know these people, not to scare them. I do not dare to talk to anyone about how I feel.

1982 – I am 23 years old, playing with my little daughter in the garden. A plane passes on its way to Lebanon to bomb 'terrorist nests'. I don't believe the radio and the newspapers; this plane will bomb innocent citizens, maybe a mother and child like me and Lior, my daughter. I call a friend, telling her I want to come and volunteer the next day in the peace party she works in. we establish a youth movement for Jewish and Arab youngsters I start to realize that I know almost nothing about the life of Israeli Arabs.

1987 – I graduate from Theatre Studies with a B.A. degree and decide to establish a community theatre in a Palestinian village within the Green Line. My professor says I am crazy. Six months later he arrives to speak at the opening ceremony of the theatre and tells the young residents attending that he is excited to see the project being realized.

1989 – I traveling to refugee camps in the West Bank as the coordinator of 'Occupation witnesses' for a movement protesting the occupation. The neglect and poverty break my heart. I feel guilt and shame and swear to continue the struggle against occupation.

1991 – I am taking part in 'Mifgashim' project, a peace-education project in which I facilitate an encounter group of Israeli Jewish and Arab high-school students. I learn of the different narratives and of remnants of fear and pain alongside a desire to change and communicate.

2001 – The second Intifada is at its height. I decide to move with my family to Boston for my doctoral studies. In the last months prior to the move there were two suicide terrorist attacks just under my clinic in Kfar-Saba, Israel. My husband and I are anxious to take our daughters away from this murderous place called our homeland. Later that year I begin my doctoral studies at Lesley University, USA, and am asked to find a subject for research. I think of my torn identity and of my emotional strain relating to being far from home . I decide to write about Israeli women who are peace activists.

And so I began to write about women and peace in Israel, out of pain, confusion, and a desire to re-discover my identity as a peace activist in a violent reality strewn with fear and despair. I clung to this part of my identity as the only part who does not bring guilt and shame. For the first time in my life I realized that it was possible to live a normal life, without constantly fearing that some disaster will happen to one's dearly loved on their daily routine. On the other hand, I felt that I would never belong to any place other than my land of origin.

When I started this journey I thought I was alone, but soon I started meeting friends for the journey: teachers, guides, partners, peace activists, social activists, both Jewish and Palestinians. From the beginning the women accompanying me were a source for support and inspiration. The bridge that I have built between Boston and Israel was long and sometimes seemed narrow, but with long phone calls, travels to visit, and research, I managed to build and maintain this bridge practically and emotionally.

This research strengthened my decision to return to live in Israel. The reality is still difficult, sometimes too hard to bear. Thanks to this study I have learned to build bridges between different islands and I see myself continuing to build such bridges in

the future.  This study brought me together with wonderful women, good friends, with whom I continue my life journey. I owe them, more than anything, all that I have learned and what I am still learning. Together we continue the journey for peace when our supplies and protective shield are friendship, love and hope. To them, my sisters for the journey I dedicate this research.

# CHAPTER 2

## Literature Review

In my work in Israel, with both Jewish and Arab people, time and again I have discovered the anxiety and frustration accompanying Israelis and Palestinians who have been living under conditions of political violence for over 100 years. At the same time I also found the human need to overcome, to survive, and to generate hope. Expressive arts therapy fosters connections embedded with therapeutic effects between people. Whereas wars and violence have sown pain and fear, such connections bridge between the past and the future, between the desire to escape from reality and the need to cope with the truth, and between destruction and the desire for correction.

The current research focuses on the encounter between two groups hailing from two nationalities and two cultures, each with many narratives. The essence of a successful encounter lies in the ability to listen well and to contain the uniqueness of the different narratives and their respective subjectivities. In this chapter, I will survey the literature and review the theoretical approaches on the topics relevant to this research.

The study is interdisciplinary; it is based on theories drawn from the field of peace education, women's studies, and expressive arts therapies, in the service of promoting social justice and conflict resolution. Accordingly, the literature review will be conducted from an interdisciplinary perspective; when reviewing approaches in the field of gender in Israel, their relation to the topic of peace is highlighted; when describing the psychological aspects of the work, feminist aspects are emphasized.

# Peace Education

## What is Peace Education?

Solomon (2007) defined peace education as the process of learning to live in peace with an enemy. He characterized that enemy not as a personal one, but as a collective enemy that frightens and threatens the I. Solomon described the relationship that exists between me and that enemy as one that is characterized by fear and mistrust.

Peace education belongs to the wide family of 'education for peace,' 'education for co-existence,' 'education for a culture of peace,' 'education for mutual understanding,' and 'education for healing and reconciliation,' among others.

## Different Approaches to Peace Education

In Israel during the 1980's, a common title for peace education was coexistence. Weiner (2000) defined coexistence work as bringing people together to participate in a dialogue with their enemies. According to Weiner, coexistence work should rely on the basic assumption that irreconcilable differences and intractable conflicts must not be escalated to total conflict. He argued that human fate is indivisible and helping people see the human face of others is crucial to coexistence.

The history of the 20th century is full of wars and disastrous conflicts. As a result, the term coexistence was created in order to educate people to understand that even the alien other has the right to exist. Coexistence is both a philosophical goal and a method of achieving it. Coexistence work happens where enemies are involved in an actual political conflict.

Ethnic conflicts seem to be the most explosive issue in the 21st century, as many armed conflicts in the world today are between ethnic groups. Weiner (2002) illuminated opposing points of view concerning this issue. He proposed that the first

sees ethnic strife as the last gasp of tribalism and the second sees ethnic struggles as a reaction to the homogenizing effect of globalization. Weiner defined a third perspective as one that sees the lack of democratic rights for one of the ethnic groups involved in the conflict as the source of the conflict. I would like to suggest that within this third perspective may lay the link to coexistence work in Israel and Palestine.

In recent years, a variety of programs have been created to promote peace education in Israel. However, research on the topic is scarce. Amir (1969) claimed that historically, some researchers interested in peace education had reservations regarding the objectivity of investigators. However, Amir also suggested that when the contact between the groups is intimate, pleasant, rewarding, or when the participants develop common goals, there are more favorable conditions for reducing prejudices.

Gurevitch (1989) emphasized the dialogic component of group encounters: "In dialogue, war cannot win. The very premise on which dialogue and dialogic ethics is founded is the meeting, not the denial of each other" (p.172). In addition, Gurevitch also discussed the difficulty in dialog between groups in conflict, and claims that the problem is not to understand, but the difficulty to contain the not understanding. In his eyes, that frustration is experienced by participants as a defeat, but could become a triumph of accepting the other.

Rouhana and Fisk (1995) wrote about the perception of power threat and intensity in group encounters between Jewish and Arab people in Israel and of the differences in feelings of being threatened by the conflict between right-wing and left-wing participants. The authors concluded that the differences between left and right in Israeli Jewish society extend beyond a mere position on the ideological continuum,

and that the psychological undermining of the ideological groups may be qualitatively different.

Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp (1977) showed in their research that interactions between cross-groups' friends lead to more positive evaluations of the out-group. They also reported that group members are more susceptible to influence from an in-group member than out-group members and actively search for information when there is ambiguity about the in-group norms and stereotypes.

With regards to the Jewish-Arab group encounter, Rouhna and Korper's (1997) study illuminated some aspects of the role of coexistence institutions and their, at times covert, political agendas. Rouhna and Korper argued that the institutions involved do not declare their support for unqualified equality between Arab and Jewish citizens in Israel. Offir (2002) had suggested that most of the coexistence projects in Israel had the hidden agenda to continue the colonization of the Arab population by the hegemonic Jewish Ashkenazi elite. He argued that these "agents of intervention" (p. 22) collected power by appearing to be experts on a problem that they themselves created.

Ross (2000) argued that in conflict resolution it is important to use multiple channels of communication. He suggested that one way of accomplishing that may be via the use of expressive therapies. Ross also named another dialogue-promoting path that involves the use of facilitators as translators who advance settlement of conflict while weakening disputants' often experienced sense of isolation. He further suggested that the third party should progressively limit their guidance as participants show they are capable of autonomous, effective action.

Stienberg & Bar-On (2001) studied the different group dynamics in the field of peace education and Jewish-Arab encounter groups in Israel, and suggested a

distinction among two types of groups. They phrased the first as the 'human relations group' approach which attempts to create personal relationships between the participants, aiming to change stereotypes, attitudes, and relationships. According to Stienberg and Bar-On, the difficulty with this approach was that it does not focus on political conflicts between the groups and ignores the asymmetry in power relations between the two groups. The authors named the second type of group, the 'collective identity group,' which emphasizes group identity and the lack of symmetry between the groups, striving to empower the minority group while promoting new understanding in the majority group. They explained that the difficulty in this approach is that it does not encourage the creation of personal relationships, thus re-enforcing stereotypic positions.

Bar-On & Kassem (2004) offered a third type of group, the 'story-telling group,' as a third approach which involves the sharing of participants' personal life stories. The authors suggested that while participants present their personal and collective history through their stories, empathy is assumed to be fostered. They explained that in that process, the creation of personal relationships and a change in stereotypic positions should be promoted.

Encounter groups are a significant experience, a process that accelerates growth and change in cognitive, emotional, and often behavioral dimensions. Bar-On & Kassem (2004) portrayed the process undergone in story-telling encounter groups between Jewish and German people as transformative, potentially creating groups' inter-relations, and when conducted in a safe environment that allows participants to integrate various different points of view, to develop a new, shared narrative.

Steinberg & Bar-On (2001) offered an analysis of the different discourses which emerged in story-telling encounter groups. The authors then concluded that the

most significant discourse is created when there is a dialogic moment – a moment of cognitive and emotional understanding in a true encounter with the other.

This moment is reminiscent of what Buber (1970) had called an 'I-Thou' encounter. He maintained that the 'I- Thou' encounter is possible only within the realization that there is not a single objective truth. Buber concluded that the result is a joint attempt to create a shared meaning of reality.

The aforementioned potential benefits of peace education may be limited. Desivilya (2000) noted that the success of the process may apply only to the 'local' sphere; that there is no change of stereotypes and prejudices beyond the group itself. Bar & Eady (2000) emphasized the importance of an ongoing process in promoting change-incurring dialogue via encounter groups. With regards to the Israeli context, Jaffe (2000) suggested that the decisive step in bridging cultural and interpersonal conflicts may involve the acceptance of ethnic and cultural differences.

With regards to the aims of peace education, discussed from a historical perspective, Pepe (1997) stressed that if a peace agreement was signed between Israel and Palestine, the education system would have to prepare the students to a reality that is a contradiction of today's reality. Pepe also suggested that one possible approach to this preparation might involve a global comparative attitude, looking freshly at "canonic texts" (p. 242) be they national or cultural, and exploring universal assumptions and the representation of the public in those texts. While Pepe spoke mainly of school education, it is possible that the approaches he outlined could apply to adults.

Bar-On, Litvak-Hirsch, & Othman (2006) spoke of a new age, extending beyond the monolithic/Zionist/Ashkenazi/secular to a new and more complex Israeli identity. They accentuated that such a change could enable the inclusion of other

communities of immigrants, gender groups, and ethnic and national groups in the creation of a new Israeli identity.

**Summary**

The results from peace education studies differ, though the bulk of studies are in support of peace education. The main change reported involves the acquisition of a more complex and realistic perception of the conflict. Solomon (2006), in an interview, summed up saying that peace education in Israel is in a state of disappointment and tiredness, with changes shown in non-central attitudes. He claimed that the effects of the prolonged occupation and the two Intifadas have created devastating change.

It seems that the field of peace education in Israel continues to develop with difficulties and errors, often depending on the basic assumptions and ideology of the peace projects' leaders. Institutions and organizations pursue different objectives and employ different strategies.

## The Feminist Approach in Psychotherapy

In discussing women's psychological development, Miller (1986) highlighted the subordination of women in western societies (and most other societies). Miller argued that if women want to move toward freer expression and action, they must expose gender inequality and question the basis for its existence. She further claimed that by projecting problematic exigencies into the domain of women, male dominant society delegated to women necessities such as emotional cooperation and the creativity necessary for human life and growth. Furthermore, Miller described how women have been objectified by society and, as such, their physical and sexual impulses and interests were presumed not to exist independently. To the question of how to conceive a society that will permit the development of all people, Miller

replied that women will only advance by cooperative action. She highlighted that in order to lead change women need self-determination and the power to implement it in reality.

An important aspect of women leading change to permit the development of all people involves the linkage between feminism and multiculturalism. Hooks (1984) claimed that the first crucial step toward theory and practice of this method relates to the de-labeling of women by their color, ethnicity, or religion. She suggested that the subsequent step involves recognizing that feminism and multiculturalism do go together; they both aim to change the world to one where people can operate equally and without racism. According to Hooks, another method for the struggle of women against social and economic oppression involves the construction of political solidarity. She emphasized that a struggle for political equality is crucial for the healing of women's psychological suffering.

In addition, women's sense of relatedness is often discussed in the field of feminist psychotherapy. According to Miller (1986), women's sense of personhood is grounded in the motivation to make and enhance relatedness to others. She observed that in experiencing their lives as arising from and leading back to a sense of connection with others women tend to find satisfaction, leisure, effectiveness, and a sense of worth. In other words, Miller maintained, women's ability to act emerges from constructive processes within relationships.

Jordan (1991) argued that psychological growth is promoted via relationships. She claimed that in a healthy relationship, one feels a greater sense of vitality and energy, is more able to act, and to obtain a more accurate picture of one's self and the other person. According to Jordan, cognitive-emotional activity promoting such growth is empathy, through which one person is able to experience the feelings and

thoughts of another person while simultaneously being able to know one's own different feelings and thoughts. Supporting this notion, Bowman et al (2001) proposed that feminist therapists serve as models for hearing others' views, especially when these views do not correspond with one's personal views. The authors also suggested that relationships foster a high sense of worth, feelings of connectivity with the other person, and a greater motivation for connection with other people beyond those in the specific relationship. Jordan (1990) suggested that personal growth can occur via becoming a part of relationships rather than apart from relationships.

Feminist psychotherapy evolved four decades ago in order to answer the psychological needs of women in western society. In its early stages, theory and practice focused only on women. Espin (1999) and Landrine (1995) maintained that in the 1990s, a significant change occurred, when feminist psychotherapy set out to include approaches focusing on racism, ethnic groups, and subjects related to struggle between economic classes. A further change took place as Enns (2004) asserted when the basic approach shifted towards the understanding that the ability to make change on an individual level is inseparable from creating social change. Thus, Enns suggested, therapy became conceptualized as an apparatus that is related to the political, social, and cultural context.

Butler (1987) argued that the traditional, non-feminist, concept of psychotherapy preserves the inequality of the balance of powers in society by distributing roles according to gender, both in theory and in practice. Alternatively, Butler claimed, the multicultural approach in feministic psychotherapy emphasizes the importance of perceptions of individualism, gender, and language. In addition, argued Butler, it calls attention to differences in individual- vs. family- oriented perceptions. In this regard, Barrett et al. (2005) emphasized a distinction between the

American view, focusing on the individual and his needs, and other cultural views in which the family comes first. The authors claimed that therapists must be mindful and sensitive to such cultural differences that might exist between them and their clients. Furthermore, Barrett et al recognized the importance of allowing space for clients to express themselves in their native tongue when in therapy and not in the language of the ruling group.

Additionally, Butler (1987) offered a different approach, particularly valuable for women, that of group psychotherapy, which provides women with an opportunity to complete developmental tasks and discover the unique contributions they can make for one another.

Evans, Kincade, Marbley, & Seem (2005) sustained that the future of Feminist Psychotherapy may best include women of different races and ethnic minorities as participants, theorists, patricians, and educators. The authors additionally claimed that the work should be collaborative, creating theories that include women differing politically, socially and culturally. Most important, they argued, is having an open dialogue which is sensitive and respectful to women's history, culture, and other group-specific elements. Evans, et al (2005) suggested a society that sees therapy as a protective element in the community, and a community which understands and accepts the psychological needs of its members and provides psychological support suitable for everyone.

I would like to argue that peace is a feminist issue since women are the largest sector of humanity that is victimized by violence, thus would aspire to bring about an end to all forms of violence and conflict. I believe that it is from this appreciation that Feminist Psychotherapy aims for the psychological empowerment of women and the fulfillment of their potential. In addition, I vision Peace Education as a mechanism

that has the potential to raise awareness regarding the costs of wars on the well being of all humanity. Therefore, I envision Feminist Psychotherapy and Peace Education as, philosophically as well as practically, connected and potentially nourishing one another.

At the base of my work that is presented in this writing, lays my strong belief that women should be at the front line of peace education because they know from their life experience how devastating and harmful it is to be oppressed. Furthermore, I envision women as the leaders in the struggle for peace and would argue that Feminist Psychotherapy is an inseparable apparatus in that endeavor to empower and guide them to fulfill that disposition for humanity.

## Women and Peace in Israel

### The Jewish Feminist Narrative of the Occupation

In this section, JI feminist peace activism will be reviewed, from the first Intifada until the time of the writing of this research. The peace activism of JI women and the story of PI women, which portrays a lack of organized peace activism, will be described separately. The two groups have very different stories with reference to the occupation. For each group, the story derives from different histories, motivations, obstacles, and successes. The JI women's narrative will be presented first followed by the narrative of the PI women.

The first Intifada was a major catalyst for greater visibility for women's activism in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip. Moreover, it was a time of empowerment and creation of alliances between female Israeli and Palestinian peace activists. With regards to women's peace activism during the first Intifada, Sharoni (1995) stated:

> In conclusion, the Palestinian and the Jewish Israeli women's movements are in the midst of grappling with and redefining their own identity and direction at this time. Women in both movements have begun to confront crucial questions of identity and differences as well as the complex relationship between dominant interpretations of national identity and other modalities of identity such as gender, ethnicity, religion, class and sexuality among others. This exploration is likely to provide a common ground for the emergence of contingent, yet stronger, alliances between Palestinians and Israeli–Jewish women (pp.148-9).

Unfortunately, this vision for the future was impossible in reality. Safran (2006) argued that the different internal political processes in each society resulted in the separation of the two groups. She maintained that the JI women concluded that their national identity conflicted with an active peace agenda, whereas the Palestinian women peace activists made their national struggle a top priority.

The focus of JI women peace activists shifted the political debate from a masculine-militaristic discourse to a more inclusive peace-oriented discourse. The best known Israeli women's peace organization, *Women in Black*, was founded in January 1988 when 10 Jewish women from the radical left began to stand vigil in a central Jerusalem square to protest the violent occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Shadmi (1992) argued that *Women in Black* redefined traditional images of femininity by using their bodies as presentation for their unheard voice. She described how the *Women in Black* members moved into the public eye, using their bodies, standing silently, wearing black, holding signs, and creating a space for their otherwise unheard voices in the public Israeli political discourse.

**After the Brussels conference**

In 1989, after a PI women's conference in Brussels, *the 1989 International Women's Peace Conference,* the *Israeli Women's Peace Net* (*Reshet)*, was established as an association that would coordinate all the women's groups, committing to a dialogue with Palestinian women from the occupied territories. Lantin (1998) argued that some feminists criticized the new groups as un-feminist because they had put the PI conflict first in their priorities instead of women's rights. She claimed, however, that these assemblies were working on an agenda advocating a two-state solution. At the same time, stated Lantin, a new feminist agenda was formed, linking violence against Israeli women to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinians.

The women's groups that were active at the time between the 1991 Madrid Conference, which was an early attempt by the international community to start a peace process involving Israel and the Palestinians, and the 2000 El-Aqsa Intifada ("uprising"), focused either on the Lebanon War or on the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. The El-Aqsa Intifada, which erupted in September 2000, was the second major wave of violence between Palestinians and Israelis following the First Intifada. It is important to further describe the leading groups at the time between the Madrid conference and the eruption of the El-Aqsa Intifada in order to understand how new women's groups emerged during the El-Aqsa Intifada.

The *Four Mothers Movement* was established after the tragic crash of two military helicopters in 1997, resulting in the death of 73 Israeli soldiers. Four mothers of combat soldiers initiated a protest against the war on Lebanon. Lemish and Barzel (2000) stated that a year later the movement reported 200 activists and 15,000 supporters in a published petition. *Four Mothers* is a most interesting test case, instructive in understanding the specific context of Israeli women's peace activism.

Sasson-Levy (1995) offered several reasons for why many more women than men were involved in Israeli protest movements. Some of Sasson-Levy's reasons include: women were socialized to invest in voluntary work; they were freer to criticize the military; and, most importantly, women were not part of instructional politics. Thus, she maintained, they had to work through grass roots politics.

Analyzing the test case of *Four Mothers,* Lemish and Barzel (2000) stated:

> It is possible that Four Mothers' achievements were the result of working within the rules of the game rather than going against them. In their non-threatening, legitimized and accepted roles as concerned mothers, life-bearers and caregivers, the public was willing to lend an ear to their message and was able to sympathize with their call (p.165).

Nonetheless, stated the authors, motherhood may have served as a double-edged sword. They presented a thematic analysis of newspaper coverage and in-depth interviews with activists and then suggested that journalists employed several gender-biased discourse strategies that framed the movement as a 'maternal voice' rather than as a civil one. Lemish and Barzel argued that the activists were sometimes presented as egocentric, emotional, and inconsiderate of Israeli security needs. In addition, claimed the authors, the activists were at times presented as lacking the skills, experience, and knowledge to make judgments related to security issues. Moreover, they were blamed for betraying the national ethos by demoralizing the military. However, stated Lemish& Barzel, after a year of activity, the group's presentation shifted:

> From being charged at first as being 'Arafat whores,' bored women who should go 'back to the kitchen,' they have moved into mainstream political life. *Four Mothers* has become an active catalyst, demonstrating, meeting

> with politicians, nagging the media. Some prominent female journalists go as far as to say that *Four Mothers* has become synonymous with the public debate demanding a withdrawal from Lebanon, and that media practitioners now actively seek their reactions to any event related to the issue (p. 160).

Svirsky (1998), one of the founders and leaders of *Women in Black*, described some of the group's many faceted impacts: personal transformation, influence on the immediate circle of the women's families and friends, and the consistent effort to counter the pro-occupation barrage. She claimed that *Women in Black* had a dynamic effect on other groups and that as a radical group, *Women in Black* pushed more centrist organizations like *Peace Now* to assume positions that were more daring.

*Machsom Watch* was founded in January 2001 in response to repeated reports in the press about Palestinians' human rights being abused while crossing army and border police checkpoints. *Machsom Watch* is a group of Israeli women peace activists who maintain vigil and document the violation of civil rights at the barriers in the occupied territories. This initiative which started with three women now boasts a membership of 400 women from all over Israel.

Emmet (2003) claimed that in order to better understand the establishment of *Machsom Watch* the exclusion of women from Israeli politics must be examined:

> While the women's vigils take place in a political context that excluded women from organized politics, they also indicate an increasing politicization of women beyond and around organized politics. The vigils provided one way in which Israeli women could establish themselves as citizens/protectors and political persons (p.35).

Kamir (2007) analyzed Israeli feminism through its ideological link to Zionism. She maintained that only non-Zionist feminists could sustain their struggle

for ending the occupation, since the Zionist ideology put the security of Jewish people before human rights and human dignity.

**The Narrative of Palestinian Women in Israel**

Rabinowitz & Abu Baker (2002) described the Palestinian generation born in the first decade after the Israeli nation's inception as one that grew up in the shadows cast by war. The authors claimed that this generation reached political maturity in the events of Yom Ha'adama of March 30th, 1976 when six Arab citizens of Israel were killed by the Israeli army and police during protests over expropriations of Arab land. They furthermore argued that because the wars of 1967 and 1973 forced this generation, also called the 'burnt out' generation or 'the parents' generation, to accept the existence of the State of Israel as a fait accompli, a political struggle for civilian equality began. Rabinowitz & Abu Baker described that struggle as one that included political organizations such as the National Committee of Arab High School Students, Arab student committees at the universities, professional associations, and coalitions. The authors claimed that the position of women in these organizations was almost entirely lacking, as patriarchal culture does not encourage women's inclusion in public offices or political struggles.

Rabinowitz & Abu Baker (2002) additionally termed the phrase 'generation standing tall' referring to the generation born into a military regime that included threats, corruption, informants, and land expropriation. They claimed that these realities pinned their hopes to those who were grooming themselves to be a new breed of independent leaders that would provide an alternative. The authors described that women were never invited to participate actively in the political system and argued that during the 1990s it became increasingly clear that the civic achievements of the Palestinian citizens of Israel remained limited. According to Rabinowitz & Abu

Baker, Activists and the public were subject to growing burnout and their faith in substantial change faded.

Subsequently, the authors argued, that the murder of young protesters during the events that took place in October 2000 turned the Palestinian problem into a personal question asked by the second generation, as well as by many of the 'parent's generation.' They argued that the younger people experienced the events of October 2000 as a turning point that sharpened their political identity and spurred them on to assume clearer positions. Rabinowitz & Abu Baker further described that in April 2000, six months prior to the October events, Palestinian students organized demonstrations, impressive in scope and intensity, to protest the death of an older woman from tear gas during a demonstration commemorating Yom Ha'adama. They clarified that those events were led by young women leaders, accompanied by many female Palestinian students, mainly because the male students had been arrested. The authors claimed that the women's style of speech and what they said over the mass media in Israel surprised many as the young women leaders promoted a new agenda, that of equal rights for Palestinians within Israel.

Cohen (2006) provided a chilling picture of power mechanisms set into action by the Israeli state to silence the Palestinian narrative. According to Cohen, The level of resistance to the Israeli state, on the part of Palestinians, was actually much higher than what is commonly accepted and the security mechanisms of the state controlled all aspects of the Palestinian population's existence. While the author did not discuss the issue of gender, he offered a description of the oppressive mechanisms applied to all Arab population in the fields of politics, culture, education, and economics, alongside its influence on their lives and their inability to improve their status.

Herzog (2004) applied feminist and post-colonial methods to trace the social worlds of educated Palestinian women in Israel. She concluded that the proximity to Jewish society had a multifaceted affect on Palestinian women. Herzog argued that Palestinian women exist in a state of 'limbo:' between cultures, statuses, genders, nationalities, and races. Furthermore, she claimed, that in this state they are perpetually ambivalent and that in this impossible space, they manage to negotiate their identities and challenge dominant social definitions. Herzog maintained that the encounter and confrontation with Jewish society creates identities and practices that are often illogical, placing the Palestinian woman in a position of a double, contradictory identity.

Brand (2003) described political discourse in the Middle East as fortifying the separation between the public and the private in order to exclude women from public discourse. The author explained that when women manage to escape this oppressive position, they are judged by their loyalty to the collective and are pressured into proving this loyalty, and are referred to with suspicion and lack of faith.

Finally, Rabinowitz & Abu Baker (2002) described the status of Palestinian women in Israel as forcing them to live with a double identity and to suffer double oppression. They claimed that the 'parent's generation' had found it nearly impossible to break down the walls of oppression while the 'generation standing tall' has seemingly managed to do so. However, the authors argued, they still encounter double barriers, from Jewish society that feels threatened by Palestinian national definition on the part of young Palestinian women, as well as from Palestinian society that feels threatened by their gender definition, which clamors for a recognition of their full rights.

**Expressive Therapies in Service of Social Justice and Conflict Resolution**

Rogers (1993) maintained that expressive therapies for groups are used across various arts (e.g., movement and dance, music, drawing, drama, and storytelling) in a supportive setting to facilitate growth and healing. The author claimed that through the creation of art forms, participants are invited to use their intuitive and creative skills in expressing their inner worlds and feelings. For this purpose, Rogers argued, non-verbal or metaphoric expressions are used. According to Rogers, beauty, harmony, or esthetics, are of no concern; rather, participants use the arts to let go, to express, and to release. Finally, Rogers suggested, arts are used for self-exploration as well as for interaction among group members.

Kalmanowitz and Lloyd (2005) argued that the use of expressive therapies creates a path through which one is able to express the complexities of his experience. The authors claimed that such an expression has important implications for the individual, as it promotes an affirmation of one's experience alongside feelings of being deeply understood by others. Thus, they maintained, the creation of personal meaning is fostered.

Within the context of political violence, art therapies can be an effective tool in support of individuals and communities under such conditions. As noted by Byers (1996): "The war situation stimulates powerful projections and fantasizes. These may be real or unreal, but the opportunity to express one's experiences may be gratifying and provide some relief from some of the anxiety and anger" (p. 238). Kalmanowitz & Lloyd (2005) studied trauma and mental health interventions that were conducted by expressive therapists in conflict areas. The authors concluded that art therapies help create meaning, bring in spiritual healing, ask questions, create aesthetic

distance, and foster creativity and flexibility in working with the unconscious through symbols.

Baker (2006) described the healing effect of art therapies in contexts of conflict as follows: "Through art expression, fractured parts of the self are brought to the surface to be observed and evaluated for change. In the process of creating visual dialog through art, survivors of trauma are able to resolve conflict, develop personal strengths, and heal their invisible wounds" (p.184).

According to Landy (2002), art therapies have a threefold role in helping their communities cope with deep massive trauma: Firstly, art therapists encourage traumatized clients to work with images that help them engage in a playful dialog that will help them achieve a greater sense of control. Landy suggested that the second role of art therapists is to create a play space that has potential for imaginative action, a space for healing, safety, and containing. Third, maintained Landy, therapists use role-play to work through feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

Kellerman (1992) specified one form of art therapy as Psychodrama and described it as a method in which participants are encouraged to use role playing and dramatic self-presentation, utilizing both verbal and non-verbal communications. Moreno (1972) cited a related form to Psychodrama, that of Sociodrama. He described it as an action method for improving intergroup relations and solving political and social conflicts. According to Moreno, this method was originally developed during World War II in order to improve coexistence between various groups in the posttraumatic societies of the post war area.

Bouchard (2002) claimed that drama may be the ideal choice for a narrative approach intended for moral experience, as the goal of both drama and the narrative approach is to have the participants become the authors of their own moral voices.

Thus, Bouchard argued, through narration and drama participants give meaning to their experience. He additionally suggested that from a relational perspective, both drama and narrative approach are possible by means of the relational model: "Drama offers an opening onto the world of affectivity and privilege relationships with others, as is the case for narrative approach" (p. 419). Kellerman (2007) similarly claimed that from a political perspective, political Sociodrama composes a place to explore social and community issues that restrict participants from living a full life.

Hazut (2005) described an expressive therapy work conducted at the second 2000 intifada, a time of extreme political violence, which aided a group of traumatized students so that they could continue their studies. She specified that the therapeutic process included working with colors and papers in the creation of a safe place for 'hope work.' Hazut suggested that the work of hope needs an optimistic approach, physical, mental, and cognitive activism, a future time perspective, the use of imagination, and the ability for self-control.

Abu Sway, Nashashibi, Salah, & Shweiki (2005) described the therapeutic work conducted by Palestinian therapists from the Palestinian Counseling Center (PCC) which advocates for positive mental health and well being for the Palestinians in the Palestinian occupied territories. Abu Sway et al. analyzed the psychological effects of political violence on Palestinian communities in the occupied territories. They mentioned that The PCC was involved in managing and training crisis intervention teams, employing methods such as debriefing, somatic experiencing, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), and expressive therapies. Abu Sway, Nashashibi, Salah, & Shweiki claimed that positive outcomes of the expressive arts therapies include: providing a therapeutic space for group participants, contributing to their healing process, energizing participants, and assisting them in

building a healthier community during the time of the workshop. Nonetheless, the authors maintained, 30% of the population was considered likely to be affected on a long-term basis, with unemployment, poverty, and restriction of mobility serving as causes for high levels of psychological distress. Furthermore, the authors argued, the most extreme reaction was the indifference to death, the consideration of life as diminished, and hopelessness regarding its preservation.

Kaplan (2007) argued that expressive therapists must honor participants' backgrounds and avoid separating people from the cultural setting in which they live. She suggested that while remaining transparent about one's social and political identity, therapists should assist participants in dealing with aspects of society that have contributed to their suffering and prejudices.

Following that notion, Cohen and King (1997) discussed the meanings of being an outsider vs. insider with regards to the art therapy group. The authors claimed that when the therapist is an outsider, he is unable to really understand the mechanisms of oppression in place, thus, they maintained, such experience forces the therapist to be extremely tentative to the cultural differences. Furthermore, Cohen & King argued that as an outsider, the therapist is able to expose and interrupt destructive dynamics, and once gaining a new perspective he can offer to the community the idea of liberation.

To conclude this chapter, a citation from Ross (1997), regarding ways for women to cope with conflict through art therapy, follows:

> For women to find productive ways of dealing with their conflicts, we must recognize the inter-connectedness of the inner psychological world and the outer social material world: the personal and the political. Art therapy can be a valuable way of enabling women to explore and 'unlearn' female

> stereotypes. In art therapy women can develop a greater range of emotional expression and be empowered through an increase understanding of the social context within which we operate (p. 148).

In sum, the above literature review shows that in communities living under conditions of political violence, the psychological and physical integrity of the person and the community is threatened. The expressive arts foster links between internal and external experiences, facilitate multiple possibilities, and provide opportunities for multiple levels of narrative to unfold. Additionally, via working with symbols, a safe place for uncertainty and doubts is created and the unconscious is allowed to emerge and reveal that which is unspeakable.

# CHAPTER 3

## Method

### Research Methods

This research uses case study from the perspective of qualitative feminist research in the context of Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli women peace activists as they create a dialogue through the arts. Additionally, this research uses the framework of Action Research as it is anchored in the belief that the research process itself serves as a mechanism for social change. Ponterott (2010) suggested that Action Research aspires to combine action with reflection, theory with practice, in the quest for realistic solutions to significant issues that concern people. Additionally, claimed Ponterorr, Action Research seeks to improve the wellbeing of individuals and their communities.

Ponterorr (2010) argued that Action research is undertaken by people who are part of the phenomena. My identity as an Israeli researcher located me within the research field as an insider, a part of the community being researched. Being an insider originated from my familiarity with the background, themes, fears and issues that were expressed and dealt with by the participants throughout the research, as an Israeli woman, sharing with them social, political and historical roots.
Furthermore, my research study was the means to assemble the essential knowledge about the research question and to suggest a change directly useful to the Israeli society in the form of artistic therapeutic intervention. The research question is: How do Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian women use expressive therapies to create a dialogue about peace?

Theordoson and Theordorson (1969) defined case study method as a technique that examines social phenomena via the analysis of an individual case. Stake (1995)

maintained that the case study examines both the uniqueness and the complexities of a particular case in an attempt to understand their meaning. According to Creswell (1998), this method is often used within the fields of nursing, public administration, social work, medicine, and psychoanalysis. In contrast to quantitative research which constructs generalizations by analyzing or comparing many cases, qualitative case study focuses on a certain case or particular issue, which may be a person, a group, an episode, a process, a community, a society, or any other unit of social life. Thus, it is a frequent method for studying political and social processes of change.

Reinharz (1992) argued that the objective of feminist case study research is to analyze changes, explore the uniqueness of phenomena, understand relationships between aspects of the phenomena, and determine the implications for the future. According to Reinharz, case studies in both the feminist research field and other fields describe an idea or a subject, explain processes of development and change, show the restrictions of generalization, and explore new issues or subjects. She claimed that the individual case has value for feminist theory and action in its capacity as a positive model.

This case study was developed in order to highlight the ways in which participants use the arts to express personal issues and to communicate with one another. Herzog (2002) claimed that women in Israeli society are silenced and are rarely described in social research. As a feminist researcher, that recognition served as a motivator for learning about the lives of Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli women, and thus support their involvement in public affairs. Moreover, in a militaristic society, which existed for decades in a situation of political and violent conflict, creating such a dialogue composes the essence of peace education and conflict resolution research.

The current research examines conflict characteristics in both Israeli and Palestinian women peace activists, as expressed and reflected upon in the workshops they participated in as part of this study. The ways in which the participants created connections and built bridges alongside the difficulties and obstacles they experienced are described. This interdisciplinary research integrates expressive therapies (music, dance, drama, visual arts, and storytelling) in a therapeutic setting with peace education and women's empowerment processes.

Bar-On (2006) as well as Halabi & Zak (2002) argued that previous peace projects have shown that Jewish and Palestinian co-facilitators may serve as a model for co-existence and equality and, as a team, are in a better position to understand issues of national identity in the group. In line with that, two facilitators participated in the current study; the author and a Palestinian facilitator from the Institute for Expressive Therapies in Switzerland.

The objective was to construct a study which will validate participants' experience as 'survivors' of prolonged, intractable, violent, political conflict but also as activists for peace and social justice; a study which will enable participants' use of the arts in expression of their fears, anxieties, and mistrust, as well as their hopes, dreams, and wishes.

This research was conducted under the rules of the institutional review board (IRB) and was approved by the Lesley University's internal review board.

## Research Design

The research data come from two workshops. The first took place in November 2006 at an educational center near Kfar Sabah in Israel, and the second took place in February 2007, at the Israeli extension of Lesley University in Netanya, Israel. This community case study is of a "bounded system" (Stake, 1995), and was

time limited (each of the two workshops lasted for two days). The workshops at hand took place a few months after the 'Second Lebanon War' between Israel and the Hezbollah which erupted in the summer of 2006. Due to the political climate during the war and the deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories, Israeli Palestinian women were less inclined to participate in peace projects than Israeli Jewish women. Correspondingly, the current study had twelve participants; eight Jewish Israeli women and four Palestinian Israeli women.

**Participants**

Subjects were invited to the workshops through various peace group networks, such as the *Coalition of Women for Peace in Israel*, and through personal and professional connections between Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli women. Participants were four Palestinian women and eight Jewish women, aged between 40 and 60 years old. The Palestinian participants came from an area of Israel known as 'the triangle,' which encompasses many villages in a central area of Israel, located north-east of Tel Aviv. The Jewish participants were from different locations, also in the vicinity of Tel Aviv. Some participants knew each other from the pilot studies or through shared networks.

**Procedure**

Creswell (1998) argued that qualitative research comprises an encounter between researcher and phenomena. He maintained that the phenomenon needs a precise description, but also an interpretation that is shaped by the researcher's mood, experience, and intention. The approach of the therapists in the two workshops involved a combination of leadership, facilitation, and guidance. Both therapists shared the same roles and responsibilities, and served as behavior models. Through much discussion before, during, and after each session, the therapists were mindful of

inter-participants and inter-therapists power issues. Rules regarding the times and structure of sessions were set by the therapists. The therapists did not participate in the process of art making or discuss their political agenda. External to the ongoing activity, the therapists used suggestions, explanations, mirroring, reflecting, and clarification questions.

The first workshop was videotaped by two different cameras; a student photographer used a professional camera throughout the process and a video camera was also set up in the corner of the room and was moved from time to time as needed. In the second workshop, a single camera set up in the corner of the room was used. The outline of the workshops follows. The details of the workshops can be found in Appendix A.

**First workshop – November 2006.** Day one: introduction; check-in; work with materials; reflection on the art; dinner and social gathering. Day two: morning check-in; small groups; psychodrama techniques; summary and closure.

**Second workshop – February 2007.** Day One: introduction; role-play with a chair; discussion; psychodrama of the grandmother; drawing as reflection; summary of the first day. Day two: check-in; drama therapy; summary and closure.

## Data Analysis Method

The video-taping produced 24 video cassettes which were observed and transcribed by the author. Transcriptions included primarily that which was said, but also the movement in the room, the physical contacts, voice changes when exceptional, as well as the overall expressive parts. Observing the video films and the process of transcribing both workshops promoted understanding the process on a deeper level.

The twelve participants in the current study were involved in many interactions and this case thus elucidates a rich variety of narratives and perspectives. The different perspectives of the participants and the ways in which they responded to the content and process provided many diverse opinions and expressions. In addition, the artistic expression was, in itself, complex and multifaceted.

In the first stage of analysis, themes emerged from a repeated analysis of each tape. This analysis included highlighting significant moments in the workshop and grouping those significant moments into themes. Each theme was coded with a different color. At that stage there were twenty themes highlighted throughout the transcripts. In an attempt to narrow down the number of themes, I searched for correspondence and relations between the different themes. In the second stage of analysis, three broad categories emerged and I sorted the text and the visual images that composed the twenty themes according to those categories. In the third stage of analysis, I re-examined each of the three categories and analyzed them separately. At that point I realized the three themes were actually three narratives, dividing the participants according to three sub-groups, each one dealt with her particular identity separately to the other two sub-groups. I thus named each category the narrative of the relevant sub-group and sorted the themes within them according to their relevance to the identity defining voyage. In the fourth stage of analysis, I extracted the visual images and the references regarding the usage of the arts throughout the workshop from those three categories and from them created a fourth one: the narrative of the arts.

## Discussion

Following the data analysis, I came to the realization that the texts and the visual images of the two workshops were essentially three prominent journeys of

identifying and presenting an identity that is unique and separate, taken by three sub-groups that were naturally created throughout the workshops. Re-reading and analyzing the themes presented have echoed a fascinating dance between three groups of participants, each of them mirroring to the two other fractions of fragmented identity, thus enabling them to consolidate and rename themselves as a more coherent and solid form. I began to witness a pattern of evolvement that took place within each of the three groups, and realized that as the workshops progressed, the participants within the groups came to perceive themselves as more unified inward and more distinguished and independent outward. Furthermore, I came to understand that I was reading into a feminine quest, otherwise denied by a militaristic and masculine society, for a coherent and meaningful identity that holds within it a number of separate, yet related, themes, each representing a part of her being. It was a thrilling discovery that this all-female setting invited the participants to better position themselves in relations to two highly important reference social groups that were otherwise very rarely in close contact with them.

As I went deeper into understanding each identity separately I could not but appreciate them as one edge of a feminine triangle, working together to better listen to one another and mostly, to be more loudly heard.

# CHAPTER 4

## Results

In this chapter I will present the results of the two workshops as follows. First, a brief description of the participants will be given. Following that, I will report the themes that were raised by each sub-group separately: the Palestinian sub-group, the 'Zionist Jewish' sub-group, and the 'Radical Jewish' sub-group. Finally, I will bring the three subgroups together by discussing the themes that were specific to the art interventions during the workshops.

## Description of Participants

Rinat was a 57 year old who worked as an editor for an art magazine and identified herself as having leftist views regarding state and society. She joined the workshop because of her aspiration to improve the status of Israeli Arabs and to end the occupation.

Amal was a 47 year old academic who worked as social worker in her village. She joined the workshop because of her belief in dialogue as a mechanism of empowerment and the opportunity to become familiar with the suffering of the other side.

Nira was a 42 year old movement therapist who worked as a facilitator of women's groups, as a meditation teacher and as a doula. She joined the workshop because of the focus on women and the opportunity to empower women in Israel. Additionally, she aspired for the workshop to promote the abolishment of all forms of racism.

Orna was a 46 year old family physician. She joined the workshop due to her belief in the right of every human for freedom and respect and after she was

disillusioned and disappointed by the absence of a peace process. Moreover, she aspired to take part in an all-women's group and to hear the story of the 'other.'

Zeenab was a 45 year old academic who suffered from a lower body paralysis due to childhood Polio and served as the first female council member in her village. She joined the workshop following years of political activism for achieving peace because of her desire to empower women and to broaden the circle of women connecting to one another from both sides.

Ruti was a 67 year old who worked as a story teller and voice and movement therapist. She joined the workshop because of the focus on women's activism and the opportunity to hear the narrative of the Palestinian side. Likewise, she appreciated the prospect to voice her own narrative to the other side.

Roni was a 56 year old doctoral student in hermeneutics. She joined the workshop after years of no activism in the hope of creating meaningful connection with the other side. Additionally, she believed that the women have the potential of creating empathy and understanding of the 'other.'

Miriam was a 49 year old peace activist who worked as a drama therapist. She joined the workshop because of her understanding that the basis for peace and co-existence in Israel is in the personal and intimate encounter with the 'other.'

Talma was a 48 year old drama therapist who referred to her motivation for activism as dynamic and complex. She joined the workshop with the belief that all human beings are equal and with the hope that such encounter can allow the masks to be removed and the healing to begin.

Dorit was a 59 year old radical peace activist who worked as a translator. She joined the workshop because of the opportunity to face the Palestinian women with

her immense guilt towards them and to hopefully experience peace within her after years of caring that guilt and shame.

Faten was a 55 year old homemaker who worked as a part time rehabilitation instructor and served as the chairwoman of the women's council in her village. She joined the workshop with a mission to sow the seeds of hope and connection and with the wish to tell her story and to hear the stories of other women.

Nida was a 47 year old homemaker who worked as a kindergarten teacher and belonged to a women's council in her village. She joined the workshop because of the focus on peace and the opportunity to meet Jewish friends interested in peace.

## Themes of the Sub-group of Palestinian Participants

The Palestinian participants' journey of an eminent and identifiable narrative began early in the workshops. The Palestinian sub-group asked to be heard as one that holds an exclusive narrative which denies its 'otherness' in the setting of the workshops. As the workshop progressed, that narrative grew more complex though at the same time also more complete. While that journey was taken in reference to the other two sub-groups and in constant dialogue with them, it appears to me that this narrative will be best understood as a separate section.

### Background

The Palestinian participants included Faten, Zeenab, Amal, and Needa. Originally, there were 7 Palestinian participants who intended to join the workshop; however 3 of the 7 informed me a few days prior to the workshop that they cannot attend it for personal reasons. I suspected the political climate of the time had an effect on their decision. The participants who did attend expressed their difficulty with what they defined as deterioration in the violent military policy toward the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and the manifestly unethical acts perpetrated

by the Israelis against the Arab population in Lebanon during the 'Second Lebanon War,' which preceded the workshop by three months. In the Palestinians sub-group, the following themes arose:

1. Palestinian Identity as the 'other' in a Jewish State.
2. Language as an Expression of Identity.
3. The Palestinian Naqba.
4. The Grandmothers – the Generation Who Experienced the Naqba.
5. A Story within a Story within a Story.
6. Double Oppression.
7. The Lesson Learned from the Naqba.

**Palestinian Identity as the *Other* in a Jewish State**

The first theme to be raised by the Palestinian participants was the multifaceted question regarding their Palestinian identity in a Jewish state. The Palestinian women spoke of their identity as one that is shaped by the Jewish establishment and described the difficulties that accompany their struggle to belong, as well as to be separated and distinguished, yet not excluded or denied.

The Palestinian participants described their sentiment of being the 'other' in the Israeli society. The women claimed that since the Jews are the subject of 'the Israeli citizen', the Palestinian citizen becomes the 'other' of that subject and thus suffers from discrimination, from ignorance and is treated with fear and caution. Furthermore, the women maintained that the curiosity towards their own 'other' – the Israeli Jews- is unmet by the other side with the same interest.

Zeenab was the first Palestinian participant to discuss the issue of identity and she framed it as a political matter: "Well, being a Palestinian or an Israeli in the State of Israel…recently I realized that this whole process of being an Israeli Arab is a Shin

Bet[1] project…wanting to shape the identity of Arabs who live here and say 'Israeli Arab', and they succeeded, today there is an age group who say: I am an Israeli Arab and they have forgotten the Palestinian within us (1/2/p.3 of the transcript)."

The Palestinian women continued to describe their feelings of injustice, deprivation, and social and political oppression as their daily experience in the Jewish state. They presented their feeling of inferiority both in regards to substantial and tangible rights, as well as in their innermost capacity to feel free within their country. Faten expressed a desire to experience various forms of freedom; emotional, physical, and the freedom to walk around Israel as before, when the blood and hatred were not felt at all. Additionally, Faten told the group how Palestinians from both sides of the Green Line have familial connections and how the identity of the Palestinians living within the boundaries of the State of Israel is inseparable from that of the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Amal, a Palestinian participant, said that the Palestinian-Arabs have no one to care for them. She added that due to the political situation, she has many difficulties, such as paying for the education of her two daughters as scholarships are unavailable to those who didn't serve in the army.

The Palestinian participants summed up the issue of their Palestinian identity in the Jewish state with the topic of the trauma endured during the 'Second Lebanon War.' The women asked to make a connection between the violent events the Palestinian people suffered during the establishment of the Jewish state, the occupation of the Palestinian territories and the war in Lebanon. The women asked the Jewish participants to acknowledge their feelings of relatedness to their fellow Palestinians in and out of Israel as a source of meaning and familiarity within the

[1] Shin Bet – the general Israeli security service.

Jewish state that ostracized them. Zeenab, herself a disabled woman, painfully described her identification with the disabled people who were bombed in Kfar Kana[2] and linked this experience to her helpless experience of the Six Day War in 1967.

**Language as an Expression of Identity**

The second theme to be raised by the Palestinian participants was one concerning the language being used during the workshop since the prevailing language used was Hebrew. The Palestinian women argued that the Jewish participants' range of expression is greater because they express themselves in their language, while their own expression alternates between partial and authentic. For the Palestinian women the issue of language and expression was a very important aspect of the conflict as all of them spoke both Arabic and Hebrew and all but a small minority of the Jewish women spoke only Hebrew. Thus, they maintained, in order to be heard they were forced to translate their thoughts and feelings into the language that also excluded them. That, for them, presented a chief paradox in their lives.

Faten, who was aware of the profound implications of the choice of language at a bi-national workshop, felt confused and had difficulty taking a stand:

> Ask them why they don't understand Arabic…Whoever doesn't understand doesn't understand. Here I wrote in Hebrew [speaking in Arabic]. Is it better to speak in Hebrew, in Arabic, I wrote it in Hebrew and now I will say it in Arabic [she begins to speak in Arabic, stops and returns to the Hebrew]. Maybe it's rude to speak in Arabic (1/4/p.5).

The issue of language also arose between Faten, Ruti, and Roni in the small group. On one hand the Jewish participants suggested Faten would speak in Arabic and praised the sound of the Arabic coming from women in the workshop. On the

[2] Kfar Kana – in the Second Lebanon War, the Israeli air force attacked a three-storey building resulting in the death of 37 people, among them children and disabled people.

other hand, they stated, Arabic sounds violent and unpleasant in other contexts, such as on the radio.

**The Palestinian Naqba**

The discussion in the workshop with reference to the Naqba (meaning 'catastrophe,' the establishment of the State of Israel) was ambivalent and for the most part cautious. The Palestinian participants were hesitant to address it in the early stages of the workshop and it was only in the second day that this issue was mentioned directly. When it was discussed, the Palestinian women claimed that the Israeli government was trying since 1948 to erase the Palestinian identity and that the Naqba is the symbol for all that is lost.

The first woman from the Palestinian group that raised it openly was Zeenab as she claimed: “in order for you to be here, people were expelled, if you read the book 'Good Arabs' ( Cohen, 2006)[3] you’ll see that since the establishment of the State of Israel, an entire mechanism has been created to expel the 'refugee-infiltrators' (1/6/p.6)." Later on, a Jewish participant said she refuses to have her right to live in the State of Israel undermined, to which Zeenab replied: “We survive here, this country doesn’t want us and it isn’t ours, they have suffocated us, planned to cut us off from our identity and the Arab nation (1/6/p.3)."

The story of the Naqba was told bit by bit all through the workshop and the women mentioned it mostly indirectly, while telling the stories of their families, their villages and their past being lost. As the women told their stories they mentioned repeatedly how deeply they appreciated the effort made by the Jewish women who attended the workshop to listen to their narrative, their painful stories. As the issue of the Naqba was perceived, by both sides, as an 'explosive ground' it was discussed less

[3] “Good Arabs” – describes the violent intelligence penetration of the Palestinian community within the Green Line.

directly and with greater consideration to the way in which it will be professed by the Jewish participants.

**The Grandmothers – the Generation Who Experienced the Naqba**

On the second day of the workshop, each participant was invited to tell her grandmother's story in first person. For the Palestinian participants, their grandmothers' stories were the most dominant and memorable stories of the Naqba. They presented two themes when telling their stories: the theme of tragedy turned into survival and the theme of loss.

The stories that focused on survival presented a mythological grandmother not only as a part of the personal female story but also of the collective story. Those women symbolized for the participants the ability of women to cope with war situations, oppression and poverty while giving love to their children and grandchildren, thereby strengthening their spirit and passing on the message of a life of courage, resilience and faith. Faten told the story of the *Naqba* in a very personal way through her grandmother, Balkis, who lost her husband and all of her lands, and had to provide for herself and for eight orphans. In her grandmother's monologue, in Arabic, she told the circumstances of her life. In its telling, Faten focused on the ways in which her grandmother survived, being left with no parents and no land, through faith and hard work, various skills in healing, cooking, hand-work, and primarily, a strong and loving spirit.

The loss of a son in the *Naqba* was an issue that arose in other stories told by the Palestinian women. They maintained that in the rush to get out of the village or town, many families could not take care of so many children along the way. Some of the children were found only years later, as with Amal's family, where the uncle was discovered after 1967, in a refugee camp in Jordan. In those stories the grandmother

held within her all the pain and loss suffered during the Naqba and thus became an embodiment of the bleeding Palestinian identity.

The stories told by the grandmothers were at times an opportunity presented by the Palestinian participants to create a connection between them and the Jewish grandmothers as for the Palestinian women all grandmothers symbolized what they all had in common. The grandmothers were perceived by them as the painful past that they wished they could forget, but also as the force of survival that strived to protect them from that painful past at all cost and thus presented the promise of life and love.

**A Story within a Story within a Story**

For the surviving Palestinians, one way of coping with the difficulty of directly telling the story of the *Naqba,* was to tell folk stories with indirect message. The stories were an indirect way of preserving historical continuity and national narrative without the risk of agitation.

The *Naqba* story constituted a link between the grandmother and granddaughter and between the generation that endured the trauma of the *Naqba* and the generation who is trying to understand it. For instance, Amal's grandmother, Naima, specialized in storytelling and used to tell a variety of stories each time Amal visited her with her siblings.

Furthermore, the dialogue that evolved following the story-telling constituted a connection between the Jewish participants and the Palestinian participants, as occurred between Amal and Dorit, whereby Dorit added meaning to a Palestinian story, told by Faten, and made a connection between the folk tale and the historical-political story:

> Amal: …what Faten told us yesterday about the princess who was kidnapped because she was so beautiful, she cried all the time until

> someone found out …, and then they took her back to her parents and had a party for her. That was a story she'd tell all the time, but the way she told it took almost an hour.
>
> Dorit: Do you know what I feel? I feel that this story is a metaphor. I really feel it's a metaphor for what happened. That there was a beautiful country that was taken hostage by others and they turned you into slaves to this country, but there will be happy ending.
>
> Amal: I never looked at it like that (1/9/p.3).

In a sense, there is ostensibly a role reversal here, in that Amal was supposed to have persuaded Dorit that the story had political meaning. The context of the workshop enabled Dorit, as a political activist, to release Amal's oppressed story and suggest an interpretation that might bring relief to the meaning of the story. Dorit took the role of someone who made a connection between the innocence and simplicity of the story and its political context. In this sense, it is a story of an abducted princess, as told by Grandmother Naima to her granddaughter Amal, who tells it to Dorit at the workshop, who gives the story back, charging it with a meaning previously unseen by Amal. It appears to be an act of release whereby the beauty inherent in the act of release connects with the content of a story, that is, the abduction and the release of the princess.

**Double Oppression**

Double oppression refers to the participant's experience of oppression as a minority in terms of nationality and oppression due to gender roles. Several of the women spoke about the difficulties of living in a chauvinistic society and how that increased their difficulties.

Zeenab was the first to define double oppression. She had made strides in fighting the oppression of women but still felt frustrated by the necessity to use "male language" while fulfilling her role as a local village councilor: "...you talk and they don't understand and they're absorbed in themselves and their interests and I'm like an alien there, and even when I speak, they try and take it in: a woman talking?!... I am in the dullest, driest place on earth, within the world I live in (1/2/p.3)."

Participants discussed the issue of awareness concerning oppression of women. In particular they discussed how women are not allowed to choose who to marry. Faten lamented the difficulty of Arab women in Israel who once married, have no voice and "belong" to the husband's family (1/5/p.4). However, it seemed these difficulties were not readily understood by some of the Jewish women. Ruti, for instance, tried to link female suicide bombers to the oppression of Israeli-Palestinian women. In response, the Palestinian women explained that the religion forbids suicide and thus the custom of women suicide bombers relates to politics and not tradition.

At the same time, the participants did speak about situations where they stood up to authority and society and were assertive. Amal told how she'd approached the mayor and demanded a promotion and Faten told her personal story as an example of change, emphasizing that not every woman under the difficult conditions of a conservative patriarchal society is able to make such a transformation.

The discussion on the issue of the oppression of Palestinian women turned into an argument when some the Jewish participants tried to prove that every woman has a choice. The Palestinian participants responded by attempting to explain that there are situations in which the price one might have to pay for choice is too high.

At the end of a long discussion, Needa told the group about her difficulties as a Palestinian woman whose clothing reveals her identity to the authorities. In her

story, the traditional head covering made Needa feel as if she were putting her husband at 'risk,' as if she were exposing his identity, and both of them would be harassed by the police.

The story demonstrated the struggle conducted on Needa's body. On one hand, her husband wishes to hide her identity and, on the other hand, the Israeli government discriminates against her when she reveals her identity.

**The Lesson Learned from the Naqba**

The participants discussed the lesson learned from the Naqba; this lesson was one of not surrendering and of holding tight to what was perceived as belonging to the Palestinians. The bitter memory of what was lost had become the force from which one should never again leave her home, her holding in this country, at all costs.

This was exemplified in a role play where one participant (Faten) was to sit in a chair and was asked to relate to the chair as if it belonged to her. Other participants were asked to try and persuade her to let them sit in the chair by any (excluding violence) means possible. Various methods were used by participants to get Faten out of the chair. One Jewish participant pretended to be fleeing and needing shelter; others used manipulations and pretended not to "want" the chair. The more the participants tried to get Faten out of the chair, the more she held onto the chair. After the role play, Faten related her behavior back primarily to her personal and collective Palestinian history. It is interesting to note Zeenab's words in relation to the role-played by Faten:

> We haven't resolved any conflict with our neighbors by leaving, if Faten had gotten up, she'd have created another conflict that would never have been resolved because our forefathers, some from fear or persuasion or some who sold and left and to this day are refugees, with the identity card

> of a refugee, known as transients and oppressed wherever they lived…I absolutely understand Faten, she'll give up her chair to people who will continue her path, people who have learned from the mistakes of others and not people who thought I'll surrender and we'll resolve it, … (2/2/ p.16).

Through her identification with the role played by Faten, Zeenab expressed her own perspective on the trauma, even disclosing an element of the self-accusation that exists in the Palestinian narrative.

The exercise with the chair consolidated the Palestinian group as a single voice of the collective that had learned a lesson and would not surrender land again or would fight to the death should they face expulsion again. The narrative was clarified by Faten's behavior in the role-play and in the text she spoke during her role as 'keeper of the chair until death.' It is highly significant that despite all attempts ultimately Faten held her own and did not surrender her chair.

**Conclusion**

Members of the 'Palestinian sub-group' claimed that the Israeli society does not wish to know the Palestinians of '48 and that there is intended ignorance encouraged by the authorities. Moreover, there was an allegation towards the Jewish group members according to which they were all on one side, despite an evident conflict between the 'Zionists' and the 'Radicals.' The Palestinians presented many allegations regarding inequality, discrimination, and deprivation in many fields of life. They felt that the state of Israel does not want them as citizens with equal rights, while, at the same time, dispossessing them of their Palestinian national identity.

In the Palestinian narrative, the *Naqba* is an untold story and the ways in which the silence passed throughout the family and the entire society became a fundamental theme for discussion in the workshops. The *Naqba* is experienced as a

vanished history: people who disappeared, villages that have vanished, and a society that fell apart. The participants brought folk stories to the workshops as personal and collective memory, as a way to preserve the heritage and history without risking the fury of the Jewish listeners.

The narrative of the Palestinian participants reflects a change in the status of women. There is more awareness to the oppression of women in society and a desire to change. Some of the participants succeeded in making a change on a personal level (e.g., high education, political involvement) but that success is regarded as a personal achievement and a concern regarding all the women and their poor status remains. They are aware of the fact the oppression is twofold; from the outside it is political towards them as Palestinians, and, from the inside, patriarchal towards them as women.

The Palestinian narrative in the workshops included readiness and openness on behalf of the Palestinian participants to expose the problematic sides of their society to the Jewish participants. In addition, the Palestinian participants formed feminine solidarity and openly referred to their difficulties as women in their society.

As the memory of the Naqba was sown all through the workshop as a recurring theme, the Palestinian narrative was finally consolidated as the Naqba's bequest provided them with innermost strength and belief. The Palestinian women asked to be signaled as those who will never again leave their land, their homes and their identity.

**Themes of the 'Zionist Jewish' Sub-group**

The Jewish participants in this group and the Jewish participants from the radical peace activist group were both preoccupied with the ideological conflict between what is known as the ‘extreme left’ (represented by the ‘radical peace

activists group') in Israel as opposed to the 'consensus' (represented by the Zionist group). While surfacing this conflict is not characteristic of Jewish-Arab encounter groups (Bar-On, et al., 2006), participants from both sub-groups did not hesitate to do so, even to a point of controlling the workshops' agenda at times with this internal argument.

In Israeli society, in terms of a numerical majority and political power, the Zionists are the hegemony. In this workshop there were eight Jewish participants, four of whom were radical peace activists and four were Zionists. This distribution placed the 'Zionists' in a state where they did not belong to the ideological majority. This situation may be perceived as a role reversal, one which caused the Zionists to step into the unfamiliar position of being defensive.

**Background**

Participants of the 'Zionist Jewish' sub-group were Jewish women not politically active against the occupation. This group included Ruti, Nira, Roni, and Talma. The group was heterogeneous in that Roni and Talma's political opinions occasionally changed, and though closer to peace activists, their views were not radical. Moreover, Talma and Roni represent a motif in common that, for the purpose of this research, is termed 'the spiritual motif,' characterized by a holistic, spiritual worldview with feminist and ecological-environmental elements. In the Jewish Zionist sub-group the following themes arose:

1. Representations of Internal Conflicts in Zionist Identity.
2. The Grandmothers – or Inherited Trauma.
3. Women in a Patriarchal Society.

**Representations of Internal Conflicts in the Zionist Identity**

This theme refers to the internal conflict that participants in this sub-group experienced in regards to attending the workshop and what position to take while there.

All four participants in the Zionist group expressed a desire to overcome racism and prejudice when connecting with the larger group. Moreover, the participants in this sub-group expressed a desire to make contact with the Palestinian participants. However, the women said it was difficult for them to come to the workshop after the State of Israel was accused of occupation and oppression.

Participants from the Zionist sub-group presented an ambivalent motivation for attending the workshop. The women said they came because they felt affiliated with the feminine forum but had reservations due to their fear from the political forum and from talking in political slogans. Furthermore, they expressed a desire for peace, anger at male thinking, and the aspiration that women would govern a better world. Nira, from the Zionist sub-group, was among the first to get up to work with the materials, expressing through it the pain common in both sides and the need for a feminine, spiritual solution and feminine leadership.

Despite expressing Zionist statements in regards to the political reality, the women had difficulty admitting that there could be conflicts or obstacles of a political nature and preferred searching for similarities rather than differences. The participants stated they understand how important it is to speak of the difficult things that happen in reality but that they were afraid of an open conflict. This ambivalence may have represented a fear of confrontation, which was mostly evident among the Zionists.

Another expression of anxiety in the Zionist sub-group was fear of rejection for personal or political reasons. The women talked about the fear of not being

accepted in the group and their need for a safety net. This theme was expressed by Ruti:

> …I am really afraid, afraid of not being accepted here, of my opinions not being accepted and I wish I knew what they were, I'm afraid that someone might undermine my right, that I am the evil one here or that someone might hurt me (1/6/p.3).

The sub-group's inner conflict additionally revolved around guilt. The participants in this sub-group resented what they referred to as the Jewish women's feelings of guilt as a pre-condition in the workshops, which was very disagreeable and unpleasant for them. The women insisted on not being the only villain in the reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and refused to discuss the Holocaust 'freely' as that was extremely troubling for them. This was expressed by Talma in response to a political discussion in the group that revolved around the Holocaust: "…my interpretation, because some context of the Holocaust was brought up, they went through the Holocaust, a Holocaust is taking place, that I am a sinner, this is very hard for me, very very hard (2/4/p.4)".

Talma and Roni, who presented a holistic perspective, which, at times, was more global than Zionist, preferred to avoid political arguments while exhibiting a philosophical point of view and emphasized throughout the workshop the importance in their eyes of the capacity for choice in defining one's self and being in control of one's life as a woman. Furthermore, as discussions revolved around repression, they expressed difficulty accepting the phenomenon of oppression, attempting to persuade the Palestinian participants that there is always a choice.

**The Grandmothers – Inherited Trauma**

Like the other sub-groups, the Zionist sub-group used psychodrama to express personal content and introduce aspects of their personal and collective history. In their psychodrama, the women presented their grandmothers with a reoccurring theme of bravery and survival, despite the enormous loss and pain. Three of the four women in this sub-group introduced a grandmother who was in the Holocaust and either survived or was murdered. When telling their grandmother's story, they expressed the very personal but also collective content of the 'second generation' (i.e., the children of Holocaust survivors). The women characterized the family's communication as one with a non-verbal agreement to avoid speaking of traumatic experiences. They all experienced a bond of silence surrounding the death of relatives in the Holocaust, which formed a void in them. Due to that silence, as the participants explained, they not only lost those relatives, but also the memory and the mourning of the loss.

In psychodrama, the participants expressed difficulties, loss, and anger; an inner conflict between silence and speaking, between the desire to know and the desire to repress in words and behavior.

Through her grandmother, Roni expressed her 'inner child;' she described the suffering related to her relationship with her 'post-traumatic' mother who could not express love for her daughter:

> …and perhaps I would also try and soften for her what I know her mother found hard to give, for her own reasons, and what I would like to tell her is that I loved her before she was born, and whatever she does is all right, and I would not expect her to fulfill my dreams and I would listen to hers, and that's it [weeping] (1/11/p.2).

A further theme presented through the psychodrama and the grandmothers was one of survival and strength. In describing the lives of their grandmothers, the women exemplified the routine of having to work and provide for the family as a top necessity, ruling out any space for idleness or complaints. They emphasized the message and lesson they learned from their grandmothers, namely, women cannot break down because they are responsible for the family. In this role, one's feelings must harden in order to survive, and consequently one is likely to be considered difficult.

The issue of loyalty among women also rose in relation to Talma's grandmother. When the grandmother took care of Talma and her mother, ensuring them a home when Talma's parents divorced, she was loyal to her granddaughter and daughter in law even at the price of a confrontation with her son:

> She was my father's mother but she said that the apartment would belong to me and my mother and we would have a home there, she told my father: you will be able to take care of yourself, I am worried about the mother and the girl. Yes, that is also something that requires strength (1/10/p.3).

**Women in a Patriarchal Society**

Different aspects of the theme relating to women in a patriarchal society arose in the Zionist sub-group. The first aspect was related to the question of what constitutes a woman peace activist. The participants referred to that question in more general terms than the other sub-groups and discussed the fear of male violence, and of the possibility of women moderating the male aggression; what Ruti described as: "replacing male violence with feminine hands" (1/2/p.2).

A further debate regarding women and politics was developed in the Zionist group in reference to the discrepancies between male and female thinking.

Specifically, the participants labeled political speech and talking in slogans as male thinking and personal speech, which they perceived as the right way to make peace, as female thinking. The women connected the political with the feminine, and protested against slogans and attitudes which reflect male-thinking; one of black vs. white, good vs. bad. They expressed a desire for another approach, one which promotes powerful awareness and which, as described by Nira, "rises from the womb and from the heart" (1/5/p.8).

Another aspect of women in a patriarchal society which was raised by the Zionists was the fear of being left alone in a society that values women as wives and mothers above all. That issue was dealt with obliquely through Ruti, who was the oldest participant in the group and had been widowed several years previously. The discussion in the sub-group revolved around Ruti's feminine presence which was described as representing a role and stage in the life of a woman – old age and loneliness – and thus may have been threatening to the other participants. While this issue was not comprehensively addressed, by virtue of her personal charm, creativity, and skill as a storyteller, Ruti conveyed herself to the group as a symbol of life and even sexuality.

A key feminine issue that was debated in this sub-group was related to the generational chain between women and the intergenerational transference in mother-daughter relations. The participants described difficult relations with their mothers and linked their mothers' inability to express love toward them to their mothers' guilty feelings regarding their own mothers who went through the terrors of the Holocaust. Roni spoke of her mother: "Because of my mother, because of the silence and the pain and…she was only half there, she was not a mother who hugged [demonstrating on herself] or caressed, she didn't touch at all… (1/9/p.5)."

One of the long and stormy discussions in the group concerned the oppression of Palestinian women by the Palestinian society in Israel. The 'Zionists' denied the link between the oppression of Israeli Palestinians by the state to the internal oppression of Palestinian women by their own society, and found it very difficult to accept the facts as they were described by the Palestinian participants. One participant from the Zionist sub-group, Talma, was eager to prove that this is a universal problem, indirectly expressing her feelings regarding the oppression of women in Israeli society:

> But it's all over the world not only…there may be a situation where greater strength is required in order to stop oppression but nonetheless all over the world women have this situation and some may find it harder or they have to struggle harder but there is still a choice (1/5/p.5).

**Conclusion**

The narrative of the Zionist sub-group portrays a compound image of conflicting identity and rigid defense mechanisms. The Zionists presented a very defensive narrative, originating in the belief that the Jews are a minority living under a constant sense of threat and described feelings of despair with the leaders and the Zionist way. They perceived the Jewish people as a continually persecuted nation and their view included distrustful aspects and pessimism regarding the chances of survival of the Jewish nation. Throughout the workshops, the 'Zionists' expressed fear of open confrontation as well as fear of being rejected by the group. They partly presented the difficulty as personal and not as a political difficulty, but it was expressed by the desire to avoid conflict of an ideological-political character.

The Zionist narrative was characterized by signs of collective post trauma: suspicion, anxiety, rigid defense mechanisms and fear of an inner split. They all

described how the silence surrounding the death of relatives in the Holocaust has been a fundamental experience in their upbringing and had left them with feelings of debt towards mythical female figures that they had only heard of. In the Zionists eyes, the legacy of those legendary grandmothers was twofold and at times paradoxical; they symbol the bravery and survival of the Jewish people, however they also left their mark on the participants' mothers as lacking in maternal love and affection.

Though the Zionist participants wished to connect with the Palestinian participants, at times this was done under set conditions such as: “Don’t make me feel guilty.” The Zionist participants had great difficulty handling overt political conflict between them and the Palestinians. In a fascinating way the conflict focused on the Radical Jewish sub-group. The Zionists struggled with the Radicals in an open and intensive struggle claiming that the Radicals accuse them unjustly and have lost their objective vision.

Finally, the Zionists expressed difficulty in facing the Palestinian narrative of 'the double oppression', that is, the political oppression by the government alongside the internal oppression of the Palestinian women in their society. This may be due to their refusal to link the external political oppression of the Palestinians in the state of Israel with the internal oppression of women by their traditional patriarchal society.

## Themes of the ‘Radical Jewish’ Sub-group

### Background

The sub-group of radical Jewish women consisted of four participants who were peace activists: Rinat, Miriam, Dorit, and Orna. The group was characterized by its commitment to peace activity as well as a radical attitude towards the conflict. In their eyes, the solution involved a fundamental change in the mind-set of Israeli society regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the possible means of resolution.

The sub-group of radical Jewish women peace activists (henceforth the Radicals) was ideologically similar to the group of Palestinian women in terms of calling to end the occupation. Interestingly, while the Radicals had in-depth knowledge of the problems in the occupied territories, they were less knowledgeable of the problems of Palestinian citizens of the State of Israel. The reason for this is that the protest of the Radicals against the occupation is based on the outlook that the occupation of the occupied territories is the 'root of all evil.' Ideologically, the Radicals maintain that the problem between Israel and the Palestinians began in 1948, but in terms of priorities of the political struggle, the fight against the occupation of the occupied territories has top priority. Thus, for the Radicals, the workshops constituted an opportunity for an in-depth personal and political encounter with the problems and difficulties of Palestinian women who live within the Green Line. In the Radical sub-group the following themes arose:

1. Frustration, Alienation, and Despair.
2. The Burden of Guilt.
3. The Grandmothers – Trauma Passed from One Generation to Another.
4. Radical Women Peace Activists in a Militarist Society.
5. The Personal is the Political.

**Frustration, Alienation, and Despair**

The emotional difficulties experienced by the Radicals were a central theme in their narrative. According to the participants, those difficulties included living with the ongoing frustration with the violent occupation of the territories and with the 'Second Lebanon War.' The Radicals expressed a severe sense of alienation from Israeli society and despair at the painful implications involving increased militarism

and political violence on both sides. The women referred to living in Israel as life under a terrible burden that they could hardly bear.

The women described feelings of loneliness and alienation they felt at the beginning of the 'Second Lebanon War.' They were aching the broad consensus within Israeli society concerning the war against the Hezbollah and the moral justification most Israelis afforded the Israeli military response. Miriam referred to a rift she experienced in the family during the 'Second Lebanon War.' Within her family, Miriam's husband and son usually identify with her beliefs. However, with the outbreak of war Miriam found herself facing a front consisting of her husband and son advocating the military response.

A further theme that was raised by the Radicals touched the high price the women felt they had to pay for their activity in radical political groups, which were perceived by Israeli society as marginal, eccentric groups that ostensibly composed a betrayal of the consensus.

Additionally, the Radicals described a sense of anger toward the male gender that, for them, represented the men behind the militaristic approach. Miriam stated: "It began with this very difficult war, which so blatantly exposed the true face of Israel. I felt how rigid Israel is. So much crudity, masculinity, aggression and primitiveness have been revealed here" (1/1/p.7).

As a final point, the Radicals referred to a despairing dissonance they experienced between their ostensibly normal even hedonist lifestyle as women from the upper middle class, and the horrors of the occupation. According to Miriam, this dissonance, and the rapidness in which one forgets the terrible events taking place, created an intolerable inner tension.

**The Burden of Guilt**

In referring to the burden of guilt, the Radicals described an entrapping dynamics. On one hand, they feel guilt for being Israelis in whose name the State of Israel perpetrates unethical acts; on the other hand, they feel that while being peace activists is difficult, no space exists for acknowledging this difficulty as it is a lesser one compared to that of the Palestinians. In that, the participants in the Radical sub-group regard themselves as unacknowledged victims of the occupation.

A related theme, described by the Radicals was an inner conflict that existed in them regarding the State of Israel, whereby on one hand they are angry and frustrated by what they perceived as an unjust and unethical Israeli policy, and on the other hand, they referred to the establishment of the State of Israel as a miracle and described their love for many things that exist in it. Additionally, the participants frequently associated themselves with a feeling of being deceived by the State which presented before them the ethos of 'a people without a state in a state without people.'

In reference to their activism, the women in the Radical sub-group revealed that when they decided to become politically active they hoped to connect between the occupation and Israeli society for the purpose of raising consciousness and ending the occupation. In time, they despaired from that aspiration, which then undermined their identifying with their Israeli identity.

Justifying their activism despite the profound burden of guilt, the women maintained that they chose to claim responsibility and fight against immoral acts done in their name by the government rather than thinking of leaving the country as a solution.

**The Grandmothers – Trauma Passed from One Generation to Another**

Three of the four radical participants are 'second generation' to Holocaust surviving parents. As such, the Radicals described the profound suffering of their parents and the way it had overshadowed their right to have hard feelings of their own. The women maintained that as a result they were made particularly sensitive to the suffering of others, and they felt committed not to ignore Palestinians in their suffering.

The participants described an inner conflict between the Holocaust narrative and the desire not to traumatize the Palestinians which caused them to feel torn between contradicting emotional needs. Namely, the desire to respect the pain and suffering of the grandparents and parents opposed to the wish to respect the pain and suffering of the Palestinians. They argued that this inner conflict is almost tragic, in the sense that it seems impossible to find a solution accommodating everyone's needs.

The Radicals found it more difficult than the other sub-groups to relate to their grandmothers and regarded the memory of them as painful and complex. Dorit, who had been told of her grandmother's death at too young an age and in a very traumatic way, preferred to suppress the story together with her murdered grandmother and all the accompanying feelings of pain and horror: "…because the experience really is connected with that terrible death that I repressed, I had no compassion for her, all I wanted was to forget I knew it (1/9/p.5)".

Furthermore, when discussing their grandmothers, the women described them in the context of a traumatized society and referred to the manipulative way in which Zionism used the Holocaust, and to the connection between the Holocaust and the *Naqba*, saying that the Jews' Holocaust is the Palestinians' Naqba.

**Radical Women Peace Activists in a Militarist Society**

Participants from the radical sub-group related to the issue of their place as women in Israeli society. The first theme they raised touched their feelings in regard to the Israeli society during the 'Second Lebanon War.' The women described their feelings of anger toward the Israeli man, in response that what they referred to as an aggressive masculinity and a sort of primitiveness that has been revealed during the war. Furthermore, they argued that the war seemed to have caused an outburst of masculine aggression and violence in levels they never experienced before.

Another theme raised by the Radicals was motherhood in the context of the militaristic Israeli society. The participants discussed their daughters and sons, whom they raised to perceive army service as an unethical act in the political circumstances of the occupation. Additionally, the women described their painful paradox of being Israeli mothers, 'second generation' daughters of Holocaust survivors, and peace activists in a society that educates its children to be what they perceives as brutal soldiers. In fact, Miriam's daughter chose to leave Israel in order to avoid enlisting; a choice which Miriam supported, as she preferred to cope with missing her daughter rather than with seeing her serve in the army.

A related theme dealt with maternal feelings that rose in the context of the Holocaust. The women contended that the high school visits to the Nazi extermination camps in Poland, which have elements of an 'initiation ceremony' in Israeli society, incorporated a message they disapproved. They claimed that they did not want their children to learn about the Holocaust in the same manner most Israeli society do.

Dorit described to the group the message she was trying to convey to her son as the lesson that should be learned from the Holocaust:

> We had to write them a letter for after their visit to Auschwitz or Treblinka, they had to get a letter and I wrote: My boy, today was probably a very hard day for you, but I want to say to you that if you ever have to choose between being two things, only two, or being a Nazi or a victim, choose the latter (1/9/p.8).

In her sharp and honest way, Dorit went to extremes. Dorit's narrative took her a step further toward a radical, subversive, and rebellious place, linking between the Zionists paradigm and the occupation.

**The Personal is the Political**

The participants in the Radical sub-group presented, while using imaginary dialogue with their mothers, a theme dealing with the political that becomes the personal. The women faced their mothers, Holocaust survivors seeking shelter and a safe home for the Jewish people, introduced themselves to them as Post Zionists and asked them if they too felt they were deceived by their country. The imaginary dialogues that evolved were at once political and personal, as the questions that the participants raised before their mothers were cardinal questions in the argument between left and right in Israeli society, as well as an extremely personal discussion between a mother and her daughter. Moreover, the women likewise conducted imaginary conversations with their sons and daughters regarding their supposed army service, which they considered serving the occupation.

While allowing themselves to speak freely to their mothers and children in ways that were impossible for them in reality, the participants described those conversations as the meeting point of their politics and their personal lives. They maintained that however cautious they were when dialoguing with their loved ones, they felt that their decision to become activists in radical groups had made their personal life a political one as well.

A further theme raised by the Radicals was what they referred to as the departure from feelings of ownership and of adherence to the land as an act of radical politics. The women argued that a part of their politics in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was their detachment from what was perceived by the Israeli society as the justification for the conflict- the belief in an historical and justified right over the land. They viewed this as an act of radicalism and resistance and applied it first and foremost to their own private homes. This was described by Orna: "I built a home and it's the first home I ever built, and I really love it but I feel I could also go to another home if it would end the conflict (2/2/p.16)."

**Conclusion**

The women in the Radical sub-group are active in peace groups which view universal values as superior to Zionist values and are thus considered in the Israeli society as extreme left. Challenging the consensus point of view, the radical activists express a political view supporting a radical change of the historical perception of the causes for the conflict, as well as a change in understanding as for how to change reality and find a solution.

On the one hand, the radicals actively pursue knowledge of that which occurs beyond the wall in the occupied territories. By going to the roadblocks and going to demonstrations in the occupied territories against the wall, they witness the horrors of the occupation and its implications on the lives of the Palestinians. On the other hand, they feel that the Israeli society is making every effort to avoid such knowledge and lives in increasing denial regarding the suffering of the Palestinians under an occupation.

Consequently, the Radicals are trapped in a Sisyphean situation in which the growing alienation between them and their surrounding leads to increasing feelings of

guilt and helplessness. On the positive side of their Sisyphean struggle, they do manage to create relations with the Palestinians, promote certain Palestinian matters, and form new interpersonal relations within their groups of activists.

At times the conflict between the radicals and their surroundings occurs at home and finds expression in arguments between the woman and her husband, her children, and her close friends.

The radical women feel guilty for having comfortable normal lives, opposite to the Palestinians' lives of suffering. What's more, the Radicals feel that they have no right to express their hardships, as these appear minor in comparison to the suffering of the Palestinians. Part of the time they feel guilty for being members of the Israeli collective and for cooperating with the occupation by paying taxes or even worse, by agreeing to have their children sent to the army. Specifically, some of the Radicals stressed their desire to educate their children in line with their political ideology and with their values which conflict with those of the majority of Israeli society. In line with that, some Radicals expressed feelings of being deceived by the Zionist movement, and raised difficult questions regarding the real goals of Zionism and the injustice which is knowingly inflicted on the Palestinians.

The conflict which rose among the two subgroups of Jewish participants caused a great deal of stress to the radicals. Some of them controlled themselves or tried to find civil ways for listening to the other voice – the Zionists. Others could not restrain themselves and expressed anger towards the Zionists whom they perceive as denying the occupation and its horrors.

The grandmothers' stories expressed the most difficult parts of the inner conflict. In the narrative of the Radicals the grandmothers represent the reasons for establishing the Zionist movement, that is, to save the Jewish people from

annihilation. The recognition that the suffering of the preceding generations brought forth the establishment of the State of Israel, which in turn caused new suffering to others, is at the root of the radical acknowledgement. In the workshops, the radicals expressed the part of their personality that cares for others. Each one had her personal story, but in common they portrayed a side that is mobilized for helping others and shows much sensitivity toward injustice and deprivation.

However, in a role-play activity, the radicals got in touch with more complex and hidden sides of their identity, in a sense expressing the 'shadow' of their political identity. Through the role-play it became seen that there is an ongoing painful inner process of trying to find resolution to all these conflicting parts.

In sum, the narratives of the activists as mothers, wives, and daughters undoubtedly and painfully confront them with their truth as peace activists, in the face of the 'hegemonic' narratives of Zionism, the Holocaust, Israeli society, and the occupation. The ways in which they try to find new interrelations within these issues will be addressed in the Discussion.

## The Narrative of the Arts

This section will describe the use of the arts as a unique and primary means of creating dialogue. Art resources included in the workshop were painting, work with materials such as clay and wool, movement, music, story, and drama. Kellerman (2007) referred to the factor of hope in the use of political Sociodrama: "The hope is that when people gather together and feel that they have some power they are more able to make real difference in their immediate environment" (p.82). Moreover, through the various arts, the purpose was to express life-related feelings and thoughts within the reality of ongoing conflict and to investigate whether the participants were

interested in taking action to change the situation and, if so, in what way. The following themes emerged from an analysis of the data:

1. Women and Art in a Patriarchal Society.
2. Art as a Provider of Aesthetic Distance.
3. Art as an Organizational Experience.
4. Role-play – One Country Two Nations.
5. A Transition from the General to the Personal.
6. Art as a Dialogue.
7. Psychodrama as a Corrective Experience.
8. The Little Red Riding Hood Drama (stages 1-3).

**Women and Art in a Patriarchal Society**

The goal of the workshop was to help find a place for the feminine voice in order to discern the differences and tensions experienced by women in a society filled with cultural, social, and political conflict. Accordingly, one of the goals of the workshops was to create a space for women to express their difficulties through the arts. Art activities were predestined to enable participants to express their place in their communities with regards to the effects of the conflict on their lives.

In the beginning of the first workshop, participants were invited to create the image of a net made with woolen threads tied to their chairs. Subsequently, each participant was invited to create a personal image with pieces of jute, polystyrene cylinders, cotton, and paper; materials that would evoke associations of softness and familiarity for participants in the contexts of home and family were chosen.

The knitting activity aroused a discussion regarding women in a patriarchal society as the women maintained that knitting is associated in both the Jewish and the Palestinian societies with feminine activities and with familial behavior. The

participants expressed anger towards the male thinking which ascribes many nurturing and home related activities to women as a mechanism of oppression and are used by men to prevent women from exploring their interests and abilities outside their homes. That discussion was followed by Ruti's anecdote about Freud and a psychoanalytic interpretation of why women weave. According to Ruti, Freud maintained that women weave and embroider in compensation for their 'penis envy.' Through the story and the anger it evoked towards 'specialists' who interpret women without asking why they make certain choices, the participants examined their space as women to create and express themselves freely.

Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2005) suggested that women use the means at their disposal to create a counter-discourse and counter-space against the occupation and war. Specifically, the writer argued that the Palestinian women use national and religious narrative to strengthen family spirit by daily routine, cooking, cleaning, and re-building demolished homes, thereby creating a relatively safe space by using simple means through hard physical labor. For example, Faten told of her mother who used to knit for all her children and even for children in the extended family. The use women make of the arts in order to satisfy needs like decorating the home or clothing raised the question of how can the arts be used to create a different dialogue.

**Art as a Provider of Aesthetic Distance**

Grossman (2007) argued that when people live in an ongoing state of political violence they lose the ability and desire to feel. Moreover, Grossman asserted, part of the survival mechanism is an unconscious limiting of the inner world. Words, too, become limited, and the longer this state of affairs lasts, and the shallower the language used to describe this state of affairs, so public discourse dwindles. The writer maintained that what remains are the fixed and banal mutual accusations

between enemies or political adversaries within the same country. What remains, Grossman claimed, are the clichés that are, ultimately, a collection of superstitions and crude generalizations, in which we capture ourselves and entrap our enemies.

Art seeks to re-create or protest against aspects of the world while revitalizing the experience without reducing it to its foundations. In the current study, the arts were used to create an alternative space with fewer preconceptions and clichés. Participants were invited to create with materials, in order to circumvent words, and to find artistic expression that would expand and deepen each person's encounter with one's self and the others.

In the first hours of the first workshop, participants were invited to create personal artworks that would express their difficulties in reality. Soft materials like jute material, polystyrene, and cotton balls, were used on a net they had made earlier, between the chairs. The participants created islands of personal art works on the general net. Some wrapped the threads in jute, some tied additional threads onto existing ones, some glued on small paper cylinders, and some created cloth cradles in which they laid polystyrene eggs (see Figure 1 below).

*Figure 1.* Artwork with Materials; First Workshop, Third Hour

After working with materials, the participants expressed their excitement from the aesthetic beauty of the artwork created by the women in the room. Amal noted the new perspective made possible by the artwork: “…maybe we really do need to think about our difficulties in a different way” (1/4/p.1).”

The work with materials enabled creating an ‘aesthetic distance’ with innate poetic effects, as previously noted by Landy (1994): "Aesthetic distance, the point of liberation, marks the moment when the client is at his most spontaneous. It is the creative moment, the moment of infinite possibilities, the moment of play, the moment when the unconscious is accessible and ready to be symbolized through dramatic action (p.113-114)."

The participants' words indicated that the aesthetic distance created enabled them to see beauty, but the nature of it remained obscure. With regard to the political context, and the facilitator's request to use materials to create artwork that symbolizes difficulties, one might have anticipated a different impression. The expression 'lovely things,' used by the participants, indicates positive possibilities and not only difficult feelings.

**Art as an Organizational Experience**

Art can additionally constitute an organizational experience. As the external reality from which participants came to the workshop was filled with contradictions and controlled by destructive elements, participants made use of the arts as a means of organization. Through the use of shapes and colors, of images evoked by the artwork, the participants had a therapeutic organizational experience.

Kalmanowitz and Lloyd (2005) argued that people who live in a state of ongoing violence are exposed to an impaired sense of time. The authors maintained that such people experience a polarity between loss, anxiety, and disregard on one

hand and hope of returning to the lost world on the other hand. In their reality, the women's experience contained pain and confusion. However, through artistic expression, they managed to organize an aesthetic experience and to create categories and continuity.

For example, Faten used colors to create categories of time and meaning. She used red jute as a symbol of violence and war, blue jute as a symbol of the past (before the *Intifada*), perceived by her as a more peaceful period, and polystyrene as a symbol of a different future and hope for good relations of equality and justice. By allocating colors, Faten expressed an attempt to organize reality according to time and feelings; the past was better than the present; the present is of violence, war, blood, and pain; and the future holds hope for a solution that will enable coexistence.

Additionally, time and space considerations in the current study served as an organizational factor as well as a link between content and process and were intended to maintain and protect the process. The facilitators tried to direct the process so that the art would be the main tool of expression, moderating the group's tendency of being swept away in intellectual discussion.

For example, in the second workshop, participants were invited to paint with gouache. The painting process served as a much needed organizing and containing experience. It was an intra-psychic experience that enabled the process of the difficult material that arose and the expression of feelings in an organized fashion through color and form. Images that arose from the paintings included a crying star, a sun and a moon, and two mountains that will never meet. The images expressed the dialectic of the process: hope versus despair, peace versus war, and distance versus closeness. The participants used painting as a time out from the intensity of the inter-personal encounter and focused on their own sensations and feelings.

Furthermore, the element of sitting in a circle exists in most dynamic groups but here an extra element came into being when we created a woolen net, adding to the circle the image of a communication network. The participants created the image and related to it, noting that it symbolized a 'safety net.' A new map of images and definitions on the net expressing deep and personal content was created via working with materials. When the facilitators decided to leave the woolen net intact in the circle for the two days, it created a metaphor symbolizing the connection between the participants and the language they themselves created.

Throughout the workshop, the facilitators noticed the participants were withdrawing to a more familiar, intellectual discourse of "whose narrative is more just?" In this discourse, often directed by reality through the media and intellectualization on both sides, there is only space for one narrative. In the spheres of art, there was space for infinite narratives: personal, subjective and emotional.

**Role-play – One Country, Two Nations**

Landy (1994) defined role-play in drama therapy as a method that invites identification, projection and transference. According to Landy, the actor projects her thoughts and feelings onto the role. In the second workshop, role-play took place. The facilitators placed a chair on the stage and invited the participants to volunteer to sit on it, without explaining the role they would play. After Faten volunteered to sit down, it was explained that from then on this would be Faten's chair, and participants were to try and persuade her to leave the chair and take her place (see Figure 2).

The participants connected with the chair as a metaphor for land-country-homeland-affiliation, and chose to play roles representing different sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The dialogue was very condensed and concentrated with no superfluous words. The women chose to play characters who expressed the main

messages of both national narratives: the Israeli and the Palestinian. For example, Dorit brought the Zionist meta-narrative directly to the stage. She described herself as a woman fleeing the Germans who want to destroy her and she asked Faten to shelter her from the danger of annihilation. Faten brought the Palestinian narrative; the chair is her country, and she refused to give up her country because Dorit was in a danger of annihilation.

Among the strategies used by the participants was also an attempt to break down the metaphorical meaning of the chair. A Jewish participant tried to claim that it was just a chair while Faten refused to participate in deconstructing the meaning, and insisted on maintaining the metaphorical meaning of the chair:

> Miriam: "But do you see that you are just insisting on hanging on to a chair."
>
> Faten: "Not just a chair, I am sitting on it and that gives me life, gives me land, so I hang on to the land."
>
> Miriam: "Why?"
>
> Faten: "This is my power, my soul, my energy, here on the chair (2/1/p.11)."

*Figure 2.* The Chair Role-Play Activity

The group's emotional response to the issues reflected in the chair exercise was one of exhaustion and depression. For instance, Roni said:

> For me personally it is very hard, it was hard for me to see… Faten changing, hanging on to something specific, I just wanted her to let go, it's the

> embodiment of how stuck we are… there's no way out, all I wanted was for her to let go of it (2/3/p.2).

Following the role-play, participants were asked to divide into two groups, one on each side of the room; those who would surrender the chair and those who would hold on to it. The task of choosing a group required action and decision making, and thus of relating to one's personal identity, self-scrutiny, and definition of her personal place in relation to the political conflict. The personal decision – which side to take – helped the group to make a shift and relate to their position and behavior with regard to the conflict.

This activity reflected the fact that the participants in the group differed with regard to what gives them security. For the Palestinian participants, for whom the loss of land is the national trauma and an existential threat, the land was of supreme value. The Jewish participants, who own the land but feel no security, understood that the land does not necessarily mean security. Thus, the chair role-play profoundly clarified the meaning of the conflict. Someone whose land has been taken will fight to prevent it from being taken away again; someone who has land but cannot live on it in security must find a solution in which everyone, Jewish and Palestinian, will feel secure. In this context, the place and the land symbolized everything relating to rights and existence.

**A Transition from the General to the Personal**

The use of art enabled the participants to shift between the general and the personal. As the conflict is between two nations, one can easily become a 'representative' of a collective and hide behind the collective's voice. Therefore, one of the goals of the workshops was to address the personal voice that so often gets lost

in an ongoing situation of conflict. In its capacity as creative artwork, as a one-time, personal, and subjective product, the art legitimized personal expression.

In the process of working with art materials the participants grew closer to themselves and the issues relating to their fears as women. Each of the participants allowed herself to express her own personal dilemmas and pains and through the joined art processes, personal and intimate connection were created that had crossed over barriers of anger and rejection.

The medium of movement often comprises a more comfortable substitute for people who tend to restrain their verbal expression. Several of the participants used movement in order to express themselves and to interact with other participants in a personal manner that was difficult for them verbally. Thus, by means of the medium of movement and drama, those participants expressed a greater desire for communication.

**Art as a Dialogue**

Art is a dialogue between the artist and reality, between inner reality and external reality, between the creative work and the artist, and between the artist and his/her environment. The meaning of art therapy lies in the dialogue that is created between the patient and the artwork and between the patient and the therapist through the artwork. It is a dialogue that can be described as a system of interactions: patient-artwork, patient-therapist, therapist-patient, and therapist-artwork.

Under conditions of conflict and anxiety, there is usually no space for dialogue. Unlike in the reality of the participants, where the difficulty of living together is major, the women attending the workshops were able to create a dialogue that constituted a therapeutic space with participants' artworks expressing both pain and hope.

> For instance, Rinat created a dialogue between beautiful and difficult content: First I have something general to say about how it looks, contrary to what I heard Amal say about it being beautiful, more than beautiful, I thought the threads were very lovely in the beginning, I think it looks more like a wound, a blow, it is difficult to see it as beautiful (1/4/p. 14).

While discussing an art work, Rinat referred to the group as a pleasant and accepting place and, despite that, she believed that a wound was present in the group. Rinat described her dialogue with the group and her inner conflict between the need to say what she felt and the desire to maintain a pleasant atmosphere.

A dialogue process between one's inner resistance and the need to communicate was evident in several participants' description of their inner experience. They presented a dialogue between fear of difficulty that may arise in the meeting, the need for communication, and the ambition to succeed in an interpersonal encounter with other participants.

Another element of dialogue was that of control versus loss of control. Roni described how these found expression in her use of materials:

> Now connections are all sorts of things, it could be a knot, a connection that is a bond, so in the beginning I made things like knots…and then, in a trance, I began to make millions of knots and connections… then I forgotten what I was doing and then I took all kinds of materials and I connected them (1/4/p.3).

The art materials helped Roni express her striving for connection in the face of her fear of the blocks. The artwork expressed the emotional force and need to overcome her fear. The creation of something one is unable to recall also arose with other

participants who reflected that there is something elusive and inexplicable about artwork.

**Psychodrama as a Corrective Experience**

The purpose of using psychodrama in the workshops was to generate a platform for participants to express their personal/familial and personal/collective histories.

Psychodrama was utilized for expressing one's identity in the context of personal and collective roots. In order to connect with the personal-historical narrative in a way that would enable them to tell the story authentically and in an outright manner, participants were invited to use psychodrama techniques and play the role of their grandmother.

First, in the warm-up, the participants told their partners in the small groups about their grandmothers. At the psychodrama stage, the participants returned to the large group. In the room, a space termed 'the stage' was created, and participants were invited to 'go onstage' and play the role of grandmother in the first person. At this point, they did not tell a story but acted the role of their own grandmother.

Through the evoking of the grandmother's personal and authentic monolog, one's most personal history was shared. In addition, these narratives served as a connection to the collective narrative. For instance, a grandmother who was murdered in the Holocaust presented the personal trauma of the Holocaust for herself alongside presenting the Holocaust as a collective issue for all the Jewish people. A similar narrative arose when a Palestinian participant told the story of a grandmother who survived the *Naqba*. This is a story of personal survival which also presented the *Naqba* as the collective trauma of the Palestinians.

Inviting participants to tell their grandmothers' personal stories promoted speaking of the personal and the political in a way that would enable listening and empathy and reinforce relations between the participants. Indeed, communication between participants became empathic and containing. The participants willingly brought their stories and listened to one another with focused attention. When a participant told her personal story, it was clearly her own story and therefore no argument was possible.

Roni exemplified the transition from 'talking of' to 'telling,' opening her monolog by inviting the participants to a world she called "fictitious, made of the stuff of dreams" and sharing that she is "made of silences that are extremely hard on me (1/10/p.2)."

As the daughter of a mother whose parents were murdered in the Holocaust, Roni grew up in the shadow of a great silence and difficult feelings that were never directly expressed, preventing her from establishing a good, normal relationship with her mother. Through her grandmother's 'fictitious' monolog, Roni created that which could not have happened in reality. The grandmother, in the imagined monolog, explained to her granddaughter why her mother kept silent.

As an entire generation in Israel grew up in the shadow of the Holocaust and under the thundering silence of their parents who survived the Holocaust, Roni's narrative was a very personal and nonetheless a collective one.

The psychodrama also enabled participants to move between chronological times. In her psychodrama, Roni returned to her childhood, choosing her grandmother to speak to Roni the child rather than to Roni today as an adult woman.

At the end of the psychodrama monolog, Roni said in the name of her grandmother that she was made of the stuff of dreams and, therefore, she was open to

the possibility of coming to visit again. This was the promise Roni made herself, to re-use the materials that arose in psychodrama.

Through psychodrama, Faten told how her grandmother survived the *Naqba* and lost her parents and all trace of them in the events of 1948. As a result of the *Naqba*, she lost her lands and, after her husband's death, she remained a widow in a traditional patriarchal society, without a job or a trade. Faten's grandmother chose Faten as her special granddaughter; the one who looked after her grandmother, slept with her every night, and was chosen by her grandmother to go to visit extended family outside the village.

Later in the workshop, the Jewish participants who lost their grandmothers in the Holocaust admitted feeling jealous of Faten. The intimate, special relationship she experienced with her grandmother was contrary to the loss they felt at not knowing their grandmothers. In a sense, through the psychodrama, the roles in the group were reversed; the Palestinians 'had' a grandmother, roots, a generation chain, a bond with the land, place, and family, as opposed to the Jews who were temporarily those 'without' a grandmother, roots, and a bond with the land. Moreover, the participants understood that there are meaningful differences between struggling to preserve a place that has been taken from you and trying to occupy a place that is not yours.

The psychodrama was a multi-level process. On the stage, it involved the characters played by the participants, and symbolized their transition and connection to past and present. As an audience, the participants experienced the psychodrama as a mirror of their own story. The additional psychodrama was that the entire event took place in a group consisting of Jewish and Palestinian women. The personal opportunity for each participant to hear the traumatic experience of the other side constituted the peak of the process in that it deepened the connection between

participants and their ability to expand their personal and collective historical understandings. This part brought forth the highest level of empathy and mutual acceptance.

**The *Little Red Riding Hood* drama.** The transition to drama therapy and role-play using the characters from 'Little Red Riding Hood' enabled creativity, personal expression, exercising aggression, and a need for multi-dimensional communication.

The story constituted a meta-narrative of femininity and masculinity, and united the participants as women: grandmothers, mothers, and little girls facing the wolf, which symbolized for them the danger that exists in male aggression. The story of Little Red Riding Hood may be interpreted as an unconscious metaphor for the entire group – the little girl whose only wish is to get safely to her grandma. Grandma's home may, in this context, be a metaphor for personal and political safty. This perspective of the unconscious meanings of the story may elucidate the drama of the entire group's process.

Gersie (1996) suggested that in the intermediate stage of the drama therapy process participants tend to focus on themes of resistance to change and commitment to change, or renewed involvement with themes of hope as opposed to hopelessness. In line with that, these themes were expressed via the chair role-play and the psychodrama. The transition to 'Little Red Riding Hood' drama finalized the process with an archetypal story and a women's ritual. Following a morning of difficult content and a sense of despair and anxiety, the story integrated the group in a ritual whereby Eros overcame Thanatus. The participants enjoyed the role-play and expressed their fantasies. They chose their own roles and their interactions were spontaneous improvisations.

The objective of the 'Little Red Riding Hood' drama was to invite the group to experience, through improvisation, the meaning of having various choices as a character. If, for the group, the wolf symbolized male violence, danger and death, the grandmother symbolized women's ability to protect, the hunter represented order and the mother symbolized by their interpretation dysfunctional behavior.

In the drama therapy, there were three stages: the stage of choosing a character, the stage of free interaction, and the stage of group improvisation, as follows.

**The first stage – choosing a character.** Jones (1996) argued that costumes and accessories may compose a projective means of building a character. Accordingly, Jones maintained, drama therapy emphasizes the ways in which projection correlates with the dramatic form that encourages participants to create, reveal and engage in an external expression of inner conflict.

During the first stage, participants got up and began to look for costumes for the characters they had chosen. Each participant was focused on herself although there were participants who were spectators of the process and responded to the choice of costume. Participants had not yet revealed the character and there was an element of guessing and surprise.

**The second stage – free interaction.** During the second stage, participants were in the role of the characters they had chosen, creating spontaneous encounters with each other and using improvisation in couples and small groups as a warm-up for group improvisation. This stage signifies the conflict from a dramatic perspective; the characters signal the subject of the conflict to each other and how each one plays the role in relation to the conflict.

**The third stage – group improvisation.** During the third stage, the facilitators invited the whole group to relate to the story through group improvisation, while maintaining the general structure of the story. By this stage, the participants were accustomed to their roles and the conflicts surfaced, reaching a peak with the expression of potent feelings, loud voices, shouting and physical pushing.

The first scene in the group improvisation described the mothers preparing Red Riding Hood to set out to her grandmother, with each mother caricature and emphasizing her own dysfunctional behavior.

After the contradictory, confusing instructions, Riding Hood got from "her mothers" she set out and met the wolf. The wolf appeared as an old sinner, a pedophile, an uninhibited, lustful old man. Riding Hood tried to run away and call her mothers. When Riding Hood understood that the mothers would not come to her aid, she ran away to her grandmother, but the wolf got there first, entered, and attacked the grandmothers. In the participants' version of the story, the wolf was sexually interested in the grandmother and made no distinction between little girls and grandmothers. The peak of the drama was when the wolf actually attacked the grandmothers, the hunter arrived to get rid of him and the scene almost reached violence.

After the improvisation came to a 'happy end,' the facilitator invited the participants to one last sentence as their character. The grandmothers, who were played by one Jewish participant and one Arab participant, praised the help of the neighbor (hunter) whom they "didn't know lived next door" and "helped at a very difficult time (2/5/p.9)."

Red Riding Hood, as a little girl, spoke briefly and childishly, saying in a sentence one of the lessons she had learned, which had to do with the mothers being

just as dysfunctional as the wolf. And the figure representing evil in the story, the wolf, concluded that the experience had been a victory:

> …the hunter simply took me by force, the mothers were so preoccupied with themselves, and one grandmother thought she could do magic staff with me and I would go…I could take Riding Hood very easily, because I saw she was tempted, a man is a man [parodies a macho man], but never mind, there are many more opportunities, in the meantime I'll rest… (2/6/p.11).

The hunter concluded that if neighbors stood together against the force of evil, only then would they manage to preserve the next generation. In that, the hunter concluded his role as preserver of law and order and restored the allegory to reality: "I had a difficult role, but in the end I saved the day, it's because neighbors should always be reliable and look after each other (2/6/p.12)."

Jones (1996) suggested that the development of empathic response in situations of misunderstanding or an ability to identify with the 'other' comprises a therapeutic act in itself. Accordingly, the drama therapy of 'Little Red Riding Hood' enabled the participants to fell both distance and empathy, which are important elements in achieving emotional balance. Distancing was achieved through using a children's story and inviting the participants to use figures from the fairytale world. Empathy was created by sharing archetypal and universal content. The content that arose in the drama and its link with reality will be discussed in the discussion section.

## Summary

In this chapter, it was revealed how the arts created a space for the participants to express conflict-related content and its projection onto the reality of their lives. The use of materials aroused associations from daily life and via role playing different characters work on both a collective and a personal level was made possible.

Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2005) argued that women make use of any means at their disposal to create a dialog and space that are in contrast to the occupation and war. The arts enabled participants in the workshops to use materials from reality in another way. The participants created an alternative space, expanding their world that had been reduced by life in the shadow of an ongoing war. The encounter of each participant with her identity and the identities of others in the group appears to have been expanded and depended via the arts as the participants protested against aspects of a violent and oppressive world.

The artistic net to which other personal artworks were added created a metaphor of a container that remained in the room throughout the process. The net also symbolized a place for both the group and the individual; a place where aesthetic beauty and difficult experiences meet in harmony. The contrast between aesthetic beauty and a traumatic experience surprised the group, providing an element of hope and change. With the help of aesthetic distance, a space was formed for play, new possibilities, and expression of the personal and collective unconscious.

Through art, dialectic was created between good and bad, outside and inside, personal and general. Via the art, chaotic experiences were categorized and feelings were organized in a more continuous and structured fashion, thereby providing them with a clearer meaning. The struggle between the will of the group to return to familiar patterns of intellectual discussion and the will of the facilitators to use art as a primary instrument of expression reflected the struggle between the familiar and safe to the new and different. The participants felt anxiety in the face of opportunities for change; the facilitators provided the experience and belief in the means.

Numerous personal narratives emerged via the arts as the group felt that a container for them was formed. With the help of psychodrama, the participants

presented personal and collective historical stories. Telling one's story in the first person fostered empathy and mutual acceptance. The psychodrama monologues also provided materials from the unconscious, bringing words where there had been silence and silencing. Thus, the participants discovered that although their parents refused to discuss the traumas they had endured, they had a lot of information of which they had been unaware.

The role-play enabled direct expression of the struggle for land and place. Under the protection of role-played characters, participants were able to broach the subject of the conflict in a direct and dramatic manner. As a character, it was made possible to express aggression, stubbornness, and force, qualities that women have difficulty expressing directly as a result of cultural conditioning. Communication in role-play was not only verbal but also multi-dimensional; gestures, movement with participants, and the physical contact that was created between them added important dimensions to the drama taking place. Thus, the drama directly represented a multi-dimensional reality.

Role-play enabled participants to express and experience representations related to the conflict. This encounter between sides in conflict was highly significant in that it enabled a space for investigating parts of one's self that are denied, repressed, and unconsciously affect one's actions and political views. By playing the role of a different and archetypal character in the conflict, the participants raised those inner representations from the unconscious to the conscious in an unthreatening manner.

Moreover, the role-play exercise was a way to cope with the issue of personal and political identity. As part of the exercise, participants were required to choose between two groups. That confronted the participants with their identity in an atypical

way. In the Israeli reality, women and men are defined according to their nationality or according to their ideological affiliation: those who strive for a solution of two states as opposed to those who strive for a solution of a democratic secular state, those who are defined as left-wing as opposed to those who are defined as right-wing, etc. Having to choose between those who surrender and those who do not, added new elements to the inner and interpersonal discourse. In a reality in which groups and individuals excavate themselves deeper into behaviors that prevent change, adding a new factor for participants to examine composes a change in itself.

Another method used was painting, which served as an intra-psychic space and as means for processing feelings in an organized fashion through form and color. Via painting, an opportunity for relief from the potency of the feelings was provided, making space for inner observation.

Drama therapy provided participants with a new form of engagement. The pleasure expressed in their faces, intonations, laughter, and joy, expressed an element of release intrinsic to drama therapy. The harder the material of reality, the greater the release through the experience of drama therapy was. In contrast to the reality in which there is no solution, where the participants experience frustration and ongoing pain, in drama the conflict ends in resolution. The ability to organize the experience as a drama with a beginning, middle, and end has therapeutic effects of control and reorganization that regretfully do not exist in reality. Also, elements of distancing and empathy, which are important for achieving emotional balance, were present in the drama therapy. On one hand, the participants distanced themselves to a world of fairy tales and theater acting and, on the other hand, they expressed the most profound and difficult content and subjects concerning the conflict.

In drama therapy, the group expressed content related to the perceived gender-roles in a militaristic society and their encounter. The little girl symbolized all children and their desire to reach a safe place. The mothers allowed themselves to express their guilt and anxiety through representations of dysfunctional mothers. The grandmothers united a Jewish woman and a Palestinian woman, in order to save the little girl. On another level, drama therapy expressed the group drama through the character of a little girl who just wants to get home safely but has to go through a universal feminine initiation – encounter evil and overcome it with the help of her own positive forces and those of her community.

The use of the arts enabled participants to move between the personal and the collective. Non-verbal expressions helped participants to express feelings and difficulties in a new and less threatening way. People in stressful situations may resort to defense mechanisms involving emotional distancing. Countering that, art evoked spontaneity and creativity, thereby bringing the participants closer to their feelings and to the feelings of each other.

Psychodrama enabled participants to bring their personal and family narratives to a safe and containing place. The participants connected with conscious and unconscious memories, inviting the group to bear empathic witness to the personal and collective traumas. Sharing deep pain and loss with others connected the participants to the universal meaning of war without turning them into victims. In a reality whereby, as part of the war, the sides use national trauma as a means of achieving political gain, psychodrama enabled participants to connect with the human and subjective aspect. In the reality in which even trauma is denied of the individual in order to justify political goals, there is immense importance in re-connecting with the personal as a stage in the healing process.

Art served the group as a ritual gathering to tell the story of the trauma in different ways. Jenings (1998) argued that exercise of dramatic imagination develops empathy and awareness as re-embodying personal stories helps us understand their meaning and see them from different perspectives. Accordingly, through drama therapy, the participants experienced the struggle between life and death; in the sensuous and sensual drama they chose to enact, they brought the instinct for life as opposed to death that was expressed in the morning discussion of the Holocaust and the *Naqba*. The parallel between drama and reality found expression in the efforts of the mothers to take care of themselves instead of taking care of their daughter. The dysfunctional mothers represented a society in which parents fail to protect their children from the danger of violence. Through the group of mothers, the participants expressed anxiety and guilt regarding their functioning in reality. The guilt was present among the Jewish mothers who are forced to send their children to be soldiers in an occupying army, as well as among the Palestinian-Israeli mothers whose children experience discrimination and deprivation.

Finally, the inability to change was evident in the group of mothers who represent the ‘generation of reality;’ a worn-out generation who has lost hope and the ability to change (Rabinowitz & Abu Baker, 2002). Only the Palestinian mother concluded that she had learned that she was too naïve. In parallel to reality, the parents’ generation also experienced that it had been too naïve, hoping that if they were 'good Arabs’ or 'good Zionists,’ ultimately the problem would be resolved in their favor.

# CHAPTER 5

## Discussion

### Dialogue between Narratives through the Expressive Arts

"What I am taking with me is this miracle that two people suddenly meet. This is something special, and this is what I am taking with me from the Workshop." (1/12/p.5)

The current study was a qualitative action research describing two workshops of Israeli Jewish and Palestinian women using Expressive Therapy for creating a dialogue. The purpose of this study was to describe the process and dialogue occurring between the participants. The study described the narratives created in the group as three narratives – the Palestinian, the Jewish Zionist and the Jewish Radical – and the encounter through the arts as a narrative on its own. Such research, in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the violent political reality in Israel, and in a group of women only, is innovative in the field of therapy. The study described and analyzed the ways in which participants expressed their personal and collective narratives, how they communicated with each other in subjects related to peace, and their roles as women in the Israeli society as peace activists.

For decades, women in Israel have lived in a reality of political violence. Life under such circumstances has painful psychological impacts. Papadopoulos (2005) argued that residents of regions in conflict have emotionally charged reactions and mechanisms that split reality into 'good' and 'evil,' with a tendency towards simplification while ignoring multidimensional complexity. In the reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the research participants agreed to risk touching what they called 'the wound.' The very willingness to meet face to face with their 'other' is not to be taken for granted. The participants did not know what awaited them in the

Workshop, yet they were willing to leave their private and collective space for the encounter. Because the issue of the participants' identity was associated with life and death such willingness comprised a demonstration of courage, humanism, and hope.

The current research question was: How do Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian women use expressive therapies to create a dialogue about peace? Accordingly, issues such as the roots of the conflict, its impact on life as women and as citizens, as well as different ways to find a solution were at the center of the encounter. However, beyond the political debates, a fascinating interpersonal process was created between women who in reality live separately from each other.

The participants were all Israeli citizens, living in the same country, and officially entitled to equal rights. However, some argued that there is discrimination, deprivation of rights, and political and social oppression of the Palestinian minority. The women participants created a different reality through their very willingness to meet and to create a genuine dialogue. Nonetheless, how can dialogue be created when there are so many historical memories?

## Findings

In a reality in which the very encounter of Jewish and Palestinian women can be considered a defiant act, the participants, assisted by the expressive arts, were able to create a safe, containing place with reciprocal respect. Thus, the first finding was that the universal language of the arts made it possible for the group to bridge the cultural and political gaps through working together on creative activities while sharing materials and space. The interactions that took place as the women worked on their projects, with the informal conversation and contemplation of the process, created an alternative space that was in contrast to the external space.

In using art media, the women were able to express their emotions, as suggested by Kalmanowitz and Lloyd (2005). The first moment of the artistic creation was a pure moment of personal decision, with the permission to choose and to express oneself freely. Additionally, the space, which was created when the women began to work with materials, represented permission, opportunity, and freedom, as was described by Ross (1997). It was both permitted and desirable to be authentic and special, in a one-time action, without constituting a threat or being opposed to the needs of other participants in the room.

Baker (2006) argued that in creating dialog through art, personal growth is allowed, and healing of wounds is promoted. Certainly, through the arts activities of the workshops, participants found out that when painful emotional content was expressed in a new way, it took on new meanings. In a political situation, such as the one lived daily by the participants, where painful emotions were dominant, the ability to expand the imagery represented the expansion of the discourse. In this sense, the use of the arts brought in dimensions unexpressed in daily life, thus facilitating a new mode of personal representation, which resulted in another mode of dialogue. Moreover, the use of images, movement, storytelling, and drama allowed the participants to overcome their complex protective mechanisms and allowed them to connect to the deep places of their souls, which contain both good and difficult parts.

Bouchard (2002) suggested that drama enhances familiarity with the world of others and promotes openness towards ones' own narrative. In the workshops, through the psychodrama of retelling of their family histories, the participants connected with themselves and re-examined their perceptions and understandings of each other and of their historical-familial roots. At the same time, they connected to one another

through the intimate acquaintance formed through their cooperation and by inviting the 'others' into very private places.

A second finding was the issue of identity, which was very charged from the beginning of the workshops. Each participant came as an individual woman, but also as a party in the conflict. The most prominent finding with reference to identity involved the division of identities in the workshop into three sub-groups, the 'Zionists,' the 'radicals,' and the 'Palestinians.' While each of the three narratives was discussed at length in the previous chapter, I wish to argue here that the discovery of the three separate identities within the group of participants was a novel finding as it varied from the presumed division into two identities, a Jewish- Israeli identity and a Palestinian- Israeli identity, as was presented in the literature review chapter.

Conversely, the traditional division into two nationalities debating coexistence was transformed into a multifaceted and complex journey. The dynamic was shifted from a nationally oriented division into an internal conflict within the Jewish group, thus bringing the more radical participants closer to seek partnership with the Palestinian participants who found it difficult to favor partnership over independence. The division within the Jewish group was consistent with Kamir's (2007) claim that non-Zionist feminists decline the Zionist ideology which places the security of Jewish people before human rights and human dignity. In reality, the 'radicals' asked to separate themselves from the Zionist narrative and to form alliance with the Palestinian participants alongside ideological lines. Additionally, Herzog's (2004) description of the multifaceted encounter of Palestinian women with Jewish society, as one that may place them in a position of a double, contradictory identity, was similarly evident in the workshop.

Consequently, the debate regarding one's identity became an elaborate and fundamental theme throughout the workshop, one that at times separated the women and brought them apart and at times allowed for their connection and connectedness from unexpected and unfamiliar aspects of their identities.

The different studies, described in the literature review, dealing with peace education, reported that the most outstanding achievement of different peace programs was the acquisition of a more complex and realistic perception of the conflict. In line with that, I wish to argue that the journey to liberate one's identity, which was a central theme of the workshops, was indeed a prominent achievement. Furthermore, this journey promoted a greater understanding and a more holistic view of the 'other,' as well as the self, in ways that challenge the monolithic perceptions of the conflict.

Additionally, the process involved an 'I-Thou' encounter (Buber & Kaufman, 1970). That is, an encounter that requires a deep and genuine familiarization between the 'I' and 'the other' but is essentially an encounter with the self. Meeting 'the other' invited participants to journey into themselves and look closely inside. The group constituted a container into which the participants dared contributing more parts of the self. The process committed participants to integrative strategies between the 'I' and the 'other,' between reality and the group process, between words and the arts, and within a reality of violence and post-trauma. This integration constituted a therapeutic act, as did its results, namely the linking and connecting between participants.

Finally, on a philosophical level the workshop was a subversive activity against the hegemony. Women are not supposed to take part in political action, and the very encounter between Jewish and Palestinian women was an act whose essence was opposition to separation and an attempt to find a different path. This concept was

suggested by hooks (1984) as an important aspect of women leading change, where the connection between feminism and multiculturalism allows the construction of political solidarity. That understanding had allowed for the women to be joined in a mutual rebellion against the hegemonic and militaristic debate, thus inspiring them to create cooperation founded on their feminine strength.

A third finding was an analysis of the different forms of communication, which were in use during the workshops, and their contribution to the healing process. Ross (2000) argued that in conflict resolution it is important to use multiple channels of communication. In line with that, there were three types of communication formed in the Workshop: *Verbal communication* referred to activity units in which the participants spoke about themselves and their lives. *Artistic communication* referred to sections in which participants were engaged directly in artistic creation using an art medium. The artistic activities included creating with a variety of materials, painting, dance, storytelling, drama, and role-playing. *Informal communication* referred to spontaneous, unplanned interactions between the structured activities. Some of the informal activities were sharing meal times, resting, social gatherings in the evening, and conversations among participants during breaks between structured activities.

Participants arrived at the workshop bearing the burden of 'history,' which taught them to survive violent, extreme states, states in which verbal language diminished. In the workshop, language reflected reality and became more violent, fencing-off people, while the non-verbal language of art made it possible for the participants to expand their interpersonal communication. Group members learned to get to know each other through artistic imagery. The group used art to express individual content, emotions linked to the process of the encounter, and to the external reality.

Furthermore, in the verbal units, the element of 'witnessing' was present but with less empathy than in the non-verbal units. The arts arouse empathy due to their inherent subjectivity. Jordan (1991) suggested that empathy promotes growth, as one person is able to experience the feelings and thoughts of another person while at the same time she is learning of her own feelings and thoughts. Similarly, in the Workshop units in which empathy was made possible, the effects and significances were multidimensional. These effects took place in a setting seemingly least suitable for self-forgiveness and self-acceptance, that is, in the presence of 'the other,' the person with which one is in conflict. In this sense, the process was a liberating psychological process (Martin-Baró, 1994).

Finally, within the reality of political conflict and the relationship between an oppressive Jewish majority and an oppressed Palestinian minority, words served to separate the groups. Each group used language to win the struggle and the words to justify their side, making it into the 'good side,' while blaming the other side and turning it into the 'bad side.' Consequently, the verbal dialogue limited the space of the encounter, while the artistic dialogue expanded it. In the verbal sections, the participants expressed important contents however there was a feeling of adhering to familiar positions from the public discourse. An atmosphere of power struggles prevailed, as if only one side is right and there is only a single truth. Alternatively, in the nonverbal activity units and within the artistic dialogue, the participants exhibited a significantly higher ability for empathic listening and for acceptance of the 'other.'

A related finding was an analysis of the different artistic activities and their diverse therapeutic qualities for the participants as individuals and for the whole group. In the workshops, the participants treated their artwork with ambivalence. On one hand, they saw aesthetic beauty and the desire to make contact; on the other hand,

they spoke about 'the wound' and the violence they witnessed in real life, as was suggested by Byers (1996). Furthermore, as the facilitators invited the participants to transform familiar materials offered in their original state into something else, and to use materials from everyday real life as images, the participants themselves expressed amazement at the objects they created. The facilitators observed that the participants used creative artwork to expand the dialogue.

Additionally, a powerful transformation was revealed following the drama and painting activities. Bouchard (2202) argued that through narration and drama members of groups give meaning to their own experience. In line with that, in the workshops, participants were astounded to discover that in 'role-play' they could become decisive, assertive women who could fight for their place. Beyond the ability for empathic listening, described by Bar-On & Kassem (2004), the story and psychodrama enriched the participants' identities within contexts of history and family, culture and tradition, nationalism, and femininity. Each personal narrative had many layers, and every story invited individual associations among listeners. Thus, the stories created an infinite number of mirrors in the group and showed how historical traumas shaped lives and choices, both of individuals and of nations.

Furthermore, the artistic process caused the participants to re-examine their narratives. It brought the 'I' into a dialogue, and created humanization and communication that crossed the concrete as well as metaphorical split of 'oppressors' and 'oppressed.' As suggested by Kellerman (2007), political Sociodrama offers groups in political conflict, a space to explore social and community issues that restrain people from living a full life.

Certainly, the psychodrama provided the opportunity for individual testimony of family trauma to be heard, thus becoming a healing experience for participants who

had grown up in the shadow of repressive silence. In the workshop, silence turned out to be a common theme shared by participants from both nations. The Jewish women had grown up in the shadows of the Holocaust, while the Palestinian women had grown in the shadows of the *Naqba*. The very act of re-telling what had not been told was a liberating and therapeutic act that provided a place for the experience, which the participants lacked in real life. The narrative revealed in the group re-established the traumatic experience within a containing and supportive framework. Thus, the act of mutual recognition of the pain made it possible for the participants to accept the repressed parts of themselves, as well as the fact that trauma is a shared theme in both nations.

Finally, in the creative movement exercise, participants expressed a need for contact and the ability to touch without threat. The participants held hands, danced to a single rhythm, leaned on each other, and were sensitive to personal space while maintaining the ability for very intimate space. When using the medium of expressive movement especially, the link was physical with unmediated touch. The need and the ability to create were henceforth diametrically opposed to violence.

A final finding was that the participants used the framework and the rules to create contact and security, using the expressive arts as an organizing means. In the reality of political violence, one of the painful elements is lack of control. Alternatively, through the use of form and color, through dramatic storytelling with beginning, middle, and end, and through movement in a space with clear boundaries, time, and rhythm, the participants experienced a therapeutic organizing experience, which promoted individual and group recuperative processes to exist safely.

## Implications

Through an analysis of the narratives that were created in the workshops, it was demonstrated how the expressive arts and personal reflection helped participants build bridges and promote trust and empathy for 'the other.' Using symbolic and archetypal expressions, participants deepened their awareness of the differences and their various shades and successfully showed empathy and understanding for differences. By deepening the understanding of that which separates people and keeps them apart, the process led to a genuine, deep closeness, thus challenging a violence-laden reality.

The claim of the current study is that the artistic units contributed to a change in the existing power relations that occur in real life, more than the other units, such as the verbal or the informal. The expressiveness and the contact formed using the arts created a relationship in which participants did not differ hierarchically in terms of ability for creativity and self-expression. The emphasis was on cooperation and action that created bonding and understanding.

Additionally, the communication established by using arts, compared with the verbal communication created, was characterized by deep attention, authentic speech, empathy, and tolerance. Also, it was characterized with multidimensionality, complexity, and a wealth of emotions and emotional expressions. The research showed how expressive therapy can be used as means to increase understanding, tolerance, and mutual empathy in groups that suffer in real life from suspiciousness and prejudice, due to violent and lasting political conflict.

Furthermore, even when the expressive arts emphasized the conflict, such as in the chair role-play, the arts made it possible for the participants to express their side, while onstage, without taking over the stage. Participants demonstrated and

acted out the conflict as expressed in reality, which sharpened their awareness and moved the process forward in a continuation of the understanding of the need for change.

In a certain sense, the process became the center of the experience; the tolerance, deep familiarization, knowing the 'other,' the attentive listening to the various narratives, and the openness, is seemingly a means to an end but is in effect paths to peace. If an intimate mutual and deep knowledge of each other took place between the participants, as so described, then they had actually made peace.

In the process, participants repeatedly found it difficult to feel empathy towards themselves and their difficulties even before they were able to feel empathy towards 'the other.' As a result of the constituting traumas, the Holocaust and the *Naqba*, and of being exposed to extended violence since 1948, the Israeli society, including the Israeli Jewish and Palestinian public, is in a continuous state of trauma. In such an emotional state, the most common mental mechanisms are survival, which leave no room for empathy towards one's self, let alone towards another. The study showed how in this surviving space, expressive arts created the most moving and meaningful moments in which empathy towards the self and towards 'the other' were formed. In such moments the most human and universal core in each of the participants was felt, and the anger and guilt were replaced by sadness and compassion.

Studies in the field of expressive therapy and in the field of peace education relating to group meetings are numerous, yet the two domains are seldom brought together. The current study highlighted the need to broaden the experience and to expand the study of using Expressive Therapy as means in educating for peace, and in encounters between groups in political conflict.

## Future Directions

The study was conducted in a group consisting only of female participants. The decision to include only women in the research group resulted from the definition of the research as feminist research, aiming to give women in the Israeli society an opportunity to express their unheard voice. I recommend having a similar study in mixed groups of women and men to study how the process proceeds when both men and women, Jewish and Palestinian, participate in the encounter group. It will be also important and interesting to learn how the encounter occurs between other groups, such as secular and religious people, leftists and rightists, senior immigrants and new immigrants, and between populations from central Israel and from the peripheries. Israeli society faces countless social struggles, visible and invisible, and it is worthwhile to learn how the use of art therapy can assist in having a dialogue between the various sectors.

There is no doubt that in a society facing severe and lasting political violence, it is of critical importance to conduct studies in the subject of educating for peace. I would like to emphasize and recommend performing similar studies in deprived sectors such as the Mizrakhim (Jewish people of eastern origin), peripheral communities, and new immigrants. The need to enable expression and dialogue between 'strong' groups and 'weak' groups is one of the foundations of the education for peace and social justice.

As seen in this study, using expressive therapy creates 'alterative spaces,' enabling a different kind of discourse that is not aggressive, a discourse that regrettably rarely exists, if at all, in the Israeli society. Therefore, it is recommended to create opportunities for more action studies that will examine the various ways with

which multiple discourses that strive toward equitable peace between the nations can be achieved.

Over troubled and stormy waters and under dark skies, the participants expanded the bridge that is their world. Beyond bridge building, the participants crossed external and internal borders. They crossed the borders of racism and bias as well as historical grudges; they crossed the limitations on silencing of women as they spoke aloud in clear voices. The limits that were crossed were acknowledged and the awareness of the borders that separate people became clearer. In the resulting space, which is an alternative space that does not exist in realty, another kind of peace was reached; one that is not based on political treaties but on human understandings.

# APPENDIX A

## DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOPS

## First workshop – November 2006

### Day One

1. Introduction, 20 minutes

The participants arrived at the workshop on Friday morning. The facilitators opened the workshop by discussing the objectives of the process. The author introduced the research and explained the need for participants to sign consent forms. The author also introduced the photographer who video-filmed the workshop for documentation and research**.** Some participants responded to the issue of filming and participating in the research.

2. Check-in, 90 minutes

Participants were invited to introduce themselves and tell the group about their experience of the war of Israel with Lebanon. Each person presented herself and related her personal experience of the war and the time following it. Self-presentation was facilitated by questions such as: “Where am I in my life?” and “Why did I come to this workshop?” Upon beginning their introductions, participants were invited to tie a yarn to their chairs, and to throw the yarn to another participant when they finished their introduction. The yarn was intended to serve as a symbol of an imaginary net that would create a net of communication, connection, and trust. This phase was aimed at emotional expression, group interaction, and group integration. Another aim involved reconnecting from the last meeting on the pilot study and 'catching up' with that which has happened since. The occurrence of a war in Israel during the months between the last pilot study and the time of the workshop, was taken into account by the facilitators. All participants talked of their experiences during the war, the impact of the war on their lives, and of their expectations and fears regarding the workshop. Some participants referred to the yarn and its symbolic meanings. Each participant

chose how long to speak and the content she wanted to focus on. The facilitators hardly intervened, apart for clarifications.

3. Working with Materials, 40 minutes

Participants were invited to use materials such as cotton, Styrofoam, and burlap in order to create an image of a blockage or difficulty they were experiencing. The facilitators aimed at self-revelation through artwork, inviting the participants to explore their difficulties in an open, though restricted way by working with art materials and creating metaphors. Each participant chose which materials she wished to use and what to create from the materials, and each chose a location on a woolen net for her artwork. Most of the women talked to each other while working with the materials. The facilitators directed the participants to use the net, think of it as a map or a body, and define how near or far their image or art work would be from their chair. This exercise was followed by a one-hour lunch break.

4. Reflecting on the Art, 4 hours

Upon returning to the room, the facilitators invited the participants to verbally express that which they were trying to express through the art materials, and to tell the group about the process of choosing and molding the art materials. Participants were also invited to talk about their real-life experiences in relation to that artwork, and to reflect on their process, product, and its personal symbolic meaning. Some of the themes developed into a wider, intensive, and more prolonged discussion. There were two short breaks in the course of this dialogue, which lasted until the end of the day.

5. Dinner and Social Gathering, 3 hours

This phase was not documented, in order to provide participants an informal and undocumented part of the day for spontaneous social interaction. The participants dined together and then, at their initiative, made a circle in the large room near the

dormitories and invited each other to tell folk stories in Hebrew and Arabic. Some participants initiated dancing to music and one of the Jewish women asked one of the Palestinian women to teach belly dancing. This part went on all evening, for about three hours, and included most of the participants. As this was an optional part of the program, two participants went to bed early.

**Day Two**

1. Morning Check-in, 90 minutes

The participants and facilitators had breakfast together and then met in the workshop room for the second day's activities. One of the Jewish participants, the only participant who could not stay for the night, brought up a very controversial issue in relation to themes that emerged the day before. This issue became the center of an emotionally charged 90-minute conversation, comprising the most conflict-ridden part of the entire process. The group expressed anxiety and there was a lot of tension; parts of the conversation were characterized by attempts at finding a single truth or a better way to deal with the problems of living within a prolonged violent conflict. This part seemed to represent the reality outside the workshop, where people need to prove that they are right and the other side is wrong. As in reality, this process was characterized by stress and a power struggle about justice and pain. In the break between this phase and the next, the facilitators decided to initiate activity in small groups, in order to support the participants in returning to an expression that was more personal and less dogmatic.

2. Small Groups, 2 hours

The facilitators invited the participants to gather in groups of three and find a place outside the room where they could sit and talk quietly. On their own initiative, the participants chose to create small groups of two Jewish and one Palestinian.

Participants were invited to use pictures of their grandmothers, which they were asked in advance to bring to the workshop, and to each tell the others small group' members about her grandmother. Participants told their personal and family histories and of the relationships they had with their grandmothers. The participants asked each other questions of clarification. This phase lasted until the lunch break.

3. Psychodrama Techniques, 90 minutes

After lunch break, the participants gathered in the room and each of the four small groups was invited by the facilitators to go 'on stage' together. Each of the participants on stage was asked to tell her grandmother's story in the first person perspective.

Via Psychodrama, participants told their stories using theatrical techniques such as gestures, facial expressions, intonation, and humor, while the 'audience' members listened. The facilitators intervened by approaching the characters portrayed and asking leading questions in order to deepen the acquaintance with the characters, and to understand more about the relationships between the participants and their grandmothers. Observing participants were invited to ask questions.

4. Summary and Closure, 30 minutes

In the final part of the workshop, participants were asked to say which experience of the past two days they could take with them or use for empowerment in their personal or political activism. This phase aimed at gaining a time-perspective of the experience and an intra-psychic conclusion for the participants. The facilitators also led the group toward closure in identification and integration of the two days' experiences. All of the participants took part in this phase and expressed very positive reflections on the workshop experience and how they anticipated it would affect their lives.

**Second workshop – February 2007**

**Day one**

1. Introduction, 20 minutes

The second workshop began on a Friday at noon. The participants arrived both from work and from home. All the participants from the first workshop arrived except for one Jewish participant who was abroad. Firstly, introductions relating to the last workshop and in connection with this workshop were made. Participants were again asked to sign consent forms and the rationale for including this workshop in the study as well was explained.

2. Role-play with a Chair, 60 minutes

The facilitators initiated role play that focused on the idea of dramatizing the need to create a place for oneself. A volunteer was asked to be the first to sit in a chair and then the group was invited to challenge her to give them her chair or her place. Participants were instructed to use any tactic to convince the first sitter, except violence. This activity was initiated with the notion of encouraging the participants to convey their roles as 'two people fighting for one land.' One by one, participants unsuccessfully tried to persuade the volunteer to give up her chair, for almost an hour.

3. Discussion and Group Division, 60 minutes

After the role-play, participants were invited to align themselves with one of two groups in retrospect of the role-play drama. The activity aimed at defining who sees herself as one who holds onto the 'chair' and who sees herself as one who is 'surrendering the chair.' The participants located themselves in two different corners of the room, corresponding to the two aforementioned views. Two participants had doubts and took some time to consider, then decided to join the 'hold onto the chair.' There were seven participants on the side of the ones who 'hold on to the chair' and

there five participants on the side of the ones who 'surrender the chair.' Participants from both sides were invited to tell the group about their choices, the rationale for their choices, what the exercise symbolized for them, and what the chair represented in their lives. The discussion primarily conveyed the reality of the ways in which the chair represented the conflict between Israel and Palestine for the participants. Some presented conflicts from other areas of their lives.

4. Psychodrama of the Grandmother, 60 minutes

In the last workshop, only two out of four small groups had the opportunity to share the stories of their grandmothers. In order to generate an equal opportunity for the other groups, they were invited to come to the stage. The follow-up with participants confirmed that they wished to go on stage with the stories they did not have time to tell in the previous workshop. This time the participants had greater difficulty conveying their stories. There was a need for more support and involvement from the facilitators. This may have been due to the time elapsed and the controversial content that was expressed through the role-play and the two group division.

5. Drawing as Reflection and Summary of the First Day, 50 minutes

At this phase, the participants were very tired. Hence, the facilitators aimed at a calming activity that would grant participants a break from the intensity of the two previous exercises. Participants were invited to draw freely that which they felt at the moment, using watercolors and crayons; most of the participants used watercolors. When returning to the circle, each participant said a few words about her drawing and what she was expressing through it. The drawings were collected as part of the data.

**Day Two**

1. Check-in, 2 hours

The second day started with an inventory 'check-in' of participants' thoughts and reflections following the first day. The facilitators felt a need for personal comments and ventilation since the first day brought up themes of dominance, control, and power, as manifested in the role-play with the chair and the psychodrama of the grandmothers. Participants expressed anxiety and anger confronting these core issues. The facilitators supported free emotional expression.

2. Drama Therapy, 90 minutes

After lunch, the facilitators invited the participants to drama therapy through telling the story of Little Red Riding Hood. Bettelheim (1976) claimed that this story "tries to understand the contradictory male nature by experiencing all parts of his personality: the selfish asocial, violent, potentially destructive tendencies of the id (the wolf); the unselfish, social, thoughtful, and protective propensities of the ego (the hunter)" (p. 172). While the choice of the story was intuitive, in retrospect, it seems it was led to by the group's collective unconscious.

The story brought out an imaginative, libidinal, creative, and playful drama activity in the group, encouraging the expression of many unconscious themes relating to gender roles, sexuality, power, and parenting. The facilitators told the story first in Arabic and then in Hebrew, and invited the participants to choose costumes and props that they had brought to the workshop.

The choice of a character was spontaneous and the characters were invited to present themselves to each other freely. Then the participants were asked to create groups by character. These consisted of four mothers of Little Red Riding Hood, two grandmothers, one Little Red Riding Hood, one wolf, and one hunter. Each of the groups sat separately and told each other their interpretation of the character. Little Red Riding Hood, the wolf, and hunter formed one group as there was one participant

in each role. Then they were invited to participate in a free improvisation of the story, interacting freely with one another. The group determined that the leading role was Little Red Riding Hood, and she was permitted to influence the plot through her choices. The atmosphere during this activity was humorous and festive.

3. Summary and Closure, 30 minutes

Each participant was invited to reflect on all the activities experienced in the workshop. The women were asked to try and find common themes between the first and second day and to summarize their feelings following the past two days. The positive mood and sense of intimacy from the drama therapy continued into the closure. The mood was one of exhilaration.

# REFERENCES

Abu Sway, R., Nashashibi, R., Salah, R., & Shweiki, R. (2005). Expressive Arts Therapy - Healing the Traumatized: The Palestinian Experience. In D. Kalmanowitz & B. Lloyd (Eds.), *Art Therapy and Political Violence; With Art Without Illusion*. London: Routledge.

Amir, Y. (1969). Contact Hypothesis in Ethnic Relations. *Psychological Bulletin, 71*(5).

Aretxaga, B. (1997). *Shattering Silence*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Baker, B. A. (2006). Art Speaks in Healing Survivors of War: The Use of Art Therapy in Treating Trauma Survivors. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 12*.

Bar- Tal, D. (2001). Why does fear override hope in societies engulfed by interactable conflict, as it does in the Israeli society? *Political Psychology, 22*(3), 601-627.

Bar-On, D. (2006). *Tell Your Story*. Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of The Negev Press.

Bar-On, D., Eland, J., Kleber, R. J., Krell, R., Moore, Y., & Sagi, A. (1998). Multigenerational perspectives on coping with the holocaust experience: an attachment perspective for understanding the developmental sequels of trauma across generations. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 22*, 315-338.

Bar-On, D., & Kassem, F. (2004). Storytelling as a Way to Work Through Intractable Conflicts: The German-Jewish Experience a Relevance Palestinian-Israeli Context. *Journal of Social Issues, 60*(2), 289-306.

Bar-On, D., Litvak-Hirsch, T., & Othman, R. (2006). *Within-group variance as a facilitator of dialog between groups: A Jewish -Arab Israeli encounter group focused on family stories*: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Bar, H., & Eady, E. (2000). Education to Cope with Conflicts: Encounters between Jews and Palestinian Citizens of Israel. In E. Weiner (Ed.), *The Handbook of Coexistence*. Continuum and New York: An Abraham Fund Publication.

Barrett, S. E., Chin, J. L., Comas-Diaz, L., Espin, O., Greene, B., & McGoldrick, M. (2005). Multicultural Feminist Therapy: Theory in Context. *Women and Therapy, 28*(3/4), 27-61.

Belnenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule (1997). *Women's Ways of Knowing*. New York: Basic Books.

Bettelheim, B. (1976). *The Uses of Enchantment*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Bluman, O., & Halevi, S. (2005). Negotiating National Boundaries: Palestinian and Jewish Women's Studies Students in Israel *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*: Taylor and Francis Inc.

Bouchard, N. (2002). A Narrative Approach to Moral Experience Using Dramatic Play and Writing. *Journal of Moral Education, 31*(4).

Bowman, S. L., Rasheed, S., Ferris, J., Thompson, D. A., McRae, M., & Weitznan, L. (2001). Interface of Feminism and Multiculturalism. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication.

Brand, H. (2003). Loyalty, Belonging and their Discontents: Women in The Public Sphere in Jewish and Palestinian Cultural Discourse. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues*.

Buber, M., & Kaufman, W. A. (1970). *I and Thou*. New York: Scribner.

Butler, J. (1987). Variations on Sex and Gender: Beauvoir, Witting and Foucault. In S. Benhabib & D. Cornell (Eds.), *Feminism as Critique*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Byers, J. G. (1996). Children of the Stones: Art Therapy Interventions in the West Bank. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 13*(4), 238-243.

Clandin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, D. B., & King, J. (1997). Drama therapy Radical Intervention or Counter Insurgency? In S. Jennings (Ed.), *Drama Therapy Theory and Practice 3*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cohen, H. (2006). *Good Arabs*. Jerusalem: Ivrit-Hebrew Publishing House.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Dayton, T. (1994). *The Drama Within*. Deerfield Beach Florida: Health Communications, Inc.

Desivilya, H. S. (2000). Jewish-Arab Coexistence in Mixed Professional Teams: A Pilot Study *The Handbook of Coexistence*. New York: An Abraham Fund Publication.

Emmet, A. (2003). *Our Sister's Promised Land*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Emunah, R. (1994). *Acting for Real; Drama Therapy Process, Technique, and Preformance.* New York: Brunner/Mazel Publishers.

Enns, C. Z. (2004). *Feminist Theories and Feminist Psychotherapies: Origins, Themes, and Diversity*. New York: Haworth Press.

Erdreich, L. (2006). Strategies Against Patriarchy: Sexualized Political Activism of Palestinian Israeli Women on Campus. *Israel Studies, 11*(1), 35-58.

Espin, O. M. (1999). *Women Crossing Bounderies: A Psychology of Immigration and Transformation of Sexuality*. New York: Routeledge.

Evans, K. M., Kincade, E. A., Marbley, A. F., & Seem, S. R. (2005). Feminism and Feminist Therapy : Lessons From the Past and Hopes for the Future. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 83*, 269-277.

Fedele, N. M. (2004). Relationships in Groups; Connection, Resonance, and Paradox. In J. V. Jordan, M. Walker & L. M. Hartling (Eds.), *The complexity of connection*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Gersie, A. (1996). *Dramatic Approaches to Brief Therapy*. London and Bristol, Pennsylvania: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Goldberger, N., Tarule, J., Clinchy, B., & Belenky, M. (1996). *Knowledge, Difference, and Power*. New York: basic books.

Grossman, D. (2007). Writing in the dark. *The New York Times Magazine, May 13, 2007*.

Gurevitch (1989). The Power of Understanding: The Meeting of Conflicting Identities. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 25*(2).

Habibi, E. (2001). *The Secret life of Saeed: The Pessoptimist*: Interlink Books.

Halabi, R., & Zak, M. (2002). Facilitating as couple: a symmetrical dialog on an unsymmetrical reality. In R. Halabi (Ed.), *A Dialog Between Identities: Jewish and Arab Encounters in Neve Shalom*. Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Ethnography*. London and New York: Routledge.

Hazut, T. (2005). From Dark Black to Bright Pink. In K. a. Lloyd (Ed.), *Art Therapy and Political Violence*. London and New York: Routledge.

Herzog, H. (2002). *Gendering Politics: Women in Israel* (4th ed.). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Herzog, H. (2004). Both an Arab and a woman: gendered, racialized, experiences of female Palestinian citizens of Israel. *Social Identities, 10*(1), 53-82.

Hooks, B. (1984). Sisterhood: Political Solidarity Among Women *Feminist Theory: From Margins to Center*: South End Press.

Jaffe, E. D. (2000). Ethnic Minority Groups in Israel: Challenges for Social Work Theory, Values, and Practice. In E. Weiner (Ed.), *The Handbook of Coexistence*. New York: An Abraham Fund Publication.

Jenings, S. (1998). *Introduction to Drama Therapy*. London and New York: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.

Jones, P. (1996). *Drama as Therapy; Theatre as Living*. London and New York: Routledge.

Jordan, J. (1991). In J. V.Jordan, F. F.Kaplan, J. B. Miller, I. P. Stiver & J. L. Surrey (Eds.), *Women's Growth in Connection: Writings from the Stone Center*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Jordan, J. J. (1990). *Relational Development Through Empathy: Therapeutic Applications*, Wellesley , MA.

Kalmanowitz, D., & Lloyd, B. (2005). Art Therapy and Political Violence. In D. K. a. B. Lloyd (Ed.), *Art Therapy and Political Violence; with art, without illusion*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kamir, O. (2007). *Israel's Dignity-Based Feminism in Law and Society*. Jerusalem: Carmel Publications.

Kaplan, F. F. (2007). *Art Therapy and Social Justice*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Kellerman, P. F. (1992). *Focus on Psychodrama; The theraputic aspects of psychodrama*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Kellerman, P. F. (2007). *Sociodrama and Collective Trauma*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Khan, M. Y. (1997). The Drama Has Just Begun. In S. Jennings (Ed.), *Drama Therapy Theory and Practice 3*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kimmerling, B. (2004). *Immigrants, Settlers, Natives* (Hebrew, Trans.). Tel-Aviv: Am Oved.

Lahad, M. (2000). *Creative Supervision : The Use of Expressive Arts Methods in Supervision and Self-Supervision*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Landrine, H. (1995). *Bringing Cultural Diversity to Feminist Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Landy, R. (2002). Sifting through the images: A drama therapist's response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. *Arts in Psychotherapy, 29*(3), 135-141.

Landy, R. J. (1994). *Drama Therapy; Concepts, Theories and Practices* (2nd ed.). Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.

Landy, R. J. (1996). *Essays in Drama Therapy ; The Double Life*. London and Bristol, Pennsylvania: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Lantin, R. (1998). Israeli and Palestinian Women Working for Peace. In L. a. Turpin (Ed.), *The Women and War Reader*. New York: New York University Press.

Lantin, R. (2004). "No Women Law Will Rot This State": The Israeli Racial State and Feminist Resistence. *Sociological Research Online, 9*(3).

Lemish, D., & Barzel, I. (2000). 'Four Mothers' The Womb in the Public Sphere. *European Journal of Communication, 12*(2), 147-169.

Maoz, I. (2000). *Identities, Identifications and Evaluations of Concessions in the Israel-Palestinian Negotiations.* Paper presented at the Davis Occasional Papers, The Leonard Davis Institute.

Martin-Baro, I. (1994). *Writing for Liberation Psychology*. Cambridge , Massachusetts

London, England: Harvard University Press.

McNiff, S. (1998). *Arts-Based Research*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

McNiff, S. (2004). *Art Heals ; How creativity cures the soul*. Boston and London: Shambhala.

Miller, J. B. (1986). *Toward a new psychology of women* (Second Edition ed.). Boston: Beacon Press.

Miller, J. B. (1991). Women and Power. In J. V.Jordan, F. F.Kaplan, J. B. Miller, I. P. Stiver & J. L. Surrey (Eds.), *Women's Growth in Connection*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Moreno, J. L. (1972). *Psychodrama, Vol 1*. New York: Beacon House.

Moreno, J. L. (1993). *Who Shall Survive?* (Based on second edition 1953 ed.). McLean, VA: American Society of Group Psychotherapy & Psychodrama.

Offir, A. (2002). Jewish Arabic Coexistence: A Politic of Rationalism. *Democratic Culture, 6*.

Papadopoulos, R. K. (2005). Political Violence, Trauma and Mental Health Interventions. In D. Kalmanowitz & B. Lloyd (Eds.), *Art Therapy and Political Violence: With Art, Without Illusion*. London and New York: Routledge.

Peled, Y., & Shafir, G. (2005). *Being Israeli; The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship*. Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University Press.

Pepe, I. (1997). Peace education towards the millennium: new history, multi culturalisim and post modernism in the service of peace education. *Iyunim Bachinuch (in Hebrew), 2*(2), 2210248.

Ponterotto, G. J. (2010). Qualitative Research in Multicultural Psychology: Philosophical Underpinnings, Popular Approaches, and Ethical Considerations. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 16(4), 581-589.*

Porter, N. (2005). Location, Location, Location: Contributions of Contemporary Feminist Theorists to Therapy Theory and Practice. *Women & Therapy, 28*(3/4), 143-160.

Rabinowitz, D., & Abu Baker, K. (2002). *The Stand Tall Generation: The Palestinian Citizens of Israel Today*. Jerusalem: Keter Books.

Reinharz, S. (1992). *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rogers, N. (1993). *The Creative Connection; Expressive Arts as Healing*. Palo Alto, California: Science & Behavior Books, Inc.

Ross, C. (1997). Women and Conflict. In S. Hogan (Ed.), *Feminist Approaches to Art Therapy*. London: Routledge.

Ross, M. H. (2000). "Good Enough" Isn't So Bad: Thinking About Success and Failure in Ethnic Conflict Management. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 6*.

Rouhana, N. N., & Fisk, S. T. (1995). Perception of Power, Threat, and Conflict Intensity in Asymmetrical Intergroup Conflict: Arab and Jewish Citizens of Israel. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution, 39*(1), 49-81.

Rouhana, N. N., & Korper, S. H. (1997). Power Asymmetry and Goals of Unofficial Third Party Intervention in Protracted Intergroup Conflict. *Journal of Peace Psychology, 3*, 1-17.

Safran, H. (2006). *Don't Wanna Be Nice Girls* (I. Hebrew, Trans.). Haifa: Pardes Publishers.

Sasson-Levy, O. (1995). *Radical Rhetoric, Conformist Practices: Theory and Praxis in an Israeli Protest Movement.* Paper presented at the Shaine Working Papers No. 1, Jerusalem.

Shadmi, E. (1992). Women Palestinians, Zionism: A Personal View. *New from Within, 8*(10-11), 13-16.

Shadmi, E. (2007). *Thinking Women: Women and feminism in masculine society*. Jerusalem: Tzivonim Publishers Inc.

Shalhoub-Kevorkian, N. (2003). Liberating Voices: The Political Implications of Palestinian Mothers Narrating Their Loss. *Women's Studies International Forum, 26*(5), 391-407.

Shalhoub-Kevorkian, N. (2005). Counter-Spaces as Resistance in Conflict Zones: Palestinian Women Recreating a Home. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 17*(3/4), 109-141.

Sharoni, S. (1995). *Gender and the Israeli -Palestinian Conflict, The Politics of Women's Resistant*. New York: Syracuse University Press.

Solomon, G. (2006). Peace Education: Characteristics, Challenges and Obstacles. *Education and its Surrounding (in Hebrew), 28*, 97-102.

Solomon, G. (2007). Peace Education. *Interdisciplinary Thought in Humanistic Education (in Hebrew), 2*, 7-9.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousands Oaks London New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Steinberg, S., & Bar-On, D. (2001). *An Analysis of the Group Processes in Encounters between Jews and Palestinians Using a Typology for Discourse Classification*: Department of Behavioral Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Stienberg, & Bar-On (2001). *An Analysis of the Group Process in Encounters between Jews and Palestinians Using a Typology for Discourse Classification.* Unpublished unpublished, Ben- Gurion, Beer- Sheva.

Svirsky, G. (1998). The Impact of Women in Black in Israel In Lorntzen & Turpin (Eds.), *The Women and War Reader*. New York: New York University Press.

Theordoson, G. A., & Theordorson, A. G. (1969). *A Modern Dictionary of Sociology*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell.

Ullman, C. (2006). Bearing Witness; Across The Barriers in Society and in The Clinic. *Psychoanalytic Dialogue, 16*(2), 181-198.

Wadeson, H. (1980). *Art Psychotherapy*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Weiner, E. (2000). Coexistence Work: A New Profession. In E. Weiner (Ed.), *The Handbook of Interethnic Coexistence*. Continuum: An Abraham Fund Publication.

Wiseman, H., Metzel, E., & Barber, J. P. (2006). Anger, Guilt and Intergenerational Communication of Trauma in the Interpersonal Narratives of Second Generation Holocaust Survivors. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 76*(2), 176-184.

Worell, J., & Remer, P. (1996). *Feminist Perspectives in Therapy*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons , Inc.

Wright, C. S., Aron, A., McLaughlin-Volpe, T., & Ropp, A. S. (1977). The Extended Contac Effect: Knowledge of Cross-Group Friendships and Prejudices. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*(1), 73-90.

Zak, M., & Halabi, R. (2002). The language as a bridge and as a block. In R. Chalabi (Ed.), *A Dialog Between Identities; Arab-Jewish encounters in Neve Shalom*. Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad.