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YOUNG WOMEN'S MEMORIES OF THEIR EXPERIENCES IN ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

A thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK

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by

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ABSTRACT

Democratic Government in South Africa has brought with it changes in ideology and policy as well as a focus on a new area of concern. It has recognised the importance of young people. In May 1995 the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Youth at Risk (IMC) was established to re-organise the Child and Youth Care system in order increase its effectivity in coping with vulnerable youths. The IMC proposed a new framework for understanding and working with youth based on the principle of the Sioux parenting practices, called the Circle of Courage. Traditionally, helping professionals such as social workers use western theories, such as Erikson's Psychosocial Stage theory, to understand adolescents. Both of these theories and philosophies were not developed in South Africa and there is, therefore, cause for concern as to their relevance to the diverse and unique circumstances of this country.

In this qualitative study, five young South African women attending a tertiary institution were asked to tell the stories of their adolescence with specific reference to their boy/girl relationships and factors influencing these relationships. The data was gathered in one or two semi-structured interviews. Data was analysed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) broad model using data reduction (through coding), data display (with the use of two context charts and a thematic conceptual matrix) and verification and conclusion drawing (through finding synergies and contrasts between the data and the two theories). This analysis was conducted with two specific aims. The first aim was to provide a thick description of one of the women's stories to show the complexity and diversity of her experience. Secondly, synergies and contrasts were sought between the women's stories and the two theories: Erikson's stage theory and the Circle of Courage. The analysis showed strong evidence that aspects from both these theories existed in the data and that to some degree both were relevant to the experiences of these five women.

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CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY:

My primary interest in Social Work has been relationships; relationships between males and females, family relationships and peer relationships. The majority of my professional work has been undertaken at the Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA) where I have worked with women in abusive relationships. However, the organisation soon realised that in order to be proactive, training and education should begin with young people embarking on new relationships that would mould their thinking about later adult relationships. Traditionally helping professionals, such as social workers and psychologists, have worked with theories that were developed outside of this country, mainly originating in first world countries, such as Erikson's Psychosocial Stage theory of understanding adolescence. These theories have been criticised for not adequately describing people who are not western, white, middle-class and/or Anglo-Saxon (Diaz-Guerrero, Vontress, Dawis & Sue all cited in Hickson & Kriegler 1996:21-22). Hickson & Kriegler (1996:24), in their exploration of multicultural counselling in South Africa, suggest that the helping profession should not attempt to replace traditional theories as such but should attempt to adapt them to fit cultural perspectives. In a new and evolving South Africa the opportunity has arisen to work towards change and to ensure that the frameworks used are relevant to all South Africans.

The new Government, recognising the importance of young people for the future of the country, has developed the National Youth Policy which proclaims:

> *"We must recognise the contributions young people make to our society and build upon the imagination, energy, vibrance and talents of all young women and men. In doing this we shall squarely address the factors which threaten the development of young people. Whether these exist as a legacy of apartheid or as a result of our own social practices, young women and men deserve fair treatment, a safe environment and a nurturing community"*
>
> (National Youth Policy, 16 December 1997:1 from www.gov.za)

The new constitution has made provision for each individual to be protected. The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk (IMC) has also identified the impact of traumatic experiences and the Apartheid past upon the youth of the country. Research conducted by the IMC regarding the vulnerability of the children of South Africa shows that the breakdown of the family, disempowerment of women, and the loss of a sense of community, to name but a few, have lead to youth becoming at-risk (IMC 1996:7).

The IMC has taken a new stance of working with Youth at Risk from a model the "Circle of Courage (which is based on the Sioux parenting belief practices). In addition, the IMC used the work of Pinnock (IMC 1996b) who explored the relevance of the "Circle of Courage" for understanding youth in South Africa and argued that the theory is applicable to the South African context (Coughlan 1998:57). Due to the fact that this is a new model being applied within the South African context, I felt that there was a shortage of empirical evidence as to the relevance of this framework to the unique experience of South African adolescents.

My interest in therapeutic work with adolescents in addition to my interest in women's intimate relationships sparked my exploration into the relevance of the Circle of Courage to this particular stage of life. Having stated that helping professionals, such as myself, have traditionally used western theories in their therapeutic work and bearing in mind the recommendation made by Hickson & Kriegler (1996:22) not to disregard these theories but to consider ways of adapting them, I chose to include one of the more popular western theories, namely Erikson's Psychosocial Stage theory, as a point of comparison in this study.

2. AIMS:

The aim of this thesis is to use the memories of five young South African women of their adolescent boy/girl relationships to explore the usefulness of Erikson's Psychosocial Stage Theory and the "Circle of Courage" to begin to understand the experiences of South African Youth.

3. OBJECTIVES:

1. To hear and understand the stories of young women's memories of their adolescent boy/girl relationships in order to provide a thick description;
2. To analyse this data in light of Erikson's Psychosocial Stage Theory as well as the Circle of Courage seeking synergies and contrasts; and finally
3. To start a base of empirical research by exploring the relevance of these theories for understanding South African youth by focusing on young female's sexuality and their significant relationships.

The aims and objectives impose some limitations on the study as well as the findings. Firstly, this is a qualitative, exploratory study involving five young women. The size of the sample means that the findings cannot be generalized to the broader South African population, but rather serve as a starting point for future research. Also, the sample is not representative of all South Africans even though they are from different cultural groups and socio-economic backgrounds. All the respondents have attended tertiary education affording them the opportunity of reaching middle-class status, and thus the sample does not represent groups that are illiterate.

A second limitation of this study involves the differing depths of information offered by the participants, which led to differing depths of data collection and analysis. Mwamwenda (1995:66), a South African writer, states that with young African girls sexual matters are not discussed and sex education is discouraged as it is seen as a taboo or sensitive subject. Edwards (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:183) warns that asking subjects about sensitive topics may be met with resistance and a reluctance to respond. This became an important factor, considering that this study was relying on young women's memories of the their adolescence. In order to cope with this limitation I chose one interview where I felt that a greater depth was reached and presented it in the form of a thick description but recognise, as with all qualitative research, that data explication remains tentative.

A third limitation to these objectives is the fact that I have predominantly used only one theory (Erikson) as a point of reference. There has been an emergence of many influential theorists, such as Piaget (1926), Kohlberg (1964) and the Freuds (Parry-Jones in Richardson 1994:7). I have, however, chosen Erikson's Psychosocial Stage Theory as his work is ranked as one of the most well-known, specifically with regard to his concept of adolescent identity (Craig 1996:58-59; Jensen 1985:68; Meyer, Moore & Viljoen 1989:147).

A fourth factor contributing to the limitations of this study is what Finch and Oakley cited by Edwards (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:184) calls "cultural affinity." This is the assumption that the researcher will understand the meaning of what it being said simply because she is also a woman. I had to remain constantly aware of what I was assuming as well as what the respondent was assuming regarding my understanding of her story. This was accomplished to some degree by constantly checking out meanings and asking for explanations.

Finally, as discussed in the Literature Review, adolescence is a time of conflict, change, emotional upheaval (Hall in Jensen 1985:40); as well as identity crisis (Erikson 1959:20). Therefore, my prejudices and feelings with regards to memories of my own adolescence, could be considered a limitation. In order to deal with this factor I found the discipline of reflexivity crucial. Tindall (in Banister et al 1994:151) describe this discipline as continuing throughout the research process. It means that the researcher must constantly acknowledge and assess her own central position "in the construction of knowledge" (Tindall in Banister et al 1994:151).

4. OUTLINE OF THESIS:

The Introduction chapter provides a broad background to the study, a clear statement of the aims and objectives as well as an introduction to each of the following chapters.

The Literature Review chapter begins by placing this thesis in context. The chapter considers some of the historical factors that have shaped and influenced the lives of young people in South Africa, offering an exploration of its rich diversity and uniqueness, before moving to a broad discussion of the traditional definitions and perspectives of adolescence and development. These are discussed in the light of their relevance to the experience of young South African adolescents. As stated above and discussed further in the literature chapter, helping professionals tend to work with western understandings of adolescence. Within the South African context, this narrow frame of reference may hinder the understanding of adolescents from an African background. For example, Hickson and Kriegler (1996:101) see the definition of adolescence as being divergent and contradictory given the different understandings of adulthood in different cultures. Social factors such as education that may hinder development or advancement also play a role. It is, however, important to take into account that all the women interviewed did advance to tertiary education affording some middle-class status despite their vastly different backgrounds. The literature review also considers some of the changes (both

physiological and relational) that occur during this time as well as the risk factors and behaviours that young people are exposed to. The risk factors discussed in this study are limited to those experienced by the women interviewed and are by no means exhaustive. I then focus on one theory used to explain adolescence: Erikson's psychosocial stage theory. I chose this theory because it is seen as one of the most studied by social workers and is most famous for the concept of identity and identity crisis during adolescence (Craig 1996:58-59; Jensen 1985:68; Meyer, Moore & Viljoen 1989:147). I have constantly critiqued this theory in the light of the South African experiences. I have then explored some of the changes that have taken place in South African and the impact that this has had on ideology and policy. For the purpose of this study, the focus in on the new framework offered by the IMC regarding working with youth at risk. This is based on the work of Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern (1990) and emanates from the philosophy of the Sioux Native American parenting practices. Some insight is offered by Pinnock (1994) as to how he feels this framework is relevant to the experience of South African youth. The concepts of this framework are presented as well as some similarities that exist with the South African history and cultures. A theoretical comparison between Erikson's theory and the Circle of Courage is presented and discussed.

The Methodology chapter provides a systematic guide to the research design, methods, the ethical considerations and limitations. A qualitative research design was chosen over quantitative as I felt that I was not able to detach myself from the research topic as required in quantitative studies in order to avoid bias (Firestone 1987:17). The former was chosen as it encourages the researcher to look at people and phenomena in a holistic way in order to gain greater understanding (Taylor & Bogdan 1984:6). The method of qualitative research chosen in this study was predominantly gathering an accurate description. Strauss and Corbin (1990:22) believe that in order to do this one does not need to present all the data but one needs to make a selection that can be presented in order to gain a thick and accurate description. This method did not satisfy the needs of all the objectives of this study. I therefore employed the initial stages of Grounded Theory, namely open coding, in order to provide a framework to make comparisons between the data, Erikson's theory and the Circle of Courage (Strauss & Corbin 1990:22).

In order to come to a decision regarding the methodology of this study a pilot interview was conducted, transcribed and analysed bring about changes and narrowing in focus. Due to the sensitive nature of this study, gaining a sample proved challenging. However, using the non-probability technique that Marlow (1998:136) describes as "hand picking," five women, all enrolled at a local educational institution agreed to take part in the study.

The tool used to gather the data was an in depth, semi-structured interview asking the following eight questions:

1. Adolescence is often a time in life where boy-girl relationships take on a more significant role – can you tell me about this time in your life?
2. Can you remember any specific feeling that you had during your adolescence?
3. Looking at this adolescent experience that you have explained – did you always feel this way or was there a significant or sudden change for you?
4. Can you tell me on what or whom you modeled your adolescent relationships?
5. What influence did your family members play in these relationships? How did they influence your relationships?
6. Did anyone outside of your family or other groups of people, have an influence on you with regards to these relationships?
7. Looking back on your experience of relationships in adolescence now – is there anything that you would recommend to people working with adolescents that you think might have been useful for you at that time?
8. Having spoken about your adolescent relationships, is there anything that you are thinking or feeling now that you would like to comment on?

Each woman was interviewed once with the exception of one woman who was interviewed twice. The interviews were transcribed and then returned to the respondent, providing them with the opportunity to change information and to feel confident of their anonymity.

The analysis of data comprised of four stages. The first was the above process of data gathering. The second was data reduction which took the form of descriptive and open coding. The third was data display which took the form of three diagrams: Context charts, Thematic Chart and the Thematic Conceptual Matrix. Finally, Conclusion drawing and verification took the form of contrasts and comparisons (Miles and Huberman 1994:11).

The ethical considerations that are discussed in this chapter include: gaining access; informed consent, acknowledging the persuasive influence of the researcher; respecting the gift given by the respondent; the responsibility of avoiding harm, building trust with the respondent, and the researchers role vs. her role as a social worker. Finally, the discussion offers further limitations of the study, besides those offered earlier in this section.

The Data Analysis and Discussion use the raw data to provide a thick description of one woman's story in the form of two Context Charts, namely a "time line" and a "micro/macro influence and relationships" chart. These two displays contribute different descriptions and complexities to the thick description. The thematic analysis of the data was gained from open and descriptive coding. Synergies and contrasts are drawn between the gathered data, Erikon's Psychosocial Model and the Circle of Courage. Finally a Thematic Conceptual Matrix is displayed and discussed to provide evidence of the findings that aspects of both these theories are evident within the stories of the participants.

Finally, the Conclusion and Recommendations provide the final findings and answer to the research questions stated in the objectives as well as recommendations for future research and possible needs for professionals working with adolescents.

CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to explore the memories of five young South African women within the context of their adolescent boy/girl relationships. There are three distinct objectives to this study. The first is to gain a better understanding of how young South African females make sense of their significant adolescent relationships. Secondly, it attempts to use this understanding in order to seek contrasts and synergies between a dominant western theory (traditionally used by professionals working with youth, as well as being taught in academic institutions) and a model new to South Africa which has shaped recent youth policy, the Circle of Courage (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern 1990). Both the above mentioned models/theories were not developed in South Africa and therefore, may not always be applicable to the unique experiences of South Africans, given the history of this country and the role it plays in shaping and affecting life. There appears to be very little current research focused on exploring and contrasting the experiences of South African adolescents against the non-South African models which are presently being used. The third objective is, therefore, to start building a base of empirical research focusing on young female's sexuality and their significant relationships. As this is a small study, it will not be able to answer the many questions posed in this complex field; its aim, rather, is an attempt to begin a process of evaluating theories in order to ensure that they make sense to the unique and diverse South African experience.

This chapter begins with a brief situational analysis of life in South Africa in order to provide a context for this study. This is followed by an overview of adolescence according to the literature, with the objective of gaining a better understanding of dominant ways of thinking about this stage of life. Physiological changes, as well as change within significant relationships, are considered. In addittion, a consideration of the risks and vulnerabilities that face adolescents while growing up is included. In order to place this within the context of the research, I have constantly considered these views in the light of South African life with its uniqueness and diversity. I then present a discussion of Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Stage Model and its central aspects as this theory is widely used by educational institutions as a model for understanding adolescence. Bearing in mind the changes in the South African political context and its impact on policies, I then examine and offer a critique of an alternative framework, the Circle of Courage

(Brendtro et al 1990). This model has been introduced as a method of working with and understanding young people. The objective of this exploration is to consider the relevance of these two approaches within the South African context. Finally, I have discussed synergies and contrasts between Erikson's Psychosocial theory and the Circle of Courage, before concluding with a number of theoretical insights.

2. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA: CONTEXT

The history of South Africa is filled with issues of segregation, oppression and domination. The South African Apartheid laws were established by White males. These laws were characterised by policies that enforce racism, classism and sexism. Apartheid encouraged a "divide and rule" philosophy that included the bisection of communities, cultural groups, families and marriages. This division brought about the development of a fractured society, which has left the country populated by diverse groups, including the youth, all of whom have grown up with vastly differing life experiences, circumstances and contexts.

Most societies are characterised by diversity; South Africa, however, has numerous unique features. Firstly, it is characterised by ethical diversity which includes religious and cultural beliefs and practices, household arrangements, and child rearing practices. Swartz (in de la Rey, Duncan, Shefer & van Niekerk 1997:5) believes that the structure of the Apartheid government prevented the assimilation and understanding of the diversity through segregation and limited access to one another. For most white South Africans access was limited to Black domestic workers working in White homes or black men working as gardeners or factory workers. This assisted the Apartheid philosophy of creating a master and servant ethos between the two groups.

Secondly, there are strong class divisions along the lines of race. Some of the laws of the Apartheid government that affected families and communities were the Group Areas Act, Labour Laws, Bantu Education and the Population Registration Act of 1950 to name but a few. The extent of the effect of these laws upon on the communities varied according to race, gender and class division. White communities were rarely affected by the hardships of the apartheid laws in that they had full access to middleclass opportunities and lifestyles and were supported by the government in times of hardship. Black families, on the other hand, were restricted to working class circumstances for education, housing, health and welfare facilities with little support available from the state. They would therefore rely on informal resources such as family and

community (Swartz in de la Rey et al 1997:5). A Governmental Household Survey conducted by Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) in 1995 (www.govt.co.za/national.youth.policy) reports that **all** white youths (aged between 14 -17 years) lived in formal dwellings, while for black youths (of that same age group) 64% lived in formal dwellings, 25% in traditional or rural dwellings, and 9% in informal settlements (these statistics exclude homeless children). In terms of education, CASE's statistics show that 58% of white youths have studied as far as they wish to, while only 12% of black youths have done so (from Youth Policy Document: www.gov.co.za/national.youth.policy). The history of South African education is also characterised by deep division, with white South Africans being afforded sophisticated westernised Christian education while their African counterparts were mostly educated in the lower standard Bantu Education system.

The past government's labour policies often separated black working men and women from their families and from each other (for example, migrant labourers on the mines and domestic workers). In these circumstances it was illegal for family members to stay in the same home. Therefore, the role of caregiver to the children fell to other family or community members such as grandparents and / or extended family members or older children. These "alternative" forms of family should also be acknowledged and considered as they form a large part of "family" in the South African context (Swartz in de la Rey et al 1997:6).

Finally, another important aspect that South African youth are exposed to, is the structural violence of this political arena and era. Bundy's research cited in Duncan & Rock (in de la Rey et al 1997:133) reveals that South Africa is currently one of the most violent countries in the world. Black youth became involved to a larger degree in the "struggle" against oppression and the apartheid government (particularly in 1976 in the "Youth Uprising"), than the white youth. Whites have been protected (due mostly to media propaganda) from the political violence. Over the years the youth, predominantly the black youth, of this country have been exposed to the culture of violence on an ongoing basis with the following statistics showing the extent of this violence:

- In 1993, 8737 were killed or injured in acts of political violence (874 were children);
- Between 1991 and 1994, 26790 children were displaced as a result of conflict in KwaZulu-Natal;
- From 1984 – 1986, 1000 children were wounded and 300 children were killed through SAP and SADF violence, and 11 000 detained without trial;

(Duncan & Rock in de la Rey et al 1997:133)

- In 1989 – 1991 there were 26 300 recorded murders; and the average age of criminals is decreasing. In 1988 the average age was 22 years; in 1990 the average age is 17 years.
  (Youth Policy document www.gov.co.za/national.youth.policy)

Despite these statistics, the women interviewed in this study did not discuss the effects of a violent society upon their adolescence or their relationships. Initially, this surprised me but after some consideration, my feelings were that this factor could have been omitted for a number of reasons. Firstly, it may not have been mentioned as political and structural violence may not have effected their adolescent relationships directly. Secondly, two of the women were white middle class women. As noted above many white South Africans were protected from much of the violence by the apartheid system's propaganda media. Thirdly, it must be acknowledged that the black women interviewed may not have discussed the effects of political and structural violence upon their adolescent relationships due to the fact that they were being interviewed by a white woman, making it difficult or uncomfortable for them given the history of power imbalance in this country. If this was the case then this may be a limiting factor in this particular study. It is also possible that violence is so endemic that none of the young women consciously articulate it in their own immediate consciousness.

How does this context impact upon this study? Craig (1996:404) postulates that the patterns of development of a society, and the social norms and behaviour of that society, are deeply affected by social and economic events. If this is true then it would be fair to say that adolescent development in that society would be subject to the same influences and disturbances, and are therefore similarly affected (Craig 1996:404). In this particular study the focus is on the adolescent boy/girl relationships of five women. These women all grew up within the diverse South African context. Three of the participants are Xhosa speaking African women who were exposed to a number of these factors; two of the three come from rural communities while the third grew up in a middle-class township community. The remaining two participants are white English speakers who experienced fewer structural hardships due to the privileged status accorded them by the Apartheid government. However, they also faced certain social challenges (such as divorce and blended families). A common feature amongst all the women in this study is that they remained at school gaining a standard 10 certificate and then went on to tertiary education. Dennefer cited in Laubscher & Klinger (in de la Rey et al 1997:65) believes that attending university after school is a western social expectation of white middle class youths. This advancement to tertiary education may be seen as an opportunity affording them all the possibility of formal employment and to some degree middle-class status.

In order to gain a better understanding of how this social context has impacted upon these five women it is important to first consider some of the dominant views of adolescence as well as some of the risks and vulnerabilities that they are faced with. We shall then consider Eric Erikson's work as a theoretical framework offered to understand adolescence as a stage of life.

3. ADOLESCENCE : AN OVERVIEW

The idea of adolescence as a "socially constructed" life stage, marking the change from childhood to adulthood, came about in the 1900s. Richardson (1994:70), in her tracking of the history of the concept of adolescence, found that during the 18th century, British "working class" children were introduced into adulthood early while their more affluent counterparts remained in educational institutions and, therefore, remained dependant for a longer period of time. In 1870 education became compulsory and there was a growing awareness of the psychological development of the child. The growing interest in child development in both Europe and America during the twentieth century led to the emergence of a number of influential theorists, including Piaget (1926), Kohlberg (1964), Vygotsky (1948), Werner (1948), Erikson (1959; 1963) and the Freuds (Parry-Jones 1994 in Richardson 1994:7).

However, in the South African context, which is characterised by rich diversity, this Westernised definition does not necessarily apply. Firstly, compulsory schooling for all young people is a relatively new concept in South Africa: it only became applicable to black youths during the last 10 years and is not yet enforced throughout the country. The implication of this situation is that many youths leave school in their early teens in order to seek employment, due to risk factors, such as teenage pregnancy or gang involvement. It is estimated that 330 000 young people in South Africa leave school before successfully completing Grade 6, thereby contributing to the estimated 6 million illiterate people (Hartshorne in Richardson 1993:10). For those who move into the workforce, they shift from being a dependent child to being a working person, often with others dependant upon them. For many working class youth, to remain at school requires a large sacrifice for parents as the offspring remain financially dependent for a longer period of time, sometimes up to the age of twenty-five. This brings about the ambiguous status of dependent youth while being an adult (Hickson & Krigler 1996:102). Dennefer cited in Laubscher & Klinger (in de la Rey et al 1997:65) believes that in Western societies it may be a social expectation that white middle class youths attend university after school, start work and then marry. However, in a different society this might not be the norm. In this sample, although not

all women came from white middle-class backgrounds, they all chose to move on to tertiary education. Two of the participants, who came rural backgrounds, discussed having to work for a year in between school and tertiary education for financial reasons in order to afford further studies, while one of the women spoke about having to work while studying to support herself.

Secondly, Hickson & Krigler (1996:101) see the definition of childhood and adolescence in this country as divergent and contradictory with ambiguities in the legal system, where black children do not qualify for state maintenance after age sixteen while coloured and white children are eligible until the age of eighteen. There are also differences between the different cultural groups. African males are considered men after undergoing initiation ceremonies from early in their teens. This brings about further ambiguities in that they are considered men in their communities and may no longer be disciplined by women while they may still be attending school with the status of children (Hickson & Krigler 1996:101-102). White children are considered adult at the age of eighteen when they are eligible to vote and obtain a driver's license.

Historic western theory generally agrees that adolescence begins at the age of 11 years and continues to approximately 18 years (Craig 1996:59) or when sexual reproduction can take place (Jensen 1985:11). Hall (quoted in Jensen 1985:40) describes adolescence as the period of "*strum und drang"* meaning "*storm and stress*" - a period of "emotional upheaval, suffering, passion, and rebellion against adult authority." He believes that adolescent changes are biological and therefore any attempt to alter the changes would be fruitless. Armour (cited in Jensen 1985:5) describes adolescence as being "a disease - like the common cold there is no cure for it." In Freud's works on sexuality (cited in Mishne 1986:6), he describes puberty "as the time of life when the bodily changes occur which give infantile sexual life its final form". He views the adolescent as looking for new sexual aims, as well as new sexual objects outside the family. Conflict and confusion are seen as accompanying these bodily changes, sexual awakening, and increased awareness of society. Blos (cited in Moore & Rosenthal 1993:29), a psychosexual theorist, sees adolescence as the "second individuation process." During this process of "defining selfhood," the young person is seen to emotionally move away from parents and family as they discover that sexual and emotional needs may be met outside the family unit.

Earlier theories of adolescence focus predominantly on the development of the individual. The developmental approach however, shifts this focus to qualitative change as opposed to quantitative changes. This means that "once a stage of reorganization has occurred, it is simply not possible to go back to view that world through earlier, less complex modes of organisation"

(Kroger 1989:4). It also takes into account the role of society. Eric Erikson's work was the first to acknowledge the "pycho*social*" aspect of adolescence and the development of self and identity. Erikson focused on both the importance of biological change during puberty and the role of social factors surrounding the adolescent. These were seen to assist in the shaping of the ego if they were perceived to be supportive and nurturing (in Kroger 1989:6; Moore & Rosenthal 1993:28). This model shall be considered more fully later in this chapter. Mead (in Moore & Rosenthal, 1993:22) supports this theory as his research in cross-cultural studies indicates that the level of stress and conflict experienced by an adolescent can be influenced by the prevailing cultural norms about sexuality and sexual expression in that society. If this is true then a general understanding of "South African adolescence" per se would be difficult to attain due to the diversity and magnitude of the cultures in this country. An example of this can be seen in the sample of this study: five women from two different cultures but also from different socio-economic and family backgrounds. Let us now consider the impact of change upon adolescents, as well as some of the cultural impacts upon adolescents and their relationships in more depth.

4. ADOLESCENCE AND CHANGE:

Male and female development is believed to progress at different rates and stages. Females tend to start developing earlier than their male counterparts, especially in sexual and physical maturation (Craig 1996:409; Jensen 1985:11). Some of the changes that an adolescent endures are internal while others are external and occur within relationships. Change also occurs in the way that young people relate to those around them and the role that these people play in their lives. Relevant changes are discussed under the following headings:

- Biological changes
- Adolescents and Family
- Adolescents and Sexuality
- Adolescents and Relationships
- Adolescent and Peers

4.1 Biological Changes in Adolescence:

It is believed that adolescence ranks with the fetal period and the first two years of life for physical development (Craig 1996:407; Erikson 1963:261). However, the adolescent has the

advantage, and disadvantage, of being able to witness and take cognisance of the changes that they are experiencing. Accompanying the physical change are the ambivalent feelings ranging from uncertainty to surprise and pride. Comparisons may take place between peers as self-image develops, adding to feelings of insecurity due to not meeting up to the ideal (Erikson 1963:261). The biological changes are still unexplained in terms of the timing that is "chosen" where a message is sent to the pituitary gland to begin the hormonal production for adulthood (Hoffman, Paris & Hall 1994:343).

Physical development in female adolescents usually begins with the enlarging of breasts as the first outward physical sign of puberty. This stage also includes the growth of pubic and axillary hair (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:36). At the same time development takes place in the uterus and vagina, with enlargement of the labia and clitoris. Menarche (the name given to the first menstruation) is seen as the most dramatic start of puberty and begins at approximately 12 years of age. Jensen (1985:217) sees this as playing a vital role in the youth's self image as a woman and as a sexual being, affecting her perception of her self in intimate relationships. Moore and Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:36) see this as a signal to the external world that the child is now moving into adulthood. Stone and Church (in Mwamwenda 1995:67) stress this beginning for young girls as vital as it signifies both fertility and maturity. Mwamwenda (1995:66), a South African writer continues, saying that the beginning of menstruation for young girls is traumatic but can be made worse without adequate preparation. This is often the case with young African girls due to the fact that sexual matters are not discussed and sex education in schools is discouraged. The cycle of misinformation and secrecy continues from one generation to the next.

The age that menstruation begins, however, varies in different societies. This variation has been linked to different nutritional factors and health care, as it is associated with the female's body fat and height (Russell in Carolissen 1993:6). With South Africa consisting of such a vastly differing societal make-up, it becomes difficult to state a norm for all the adolescents in our society. In a study (Mwamwenda 1994:67) conducted in the eastern area of the Eastern Cape (the former Transkei), which is predominantly rural and poverty stricken, the average age was 15.5 years. Whereas in Western societies such as Britain, which may be seen as similar to the middle class white South African's, the average age of menarche is 13 years.

Mwamwenda believes that as female adolescents reach sexual maturity they become more concerned with how they look. The adolescent's body image is connected to her speed or rate of

physical development as well as being linked to how family members and peers perceive her development (1994:68). They may form attitudes of themselves according to what they are told about themselves; this emphasises the importance of the environment - family, peers and society in general. This, in turn, influences her self-image and her belief in her self and worth in relationships, both with her peers and romantic relationships. The media is also seen as playing a role in how adolescents perceive themselves and how they are manipulated by the creation of stereotypes. This brings about feelings of anxiety and stress as adolescents compare themselves with the so-called "ideal." Longitudinal studies in the United States have shown that body-image of girls at the age of 13 is at it's lowest and then it rises steadily. Craig (1996:412) makes an interesting suggestion – that at all stages of adolescence (between the ages 11-18) self image is seen to be lower for girls than for boys. There is a large gap in South African research, especially with regard to longitudinal studies. The United States studies may apply to a portion of the South African population, but not all. Research conduced by Peskin & Livson (in Benedek in Sugar, 1979:5) suggests that the manner in which the adolescent copes with puberty will affect their strengths and weaknesses in coping in later life. Erikson, (1968:16) in his stage theory, also postulates that each stage or "crisis" should be adequately resolved in order to cope with later crisis.

The adolescent male growth spurt occurs between the ages of thirteen and sixteen years. It is characterised by the growth of the testes, scrotum and penis, pubic, facial and bodily hair development, and the maturation of the seminal vesicles and the internal prostate gland (Moore and Rosenthal in Coleman and Roker 1998:37). In comparison to males, the female has a growth spurt earlier than their male counterparts causing the female to be taller than the boys of her same age. This can be a source of self-consciousness and embarrassment with her not wanting to be different in anyway from her peers and friends (Craig 1996:409).

4.2 Adolescence and Family:

Young people experiencing adolescence cannot be seen or discussed in isolation. They form part of a family system that influences them, their behaviour and their decision making, to a large degree (Balk 1995:237). Therefore, in order to gain an understanding of adolescence, one needs to consider them in this context. Within their family system, which may take different forms, the young person learns about relationships and norms. Families are affected by their history as well as by the environment in which they exist. One view (McMasters Model of Family Functioning in Balk 1995:243) contends that "family structure and organization

significantly influences behavior of family members", and secondly, "adaptability and stability of a family system significantly influence how family members behave."
"Healthy" family functioning needs to be characterized by six dimensions namely:

- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Family Roles
- Affective responsiveness
- Affective involvement , and
- Behavior control

(McMasters Model of Family Functioning in Balk 1995:243).

McWirther and others (1998:42) support this and stress that parental support is imperative for development. This is seen to include emotional support and the modeling of socially acceptable behaviour and conflict resolution. Parents also influence adolescents indirectly as children observe behaviour within the marital relationship, and within social relationships (for example work relationships).

In Western society adolescents' problem behaviour has been linked to family dysfunction. Dysfunctional families are seen as families who are unable to adapt to change, and where there is a lack of closeness and sense of belonging within the family unit (Epstein, Bishop & Baldwin 1982; Moss, 1976; Oliveri & Reiss 1981; in Burt et al 1998:42).

In the South African context, this is complicated, as family structures are diverse. In the traditional black communities, family is made up not only of immediate blood relatives but also includes extended family (for example cousins are referred to as brothers and sisters). Hierarchy is based on age within the family and the community. The role of the family includes moral education (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:31). However, family structure has been negatively impacted upon by the apartheid system. This has brought about constant change with migrant labour, urbanisation and the creation of Bantustans fragmenting families and leading to parental separation, which in turn has meant that parents have often not been able to meet the developmental needs of their children (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:30). On the other hand, white families are experiencing a growing number of divorces (Richardson 1993:9). In these circumstances, parental modeling with regards to relationships is made more difficult and perhaps confusing for children.

As discussed above, some of the work of adolescence may be seen as the work of separating from the family system. The process of gaining independence, self reliance and autonomy may be seen as contentious and conflicting, as a battle of wills and testing of boundaries takes place (Gouws & Kruger 1996:110). Adolescence is often an especially stressful time and it may catch the young person by surprise, leaving them feeling unprepared. Similarly, parents are often not prepared for the changes and they struggle as their child outgrows childhood. Also impacting on the changes taking place within the adolescent's body are fluctuating emotions which bring about mood swings. These may range from great excitement to the depths of despair, from confidence to self-doubt, and from great affection for parents to deep hatred for them (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Kroger 1998:37).

In addition, the young person is developing and gradually changing their attitudes, beliefs and values. In childhood they carried their parent's beliefs and values, but now, in adolescence, they are moving towards those of their peers using their parents values as a starting point or base (Gouws & Kruger 1996:113; Jensen 1985:283).

A major area where parents and family influence the outlook and behaviour of the adolescent is in their sexual behaviour, knowledge and attitudes (Jensen 1985:283; Pistella & Bonati 1998:206; Hoffman et al 1994:362). Parents and adolescents often find it uncomfortable discussing these issues. In a study conducted in the United States (Levy, Lampman, Handler, Flag & Weeks in Pistella & Bonati 1998:207) it was found that adolescents were more uncomfortable discussing sexuality issues than they were discussing drugs, alcohol or tobacco. This communication and education is essential in order for adolescents to make informed choices about their behaviour. Without this knowledge they may be seen as good candidates for becoming involved in risk behaviours (see section: Risk Behaviour: Lack of Sexual Information, page 30).

4.3 Adolescence and Sexuality:

Sex and sexuality are often confused. Beake & Zimbizi (in Goosen & Kugman 1996:233) clarify the difference, saying that sex can be seen as the physical act of penetrative intercourse. On the other hand, *sexuality* is a far more complex issue including a wide range of social processes and ideas and gender power relations (Potgieter & Fredman in de la Rey et al. 1997:101). Sexuality may also be seen as an awareness of, and feelings about, one's own body, intimate thoughts, sensations and behaviour (Beake & Zimbizi in Goosen & Kugman 1996:232). During adolescence there is an increasing awareness of a sexual drive that may be frightening, but at the

same time, pleasurable. Adolescents become increasingly aware of social norms and the expectations of others in their immediate environment. Peer groups can be quite cruel, as they tend to focus on difference and reject those who are seen to be non-compliant (Erikson 1963:262; Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:37). Moore & Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:37) believe that physical change plus social context blend together to impact upon young people's sexual behaviours and attitudes.

Western research (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:35-6) has shown that a large emphasis is placed on problematic behaviours when considering adolescent sexuality. Adolescent sexuality is often linked to undesirable activities such as drugging, alcohol abuse and promiscuity. There is little or no focus on the importance of developing sexual values which will guide behaviour. Young people often receive conflicting messages about sexuality and sexual behaviour. From authority figures they may be receiving instruction regarding sexual caution and conservatism while peers encourage experimentation and risk-taking behaviour. Others may receive no information at all, which in itself, reflects certain beliefs about sexuality.

Sexual expression is different for girls and boys and does not necessarily mean intercourse. Sexual expression means different things to different people and covers a wide range of activity: from flirting, holding hands, kissing, fondling, mutual masturbation to penetrative sex (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:41). Females are generally discouraged from overtly expressing their sexuality (Craig, 1996:416). Craig postulates that in Western society, femininity is synonymous with "passivity, nurturance and the ability to fit in." Hickson and Kriegler (1996:32) note that in African society, females are not awarded equal status with males, who are seen to have more value than the females providing the way for a patriarchal value system of male privilege. Potgieter and Fredman (in de la Rey et al 1997:105) also found that South African girls are taught to be compliant. This tends to mould their construction of sexual meanings: "sexuality tends to be seen as something that others do to them and define for them." They go on to conclude that for girls, sexual identity seems to have two very different messages: "the fear of rape and harassment on the one hand, and the need to be attractive to boys on the other."

Closely linked to adolescent sexuality and included in the development of identity is the development of a gender identity. The distinction between the meaning of "sex" and "gender" can be seen in terms of a biological distinction. The sex of an individual is determined by the biological male and females differences that one is born with. Shefer (in de la Rey et al.

1997:82) sees these differences as fixed and as physical, biological and genetic. She continues to define this distinction saying that gender is not a biological phenomenon but a set of social norms and expectations. She believes too, that the emphasis placed on the physical differences between males and females cannot be separated from the fact that they are being perceived through the notion of what gender is.

There are two interrelated parts regarding a child's understanding of personal gender: "*gender-related behaviours"* and "*gender concepts*" (Craig 1996:100). Social learning theorists stress that children learn their gender-related behaviour from others in their immediate surroundings. Sex roles or gender roles are learned through imitation and/or encouragement. By the age of three years children display some sex-related behaviour. By the age of five years these behaviours have become quite clear, as girls play with dolls inside while boys are play with trucks and cars outdoors. In the African culture there is a strong patriarchal division of labour, where children learn their gender roles from an early age. Hickson & Kriegler (1997:31) see this happening so that sexual identities are not confused. Young men and women often have a different set of rules to which they have to abide. Females are not given equality with males and a patriarchal value system prevails with males accorded more value than females (Hickson & Kriegler 1997:32). These different rules are described as a norm by one of the subjects (in regard to differences between herself and her brother).

Although Erikson (1959:52), in his psychosocial theory, acknowledges the role of society and cultural norms, he does not consider the differing experiences of males and females and how these effect their development and perpetuate patriarchal societies.

It would seem that Erikson was not the only theorist to neglect this area. In an initial exploration of the literature and research in South Africa regarding the experiences of youth development as well as gender identity, Shefer (in de la Rey et al 1997:90-2), was disappointed. After investigating the matter further, she found that this was not surprising when one considered the apartheid past of this country, where oppression was a legalised way of life. Much of the work concerning women and gender identity in South African is based on the experiences of black working class women, where the research has been conducted by white middle class woman. This research, however, has stimulated some debate regarding validity and reliability given the power relations between the two cultural groups in the history of this country. I remained very aware of this issue during this study, as three of the participants were black, and I am white. However, these participants had reached a level of tertiary education, elevating them, to some

degree, to middle class status.

Shefer (in de la Rey et al. 1997:80-89) expresses concern about some of the mainstream research on gender identity development. This research does not present the construction of identity as a "life-long process," but rather as a static view that one might gain of one's self as a male or female, that simply emerges during early childhood. Erikson (1963:261) is an example of this stating that identity is developed from early childhood to the end of adolescence, when the identity should be attained in order to experience the next stage of intimacy. The former view takes a far more radical stand, stating that "from the moment that first question ("what is it?") is answered, the child's entire life will be mapped out in one or another way." The biological sex of a child will determine how he or she will be treated and handled in the world. She goes on to say "development is gendered". It therefore becomes a pivotal part of the human identity and influences development as a whole. Again, Erikson does not offer an exploration of the different experiences possibly indicating that he believes that they are the same and yet this does not seem logical in a patriarchal society where males and females do not share equality.

In an exploration of young women's perceptions of their identity and roles within the family, Beake & Zimbizi (in Goosen & Kugman 1996:223) postulate that it begins to change at the age of eleven years, with the onset of puberty. The young woman is now considered to be in training for motherhood, and for the role of wife. She is given more responsibility and more is expected of her within the home. On the other hand males are encouraged to explore career options and specialise in outdoor activities. In a study conducted for the Beijing Conference Report: 1995 Country Report on the Status of South African Women (Beake & Zimbizi in Goosen & Kugman 1996:222) it was found that the gender breakdown of enrolment in Technikons in 1987 was 71% male and 29% female. This may be a trend in South Africa, however, all the women interviewed in this study had chosen to obtain a tertiary education.

Kroger (1989:33) further criticises Erikson with regards to gender issues, where he states that "identity definition must wait until a suitable partner is found and 'welcomed to the inner space.'" This is a contradiction of his earlier statements that the identity stage must be resolved before intimacy can be experienced, but also it is less true in societies where women postpone marriage and families in pursuit of a career. Other criticism states that these two stages may be reversed or even co-exist for women (Gilligan in Kroger 1998:33).

Another aspect that should be considered is the role of women in relationships because of their

gender. Mkize (1994:21) explores the African family's unspoken rules which are passed from generation to generation of the women folk of different cultures. Different languages have different words or proverbs, and yet they all have similar themes or meanings: in Twana a mother may say to her daughter: "mosadi utsoara thip kabo kgaleng" meaning that a woman holds the knife on the sharp edge. Another in the Xhosa culture is "nyamezela" which literally means: "endure". These two messages, among others, are telling the women to remain in the family regardless of the pain that they may endure. Some Christian beliefs play a similar role in encouraging women to endure rather than confront inequality, for example: Proverbs 31:10-31, teaching women about the qualities of good and "obedient" wives. Messages coming from the cornerstones of our society, such as culture and religion, impact on adolescents and how they perceive themselves in relationships.

4.4 Adolescence and Relationships:

In pre-adolescence, children tend to develop strong friendships with peers of their own sex, and generally show little or no interest in the opposite sex. Often, if they persist in playing with or associating with members of the opposite sex, they are laughed at or ridiculed by their peers (Mwamenda 1995:59; Coleman 1974:53). The radical change which takes place in attitude towards heterosexual relationships 3-5 years later is striking and noticeable.

Jensen (1985:71) sees "falling in love" as a second method of over-identification: this is due to the fact that it is not physical in nature but revolves around thought and idealism. Erikson (1968:132) sees adolescent love as an attempt to define one's identity by projecting one's uncertain self-image onto another, thereby using the relationship as a mirror to reflect and gradually clarify identity. Erikson sees this as taking the form of "conversation" as opposed to being a sexual matter (Erikson 1963:262). Moore & Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:44) see "falling in love" as a normal and natural part of the growing up process.

Biological development alone does not direct and motivate sexual behaviour. Moore & Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:36) believe that cultural and social factors also have a strong influence on how an adolescent expresses her sexuality. Adolescents begin dating between the ages of 14 - 16 years and then become sexually active at varying rates. Social factors play a large role in determining when girls and boys become sexually active. The studies of Moore & Rosenthal suggest that girls are influenced more by peer behaviour than boys and therefore, if their friends are involved sexually, they are more likely to become involved. In addition to

social factors, other determinants were noted: physical attractiveness (mature looking), opportunity; parental behaviour (for example lower levels of parental supervision) and religious beliefs/influences (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:38-46). These studies, however, were conducted with European adolescents and therefore may not be applicable to all South Africans.

Young people seek to explore sexual behaviour in different contexts, some preferring to experiment in a relationship where there is no commitment, while others prefer to fall in love and develop intimacy, with sexual behaviour being one aspect of that relationship (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:42). A young girl's first sexual experience is believed to have a far-reaching effect upon her future conception of sex and her own sexual functioning, although little is known about just how subtle the effects are. In a South African study conducted by the National Progressive Primary Health Care Network (NPPHCN) with young boys and girls from around the country, it was discovered that sexual activity begins at a very young age (12 years old for some young girls in rural areas). More importantly, it is believed to occur in the "context of unequal power relations, with boys having power over girls" (Potgieter & Fredman in de la Rey et al 1997:104). It was also discovered that boys expect girls to be available for sexual encounters and that they experience a large amount of peer pressure to be sexually active. Also at times, boys may feel that they are within their rights to coerce girls into sexual activity, or that petting (such as kissing and fondling) implies permission for sex (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:38). Girls, on the other hand, seemed to have very little power in the negotiation of the sexual experience. They linked sexual relationships to "being loved, gaining materially, gaining experience, as well as being forced into it" (Potgieter & Fredman in de la Rey et al 1997:105). Heise (in Parker & Gagnon 1995:118) believes that "when coercion enters the sexual arena, it invariably affects women's experience of sex".

Research indicates that girls appear to learn to be more compliant within relationships. Unlike boys they are socialized into believing that to be assertive is to be unladylike. This difference in attitude may be responsible for a gendered sexual identity which leaves the girl with far less power within the relationship (Potgieter et al in de la Rey et al 1997:105). Therefore, as Potgieter & Fredman (in de la Rey et al 1997:101) insist and the studies above show, choice or negotiation to have sexual contact between a male and female does not necessarily happen on an equal footing. The power relations are acted out in this intimate relationship, as they are in most other arenas in the patriarchal society. This unequal footing has an impact on the negotiation and use of contraception and risk-taking behaviour as discussed in Section 5: Risk Factors, Risk

Behaviour and Coping Strategies (page 25).

As discussed above, Erikson (1963:262) defines adolescent "love" as an attempt to develop an identity by projecting one's image onto the other person, so that it may be mirrored back, reflected on, and gradually clarified. Erikson (1963:263) sees intimacy (as opposed to isolation), as the life stage following adolescent identity and defines it as:

> "the capacity to commit him (*her)* self to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even though they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises."

> Intimacy thus takes on the development of :
>
> "1. mutuality of orgasm
> 2. with a loved partner
> 3. of the other sex
> 4. with whom one is able and willing to share a mutual trust
> 5. and with whom one is able and willing to regulate the cycles of work, procreation, and recreation
> 6. so as to secure to the offspring, too all the stages of a satisfactory development"
>
> (Erikson 1963:266)

Erikson's definition of intimacy makes numerous assumptions about the nature and context of relationships. Firstly, he assumes that relationship takes place on an equal footing where power is shared. Secondly, he assumes that intimacy involves heterosexual relationship; implicit is the assumption that homosexual relationships cannot be intimate. Thirdly, there is the assumption that intimate relationships necessarily produce offspring.

In a patriarchal society like South Africa and as stated above from Potgieter & Fredman's (in de la Rey et al. 1997:101) findings, relationships and sexual decision making do not occur on an equal footing; males usually hold the power.

4.5 Adolescence and Peers:

Peer relationships assume far more significance in the young person's life as they approach adolescence. They share a great deal of their time, their ideas, fantasies and concerns with their

friends (Gouws & Kruger 1996:117). In Western cultures, adolescents place great importance on being a member of a popular group. The group tends to have high expectations of conformity (Balk 1995:280). Peer relations are seen as having both a positive and negative influence upon the adolescent, encouraging conformity in risk behaviour such as unprotected sex, drug or alcohol use. On a positive note peer relationships may encourage the development of independence from parents and provide a place from which to learn about intimacy and close relationships with people outside of the family (Balk 1995:281; Gouws & Kruger 1996:120).

Social acceptance and popularity versus rejection also plays an important role in peer relationships. Being liked or being popular is important for young people and the fear of rejection or being pointed out as being different is great (Balk 1995:282). Gouws & Kruger (1996:121) link this to the fear of being alone, which can be seen as a form of social ostracism. This in turn enforces the adolescent's need to conform to the norms of the group.

Considering the extent of change that the literature offers as well as the changing social and political context of South Africa it would seem reasonable to assume that young people face challenges and risks along the rocky road of adolescence. In the next section we consider some of these risk factors.

5. RISK FACTORS, RISK BEHAVIOUR AND COPING STRATEGIES:

Budlender (1995:144) encourages the acknowledgement that adolescence is a time for experimentation and that it is essential that young people (and especially women) enter this phase of life with skills and knowledge about their rights to make informed choices about their own lives. Without these skills and knowledge they may be considered to be at risk or vulnerable. The term "*at risk"* has been used by many different professionals with little consensus regarding its meaning (McWhirter, McWhirter, McWhirter & McWhirter 1993:6). McWhirter and others (1993:6) use the term *at risk* to indicate "a set of presumed cause/effect dynamics that place the individual child or adolescent in danger of negative *future events.*" Risk behaviour has been defined by Jessor (1998:1) as "behaviors that can, directly or indirectly, compromise the well being, the health, and even the life course of young people". Risk factors are those factors that may bring about undesirable personal, social or developmental outcomes (Jessor 1998:1). McWhirter and others (1993:6) also stress that being *at risk* is not a diagnostic static category or state of being, but should be perceived as rather like steps on a continuum.

Risk factors and behaviours are usually studied separately. However, in the real world, they occur concurrently, interacting together and feeding off each other as they cluster together, with the problems that develop in childhood illuminating in adolescence. Also, not only do risk factors cluster, but so do young people who are at risk; they are exposed to similar influences. In some circumstances it becomes an intergenerational cycle of that society (McWhirter et al 1993:13).

Jessor (1998:3) points to the new and very important focus of investigation regarding adolescents at risk. This is the identification and assessment of protective factors. These factors are likely to decrease the risk behaviour and may also be seen as factors that can buffer or moderate exposure to the risk factor or involvement in risk behaviour. Burt, Resnick & Novick (1998:39) identify protective factors within the family, such as individual competencies and abilities as well as parental competencies and resources. In the community, they identify factors such as influential adults, neighbourhood resources and effective schools. However, some of these factors are specific to first world countries and urban areas. These shall be included in the discussion on risk behaviours and factors in South Africa.

A second new focus in research is the study of why some adolescents are able to face adversity and conquer it, i.e. what makes some adolescents resilient. Carnonell, Reinherz & Gaiconia (1998:259-260) in there study of "Risk and Resilience" defined psychological resilience as "the capacity to be unaffected by, to recover from or even to gain strength or to grow from difficult life experiences or circumstances" and is the "unexpected positive outcomes among individuals at risk." McWhirter and Jeffries (1998:80) define resilience as inherent in those youngsters who "exhibit competence, autonomy, and effective strategies to cope with the world around them" as well as those who do well and have hope.

The Search Institute, in Minneapolis, conducted research (1997) with 100 000 United States adolescents and developed "40 Developmental Assets" as building blocks to protect and help young people grow up to be healthy, caring and responsible. Although this is a Western study, I believe many of the assets may be applicable to the South African community. These building blocks are based on relationships that the young person has with others (external assets) as well as personal characteristics (internal assets). The external assets include family support, community support, and a caring school climate. Secondly, empowerment resources in the community, having adult role models and positive peer influence. Thirdly, developing boundaries with family, school and peers. Fourthly, developing a constructive use of time such as creative activities, being involved in a religious community and being at home some of the

time. Five internal assets have been identified as important. Firstly, having a commitment to learning, such as being motivated to learn and being involved in one's school. Secondly, having positive values, such as caring for others. Thirdly, a belief in equality and justice, integrity, honesty and responsibility. Fourthly, having some social competencies, such as the ability to plan and make decisions, an ability to maintain interpersonal relationships, having some knowledge of people of different cultures, and conflict resolution skills. Finally, having a positive identity, personal power, self-esteem and a sense of purpose. The research indicated that the fewer of these assets that young people have the more likely they are to be at risk. Although these "assets" have not been specifically sought in this study, some were identified during the course of the interviews.

5.1 Risk Factors in the South African Context:

Blos (in Kroger 1989:75) believes that "no adolescent ... can develop optimally without societal structures standing ready to receive him (or her), (as) the successful course of adolescence depends intrinsically on the degree of intactness and cohesion which societal structures obtain". In the South African context, Laubscher and Klinger (in de la Rey et al 1997:70) agree with this as they emphasise the importance of the impact of societal context. South African adolescents grow and develop in society and then create their own life story and self-image in that context. How the adolescent develops is dependent upon both the micro- and macro-context of their environment.

In the first part of this chapter we explored the South African context, emphasising the diversity of the society as well as some of the hardships and inequalities enforced by the past government. Given this context and the belief that societal norms have a vital impact upon adolescent development, let us now considered some of the risks, as well as some of the coping strategies and protective factors available to South African adolescents.

The risk factors and behaviours that I have chosen to explore are specifically linked to some of the factors that this sample of women experienced and are by no means exhaustive in terms of the vulnerabilities that could face young people in different circumstances or situations. The following are considered:

- Family breakdown
- Adolescent's Role in the Family and Society
- Lack of Sexual information

- High Risk Sexual Behaviour
- Adolescent pregnancy
- A Changing Society

5.1.1 Changes in Family Structure and Family Breakdown:

Richardson (1993:9) states that, in South Africa, the breakdown in family structures has been due to divorce (the majority in White families), migrant labour, urbanisation, women headed households and child headed households. All these factors affect family structures and relationships which, in turn, affects adolescents.

Divorce in South Africa is on the increase. In 1996 (Statistics South Africa: www.statssa.gov.za) there were 32 775 recorded divorces (48% "white" marriages, 22% "black" marriages, 13% "so called coloured" marriages, 5% "Indian" marriages and 12% "mixed" and "unspecified" marriages) effecting 36 719 children. Families with an apparently secure base may break down leading to conflict between spouses, relocation, change in socio economic status and changes in the family structure (Smith, Cowie & Blades 1991:96). The children usually (but not always) remain in the care of their mother creating female-headed households. One of implications of this situation is that the decrease in household income puts many families at risk of poverty. Poverty has various effects upon children depending on their age (Balk 1995:253). Smith and others (1991:96) found that the younger the children the less they understand, while Balk (1995:253) found that they could become more demanding, while adolescents tend to react with anger and shame. Balk (1995:253) found that a consequence of poverty is that older adolescents leave school in order to assist with the alleviation of financial pressure by seeking employment.

Some adults remarry, thereby constructing a blended family, where the children have to adjust and cope with new relationships such as step-parents and possibly siblings (McWhirter & Jeffries 1998:47).

Black South African families suffered added pressure with the policies of the apartheid era, migrant labour system, anti-urbanisation strategies and forced removal. These laws enabled the breadwinner to live close to work while prohibiting family members from living with them; in this way families were divided for lengthy periods (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:90). For rural

families, often, to survive, the breadwinner (usually the father) would become a migrant labourer being away from the family for six months to a year at a time. Another consequence of migrant labour was the fact that some men would create new families and relationships in their place of work. The development of this situation meant that rural families would receive less money from the breadwinner. Hickson & Kriegler (1996:92) saw this system impacting heaviest on the women and children. Although Apartheid is no longer in place, families are still at risk of being affected by migrant labour. In the urban areas, women were possibly more aware of their rights to claim maintenance through the courts, whereas rural women were not aware of this option.

Swarts (1997:41) found these factors to have caused havoc in the family lives of many South Africans. Other stressful factors experienced by families are disempowerment and retrenchment. These situations are dealt with very differently in families, with repercussions such as family violence and alcohol abuse. Families are torn apart, resulting in single-parent families with reduced support systems. In the past families were protected and supported by extended families in times of crisis or stress. However, with the above social and political factors, this support has been torn away. Carbonell and others (1998:251) state that family cohesion and support systems are associated with resilience. The ongoing family breakdown in South Africa is, therefore, a major cause of concern.

5.1.2 Adolescent's Change of Role in the Family:

Hahn (in Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern 1990:28) expresses deep concern for modern adolescents in the development of their self-concept, saying that they are "suffering from the misery of unimportance." In the past they played vital roles in the home or in working the land, assisting in the survival of the family. They had the experience of being close to extended family and community, encouraging co-operation and a sense of responsibility. The family also provided a place to give and receive love. This may be the case within some of the rural communities, however, in modern Westernised society, the extended family is divided and the sense of community interrupted by walls between homes and families becoming far more introspective and private. The youth are no longer vital to the survival of the family. They are now deprived of the opportunity to be productive and needed. During this stage of development, adolescents seek a sense of importance in order to develop their self-esteem and image. Adults play a role in increasing this feeling of unimportance as they spend less and less time with their children. Charleston in cited in Brendtro and others (1990:29) believes that time is not real, only a human creation. Relationships are real, occurring when we "narrow the distance between

ourselves and others." Due to the stresses of having to work longer hours to cope with the rising costs of living, both parents often work, as families are not able to survive economically with a single breadwinner. If the family is a single parent family (as a high percentage of them are in present society) the pressure is even greater to work long hours. Parents are, out of necessity, working longer and harder outside the home. Hersch (in Bender & Leone 1994:18) sees this as having a detrimental impact upon adolescence as the close bonds of interpersonal relationships are diminishing and the adolescents are left alone at home to learn from their peers as opposed to their parents. They also become involved in risk behaviours like gang membership.

5.1.3 Lack of Sexual Information:

The South African Children's Charter (Article 8 or 1992) states that all children have the right to education on a broad range of issues including sexuality, HIV/AIDS and contraception. Potgieter & Fredman (in de la Rey et al 1997:106) report that there is in fact little sex education in the majority of South African schools for various reasons, such as conservative communities, religious views or parental views. The major responsibility for sex education has fallen at the feet of Non-Governmental Organisations, but their programmes have been criticised as being too explicit. However, those conducted by governmental departments have been seen as moralistic, unrealistic and conservative. Despite the attempt made to increase adolescent awareness and provide sex education, Mayekiso and Twaise (1993:21) feel that little effort has been made to include parents in these programmes. They believe that parents should play an active role in imparting sexual knowledge and facts. Potgieter & Fredman (in de la Rey et al 1997:106) believe that sexuality education should begin from 5 years of age (pre-school) in order to dispel misinformation and myths.

Adolescents may learn about sexual matters from various sources besides parents and schools. These sources may include peers, boy/girlfriend and the media. This information is not always reliable or factual (Balk 1996:501). Figure 1 shows the findings from a study conducted by Meyekiso and Twaise (1993:22) amongst 50 African girls at an Eastern Cape high school, where inquiries were made as to the source of sexual information.

Figure 1: Source of Sexual Knowledge

Source of Knowledge	%
Mother	13.2
Father	1.0
Peers	45.8

Teachers	16.7
Media	4.8
Relative	18.5

Some parents and educational institutions avoid discussing sexual matters with adolescents because they feel uncomfortable. They therefore ignore or neglect this issue. Hersch (in Bender et al 1994:17) sees this as giving a mixed and confused message to adolescents as they hear bits of information from their external environment that is neither confirmed or expelled by silent parents.

On the other hand, some parents believe that discussing sexual issues with adolescents may encourage them to become more sexually experimental. However, Murray (in Pistella & Bonati 1998:207) found that their sample of American female adolescents who had good communication with family members about sexual behaviour appeared to be more likely to postpone their first sexual experience than those who did not discuss sexual matters with family. It was also found that favourable maternal support of adolescents using contraception was associated with both male and female adolescents using contraception. Therefore, a protective factor can be seen as providing young people with concise and accurate facts about sexuality and contraception.

5.1.4 High Risk Sexual Behaviour:

One of the risk factors involved in not educating young people about the use of contraception is the heightened risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases and or HIV/AIDS. At the Women's Health Conference 1994 (Budlender 1995:143) grave concern was expressed about the drastic increase in new HIV positive cases amongst women between the ages of 15-24 years. Prevention of sexually transmitted diseases would mean abstinence or, alternatively, the use of a condom. Given the fact that many adolescents are sexually active, prevention would sway towards encouraging the use of condoms. Balk (1996:506) believes that adolescents using contraception are less likely to be using a condom than other methods. He found that adolescents do not use condoms for various reasons. One reason is that they often have unplanned sex on the "spur of the moment" and are under the influence of alcohol and are, therefore, unprepared. Another reason is that purchasing condoms is an admission that the adolescent is in fact sexually active (sometimes this is a difficult admission). Finally, Mayekiso and Twaise (1993:22) found in their study, conducted in the former Transkei, that only 4% of the women had any knowledge of condoms and therefore did not make use of them during sexual intercourse.

Again, protective factors against high risk sexual behaviour may be implemented by providing the necessary information and knowledge that young people presently lack regarding the consequences of their behaviour.

5.1.5 Adolescent Pregnancy:

A second consequence of sexually risky behaviour is adolescent pregnancy. Some of the main reasons cited by Gouws & Kruger (1996:131-132) for teenage pregnancies are:

- heightened sexuality,
- lack of sexual and contraceptive information and
- the tendency not to use contraception.

In South Africa, he found the non-use of condoms was exacerbated by the following myths:

- contraception makes one sterile,
- plastic wraps make effective condoms,
- one cannot fall pregnant the first time one has intercourse;
- one cannot fall pregnant with timeous withdrawal before ejaculation; and
- one cannot fall pregnant while standing up!

Every 330:1000 pregnancies in South Africa occur in women under the age of 19 years. Over and above that, approximately 200 000 women are treated for incomplete abortions (Budlender 1995:143). The young person has a range of choices: she may choose to have an abortion (now legal in South Africa), she may give the child up for adoption or she may choose parenthood (Balk 1996:514).

If the adolescent chooses parenthood they may be forced to leave school, either for her to care for the child or for him to seek employment to support the child. The long-term effects may be low education, unemployment, lower incomes, and dependency on welfare (Balk 1996:515).

For some adolescents pregnancy does lead to marriage. But for those who choose not to marry the girl may become more ambitious and independent. This is more likely to happen if there is parental support resulting in maintenance of social and economic support and some times receiving assistance in caring for the child (Gouws & Kruger 1996:132).

From these explanations and discussions, we can conclude that adolescence may be seen as a phase or stage in life (between childhood and adulthood) during which physical, behavioural and

psychological transformation occurs. During this time the adolescent may be faced with different circumstances that could place them at risk. Different theorists believe that the social and cultural climate of society may affect the transformation in differing degrees.

As can be noted from the above discussion, adolescence is a topic that has had much written about it with different aspects of this stage highlighted. For the purposes of this research project, I have selected Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Theory as his theory predominates in the training of social workers, psychologists and educationalists. During the above discussion some of his ideas have been mentioned however, let us now concentrate on his key theoretical concepts for a deeper understanding.

6. ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY:

Erik Erikson is acknowledged as a modern ego psychologist. He was trained in psychoanalysis. Although agreeing with Freud that early experiences have a large influence upon one's life, he also believed that personality develops on an ongoing basis from birth through to death. Erikson's theory is widely studied by social workers, psychologists and lay people all around the world. He is ranked as one of the most well-known psychologists; most famous for his concept of identity and the identity crisis in adolescence (Craig 1996:58-59; Jensen 1985:68; Meyer, Moore & Viljoen 1989:147). Erikson was born in Europe and lived in a single parent home until he was three years old, when his mother remarried. In his adolescent years he travelled on foot through various European countries, and he was described as being an "alienated young man" (Cole in Meyer et al 1989:148). This possibly contributed to his interest in the identity problems of adolescents. Later, through his studies, he met up with a number of Freud's followers and began training in psychoanalysis. He later emigrated to America where he become a respected psychoanalyst and academic. Much of his work centres around identity struggles as well as the influence of society on individuals. Notably, he also wrote on non-Western cultures, for example on the Sioux in 1963 (Meyer et al 1989:148).

Initially a scholar of Freud's, Erikson extended Freud's psychosexual theory referring to it as "*psychosocial development*". Erikson's basic principles are as follows:

- Individuals have multifaceted potential.
- Their development is determined by:
    - **the epigenetic principle** (everything has a *ground plan* that has parts and each part has a time of special ascendancy. Only when all parts have arisen will a *functioning*

whole exist (Erikson 1959:52)),

- **the ego (**which Erikson (1959:20) describes as the "individual's center of organized experience and reasonable planning, stood endangered by both anarchy of the primeval instincts and the lawlessness of the group spirit" (i.e. adapting and controlling their environment)) and
- **the nature of the social and cultural environment**;

- Development continues throughout life.

(Erikson 1959:52; Meyer et al 1989:148)

An important emphasis in his theory is the influence of the culture and the society in which one lives and develops. Erikson sees society as making demands on a person. At the same time it should ideally offer that person opportunities for growth and development (Meyer et al 1989:152).

Erikson proposes that development takes place in eight stages, with one aspect of personality emerging at each stage while other aspects develop "below the surface" (Meyer et al 1989:152). Each stage represents a unique social problem or "crisis" requiring an adaptive resolution. Erikson (1968:16) sees this "crisis" as a "turning point, a crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, marshalling resources of growth, recovery, and further differentiation." Figure 2 shows the eight stages from birth to old age.

Figure 2: Erikson's Eight Stages of Development

Stage	**Developmental Crisis**	**Ego Strength**
Maturity	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom
Adulthood	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Care
Early Adulthood	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love
Adolescence	Identity vs. Role confusion	Trustworthiness
School age	Industry vs. Inferiority	Competence
Play age	Initiative vs. Guilt	Purpose
Early childhood	Autonomy vs. Doubt	Will Power
Infancy	Trust vs. Distrust	Hope

(Adapted from Meyer et al 1989:153)

For adequate resolution of each stage or crisis (for example during adolescence gaining an identity as opposed to role confusion), Erikson proposed that one would need to create a

"workable balance between opposing forces or tendencies" (Moore & Rosenthal 1993:30). Although not all of these stages are explored with the subjects in this study, Erikson believes that the extent to which previous crises have been resolved impacts on identity development during adolescence (in Jensen 1985:69-70). In this way some of the former developmental tasks arise. The developmental tasks that need to have been completed prior adolescence, or that must take place during adolescence, alongside its primary task, are the development of:

- **a sense of trust**: that is learning to rely on sameness and continuity of those outside him/herself, beginning with one's mother, then trusting oneself, and creating a sense of hope (Erikson 1963:248);
- **a sense of autonomy as opposed to shame and doubt**: Erikson (1963:252) describes this as a "sudden violent wish to have a choice, to appropriate demandingly, and to eliminate stubbornly". The optimal environment would be encouraging, empowering the adolescent to "stand on their own feet" thereby creating some form of independence and will power;
- **a sense of initiative** in the appropriate sex role development and conscience development **rather than a sense of guilt:** Erikson (1963:255) believed that initiative is an important aspect of every act that is learned or accomplished, and provides a sense of purpose; finally
- a **sense of industry instead of a sense of inferiority**: Erikson (1963:258-259) describes this stage as the entrance into life and specifically school life or a place of learning. This entails gaining skills that go beyond play and encourage work completion through perseverance. During this stage children receive "*systematic instruction"* which is not necessarily in a formal setting but may be in an informal way and where teaching is undertaken by both significant adults and older children as they develop as sense of competence. Erikson (1963:260) notes that some children's development would be disturbed if they are not adequately prepared by family for school life or learning.

Erikson (1968:128) sees adolescence as a time when young people find themselves between early school life and specialized work and adulthood. They become part of a subculture where they are preoccupied with how they are seen by others as opposed to how they see themselves. Their need is to balance a sense of sameness from the past with sexual maturity. Often, unresolved past issues need to be dealt with. These processes result in the development of a "fitting" identity. Erikson, therefore, sees the most important developmental task of this stage, as the development of ego identity, self-image, and self-concept.

Moore & Rosenthal (1993:30) understand Erikson's meaning of identity as:

> "a coherent sense of self, based on a commitment to present and future roles,

> ideology, and values regarding future relationships. Ego identity develops out of a gradual integration of all identifications, so that adolescents, who move satisfactorily through this stage have an inner confidence about who they are and where they are going. The opposite is identity diffusion, the inability to co-ordinate past identifications with new roles, the inability to find a niche in life, and the confusion and alienation which accompanies this state."
>
> (Moore & Rosenthal 1993:30)

With the physical changes of puberty, the start of sexual maturity and the expectations of society to make a career choice, the young person questions past certainties in order to create a correlation between self-image (i.e. how they perceive themselves) and society's view of themselves (Meyer et al 1989:160).

"Identity crisis" is a term Erikson (1968:17) arrived at, after working with war veterans who had lost the central control over themselves for which the ego was responsible, resulting in a loss of ego identity. He then recognised a similar "central disturbance in severely conflicted young people" whose sense of confusion was from a war within themselves or for "confused .... and destructive delinquents" where the war was societally based. Erikson (1963:262) notes that the most common incidence of role confusion that disturbs individual young people occurs due to the inability to settle on an occupational identity. When this factor is considered in the South African context, where unemployment is high, there is cause for concern, as it means a high percentage of youths may be experiencing "role confusion." However, in this study, all the women had decided to attend tertiary education and were on an occupational path, which in Erikson's view would mean that they had attained a level of ego identity.

This stage of role confusion then leads to overidentification with heroes or clique leaders, possibly resulting in a total loss of identity. This often initiates the stage of "falling in love." Erikson (1963:262) believes that adolescent love is not necessarily a sexual matter, but rather an "attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's diffused ego image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified". Erikson concludes that much of young love is conversation.

An essential element in the development of a strong identity is the successful development of *self esteem*. Erikson (1959:20) believes this comes about when the adolescent receives external criticism ("mighty disapproval") initially from parents and then from educators (authority

figures). This brings about a compromise of the original state of self-love. The adolescent then looks for models to measure themselves against, and attempts to mirror them. Self-image is therefore determined by achievement (successfully mirroring) and by being socially recognised (Erikson 1968:49).

Walker (1979:31) sees the concept of self-image as being directly linked to one's self-perception and self-worth in relationships. For example, a woman in an abusive relationship believes that she is worthless and unattractive as well as having a low self-esteem. She often believes that without her partner she will be left in isolation. She will, therefore, choose to remain in the relationship, remaining in danger. This would in turn only deplete her self-worth, causing a downward spiral.

Freeman (1993:160) explores Erikson's views on the role of peers in identity development with regards to South African youths. He found that "identifications with age mates and leadership figures outside of the family are part of this process" and that in some circumstances they may "overidentify with their peer sub-group and with heroes of their choice." This overidentification may be accompanied by a preoccupation with a perception of how others see them, leading to cruelties towards outsiders or those who are different.

Erikson proposed that the "presence (or lack) of appropriate social supports" impacts upon identity development (Moore & Rosenthal 1993:30). The adolescent requires space to experiment with various identities and a tolerance of their, sometimes unacceptable, behaviour. In addittion, active support is provided in the form of social institutions such as technical colleges, training colleges and universities (Meyer et al 1989:160). Erikson (cited in Jensen 1985:70) calls this space "a psychological moratorium" or space not to be an adult. In an effort to cope with all the changes an adolescent may over-identify with stereotypical groups such as in dress code or hairstyle, in an attempt to create a sense of belonging.

In conclusion, the resolution of this stage of development (identity versus role confusion) means gaining autonomy and separation from one's parents (Garbarino, Eckenrode & Levine Powers in Garbarino & Eckenrode 1997:152), discovering one's self (gaining an identity) and one's beliefs (Richardson 1994:7). An aspect that I believe Erikson's theory does not deal with adequately is the exploration of the importance of young women's relationships, and their impact on a sexual identity. This, I believe, leaves a gap in his theory and perhaps highlights his slant towards not acknowledging difference between sexes in assuming that males and females resolve this "crisis"

in the same way.

Having considered Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Theory with the specific aim of understanding how he sees the stage of life called 'adolescence', and in so doing creating an awareness of some of its limitations within the South African context, let us now consider an alternative framework as proposed by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk (IMC).

7. AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMEWORK: CIRCLE OF COURAGE

7.1 Background to Introduction of New Framework:

In 1994 the Government of National Unity came into power in South Africa and recognised the need to reassess the policies and attitudes that the courts and the country had on working with youth. The President, Nelson Mandela, opened the conference for the development of the "National Youth Policy" with the following words:

> "Youth are the valued possession of the nation. Without them there can be no future. Their needs are immense and urgent. They are the centre of reconstruction and development."
>
> (www.govt.co.za/national.youth.policy)

In a household survey conducted by CASE in 1995 16.2 million (35%) of the population were found to be youth (aged between 14-35 years); of these 43% were aged between 14-21 years. 3.5 million of the youth were seen to be "marginalised" (a controversial term used to describe people who have been systematically disempowered and alienated bringing about the inability to develop economically, socially and/or psychologically) (Richardson 1994:8; National Youth Policy, www.govt.co.za/national.youth.policy).

Hence, Youth at Risk was seen as an area of priority and during May 1995 the Inter-ministerial Committee (IMC) on Young people at Risk was established to reorganise the Child and Youth Care System to make it more effective in coping with this vulnerable group of South Africans. Adolescents who are considered to be at high risk are those in conflict with the law. In an assessment of the way courts handle youth offenders the following was discovered:

- At the end of 1992 16 459 sentenced and unsentenced juveniles were being held in prison and

in 1993 36 000 young people were whipped by the state as punishment for crimes committed.

- The age of those committing offences such as robbery, assault and murder was peaking at 19-20 years of age and the majority were "people of colour."
- In the courts' attempt to play a paternal role, and a controlling role, they failed; primarily due to the fact that they are seen as culturally alien by the majority these youth.
- Punishment, which takes the form of time spent at a place of safety, a prison or other institution, results in youth being cut off from support systems and families. In this way offenders feel rejected by society, and instead find themselves relegated to a place where their criminal behaviour may be nurtured and reinforced.
- This system often creates what Pinnock (1994:2) describes as "victims" who seek revenge as opposed to restitution and reparation.

Pinnock (1997:preface) described this as a "crisis in punishment" as it created a cycle of criminal behaviour being dealt with by hard sentencing and further alienation and revenge. Considering solutions, the IMC decided that the opposite methods should be implemented i.e. deaggregate, deinstitutionalise and strengthen the role of family and community (Pinnock 1994:1-2) as well as encouraging the youth to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions (Pinnock 1997:preface). Incorporating this, the new Youth at Risk Policy also had to take into account South African's new Human Rights culture. They also identified the impact of apartheid and urbanisation as having left the youth of this country vulnerable with "ubuntu" not being strong enough to protect them. Their research regarding the situation of the children of South Africa shows that discrimination, breakdown of the family, violence and disempowerment of women, to name but a few, have lead to this vulnerability (The Inter-ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk 1996:7).

Coughlan (1998:9a), in her pilot project and research on 'Alternatives in Residential Care,' reported that the IMC had based its working philosophy on Brendtro, Brokenleg and van Bockern's (1990) philosophy of the "Circle of Courage." However, little research has been conducted as to whether this philosophy, based on the American Sioux child rearing practices has any similarities to way of life and practices of South Africans and is therefore helpful in working with youth at risk in this context.

7.2 Relevance to this study:

Traditional Sioux Native American child-rearing philosophy provides a challenge to the

traditional European heritage as well as to the current psychological theories. It has, through oral history, been refined and passed down through the generations of the Sioux Americans for centuries. Through the invasion and conquering of the Indian people by the European "civilised" society, they were seen as savages with nothing to offer. The Indian children were removed from their families and prohibited from using their own traditions and ways of living, leading to a process of cultural assimilation. The consequence of this was the stripping away of their cultural identity and heritage. The very ideology that was stripped away and disregarded was a philosophy that focused all its attention on the empowerment of the children of that society as well as the importance of relationships (Brendtro et al 1990:34-35). To think in the Indian way "means to look beneath the surface to see deeper relationships and explain them with clarity and simplicity" (Brendtro et al 1990:46)

The history of traditional Native American Sioux shows many similarities to the history of colonialism in South Africa. The Apartheid regime brought about systematic division and discrimination through the legalisation of laws such as forced removals and migrant labour. This in turn divided families and communities, which brought about the disintegration of the sense of "ubuntu." The systematic oppression of the majority of the country brought about havoc in the lives of many South Africans. Policies, such as forced removal, migrant labour, disempowerment, anti-urbanisation strategies and the continual enforcement of violence within the communities caused stress and anxiety, which spiraled into violence that inevitably landed within the home: "the cradle of violence" (Swarts 1997:40).

The traditional Native Sioux educational practices highlighted four components of self-esteem that should be established in relationships within the youth's environment. These are: a sense of belonging; a spirit of mastery (competence); a sense of independence; and a spirit of generosity (sharing). These traits are represented in a medicine wheel with four directions (Figure 3: Circle of Courage, page 41) showing that all parts must be in balance and harmony (Brokenleg 1998:131). The four values are seen as the central values for a positive culture for educating and empowering youth in order to build a strong sense of self (Brendtro et al 1990:34-36). Let us now explore the four "spirits" at greater depth.

7.3 Spirits of the Circle of Courage:

7.3.1 The Spirit of Belonging:

"Our worldviews are shaped by our cultural and family attachments"

(Brokenleg 1998:130)

"The greatest terror a child can have is that he (or she) is not loved ..."

(Steinbeck in Beck & Malley 1998:133)

Circle of Courage

Figure 3: THE CIRCLE OF COURAGE

(adapted from Brokenleg 1998 : 13)

Encouraging the 'spirit of belonging' in childhood is seen as the responsibility of the community as a whole: parents and significant others. One belongs if their behaviour signifies this – not necessarily if they are blood relatives. The process of drawing all people into the community has a strong influence upon human relationships encouraging respect and concern for each other. The strong presence of the intergenerational influence still plays a significant role in the homes of Sioux communities, continuing the teachings of past generations (Brendtro et. al 1990:37). Boon cited Coughlan (1998:12a) saw this need for connection as intrinsic in the African philosophy of 'Ubuntu.' Hickson and Kriegler (1996:24) describe the Afrocentric world-view as stressing group ethic, collective good and unity. Traditionally, the group represents an extended self (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:26). There is also a strong communal existence and collective sense of responsibility. Therefore, within the African values system, one's humanity is expressed in belonging to the whole community (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:27). Pinnock (1997:72) echoes this in his description of three Xhosa words and phrases that signify the importance of belonging in the African culture. The first is "Ubuntu" meaning "humanness" but extending to "intense ties of loyalty" and never denying hospitality and sharing (Pinnock P 1994:68). The second phrase is "umntu ngumntu ngabantu" meaning that a person is a person by virtue of other people, signifying the connectedness of the community. The third is the idea that " all children are my children" within a community, signifying the responsibility of all adults in caring for the children of that community.

Brendtro and others (1990:47) believe that young people who feel they belong to a "community" have relationships that are characterised by trust and intimacy. On the other hand, those who do not share this sense of belonging or if it is distorted in some way are likely to show behaviours such as: gang loyalty, craving affection and acceptance, promiscuity, over-dependence. If a sense of belonging is absent they may be unattached, guarded, rejected, lonely, aloof, isolated or distrustful.

In modern industrialised society, however, the phenomenon of belonging has been diminished; families are spread around the country either due to urbanisation or due to the mobility of families today. In South African this can be seen in two spheres of the society. Firstly, the white minority seem to hold a Eurocentric world-view, value individuality, privacy and separateness (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:23). Secondly, it can be seen as a factor brought about by the Apartheid Government through forced removal and migrant labour. Forced removal can be seen as being responsible for destroying the ties that bound communities together (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:90). These families were generally working class and therefore could not afford

to see their families very often (Swarts 1997:41). This factor significantly decreases the contact that youths have with the older generation so the stories and legends as well as the traditional values and morals are not passed down to the younger generations as efficiently.

Young people also have a need to belong to a group outside of the family. During adolescence, Balk (1995:280) sees an attraction for adolescents to belong to a peer group and this means conformity in order to be fully accepted. Kagan (in Beck and Malley 1998:134) suggest that when young people feel that they are not accepted in the in-group, they are likely to seek belonging in a context that is more antisocial, with the belief that it is better to belong to an antisocial group than none at all. For this reason, gangs are often very tempting to vulnerable young people.

7.3.2 The Spirit of Mastery:

People endeavor to gain mastery over their environments. Other words used to describe this need are: "self actualization", "achievement motivation" and "competence motivation". It is believed that once youths have had a taste of this competency they are motivated to continue to attempt to reach new levels. However, if they do not have this opportunity they may express their aggravation in other ways, for example through troubled behaviour (Brendtro et al 1990:39).

The accent in the Sioux child rearing practice is on developing competence in cognitive, physical, social and spiritual spheres of life. Therefore, youths would learn competence in self restraint, self control and the skill of listening as well as in physical tasks such as cooking, caring for the young and the elderly, and hunting. These skills are taught and learnt through stories, repetitive practice and through a balance between work and play (Brendtro et al 1990:39).

Another important aspect of mastery is that its aim it to gain recognition from those around you as well as satisfaction from within, and not to develop arrogance or high levels of competition. Those who are seen as more competent in an area are seen as models as opposed to competitors. Superiority and arrogance are discouraged (Brendtro et al 1990:40). The white minority of South Africans adopt the Eurocentric world-view that see competence as wealth in material terms, competing and winning, self-interest and assertion as well as primacy of the individual over the group (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:23). On the other hand, African cultures value co-operation, the "weness" ethic and behaviour that contributes to the collective good for the whole community is seen as competence (Hickson & Kriegler 1996: 27). These conflicting views

may bring about confusion amongst young people, especially young black youths, growing up in a changing society, and having to compete in an economy dominated by Euro-centric values.

7.3.3 The Spirit of Independence:

Independence is seen as young people having control over their own lives and having a sense of meaning and worth. Pinnock (1997:74) sees independence as a product of both master and belonging in that "the purpose of any external discipline and support is to build inner discipline and social worth." Independence is built on having enough respect for young people to allow them to have control over their own future and the belief that people respond to being nurtured. In addittion, adults must believe that they cannot make young people take responsibility by imposing their own view onto them. Often it is easier for parents and adults to take control of young peoples lives and make the decisions for them; however this is seen as lacking respect for them in not allowing them to work it out for themselves (Brendtro et al 1990:41).

The process of developing the "spirit of independence" is created through a principle of 'guidance without interference.' In this way the young people have a sense of power over their own lives and to build a sense of self-discipline and give them an opportunity to learn to make choices and decisions with out interference or persuasion. The main purpose of disciplining adolescents and children is to develop internal discipline, courage and responsibility (Brokenleg 1998:130). Hoffman (in Brendtro et al 1990:43) cites research concerning child development, saying that when power is exerted over the young person in order to control them, one is teaching them that morality comes from outside instead of developing the belief that it is from within. In the South African context, the education system has been characterised by external discipline and corporal punishment demanding compliance (Holdstock in McKendrick & Hoffman 1990:341). This form of education (i.e. punishment and external discipline) was seen to drive out love and trust between adults and children and did not adequately prepare children to be co-operative, productive and self-motivated. It has also discouraged young people from thinking for themselves and making independent decisions (Holdstock in McKendrick & Hoffman 1990:360).

The role of adults is then to provide an environment to make this learning conducive with behaviour like nurturance, trust, respect, dignity, and patience in the form of caregivers or the "elders" taking time to talk to (or ""kindly lecture") young people. In this way they are serving as role models, having a positive influence, demonstrating communication skills through discussion and finally, showing a belief in their ability through affirming expectations (Brendtro

et al 1990:41-2). Pinnock (1997:8) believes that in traditional or pre-industrial cultures this guidance was achieved by nurturence through a process of rituals and initiation. For males it is a clean break from parents and a "going out" to the wilderness. For females it takes place when they reach menses where they are secluded and taught the "art of womanhood" by older women in the community. Pinnock (1997:8) believes that western societies have lost this important "rite of passage" in culture where childhood ends and adulthood begins. As one of the subjects comments in her interview, it would seem that some of the African cultures have lost parts of the cultural heritage as these rituals are often not carried out fully, leaving the young people at a loss as well as lacking the "guidance without interference."

Brendtro and others (1990:49) believe that in order for the circle of courage to be complete or whole, this independence is necessary as it leads to a more whole and positive self-image and inner confidence. Therefore, lacking the spirit of independence leads to the absence of confidence and assertiveness in adolescence.

In this study, I have explored to some degree the participants sense of how much control they felt they had over their own lives and choices. According to Potgieter & Fredman (in de la Rey et al 1997:105) these choices and power for a young female are limited due to the power relationship in a patriarchal society.

7.3.4 The Spirit of Generosity:

Finally, the spirit of Generosity is taught from an early age and a young person looks forward to receiving so that he/she may, in turn, be able to give to someone who is in need. A constant message sent to children is that "the highest virtue was to be generous and unselfish" and to experience "the satisfaction of giving" (Brendtro et al 1990:44). People were encouraged to give and share responsibility for creating a sense of community where material goods were far less important than people and relationships in creasing a sense of connectedness. To keep property for one's self when there were people in need was seen as a disgrace.

This culture of giving and generosity is very different from that of dominant western culture and Eurocentric worldviews as Hickson & Kriegler (1996:24) describe white South African, where one strives to success and gather material wealth. However, Brendtro and others (1990:45) believe that the former philosophy has been largely responsible for the survival of oppressed communities.

Brendtro and Ness (in Brendtro et al 1990:45) believe that through caring for others, troubled young people develop a sense of self worth. Pinnock (1994:74) echoes this suggesting that "self worth is ... derived from how one is viewed by others (and therefore) being committed to other improves one's view of oneself through the eyes of others." Therefore, one of the objectives of generosity is "de-centreing" and learning to be responsible to other people as well as to oneself (Pinnock 1994:74).

8. A COMPARISON: Erikson's Psychosocial Stage Theory & The Circle of Courage

Erikson's psychosocial stage theory and the Circle of Courage have many similarities and overlaps. Brokenleg (1998:132) found that many developmental psychologists have discovered universal human patterns of "attachment, achievement, autonomy, and altruism that correspond to the principals of the Circle of Courage."

However, the main difference lies in emphasis. Although Erikson acknowledges the role of society and culture his emphasis lies in biological and individual life history and is based on Western culture. As the name indicates, one moves through life one stage at a time, resolving conflicts that one is faced with. Figure 4 offers a diagrammatic comparison of the two theories, followed by a discussion considering synergies where concepts have similar meaning as well as contrasts in the different stages in life.

Let us consider all the stages briefly before focusing on adolescence as a stage of life. During infancy Erikson (1963:248) describes the importance of developing a sense of trust: that is learning to rely on sameness and continuity of those outside him/herself beginning with a child's mother and also trusting themselves and creating a sense of hope. This is also associated with believing that initially their mother and later others will return to them and not abandon them. This concept can be likened to the Circle of Courage's concept of the need for a sense of belonging through one's behaviour and relationships. The main differences in these concepts is the focus where one belongs: to a small family unit or to a community. The role of the community is stressed in that Sioux children often didn't know who their biological parents were, stressing the fact the kinship and a sense of belonging was not genetically determined but rather by the way one behaved. This is similar to the belief of some African communities that believe that "it takes a village to raise a child" or "Ubuntu" (Brokenleg 1998:13) as well as what Hickson & Kriegler (1996:27) highlight as the Afrocentric world-view stressing group ethic,

collective good and unity. In Erikson's work in the Sioux community he felt that this "shared parenting was destructive to a child" (Brokenleg 1998:13).

Figure 4: Tabular Comparison between Erikson's Eight Stages of Development and the Circle of Courage

Life Stage	Erikson's Developmental Crisis	Ego Strengths	Circle of Courage
Maturity	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom	Belonging, Generosity
Adulthood	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Care	Mastery, Generosity
Early Adulthood	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love	Belonging, Generosity
Adolescence	Identity vs. Role confusion	Trustworthiness	Belonging, Independence
School age	Industry vs. Inferiority	Competence	Mastery
Play age	Initiative vs. Guilt	Purpose	Independence, Mastery
Early childhood	Autonomy vs. Doubt	Will Power	Independence
Infancy	Trust vs. Distrust	Hope	Belonging

(Adapted from Erikson 1963:247-269)

He takes a more Eurocentric view, as described by Hickson & Kriegler (1996:23) stressing the importance of individuality, privacy and self-interest, values held by western, white, middle-class people. In the South African family context the reality is that black children are often raised by extended family, grandparents, older brothers or sisters referring to biological parents by their first names and the caregiver "mother" or "father." On the other hand white children are exposed to a more western experience of families in the form of traditional nuclear families, single parent families or blended families (personal communications and experience).

Early childhood is characterised by the seeking of autonomy as opposed to shame and doubt. Erikson (1963:252) describes this as a "sudden violent wish to have a choice, to appropriate demandingly, and to eliminate stubbornly" and the environment around them is encouraging them to "stand on their own feet" in creating some form of independence and willpower. The "spirit" of independence described by the philosophy of the Circle of Courage is the principle of "guidance without interference" (Brendtro et al 1990:41) and the focus is on developing inner discipline. They are provided with opportunities to make age appropriate decisions so that they are not forced into being independent prematurely. Brendtro and others (1990:41) see this as differing from western white cultures where children are "pressured" to become assertive, and competitive at young age.

Erikson (1963:255) sees 'play age' as being characterised by seeking a sense of initiative in the appropriate sex role development and conscience development rather than a sense of guilt**.** He (Erikson 1963:255) believed that initiative is an important aspect of every act that is learned or accomplished providing a sense of purpose. This can be likened to both a "spirit" of independence in that initiative takes some level on individual choice. It also shows aspects of gaining a sense of mastery (Brendtro et al 1990:39). The "spirit" of mastery aims at developing competence in cognitive, physical, social and spiritual areas of life. Success through mastery brought about recognition within the community and also inner satisfaction. Honour and mastery is received without arrogance and is not associated with "winning" as in the western culture (Brokenleg 1998:13). This concept of mastery is also linked to the next phase of Erikson (1963:258), which is 'school age'. During this stage the individual is seeking a sense of industry instead of a sense of inferiority. Erikson (1963:258-259) describes this stage as the entrance into life and specifically school life or a place of learning. This entails gaining skills that go beyond play and encourage work completion through perseverance. During this stage children receive "*systematic instruction"* which is not necessarily in a formal setting but may be in an informal way and where teaching is undertaken by both significant adults and older children as they develop as sense of competence.

Laubscher & Klinger (in de la Rey et al 1997:62) consider the implication of this stage in the South African context, arguing that the role of apartheid has affected the development of black children and adolescents. The developmental task to be "managed" may have been made far more trying and complex under the old South African government where the objective of apartheid was to devalue a large part of the community. They provide an example of a young black child attending a two-roomed school with broken windows and very few facilities. The white schools on the other hand have huge buildings and playing fields and the children all wear smart uniforms. They argue that this may well effect the black child's view of themselves and whether they feel inferior or equal to their White peers. This may also affect their sense of self worth.

Erikson's (1963:261) focus during adolescence is on one's search for an ego identity as well as on career choice. This again highlights his bias towards the western, white, middle-class population with its focus on individuality, self-interest, privacy and separateness (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:23). Erikson (1963:262) also highlights the importance of loyalty to peer relationships during this time. There are similarities between this concept and the Circle of Courage's (Brendtro et al 1990:37) concept of belonging.

During early adulthood, once the young person has "emerged" from their search for identity, Erikson (1963:263) sees them as having the capacity for an intimate relationship. Brendtro and others (1990:47/50) concept's of belonging and generosity can be linked to this stage. In order to gain a sense of generosity one must experience caring, sharing, loyalty, emphatic care and altruistic behaviour (Brendtro et al 1990:50). Generosity is also displayed in Erikson's (1963:266) stage of generativity in that it is the stage where adults are caring for older parents as well as for children. Focus is on productivity as well as creativity, again highlighting Brendtro and other's (1990:48) "spirit" of mastery.

The final stage that Erikson (1963:268) describes is that of integrity which is concerned with wisdom and acceptance of one's self and one's life. This may be likened to Brendtro and other's (1990:47/50) "spirits" of belonging and generosity, discussed above.

Traditionally, theories focused on the individual. Modern theories are only now reaching the point of acknowledging the importance of the development of a holistic approach to working with adolescents. A strong self-image and sense of self-worth is the objective of most societies for their youth. Without this they become vulnerable to many social and psychological problems. Self esteem and self worth are intricately entwined in relationships. In past research, in South Africa and abroad, (Walker 1979:31; Sege & Labe in McKendrick & Hoffmann 1990:260) it has been shown that both abusive men and battered women have displayed low self-esteem and a poor sense of self-worth.

The Circle of Courage places a large emphasis on the whole person as well as the whole community and their role in rearing a child. Development as a whole person is based on the tribal belief of harmony and balance. This holistic view can be depicted in the circular nature of the Medical Wheel used by Brendtro and others (1990:52), including Brokenleg (1998:13). For me this circular notion depicts on-going development as well as incorporating the micro and macro environments in the development of young people: showing one within a community.

Van Engeland (cited in Richardson 1994:7) postulates that adolescence is often believed by western theorists to be a stressful time in life characterised by like depression and inter conflicts and descriptions of behaviours such as hostility and maladjustment. This draws attention to another emphasis which is different in focus to that of Erikson. He sees the conflict within the individual as pathological, ustilising terms such as "inferiority complex" (Erikson 1963:259), "role confusion" (Erikson 1963:261) and "isolation" (Erikson 1963:263). However, Blos feels

that it is normal and a natural part of strength development (Richardson 1994:7). The Circle of Courage also focuses on strength as opposed to negative or pathological characteristics of the child. Brendtro and others (1990:18) found that often when professionals or adults work with "difficult" young people they revert to negative theories and labels such as "hopeless" or "inferiority complex." They preferred to work with a positive theory which rejects the behaviour rather than the child. The focus is on positive discipline and the education and empowerment of children (Brentdro et al 1990:35).

Roberts and Newton (in Laubscher et al 1996:64) offer another criticism of developmental theory stating that most of the research with adolescence and development is conducted by and with males. Males at this stage of development are focused on careers and vocational choices while females are believed to "construct their dreams in relational terms." This has far reaching implications for the way the female adolescent organises her life and her relationships. Her focus will then be on developing and maintaining relationships as opposed to formulating a plan for her career. This theory is also based on white, middle-class Anglo-Saxon values stressing individuality, competition, self-interest and a tendency to make "comparative judgements" such as whether a person is coping or not or whose values are seen as correct (Hickson & Kriegler 1996:23). All South Africans do not hold these values. In African cultures the focus lies on the group and the community as opposed to the individual. Individuals simply ensure the survival of the group. In order to understand all South African adolescents one needs to incorporate this understanding into the framework of working with young people: an objective achieved by Brendtro and others (1990:37).

Despite these criticisms, Freeman (1993:157) found that Erikson's model does offer important insights and grounding with regards to adolescent development and identity. However, he does acknowledge that he drew from Erikson very selectively. In isolation, I believe that Erikson's model neglects some of the unique aspects of a society that is as diverse as South Africa. These aspects can be incorporated into the framework with the assistance of the philosophies of the Circle of Courage as proposed by Brendtro and others (1990).

9. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined some of the Western theories and models of adolescence as well as the complexities and diversity that adolescents face in the South African contexts. During this stage in their lives adolescents are often faced with challenges and adversity, at times

putting them at risk. The South African past, as well as present changes, have brought about risk factors that face adolescents. In some circumstances protective factors are in place to assist young people, however in others these protective factors have been worn away.

The changes in South Africa have provided the opportunity for changing the way that society deals with young people at risk. The new framework, based on the Circle of Courage, offers a new way of thinking about young people at risk and requires change in attitudes as to working with young people. A comparison of the two models shows both overlaps as well as fundamental differences in emphasis and the cultural beliefs that it is based upon.

I have been very aware during this chapter of repetition, however, I feel that this shows the complexity and density of the concept of adolescence. In an attempt to gain a better understanding of this complexity and density we now move to the data analysis.

CHAPTER 3:
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the research design used, the methodology (from sampling through to data analysis), ethical considerations and limitations, and an evaluation of the findings of this study.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Research Design

Choice of research method is crucial. Bearing in mind the objectives of this study, a decision had to be made as to which research method was best suited to the task. The objectives of this research project are:

- to hear and understand young women's experiences of adolescent boy/girl relationships
- to assess the synergies and differences between a dominant western theory and a model new to South Africa which has shaped recent youth policy and
- to assess the relevance of the above to the experiences of the South African women who participated in this project..

Bearing these objectives in mind, I explored various options regarding research methods and came to the following conclusions. Quantitative research is often associated with the positivist paradigm which places an emphasis on social facts and an objective reality that is observable and precise. The findings of the research may be generalized and the research itself may be replicable. The quantitative researcher needs to maintain the role of an objective outsider in order to avoid bias (Firestone 1987:16-17). Although this method of research does have its place in social work research, it did not meet the objectives of this study. As stated above, my objective was to focus on what Taylor & Bogdan (in Firestone 1987:17) call understanding ("Verstehen"), of the young women's experience of their adolescent relationships. In addition, given the research topic of female adolescent relationships, I believe that as a woman, it was not possible for me, the researcher, to be an outsider or to remain "detached". Detachment is a necessary requirement, according to Miles & Huberman, (1994:8) in quantitative research. I became "immersed" in the

phenomenon due to my gender and the fact that I have experienced adolescence and adolescent relationships.

The research design chosen for this study is qualitative. I believe qualitative research encourages the researcher to look at people in a holistic way and to view them in context. Qualitative research also emphasises the need to understand people's situations from their own frame of reference (Taylor and Bogdan 1984:6). Hammersley (1989:1) believes that as researchers we need to tune our research methods to fit in with the social world. Human behaviour and experiences are fluid and therefore cannot be found or captured as fixed patterns. Focus is placed on the process, rather than on the structure, of the research.

Taylor and others (1984:7) describe qualitative research as a process which encourages the researcher to get to know people personally and to experience what they have experienced in their lives. As researchers we learn about the feelings and inner thoughts of the participants; these may be lost in other forms of research such as quantitative research where the focus in on data that is quantifiable and measurable. Strauss & Corbin (1990:19) also believe that qualitative methods are more constructive in circumstances where the research is trying to uncover the experiences of individuals within a particular focus (in this instance female adolescent relationships). Miles & Huberman (1994:90) point out that qualitative studies can also be designed to confirm or test existing theories.

Qualitative research does not restrict the researcher to a single or specified method or style of data gathering or analysis. Strauss & Corbin (1990:21-22) identify three different approaches to qualitative methods of research:

- that which does ***not analyse*** or ***interpret*** the data
- that which aims to ***build theory*** and
- research that provides ***accurate descriptions***.

Different styles or options are adopted according to the objectives of the study. I shall begin by exploring the first two types (those which I have chosen not to use), before proceeding to an explanation of ***accurate descriptions.***

Researchers who choose to use the first form of qualitative research mentioned above believe that data should not be analyzed or interpreted. It is the researcher's role to gather the data and present it so that "the informants speak for themselves," and in this way they "hear and report" without

personal bias (Strauss & Corbin 1990:21). I felt that this was insufficient to meet the objectives of this study, as I am interested in "hearing" and understanding as well as making comparisons between the data and theory.

The second method of qualitative research is that of **theory building**. Theory building uses "theoretically informed interpretations … (in) … the most powerful way to bring reality to light" (Blumer; Diesing & Glaser cited in Strauss & Corbin 1990:22). The theoretical formulations are used to explain this "reality" as well as providing a framework for action. Grounded theory, more specifically is:

> *inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents – it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon.*
>
> (Strauss & Corbin 1990:23)

I have not used this method of research in its entirety as I felt that research in the area of South African female adolescence is still in its infancy (National Youth Policy; Shefer in de la Rey et al 1997:90). At this stage I believe it is essential to gain a full understanding and a "thick description" of this phenomenon. There are an abundance of theories pertaining to Western adolescent development. In this study I have aimed at evaluating the relevance of two theories to the experiences of five South African women. In essence this process can be said to be the starting point of theory building as it is an attempt to either validate or repudiate theory. If the findings of this or further research suggest that there is a need for new specific theory regarding South African adolescence then the remaining steps of this form of research (**theory building**) will definitely have its place in the future. I feel it did not fall into the scope of this study. I have however, used open coding, which is a form of data analysis used in grounded theory, as it provides a framework to link themes to conceptual schemes.

Finally, the third method of qualitative research is that of gathering an **accurate description** of a phenomenon when analysing and presenting the findings. Strauss & Corbin (1990:22) believe that the "principle here is to present an accurate description of what is being studied." In order to accomplish this it is not necessary to present all the data collected. The data is sorted and selections are made, with interpretations. In this way, not all the interpreted data is strictly theoretical. I felt that an accurate description would provide a clear picture of the experiences of these women. In order to provide this description, I have presented a "Context Chart" consisting

of two diagrams (see pages 76 & 80) for one interviewee with the assistance of "descriptive codes."

However, as Strauss & Corbin (1990:22) explain and Richardson (1994:25) discovered, pure descriptive analysis does not encourage interpretation of data and no attempt is made to relate the themes in order to form conceptual schemes. I have therefore, employed the initial stages of analysis in Grounded Theory, namely open coding, in order to provide a framework from which to make comparisons. From this point I sought to identify synergies and differences between the experiences of the women interviewed and the chosen theories/models.

I elected to use the broad stance that Miles & Huberman (1994) have clearly offered in their work "An expanded Sourcebook: Qualitative data analysis." Lee (1998), in his lecture on "Researching Sensitive Topics", described this method as being very useful when conducting research where one is evaluating or comparing experiences of subjects and theory. He also stressed (which was attractive to me) the flexibility of this method in that "it cannot be taken off the shelf" but should be moulded to the needs of the study. I came to the conclusion that researching this sensitive topic using this form of analysis would yield a "thick description" of these women's memories of their adolescent relationships and a sense of their interpretation of their world at that time. In order to complete the aims of the study (i.e. to consider if the descriptions these women give of their adolescence relationships show any synergies or contrasts to two theories/models currently being used) I have taken advantage of the flexible nature of this stance. I use an aspect of Grounded theory (i.e. open coding) in order to identify and develop concepts, before checking out their relationship with existing theory.

In this way I have adopted a form of **triangulation**. Triangulation involves the use of different vantage points and is used to increase thoroughness and validity. Traditionally, triangulation includes the use of different methodologies i.e. using data gathered through both qualitative and quantitative methods. However, I have chosen to use **theoretical triangulation** and **data triangulation.** Tindall (in Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall 1994:148-149) describes the former as "embracing multi-theories." This method acknowledges the diversity and complexity of multiple life experiences. Data triangulation involves collecting data from various participants with different experiences of life (and in this case adolescent relationships). This form of triangulation allows for further depth of description (Tindall in Banister et al 1994:146). In this way, I have enlarged the picture to allow for constant comparisons and checking out, in

order to draw conclusions to the research question: Do these theories/ models apply to the diverse SA experience of these women?

Finally, whilst conducting qualitative research, Tindall (in Banister et al 1994:149) sees **reflexivity** as a crucial factor. Reflexivity refers to the discipline of self reflection which continues throughout the process of the research. It includes choice of topic, the design and the personal experience of doing the research. These are all reflected on and critically discussed. In this way, the researcher is encouraged to constantly acknowledge and assess their own central position "in the construction of knowledge" (Tindall in Banister et al 1994:151). I found this discipline very useful. I also increased my level of awareness with the assistance of supervision and personal introspection using a diary. I have included comments about reflexivity where appropriate throughout the research process.

2.2 Research Methods

2.2.1 Introduction: Build Up To The Study

Conducting a study regarding adolescence requires extensive ground work and planning in order to gain access to the necessary respondents in an ethical manner that will allow one to achieve the set objectives. Initially, my interest lay in the nature of violent, abusive adolescent boy/girl relationships. Research in this particular area involves a legal requirement: adolescents may not participate (in this form of research) without the full knowledge and written consent of a guardian or parent.

After a certain amount of investigation I also discovered that some researchers (Laubscher & Klinger 1997:73) found that it was beneficial to interview young adults retrospectively. Interviewing women about their past adolescence means that they may have a fuller view than when they are immersed in it, and reliving the memories may enhance the meaning they give to their lives (See 2.3.1 Ethical Considerations: Gaining access). On the basis of these insights I decided to interview young women regarding their memories of their abusive/violent adolescent relationships. I conducted a pilot study, interviewing one woman in her thirties and found that I was faced with an ethical dilemma. In introducing the study and the purpose of the study the young woman constantly tried to make causal links between her adolescent experiences and her abusive relationship. This concerned me, as I believe that this situation contained the potential

for causing her emotional stress and possible harm. In a second pilot study, I interviewed a young woman regarding her adolescent relationship experiences and found this worth exploring. In not "classifying" the young woman before the interview (i.e. whether she had been involved in an abusive relationship previously or not), I found that she was free to disclose what she felt was relevant. In the process I discovered some interesting material that I felt could be explored. I also realised that, because of my position within an academic institution, I had access to young adult students. This led me to the sampling procedure.

2.2.2 Sampling Procedure

The sensitive nature of the study (women's stories about their adolescent boy/girl relationships and family and community relationships) enhanced the complexity of the selection process. Although all women experience adolescence, not all women are willing to discuss the personal, intimate and private details of their close relationships in a research study. For this reason some difficulty was experienced in selecting a sample of respondents.

Mason (1998:83) broadly defines the sampling procedure as the process of "identifying, choosing, and gaining access to relevant" respondents. Five women were interviewed for the study. The sampling technique used was a non-probability method called purposive sampling. According to Marlow (1998:136) this allows the researcher to "handpick the sample according to the nature of the research problem." Huysamen (1994:44) stresses that in some circumstances researchers need to rely on their own experience and knowledge in order to select the respondents. Initially, the researcher approached groups of young women and made appeals for volunteers to participate in the study. These appeals were, however, unsuccessful and confirmed the sensitive nature of the research topic. I then decided that a personal approach could be made to women who were between the ages of 21 and 25 years at the university. This form of purposive sampling proved successful. It must be stressed that in using this form of sampling, the focus was not on the ability to generalise or to be representative, but to obtain a better understanding of the individual experience.

The inclusion / exclusion criterion was that the women were between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-five years, due to the study relying on their memory of their adolescent relationship experiences. It was felt that by stipulating the age frame, all the women would be recalling memories that were not in the distant past and memories may be clearer for them.

The second criterion for the study was that all the women were able to converse fluently in English regardless of their backgrounds. This was important for practical, as well as for ethical, reasons. On the practical side the interviews and analysis needed to take place in English, my first language. The ethical issue was one of mutual understanding. I needed to ensure that the participants had an understanding of the meaning of the questions and I needed to have an understanding of their stories and answers and the meaning they ascribed to their answers. For example, in one instance where one of the participant's first language was not English, she made reference to a Xhosa term "Nyamezela" (Appendix 1: Tandi's Interview, page 9, line 381). During the interview, the meaning she attached to this word was explored to a small degree. In retrospect, I felt that I could have explored this further for I realised that I attached my understanding of the word (during the interview) from my experience of working with women in violent relationships. This may not have been how the participant ascribed meaning to "Nyamezela" in her family situation. My projection limited the exploration and understanding that may have been attained had I explored this further with the interviewee. In this instance I was aware of the situation but I have to consider the possibility that there may have been other instances where my understanding of words may be different to the meaning ascribed by the interviewees.

2.2.3 The Instruments/Tools Of Data Collection

The qualitative method of data collection used in this research was an in-depth interview. Kvale (1984:175) describes the in-depth interview as a tool to gain "precision in description and stringency in meaning and interpretation", as opposed to data that is quantifiable and statistical. Five women were interviewed using seven open-ended questions around the broad themes surrounding their adolescence. Probing questions were added during the interview in order to gain more insight into the broad themes of the study.

These interviews can thus be seen as a form of oral history taking. Atkinson (in Shakespear, Atkinson & French, 1993:86) makes special reference to the process of remembering or sharing "oral history". The process is seen as a potentially positive experience. Sandy, Kim and Tandi mentioned this positive effect during the course of the interview. It does, however need to be handled with sensitivity and care and without crossing the boundaries into a therapeutic relationship. Thompson (cited in Atkinson in Shakespear et al 1993:60) describes the oral history work as providing an opportunity for people to reflect on their "personal past (that) can lead to a stronger sense of self in the present". Barnat (in Shakespear et al 1993:85) also quotes

Thompson saying that "oral evidence, by transforming the 'objects' of study into 'subjects', makes for a history which is not just richer, more vivid and heartrending, but *truer*" (his emphasis).

In this way the study obtains information from people in the know: the women. Passerini (in Barnat in Shakespear et al 1993:85) argues that we should not use the oral histories as merely factual information to be analysed, but emphasises that the histories express the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of that particular time.

The interviews were audiotaped. Notes were taken during the interviews concerning my reactions and feelings. This process assisted me in providing a full account of each woman's experience so that all factors could be considered (for example: what she says, as well as how she was saying it).

The interviews took the form of a narrative of the participant's adolescent years. According to Rosenthal (in Josselson & Lieblich 1993:63) this process involves an "overall construction of … her past … in which biographically relevant experiences are linked up in a temporally and thematically consistent pattern," that need to be considered in context and not in isolation. In the interviews the women were encouraged to "tell their story" in a way that made sense to them, and which enabled them to talk of how they remembered their adolescent relationships. At the end of their stories, open-ended probing questions were asked regarding the particular themes relevant to this research project. Questions were also asked in order to clarify the meaning that the subjects attached to what they were saying. According to Kvale (1984:175) the researcher initially obtains the explicit meaning (what is said). This meaning then needs to be checked out through questioning. In this way the story is 'sent back', providing an opportunity for the participant to reflect on what they have shared. This process enables the researcher to gain understanding on a "meaning level".

This method of interviewing allowed the women to put forward what they perceive and remember to be relevant from their pasts. At this stage in the process it is important to note that memory is organised through a cognitive process of selection involving "sorting" and "encoding". A person will remember what is deemed at that stage in their lives to be relevant for retrieval at a later stage (Baron & Byrne 199:94-96). Therefore, what became relevant in this particular qualitative study, was what was remembered, and what was seen to be important by the respondent. Validity is thus related to the respondents and "truth" is not viewed as an objective, measurable lived reality, but their understanding of this experience.

The in-depth interviews were structured around seven open ended questions covering the necessary themes indicated in Chapter One concerning adolescent relationships as well as the four "spirits" of the Circle of Courage (see page 41). I made use of a narrative technique. I began by asking them to tell me their stories about their adolescent years with special reference to their boy/girl relationships. I then asked additional questions at the end where I felt information was lacking. However, in some interviews I did more probing than others and encouraged the respondents to offer more information. In another (Sandy), I tended to interrupt her story, in an attempt to remain focused, as I felt that we were straying from the themes of this particular study.

The interviews varied from 45 minutes to 90 minutes each. I interviewed each woman once except for one (Viv) whom I interviewed twice, because gaps in the initial interview became obvious as I analysed the data.

After each interview the tape was transcribed verbatim. I then posted a copy of the transcript to the respondents giving them an opportunity to read through and verify the information. This is another method of the "checking out" process that Kvale (1984:175) deems vital. Bell cited by Taylor (1996:47) also believes that transcripts should be handed to the respondents so that they may be verified. This is essential if they are to be quoted in the report stage. Taylor (1996:48), in her qualitative study of the sensitive subject of abortion, also found this process of showing respect to the respondents to be vitally important. I requested a response, within a period of ten days, as I felt a finite time frame was essential to encourage a response. In a letter attached to the transcript, the respondent was invited to add any further thoughts or explanatory comments. They were also invited to check that their anonymity was being preserved. I felt that this was essential as the women were all students at tertiary institutions in one town and therefore anonymity may have been more difficult to maintain than if I had taken a random sample from a larger population group (See Appendix 3: Letter to Respondents).

Two respondents sent their interviews back with comments and one communicated that she was happy with the transcript as it stood. One of the respondents filled in quite a bit of detail regarding cultural issues that she wanted to explain more fully, as well as adding to her feelings about how stressful adolescence is in general (See Appendix 1: Tandi's Interview – information in *Italics*). The other respondent modified her transcript in a more cosmetic way correcting spelling and grammar. In not hearing from the other two respondents, I understood that they did not have any changes to make to the transcripts.

2.2.4 Analysis Of Data

As I reflected on the process of analysis my focus was to remember that the respondents were "telling their story". I read widely, with particular emphasis on narrative ways of thinking of analysis. The following authors informed my process:

- Heyden analyses data looking for content, form and omissions (in Riessman, 1994:69), as well as "entering into" the ideas and world of the women interviewed (Clandinin & Connelly in Schon 1991:260).
- Robin, also cited in Reissman (1994:69), examines content and themes and listens to the words and meaning the respondent attaches to those words.
- Franklin and Jordan (1995:107) describe narrative analysis as exploring stories in order to gain a better understanding of how people "think, perceive, imagine, and make moral choices."

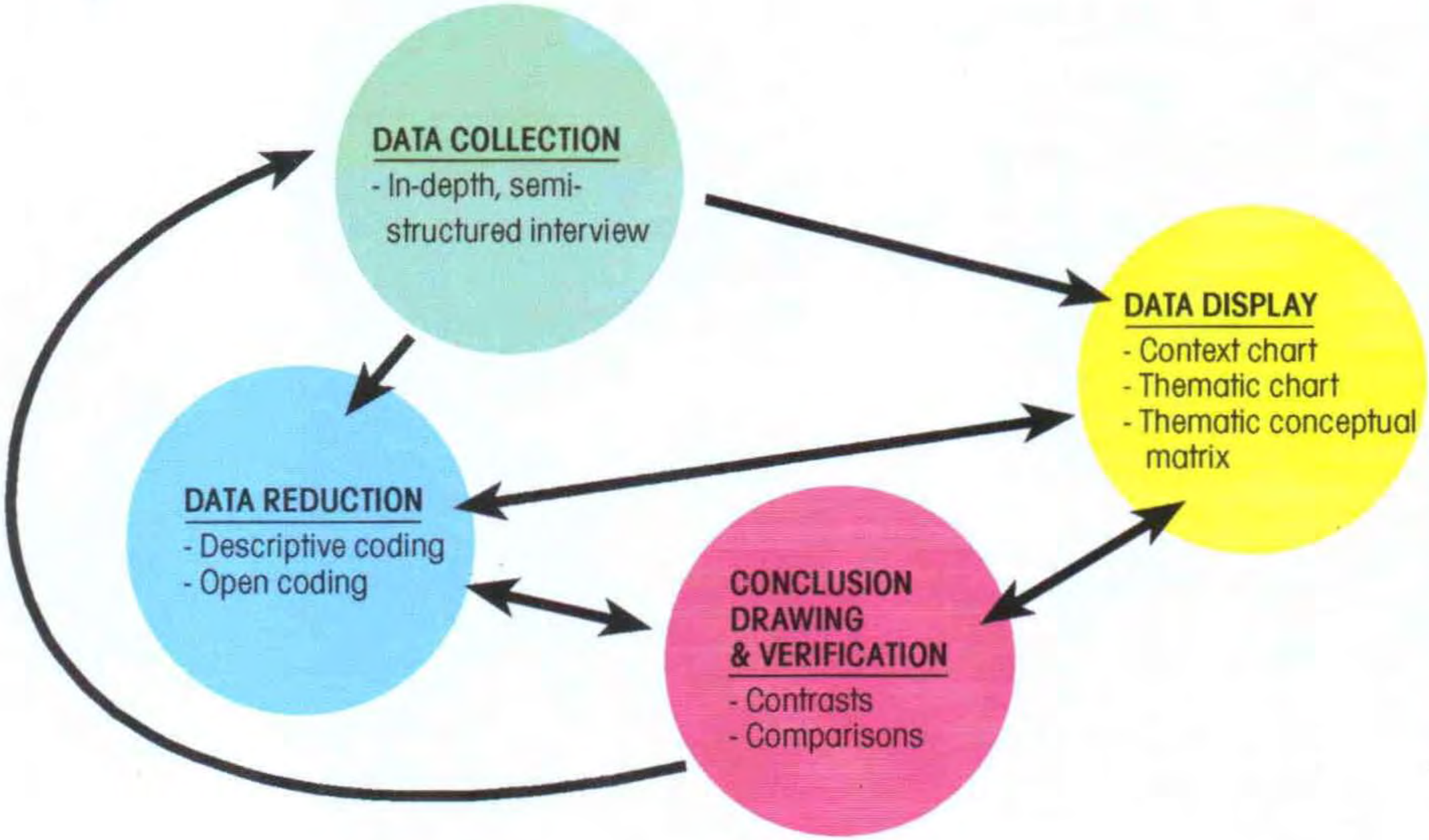
During the process of analysis I have constantly remained aware that each woman has a unique experience. I have sought to honour this "gift" by presenting a summary of their stories individually (See Appendix 2), in order to "hear" them. I selected one story and provided an in depth, thick description (See Chapter 4, page 73). I then selected themes in order to analyse the data further as described below.

The analysis of the data comprised of four stages: data collection (See section 2.2.3 page 58), data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification, as shown in Figure 1, shown below. As this diagram shows, these stages are interlinked and occur continuously throughout the process of analysis. However, for purposes of clarity in terms of understanding the process I have used, I have discussed each stage individually.

i) Data Reduction:

Data reduction is the ongoing "process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data" from the conception of the research project through to the transcribed data (Miles & Huberman 1994:10). "Anticipatory data reduction" takes place in the early stages when the researcher is focusing and considering realistically what questions to ask, what area to focus on and what data collection and analysis tools to select.

Figure 3: DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS



(adapted from Miles & Huberman 1994 : 11)

Amongst the many methods of data reduction that Mile & Huberman (1994:51-77) explore are: summaries, coding (various methods), teasing out themes, making clusters, case analysis meeting, interim case summaries and writing memos. I have explored in depth only the methods that I have used: descriptive coding and open coding. Both were used simultaneously, but I have discussed them separately for purposes of clarity.

Coding:

Coding, in essence, is analysis in that it involves breaking down and labelling units of data with meaningful words, within a context, in order to conceptualize, and then, to put it back together in order to understand it (Strauss & Corbin 1990:61; Miles & Huberman 1994:57). It is also a method of deselecting data which is not relevant to the study in order to reduce the sum into a more workable load.

The first form of coding used is **descriptive coding**. Data from the five interviews was coded descriptively in order to gain an understanding of the feelings and needs that were experienced at

that time. The researcher had knowledge of these codes beforehand (i.e. feelings and needs) and they were related to specific questions as well as conceptual frameworks. These were used to enrich the "Context Chart" showing the significant events, needs, feelings, relationships and influences within the young women's lives (see Chapter 4, Section 2.1 & 2.2, pages 74 & 77).

The second form of coding, **open coding,** has been adopted from Grounded Theory. Richardson (1994:25) felt that using only a descriptive method did not provide sufficient interpretation of the data and also, did not provide the opportunity to "relate the themes to form a conceptual scheme". In grounded theory the data is "grouped, interpreted and given conceptual labels which are related by means of statements of relationship." Grounded theory also encourages "theoretical sensitivity" which refers to the ability to understand the data and select that which is important to the concepts and their relationships (Strauss & Corbin 1990:42). In this study descriptive analysis only deals with the first objective i.e. gaining an understanding of the women's adolescent relationship. In order to take this description further and to gain understanding and develop concepts that can be compared with those of the models/theories chosen I have used the initial stage of Grounded theory which is open coding.

Open coding is specifically about "naming and categorizing.. (the) .. phenomena through close examination of data" (Strauss & Corbin 1990:62). With this form of coding the research does not have a "start list" of categories or codes and it provides, what Miles & Huberman (1994:58) describe as a "code-in-use flavor", generating codes as one proceeds. In this way the analyst is encouraged to be more context sensitive and open-minded. The researcher works through the data line by line marking labels. The data is broken down and studied carefully as the analyst identifies and develops concepts that can then be grouped into categories. Categorizing is the process of selecting similar phenomena and concepts and giving them a conceptual name. Strauss and Corbin (1990:68) warn against "borrowed" names in that they have other meanings or broader meanings that may or may not pertain to the data that has been grouped. Another option is giving "in vivo" names i.e. words used by the respondents (Strauss & Corbin 1990:69). I have used both of these methods in categorizing.

The final stage of open coding is assigning properties and dimensions to the categories. Properties are the characteristics or attributes of the categories. Dimensions show the locations of the property along a continuum. These are then used to form the basis for noting relationships between categories and subcategories (Strauss & Corbin 1990:69-70). In this way themes are clearly identified, explored and defined.

Towards the end of the coding and analysis process I began to notice gaps between the literature and data. I wondered if I had overlooked aspects within the data or if in fact, they were not evident. I decided to return to the raw data and seek out examples (if they were there) of what I was looking for to confirm or reject the suspicion I had. I realised that I had overlooked them, and by focusing on one issue, I was able to identify them.

ii) Data Display

Data display is essentially a visual format that shows the information systematically so that both the researcher and readers can draw valid conclusions.

Being a systematic and logical person it became imperative for me to have a graphic display of the information emerging from the data. I have used two forms of data display in order to meet the needs of this study.

The Context Chart

The context chart has been used to give a graphic display of one of the woman's adolescent relationships, including her feelings, needs and the nature of the relationships around her with the use of different lines (Miles & Huberman 1994:102). I chose to present one woman's story with two charts: a time line and circular chart representing different aspects of her story (see Chapter 4, section 2.1 & 2.2 from pages 74 & 77). In this way I have shown the woman's individual experience as opposed to consolidating all the stories into one picture. The objective was not to make comparisons but to show a rich and full picture.

Thematic Conceptual Matrix

This is a matrix that is a conceptually ordered display. It brings together all the aspects to be considered (Miles & Huberman 1994:131). It facilitates the need of this study to seek synergies and contrasts between themes or concepts from the data (on the one axis) and those from the two models/theories being considered (i.e. Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory and the Circle of Courage). These can be found in Chapter 4, page 133.

iii) Conclusion Drawing and Verification

This part of analysis takes place constantly throughout the processes of data collection, transcription, reduction and display. Conclusion drawing and verification consists of "noting regularities, patterns, explanation, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions" (Miles & Huberman 1994:11). Initially, these "conclusions" are held lightly until they become more explicit and "grounded" as the process continues and they are "verified" through ongoing reading and rereading and discussion with colleagues. The objective here is to move towards "valid" findings (Miles & Huberman 1994:11).

The method of conclusion drawing occurs through making contrasts and comparisons to seek similarities, differences and overlaps with the use of the thematic conceptual matrix (above).

Another process that I used to aid verification of the conclusions/findings was through constant awareness of reflexivity and acknowledgement of my own impact upon the data. In this way I kept checking for what Miles & Huberman (1994:268) call researcher effects and biases. Equally important was receiving feedback from the informants (see section 2.2 Research Methods, page 56). Finally, I have used two forms of triangulation in order to verify findings by looking at different sources of the information (See Chapter 4, Thematic Conceptual Matrix, page 133).

2.3 Ethical Considerations

When conducting research, Mason (1998:55) believes that a researcher should develop ethical principles to work from throughout the process of the research. She also believes that a proportion of ethical dilemmas can be anticipated and dealt with beforehand but that a number of issues may only arise during the process. These may require an immediate response. In order to cope with this situation the researcher needs the ability to explore possibilities so that when an issue does arise, it can be dealt with.

2.3.1 Gaining Access

An ethical consideration that I was initially faced with (in this study of the views and feelings of adolescents) was one of gaining access to the proposed respondents. Adolescents are not

entitled to give their consent to participate without the full knowledge and consent of their parent or guardian. Due to the ethical considerations and constraints in gaining access to adolescents it was decided to consider adult women's views of their adolescence as opposed to interviewing females at that stage in their lives. In retrospect this factor can be seen as an advantage. Laubscher & Klinger (in de la Rey et al 1997:73) believe that one can only obtain a fuller and mature self-narrative in adulthood (indeed this is the work of adulthood) for as adults begin to know their stories they come to know the meaning of their lives.

2.3.2 Informed Consent

Secondly, Marlow (1998:151) stresses the importance of gaining informed consent from the respondents, in order to ensure that there is no coercion and that participation is voluntary. The respondents were informed as to the aims and objectives of the study. In addition I provided a sample of the questions I would be asking. This gave the participants the opportunity to decide whether they wanted to take part in the study or not.

At the start of each interview this explanation was given, as well as an invitation to request that the interview be stopped at any time if they felt that this was necessary. (See Appendix 1: Preamble to Tandi's Interview).

Sieber (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:18) believes that informed consent goes further than a consent statement at the start: "it means communicating respectfully and openly with participants … throughout the project." Marlow (1998:151), on the other hand, views the supply of information as possibly bringing about a dilemma. Marlow feels that when respondents hear the objectives they may make assumptions about what they feel the researcher wants to hear, and may offer that, rather than offering their own experience, insight and feelings. In some instances I did feel that the respondents were saying some things in order to give the "right" information as opposed to what they really felt. In a pilot interview, the respondent was given a large amount of detail about the study and it was felt that she went out of her way to give the "right" answers as opposed to her true feelings. This factor may have been affected by my own anxiety, as well as by my lack of experience with the data collection tool. This pilot interview provided me with valuable insight as to the amount of information to offer beforehand, as well as providing an opportunity to hone skills that I would later implement during data collection i.e. through probing in the interviews and questioning to check out the respondent's meanings and understanding of what they were saying.

2.3.3 "Persuasive Influences"

The importance of acknowledging the "persuasive influences" that operate between the researcher and the respondents is stressed by Mason (1998:57). I had some form of contact with all the respondents during the eighteen months prior to the interviews as they were all students, and I had been involved in training and lecturing in the Social Work Department. However, at the time of the interviews I had terminated these functions within the Department and all of the subjects were informed of my resignation. I felt that it was important that they knew that I was no longer a temporary staff member. Two of the respondents asked about confidentiality more than once, as they were concerned that someone in the Department might "recognize their voice". Once again, I did stress confidentiality and the fact that I would be the only person listening to the taped interviews. I stressed that the transcribed interview would form part of the thesis report and that no-one other than myself would be listening to the tape. I also constantly gave them the opportunity to withdraw from the interview and research project if they chose to. Consequently, I chose to present only one full interview in the form of an appendix (See Appendix 1: Tandi's Story), changing the identifying details. I have included summaries of the remaining four women ensuring further anonymity.

2.3.4 A Matter of Respect: Receiving a "Gift"

Drewery and Winslade (in Monk, Winslade, Crocket and Espton 1997:33), in their theoretical exploration of narrative work, stress the importance of respect for the respondent. The story told in the interview is seen as a "gift" from the respondent to the researcher. The story belongs to the woman who has chosen to share it with a privileged audience. The women interviewed in the research have been invited to tell their story as it is believed that they are the experts on their own lives. This respect is vital in the research process (Limerick, Burgess-Limerik & Grace, 1996:449). I believe that I showed this respect in the way that I used probing questions i.e. showing curiosity and exploring language as opposed to "interrogative" methods. In my interview with Tandi, she felt that some of the information was too sensitive to discuss (about her family) and I used that opportunity to make sure that she was coping and receiving the assistance that she needed. She responded by stating that she was in therapy. (Appendix 1: Interview with Tandi page 10, line 465).

In her feminist study, Edwards (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:183) also stresses the importance of respect for the respondents and believes that their experiences should not be objectified and treated simply as "research fodder," but should offer something useful and meaningful to the women involved and possibly the community at large. I believe that I achieved this respect and that the women did obtain something from the experience. For example, Kim said that she had not thought about her adolescent relationship and specifically her ex-boyfriend in a long time and had found this therapeutic

2.3.5 Avoiding Harm

Fifthly, it is essential to avoid inflicting any form of harm (Marlow 1998:189); physical and/or psychological. Due to the intimate nature of the study, respondents were asked to think back to childhood memories and behaviour. I was aware that these recollections could evoke pain or distress. As a feminist researcher, I felt that I had an ethical obligation to utilise what Maria Mies quoted by Kennedy Bergen (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:201) calls "conscious partiality," which encourages the researcher to be an "empathic listener and neither exploit nor manipulate the researched." This meant that I took note of the emotional effects of the interview and if necessary, would refer the respondent to a relevant service organisation (as I communicated with Tandi at the end of the interview (Appendix 1)). Taylor (1997:48) feels that it is essential to follow-up with respondents to establish if they are all right and again suggests that they seek counselling if necessary. This was suggested to Tandi who was already receiving counselling. The follow-up took the form of a letter written to the respondents asking them to read through the transcripts and to make comments. In retrospect I could have made further personal contact to ensure that they were coping with the possible emotional effects of the interview (if they were experiencing any).

As stated above anonymity and confidentiality were essential ethical considerations that provided the respondents with privacy as well as assisting them in avoiding any harm (Sieber in Renzetti & Lee 1993:21, Mason 1998:56). Confidentiality, which means not disclosing the identity of the respondent, was achieved by the use of pseudonyms as well as making some changes to identifying details, for example changing the name of home towns, changing the names of other people mentioned or career choice. This became even more important as some of the respondents were students in various departments at the University and therefore may be known to the staff. The respondents were therefore given the opportunity to read the transcripts in order

to ensure that they were satisfied with the level of confidentiality and anonymity that I had attempted to provide.

2.3.6 Building Trust

Time and effort should be spent gaining the trust of respondents (Sieber in Renzetti & Lee 1993:20). I believe that my history as a lecturer and supervisor at the University may have had both a positive and negative impact upon the trust levels between the women and myself, given the fact that only one interview (two in the case of Viv) was required from each woman. Being known to all the respondents, I felt I needed less time to establish that trust relationship. However, from a negative perspective, supervisors and lecturers are seen to hold some degree of power in a university institution and this could have had a negative impact on the trust level. Lumerick and others (1996:450) see it as essential that feminist researchers "dismantle" the power relationships by acknowledging them. I felt that I did this with all the interviewees. I made clear my intentions regarding confidentiality and was able to assure the respondents that no other staff member would be listening to the tape recordings. Also, in the one instance where I had a social relationship with a relative of the respondent, I reiterated confidentiality. I believe all efforts were made to "dismantle" the power relationships in this instance. However, I do believe that power relations are a part of society and therefore it is impossible and unrealistic to totally eradicate all power relations. Other methods I could have used to address this issue would have involved interviewing respondents with whom I had no previous relationship. This situation would have brought about a different set of issues; for example building a trust relationship from scratch. Another method that I used to gain trust was by keeping the respondents informed of the progress of the research and giving them the opportunity to voice their opinions about what they had said in their interviews. Respondents were provided with this opportunity in my invitation to add comments to their interview transcripts as well as to offer comments as to whether they felt that their anonymity was being maintained.

An alternative method would have been to enlist the respondents as assistants in the study or to hold focus groups. These techniques were not suitable for this study, and were also outside the scope of this study. I believe that in a future study of this nature a focus group would provide very useful and rich information.

2.3.7 The social worker vs. the researcher

Lastly, McCracken (1988:9) describes the relationship between the researcher and the respondent as being a "peculiar social relationship" as it must be very particularly organised so that specific and detailed data can be collected on sensitive issues. This was done without disrespect for the respondent, and achieved without crossing the boundaries into a therapeutic situation. I felt that I accomplished this by being aware not to use therapeutic skills such as paraphrasing, summarizing or empathic statements, as McCracken (1988:21) believes that this is destructive to the end goal of data collection. This was a trying experience as the women were discussing painful and sensitive issues and given my professional background I was tempted to be empathic. After much consideration and supervision I decided upon interview behaviour that was ethical as both a researcher and a social worker. This meant using some empowering language to acknowledge the women's trying experiences. Kvale (1984:177) describes the level of sensitivity shown by the interviewer as one of the main factors that result in the study being qualitative and often not replicable, but making the study richer.

3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Asking women to discuss their "private" lives was asking them to open up about sensitive areas of the lives (Edwards in Renzetti & Lee 1993:186). Adolescent sexuality may be seen as a taboo subject (as discussed in the Literature Chapter) and therefore a reluctance was felt by some of the respondents to discuss issues in a great deal of depth. Due to the different women's willingness to divulge different levels of information during the interviews different depths of data were collected.

Despite this, Edwards (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:183) considers the in-depth interview to be a feminist methodology, in that it is seen as a method of representing what Dorothy Smith calls "the standpoint of women." She continues, describing research with women for women as being a "critique of objectivity" as it is not possible to be completely objective and value-free. The researcher is part of the "social whole" in which the research takes place. Being a woman, I had to be constantly aware of what impact I was having upon the respondents, as well being aware of what I was bringing into the data analysis through my own assumptions and values, which were not necessarily those of the respondents. This process was ongoing and as overt as possible through the use of feedback in supervision during the entire process. Kennedy Bergen (in

Renzetti & Lee 1993:203) in her study on women's experience of marital rape saw this as a positive aspect of "deobjectifing" the respondents and forcing the researcher to consider the impact of the research upon the women.

Both Finch and Oakley cited by Edwards (in Renzetti & Lee 1993:184) note the "cultural affinity between women interviewers and the women they are interviewing because they both 'share a subordinate structural position by virtue of their gender.'" This lead, in some circumstances, to respondents assuming that the interviewer would understand what they meant simply because she is a women. This was particularly relevant in this study, as adolescence is a stage in life that all young women experience as well as the fact that the respondents had some familiarity with the researcher and therefore assumptions could have been made. I made every attempt to combat this possible limitation by constantly asking respondent to give more details and explanations. It is, however, unrealistic to believe that it can be achieved in every instance. In the interview with Tandi, she constantly said, "you know how it is" which could have been a figure of speech, but also could be illustrating this very point.

Despite this "cultural affinity between women," I felt that one interview per respondent was insufficient to obtain the whole story. In the one instance (with Viv) two interviews were conducted, as it was felt that there were some gaps in the information. I therefore set up a second interview. I believed this proved very beneficial as she had had time to think about the first interview and give richer information in the second interview. Different respondents required different levels of engagement or time to feel comfortable to tell their story fully.

Due to the nature of this qualitative study where people were asked to recall their adolescence, a limitation was its reliability i.e. the ability to replicate the study and attain the same results. As Taylor & Bogdon (1984:7) state it is impossible and unreasonable to expect to be able to attain complete reliability in a study of the real world.

Once again attention is drawn to the fact that the study was relying on the respondents memories and what they saw as relevant to recall and talk about (Baron & Byrne 1987:94-96). The respondent may have omitted some information that could have been seen as important. Validity is thus related to the respondent and "truth" is not viewed as an objective, measurable "reality".

My prejudices and feelings about my own adolescence may also be considered a limitation to the study. I attempted to remain aware of my thoughts and feelings during the interview (through

the use of note taking) and during analysis of the data. This was discussed on an ongoing basis in supervision and a personal journal was kept to keep a record of my own thoughts and feelings during the process. I needed to create an "openness to new and unexpected phenomena" to what was being said and not said, maintaining a "critical consciousness" (Kvale 1984:176). This assisted in preventing imposing my own views to some degree.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter has examined the decisions taken along the path of this research study, the methods and research tools used, the ethical issues considered and the possible limitations to the study.

CHAPTER 4:
DATA DISPLAY AND VERIFICATION

1. INTRODUCTION:

My aim in the analysis, besides answering the research questions, was to maintain the uniqueness and integrity of each story. Each woman courageously gave her own story in her own unique way, emphasising what was important to her at the time of the interview.

The process of analysis involved three procedures. Firstly, I have presented a thick description of one of the women's stories. Secondly, I have analysed the data from the five interviews, creating categories of themes. Thirdly, I have evaluated the data seeking similarities and differences between the raw data, the Circle of Courage and Erikson's Psychosocial Model of Development. Tables have been used wherever possible for clarity.

I also became aware of the impact that each story had on me during the interviews, as well as during the analysis process. I was constantly surprised by the strong feelings evoked in me. Two things gave rise to these feelings: *memories* of this time in my life and *insights* which challenged my beliefs and views about women and particularly young women in South Africa.

2. A THICK DESCRIPTION: TANDI'S STORY

In this analysis I have attempted to express the voices of the women, especially with regard to what they deemed important in their memories of their adolescent relationships. The interviews revealed rich descriptions of their feelings and a wealth of information. A summary description of each of the woman's feelings during their adolescence regarding their significant relationships can be found in Appendix 4. However, due to the limitations of this particular study, I have chosen to present one woman's story in an in-depth manner so as to maintain the uniqueness and the complexity of her life story. I could easily have chosen any of the women interviewed, as each one had great value and contained many interesting aspects. After much deliberation I chose Tandi's story as I felt that it captures many diverse aspects and challenges of life in South Africa (for example: rural life, family affected by migrant labour, and adolescent pregnancy). I have used her story to emphasise significant events, relationships and energy in the "Context Chart" (presented on pages 76 & 80). This chart takes the form of two diagrams, both essential to

express the story in its entirety, an on-going theme which is considered in the discussion of all the data. In retrospect, I would have liked to offer each woman the opportunity to construct her chart or to edit it during an interview as a method of data collection. In the absence of that opportunity I believe this method sufficiently represents the stories.

2.1 Context Chart: Time Line

The time line (displayed on page 76) shows significant events that took place in what Tandi defined as her adolescence. It also shows significant feelings, identity issues, and her self-concept. All of these are concepts which Erikson (1963) mentions in the stage of adolescence he calls seeking identity. I believe that the time line is very effective in showing the sequence of events as well as correlating the emotions that accompanied them.

Tandi identifies the moment adolescence started by two events: the onset of menstruation and becoming more aware of herself (Appendix 1, line 33-44). The former was accompanied by feelings of fear due to the lack of factual information as well as excitement at the prospect of becoming a woman. Erikson (1963:261) describes these changes as matching those of early childhood with the added complexity of genital maturity of puberty bringing about a "physiological revolution". She also describes pride in herself as she developed breasts and became more aware of making herself look pretty. This awareness of self was linked to how she fitted in or in comparison to her peers, which correlates with the concept of identity development as described by Erikson ((1963:261) concern about how she appears in the eyes of others as compared to how she feels about herself). Tandi expresses her concern about feeling inferior to her peers in that they were able to afford to go into the "big cities" for holidays while her family remained in the rural area (Appendix 1, line 255). This may also be seen as an example of Brendtro and other's (1990:37-8) concept of the need to belong to a community; in this case her peers and the sense of isolation or difference in not being able to be the same due to her personal circumstances. She was able to restore her sense of competence and achievement in that she did well at school (Appendix 1, line 260) and in this way gained one of the other concepts of the Circle of Courage (1990:39): a sense of mastery.

During this time of early adolescence, Tandi talks about her need to be with her friends as opposed to being with her family (Appendix 1, line 326). They established groups called the "Big 3" and developed a "clannishness" (Erikson 1963:262). This "clannishness" can become cruel, excluding anyone who does not conform, testing the in-groups loyalty. This was shown in

Tandi's response to an acquaintance who did not conform by going to the "White House" for contraception (Appendix 1, line 78).

Tandi sees her peers as influencing her behaviour significantly. Her first sexual experience took place due to pressure from her peers to experiment, as "they were all doing it." Communication about sexual matters was about sex and was not accompanied by information about contraception, except that one should not go to the "White House" (place where one might get contraception, for example the Family Planning Clinic) as one might be seen by older people or be seen as a "slut." Erikson (1963:262) describes adolescent love as "an attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's diffused ego image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified" and felt that it was not necessarily a sexual matter.

Tandi defines this time as the end of her adolescence as she fell pregnant and becomes an adult and a mother- as opposed to an adolescent. She now experiences being on the receiving end of the rejection and cruelty described earlier with regards to being different in some way and being rejected by peers. She no longer enjoyed the support and in-group feeling as in her early adolescence (Appendix 1, line 67).

During Tandi's 18th year she can be seen, in light of Erikson's theory, in numerous "stages" of life at one time, namely:

- School age : industry vs. inferiority in that she is focusing on her competence at school,
- Adolescence: as she is negotiating her changing identity and role describing herself as a mother and adult,
- Early adulthood: intimacy as she is involved in a close relationship with her child's father that she considers mutually satisfying and close and finally,
- Aspects of adulthood and generatively in that she is offering care and support to her young child.

Gilligan, cited in Kroger (1998:33), offers, as a criticism of Erikson, her belief that for women these stages may co-exist or be reversed, which is highlighted in the above example of merging stages.

This discussion has provided a rather linear view of this story highlighting events and self concept, and, I believe, neglecting some significantly influential factors, namely relationships. This becomes clear in the following discussion of the Micro/Macro Influences and Relationships.

Context Chart: Time line

EGO IDENTITY, SELF IMAGE & SELF CONCEPT

PHYSICAL EVENTS

	14	
excited, scary		menstruation
more self aware; close friends and belonging to "the big four"		peers taking on a significant role; moving away from family and spending less time with them
source of pride		development of breasts
fitting into a group		more aware of physical self and looking pretty
sense of inferiority and lack of sophistication		left behind while friends going away on holiday to big cities
sense of achievement		doing well at school
	15	
sense of belonging to a boy		first boyfriend; kissing
taboo subject		peer discussions about sex and contraception
fear of older person seeing you going to clinic; feeling dirty		aquaintance ostracized for going to visit "The White House"
	16	
		friends talking about having sex with boyfriends
	17	
"messed up and ruined my life"; end of adolescence; felt more mature		first sexual experience; pregnant
determination set in		forced to leave school before Std 9 final exams
shame and depression		rejected by friends
	18	
defines herself as an adult and mother		baby born
		returns to same school
defines herself as an adult and mother		father returns from mines; conflict between mother and father about rearing the baby
		boyfriend (& father of child) breaks off relationship
revenge		writes and passes matric exams (boyfriend fails)
	19	
		has to work for a year (payback/punishment)
		goes to university
feels beautiful; happy with self - "not fat" like rural women		becomes an "urban" as opposed to "rural" ("English" woman)
		make up with father of child
	20	

2.2 Context Chart: Micro / Macro Influences and Relationships

This context chart, (displayed on page 80) shows the people, institutions and cultural factors that impacted on Tandi's life and the decisions that she made. It also shows the strength of the relationships, the level of conflict and the way that the energy or influence was directed. Finally, it offers a display which shows where aspects of the Circle of Courage touched these relationships.

Let us begin with Tandi's tenuous relationships with the peers of her early adolescence. Initially, these relationships were seen as a significant factor in the starting point of her adolescence, creating a sense of belonging for her where she felt part of a group and accepted. Although there were some differences between herself and her peers (for example her family's economic status did not allow her to go to the urban areas during holidays), she felt that she made up for them by achieving in another area, namely her academic work. She felt very close to these peers at this time and felt drawn to them, spending more time with them than her family. It was in these relationships that she learned about sexual issues and sexual intercourse. However, they also cautioned her of the taboo and risks of using contraception: older community members may see you and think that you are a "slut." Also shown in the diagram is the impact of social attitudes regarding sex and sexuality. In Western research (Moore & Rosenthal in Coleman & Roker 1998:35) a large emphasis is placed on problematic sexual behaviour such as promiscuity, while as Mwamwenda (1995:67) stresses, in African cultures sexuality and sex education is discouraged, which results in continuing the cycle of misinformation.

In Tandi's early adolescent peer relationships the four spirits of the Circle of Courage are highlighted. Firstly, Tandi's desire to belong to her community of friends shows the level of compliance that she went to in order to remain part of the group. It also highlights her feelings of rejection and loneliness when she was expelled from the group when she fell pregnant.

Secondly, it shows aspect of her sense of mastery (Brendtro et al 1990:48). In one sphere of the relationship she was not able to do what they were doing, namely go to the cities for holidays. However, she was able to feel competent in another area of importance, achieving at school. This served as a motivating factor in her later adolescence when she felt that she had let her family down by falling pregnant and an area that she could use to her benefit in achieving a sense of success and competence by doing well academically.

Thirdly, she displays a sense of independence as at this time she chooses to move away from her family and towards her adolescent peers, taking some autonomous decisions (Brendtro et al 1990:49). One of these decisions were to break the silence regarding sexuality and sex education from generation to generation, as described by Mwamwenda (1995:67) by educating her younger siblings and role modelling open communication with them (See Appendix 1, line 119-120).

Finally, there was a level of generosity amongst her peers in their sharing of ideas, dreams, and knowledge (even if it was not entirely factual and influenced by social attitudes). However, a low level of generosity was displayed by her peers in their lack of loyalty and support when she fell pregnant in that she was literally expelled from the group (Brendtro et al 1990:50). These peer relationships were later replaced by another friendship that was characterised by more adult behaviour in that she felt supported and accepted, increasing her sense of belonging in this particular relationship.

The relationship with her boyfriend, the father of her child, was tenuous. She describes it as being very good and strong – while it was on. However, when it ended (for two years in the middle) she was filled with hurt, pain and anger as well as a need for revenge, which she felt she received when she passed her final year at school and he failed (See Appendix 1, line 313). While involved in the relationship, she describes it as being loving and she felt needed, which created a sense of belonging. The relationship was also characterised by a sense of independence in that they took decisions for themselves (to become sexually involved). They did not always display a sense responsibility however; for example in their choice not to use contraception. Ability to make decisions and to show responsibility are two characteristics of independence as described by Brendtro and others (1990:49).

Other relationships shown on this context chart are characterised as triads. One of these relationships, which impacted on Tandi to a large degree, was the relationship between her parents and herself. Although Tandi chose not to discuss her parent's relationship as such, she did describe some of the impact it had upon her. The parental relationship was characterised by conflict and anger. She describes it as a cycle: her father was angry and took it out on her mother who in turn projected it on to Tandi in the form of "cruelty". Tandi's father would then become protective of Tandi and angrier with her mother. This cycle was heightened by two factors. Firstly, Tandi's father was a migrant labourer and therefore only at home for one month of the year leaving the majority of child care and rearing to her mother. However, on his return

during Tandi's 18th year, he was angry with her mother for not educating Tandi about contraception and sex. He had possibly been influenced by a more urban way of life which was different from their rural culture of not discussing sexual matters as noted by Mwamwenda (1995:67). Tandi's father was also critical of how her mother was encouraging Tandi's independence in her child rearing practices of her baby. This is described by Brendtro and others (1990:41) as "guidance without interference." At the time Tandi felt her mother's behaviour was bordering on cruelty but was later grateful for it.

The second influencing factor upon this triad was the "cultural pressure" upon Tandi's mother to remain in the relationship for the sake of her children (See Appendix 1, line 380). She described this as "nyamezela," literally translated means "endure" (personal communication). In retrospect, I regret not exploring this further, gaining a better understanding of her meaning for this term as well as how she saw the wider cultural environment impacting on their relationship. However, Tandi had indicated that she did not want to discuss this matter and by not pushing the exploration I felt I was showing respect.

Although Erikson acknowledges the role of society in development, he does not explore the extent of the pressure placed on the individual to conform. In terms of the philosophy of Brendtro and others (1990:37) this may be seen as an example of women's need to maintain her sense of belonging to her community fearing that if she "disobeys" her husband she may face isolation or the humiliation of being ostracised. Hickson and Kriegler (1996:27) highlight the African view that emphasis lies in membership within a group or community rather than in individuality. They (Hickson and Kriegler 1996:32) also note that females do not share equal status with their male counterparts and are therefore expected to be compliant, which enhances the patriarchal power of society.

The second triad that became evident was the relationship between Tandi, her baby and her education. Balk (1996:515) describes adolescent pregnancy as being associated with dropping out of school, low education, unemployment and welfare dependency. Tandi showed great resilience and motivation not to succumb to these circumstances, even after being turned away from her school. She describes a great struggle in coping with the demands of being a parent, caring for her child as well as keeping up with her schoolwork, doing homework and learning for exams. This was further impacted upon by her rural circumstances. She was expected to maintain her role within the family doing chores such as cooking, cleaning and fetching water. She sees these hardships as contributing to making her stronger. McWhirter and others (1993:6)

Context Chart: Micro / Macro Influences & Relationships

CULTURE
patriarchal society

CULTURAL PRESSURES
to endure pain and hardship
in a marriage:
"Nyamazela"

MOTHER
(strict & cruel
but caring)

FATHER
(migrant labourer)

CLOSE FRIEND
(support
after pregnancy)

BOYFRIEND

BABY

TANDI

SIBLINGS
Tandi a role
model for siblings

AUNT & UNCLE
(perfect family)
role model

YOUNG ADOLESCENT
PEER GROUP
"Big 4" gang

SOCIETAL
ATTITUDES
taboo use of
contraception

"WHITE HOUSE"
clinic

UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION
& BOOKS

SCHOOL

RURAL vs URBAN
left behind while friends
go to city on holiday

RURAL
CIRCUMSTANCES
house-keeping chores
eg fetching water
compounding struggle
but building strength

KEY

- relationship
- informal sex education
- struggle
- sporadic relationship
- conflictual relationship

- ★ generosity
- ■ belonging
- ● mastery
- ▲ independence

describe these kinds of hardships as *risk factors* indicating that they are a "set of ... dynamics that place the individual ... adolescent in danger of negative future events."

Resilience, on the other hand is what Carnonell and others (1998:259-260) defined as "the capacity to be unaffected by, to recover from or even to gain strength or to grow from difficult life experiences or circumstances." According to this definition, Tandi showed resilience in her capacity to maintain her role in the family, to raise a child and to complete her schooling with marks that enabled her to acquire a tertiary education. These accomplishments created a sense of mastery, as sense of independence, a sense of belonging, as well as an opportunity for generosity. By attaining aspects of all four "spirits" of the Circle of Courage she was also able to gain a strong sense of self worth; a vital aspect of empowerment and holistic development for young people (Brendtro et al 1990:35). Brendtro and others (1990:35) note that it is only recently that child research is focusing on this holistic development of young people.

In conclusion, I believe that both of the above diagrams and discussion were vital for a thick description of this young woman's adolescent years, as each play different roles in the story. Let us now turn to the thematic analysis of all five interviews in order to systematically compare and contrast the five women's stories and Erikson's Psychosocial theory and the Circle of Courage.

3. THEMATIC ANALYSIS:

During analysis eight main categories of themes emerged with most of them being divided into sub-categories, properties and dimensions. The eight themes were:

- Sexuality
- Belonging: Inclusion vs. Exclusion
- Identity
- Support Systems
- External Social Influences
- Role Models
- Coping Strategies
- Needs and Recommendations

Categorizing is the process of selecting similar phenomena and concepts and giving it a conceptual name. Some of the categories covered a broad area and were therefore divided into

sub-categories. For example the category "Sexuality" was made up of sub-categories: changes, communication, choices and intimacy – all related to the issue of sexuality. Some of the category's names are "borrowed" names for example "Belonging," "Sexuality" and "Identity", while others are "in vivo" names (using the words of the respondents or fitting names) for example "inclusion" and "exclusion". All of the categories have been assigned properties and others have also been assigned dimensions. Properties are the characteristics or attributes of the categories, for example the properties of "Belonging" were the different groups that the women felt they needed to belong to (i.e. peer groups and family). Dimensions show the locations of the property along a continuum where in some instances their position was not polarized but between two points. In this way themes are clearly identified, explored and defined.
See Table 1 below for a diagrammatic display.

Table 1: Emerging Themes

Category	Sub-Category	Properties	Dimensions
Sexuality	Changes	Biological, relational	Gradual ------ Sudden
	Communication	Facts	Adequate ------ Absent
		Emotionality	
	Choices	Sexual matters	Independent
	Intimacy	Closeness: physical & emotional	
Belonging: Inclusion vs exclusion		Peers	Inclusion----- exclusion
		Family	Inclusion----- exclusion
		Boy / Girl relationship	
Identity	Perceptions	How I perceive myself	
		How I perceive how others see me	
Support Systems		Who they chose to support them	Internal vs. external
External Social Influences	Family	Her family	
		His family	
	Community	Church/religion	
		Clinic	
Role Models		Who they chose as their role model	Parental vs. external
Coping Strategies		What they did to cope / survive	
Needs		What these women believe adolescents need to help them cope through this time in their lives	

Category 1: Sexuality

Text and codes that made up this category all fall under the theoretical explanations discussed in the Chapter 2: Literature Review of "sexuality": a wide range of social processes and ideas, including an awareness of and feelings about one's own body, intimate thoughts, sensations and behaviour (Beake & Zimbizi in Goosen & Kugman 1996:232).

The sub-categories that emerged within the broad theme of sexuality were:

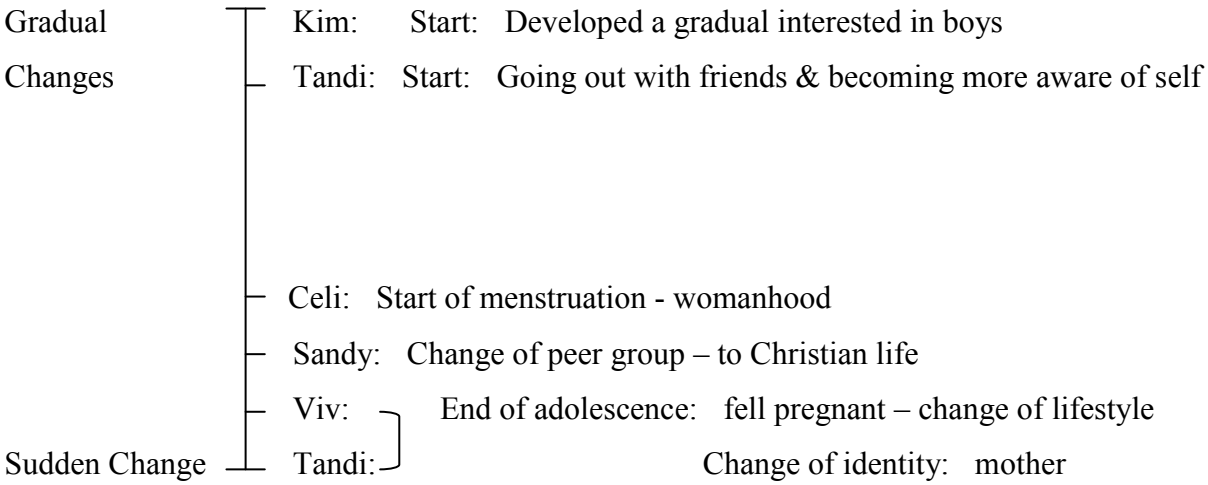
- Changes (Biological and Relational)
- Communication (about sexual matters)
- Choices
- Intimacy

Sub-Category 1: Changes:

In this category I looked at the women's experiences of change during adolescence and the dimensions that lie between gradual change and sudden change. The question asked in order to get a better understanding of this change was:

> "You have talked about your experiences and some of the things that were really important to you – did you always feel this way or do you think there was a sudden change for you in your childhood?"

The continuum looked as follows:



All the women interpreted this question in their own way and therefore the properties they described were changes both as they entered adolescence, changes during adolescence as well as changes that occurred as a symbol of the end of adolescence. They were also related to biological changes – for example the start of menstruation and to relational or circumstantial changes (for example becoming a parent or change of peer group).

Kim comments on the changes:

> *I think it was quite a gradual thing. I don't remember being uninterested and then suddenly being interested. I think it kind of progressed. With friends, the more they were interested the more you were interested. The conversation would go around guys. I can't remember any marked difference. You start noticing guys around the passages and that*

Viv experienced a sudden change when she fell pregnant – it changed her life style:

> *I remember a sudden change in that when I was in matric I got pregnant. I hated myself because it was a genuine mistake how it happened .... That was the one part of my life that was a sudden change...*
>
> ***... So that was one of those major changes. What were some of the consequences of those changes?***
>
> *At that stage we would enjoy going out and we would be drinking and that. But now it was no drinking and no smoking and stay at home. I was my first year here (at university). So I had to stay at home and look after myself. I did go out it was more to dinners and not too heavy parties to clubs and what ever. It was braais and dinner with a couple of friends, so that was also a change for me. I am a very social person but I had to change how I was social and tone down as well.*

Tandi describes both the start and the end of her adolescence as sudden. She identifies the beginning as when she became more aware of herself and also when she began to move towards stronger relationships with her peers (Appendix 1, line 324):

> *... what made it* (adolescence) *start, was firstly, that I started to become more aware of myself. That is when it started, and then I started having close friends, you know. Maybe we would be as a group; maybe we would be seen as the" big 4" or the "big 3" you know. It started like that. That is when I just felt you know that ... there was that thing that even when I was at home there was that feeling that I should see my friend today, I really want to see my friends and organise to meet somewhere. So I could see that I was becoming more involved with friendships, you know ...*
>
> *... Um, I could say that it was ... it was sudden, Andrea. It was sudden.*
>
> *... When it started ... it was sudden ... it started ... You know, firstly, I wasn't allowed to go to parties. That was the first thing, my mother never let me or allowed me to go to parties. For the first time I did go to parties, because my other friends were already going to parties. So when I was about 14 years, there was a party and it wasn't far away. So when I did go to that party my friends said to me, "you know that party was really good with you" because maybe it was because I had never been to a party before. They said, "today it was such a good party, why don't*

Tandi felt that her adolescence ended just as suddenly. She felt that she had to become an adult with all the responsibilities that accompany it (Appendix 1, line 59):

> *And then after that* (falling pregnant) *I became a grown up so quickly, so that is why I said that I didn't enjoy it that much ...*
>
> *Ya, I grew up at that time because I had lots of responsibilities looking after that baby. Everything changed, everything totally changed. I didn't associate with my peers anymore, I stayed in doors*
>
> *Well, it was more like motherhood for me, because I didn't get so much involved with my peers, even at school, I didn't get ... You know something change in me, Andrea. I didn't even get involved in sport or any of those sorts of things. I got so withdrawn - I was involved in my books, that is all.*

Celi also describes her changes as drastic at various points in her adolescent years:

> *No, there were not much changes in my adolescent years, except the changes at 13 years – when I was turning 13 ...*
>
> *... I remember when I was 13 I started menstruating – I was too young. But again as I was saying, we were not allowed to discuss anything.* ***Was that scary for you?*** *For me it was scary, but not that scary because I often had friends talking about it ...*

She also describes a change where she felt she was " a special person" through receiving gifts from her mother:

> *I remember when I was 16 or about to turn 16. I was doing Std 9 – that was quite a turning point for me – I don't know – I just valued that birthday, that particular birthday. I was 16 and doing Std 9 and I was far away – I was 1000 miles away from my home and my mother and all that stuff. So I could say that she was quite supportive... ... She often paid me visits with friends and bring me stuff, you know like nice stuff. This particular birthday, I think I had a lot of presents from my mum, I don't know, I think she quite acknowledged that I am a grown up and coming of age and all that. It was nice.* ***So this was the time that she recognised that you had turned into a woman?*** *Ya. ... I could see that I was a special person. You know I was quite old to be having such a turning point.*

And finally there was a change when she started dating (became sexually active):

> *... and my 17th year, because the 17 years one was like the tremendous one because I started dating and then I started having another second boyfriend meanwhile I was still, you know, you know ... it was quite a turning point.*

Sandy experienced both sudden and gradual changes at different times of her life and they relate more to her life style and family relationships:

> *... in my younger years no - I don't think there was any sudden changes. Yes, there was one other one - coming from Benoni - being in the "in group" to coming here and deciding against the smoking and drinking - that was a sudden change - and going into the Christian life. Yes, that was like over night.* ***And when you moved away from the Christian way of life?*** *No that wasn't sudden - that was gradual, it changed slowly. I changed being with different groups of people and that sort of thing - so that was gradual. But I think in general whatever changes there were very gradual changes.*

All the women experienced some form of change indicating that they moved into a new period or phase of their lives where they were aware of newness or change. Erikson (1968:16) described some of the changes or crossroads that an adolescent faces as a "crisis" and they have a choice as to whether they attempt to resolve the crisis or conflict or whether they choose to stagnate. The most prominent changes that are discussed are the physical changes, especially menstruation, to mark the start of adolescence. Erikson (1963:261) acknowledges the rapidity of the bodily growth and changes, which equal that of early childhood with the added pressures of genital maturity. He describes the crisis in this stage as the conflict between the "physiological revolution" within them and how they appear in the eyes of those around them to how they feel about themselves. Mwamwenda (1995:66) however, picks up on the fact that the beginning of menstruation for young girls is traumatic but can be made worse without adequate preparation. He believed that this was often the case with young African girls due to the fact that sexual matters are not discussed and sex education in schools is discouraged. This factor is highlighted in the next sub-category, "knowing vs. not knowing."

The end of adolescence is marked by the birth of a child for two of the women at which time they are faced with a new form of crisis or life stage: parenthood. In these instances Erikson's stages become confused and unclear as he does not consider the consequences or the effects of skipping or missing a stage i.e. moving from adolescence (identity) to parenthood.

The women also acknowledge the changes in their relationships, especially the growing importance of their relationship with peers (as Tandi and Sandy experienced), as well as their relationships with males (as Kim and Celi experienced). The importance of peer relationships is acknowledged by Erikson (1963:262) with regards to this stage of life. He also acknowledges the change to sexual relationships but sees these as an extension of the search for identity as opposed to real love or intimacy (Erikson 1963:262).

Sub-category 2: Communication: Knowing vs not knowing

The operational definition for communication used in this study and this context was: talking between the subject and either peers or parents about information and facts regarding sexual matters that included: sex education, contraception and menstruation. The dimensions that emerged within this property were:

Facts

		Sex & Contraception	Menstruation
Absent (not knowing)	Sandy	Assumed to be absent	
	Kim		
Limited	Tandi	Too afraid to ask mother	Only new the basics not the consequences i.e. that you can now fall pregnant
	Celi	Didn't want to change "pure" image	
Adequate (Knowing)	Viv	Knew the "theory" of relationships	

Four of the five women felt that they did not receive adequate facts about sexual matters during their adolescence. Two of the women (Tandi and Celi) said that their mothers spoke to them after they had started menstruating, but provided them with very few details and did not discuss the consequences of "becoming a woman" (i.e. that they may now be able to fall pregnant if they were sexually active). Sandy, Kim and Viv did not discuss menstruation specifically in the interviews. It would seem that Kim did not speak to her peers or parents about sexual intercourse or contraception as she felt "alone" and "isolated" in going to the Family Planning Clinic to ask for contraception and information as she describes:

> *I was very hesitant to approach my friends, because none of them had had a boyfriend for as long as I had, so I didn't think that they would understand. And I remember feeling quite insecure about where to go and who's opinion to ask and who's advise to find out.*
>
> ***That sound's like you felt quite alone?***
>
> *Ya, I was. (Big sigh) I felt like there was no support structure, the way I was feeling. I just remember that intense anger and just saying, "just wake up!"*

It would seem that Sandy also did not receive much information about sexual intercourse or contraception as her mother did not expect Sandy to be sexually active at that time. Sandy described her mothers response as:

> *She went ballistic. My mum actually went hysterical. She phoned him and made him sit in my lounge and she lectured him. Because you see, I am her perfect daughter - it wasn't me it was* Rich.

From this response my assumption was that this issue was not discussed in great depth. The South African Children's Charter (Potgieter & Fredman in de la Rey et al 1997:106) states that it

is a right for all children in South Africa to gain knowledge and information regarding sexuality. Considering this, it is interesting to note that it would seem that only one out of the five women felt that she received "adequate" information from her parents or other reliable sources.

Viv was the only one of the women who did receive "adequate facts" and as she referred to it, "theory", about sexual matters from peers, teachers and parents; something that she recognised and was quite proud of:

> *I found that I knew a lot more than my friends, especially in terms of the theory of relationships and sex and all that. Some of them who were sexually active would come to me ... With me, I just had practical, I mean theoretical stuff and they were into the practical stuff, but they still didn't know much.*
>
> ***How was it that you knew all the theory and they didn't?***
>
> *From junior school – the school that I went to, because I think that we were just aware about stuff. At that junior school we were quite open ... Those were those things that we spoke about and sometime we would be silly about it, but it just happened that way. I think it was part of the school that I went to. People were just more open. Even the teachers were more open about things.*
>
> *... I remember the one time when I was at my parent's surgery ... on one of the shelves that were these books on "where do I come from?" and there was this other one on "what is happening to me?" I looked at this and I thought "Oh, God, my mom is going to get into this topic. I remember just feeling ...oh no – you know how embarrassing it is at that age, and I know this stuff but my mom is going to try and do something about it.* ***How old were you at that time?*** *I can't remember, but I was still in junior school – that is all I remember. So one day she took this book and like threw it at me and said "just read this and then afterwards you and I are going to sit down and have a talk." I thought "No! You can't do that." And then a while later we went on holiday to visit some friends of ours. Apparently their father (also a doctor) had the video to go with the book. So they took all the kids and plonked us down and said that they have a video for us to watch. It was fun though because there were a whole lot of us together and it was all in cartoon form. That is how my family actually helped me with regards to the sexuality issue.*

It is interesting to note that she was the only woman who talks about discussing sexual matters with her parents and yet she also fell pregnant during her adolescence. My question is then: are facts enough to prevent adolescent pregnancy? What else would have been more helpful?

Kim describes her lack of information about sexual matters as making her feel isolated and judged:

> *... you don't actually know where to go or get information about contraception without being looked at or judged or whatever.*

When Kim talks about recommendations for other teenagers she uses herself as an example again expressing the pressures of making the choice to have a "serious relationship:

> *But it is not something that … I don't know if it was just like that for me, but I wouldn't want anyone at that age to go through that. I think that you have to be emotionally ready, psychologically ready for something as serious as that.* ***What made it so serious for you – the first relationship?*** *I guess it was the identity of his love – he made me everything to him and that was big pressure, because … he kind of based his world around me. Then the whole thing was about him being ready and yet I hadn't made up my mind and not knowing if anything went wrong where to go or what I would do or … Long silence*

The majority of the information that Tandi and Celi received regarding contraception and menstruation was from their peers. When asked what stopped her from asking her mother questions that she needed answered she said (Appendix 1, line 436):

> *… She was so strict. I would never have asked her.* ***What were you afraid of?*** *Yo! (Laughing) Andrea, I was scared of that woman, yoo, no …****Scared that she might?*** *No … She would say … what is the word to use … she would say, those are bad things, those are bad things that you are asking me about. Where did you learn those things? And all that stuff …* ***So she would think bad of you if asked about those things?*** *Yes, definitely. I would never ask her!*

Tandi, chose to break the "cycle of misinformation and secrecy" continued from one generation to the next and described by Mwamwenda (1995:66) by taking on the role of sex education (Appendix 1, line 119):

> *Yes, I did speak to her; I am even speaking to my brothers about girls and that at least you must be aware now. We have got an older brother and I always speak to him about girls you know. If he gets involved he knows that he will be a father (laugh) and be doomed!*

Erikson (1963:259) discusses "systematic instruction" that occurs during the stage: Industry vs. Inferiority (one stage prior to "Identity"), where the young person receives information and learns about completing tasks which supersedes the desire to play. He links this to career choice or skills that are taught and believes that "systematic instruction" takes place in all cultures in formal or informal ways. The instruction is from adults as well as from older peers or children. Erikson (1963:259) limits this instruction to career choice and does not include in the discussion and education anything with regard to sexuality or sexual information, such as menstruation and contraception. However, I do believe that it is relevant that he mentions the source of information as being adults and older peers as many of the subjects received information from their peers as opposed to their parents or significant adults.

In more recent studies, Murray's (in Pistella & Bonati 1998:207) research, regarding delayed sexual involvement, found that if parents talked to their adolescents sexual involvement was delayed. However, this cannot be considered here as the subjects were not specifically asked that question, however his findings regarding discussions regarding contraception can. Tandi

did not discuss the use of contraception (for cultural reasons), did not make use of them (for fear of rejection from her peers) and fell pregnant. However, Viv did discuss these issues with her parents, did use contraception, however, she still fell pregnant (as a result of faulty contraception or incorrectly used contraception). Both these women are from the same cultural background although one grew up in a urban/township setting, while the other (Tandi) grew up in a rural community.

This leads to the next property of communication: emotionality.

Emotionality

I have included this property of communication as I found the level of emotionality with regards to the messages that the women were receiving from their parents and peers very interesting and relevant.

In studying the literature, very little was mentioned about the emotional aspects of the message that parents or peers pass on to adolescents. As discussed above, Erikson (1963:259) does discuss "systematic instruction" during the stage "Industry vs. Inferiority" but does not include any discussion regarding sexuality. Hersch (in Bender et al 1994:17) discovered that the topic is often neglected due to discomfort. This leads me to wonder what messages adolescents are receiving (verbally or non verbally) about sexuality: that it is something to be ashamed of or afraid of? Or that is doesn't exist?

If no information is given and parents are ignoring sexual issues for various reasons, they are placing their adolescent at risk of becoming involved in high-risk behaviours such as unprotected sex, teenage pregnancy, and HIV/AIDS. This is not "guidance without interference" (Brendtro et al 1990:41) with the aim of developing independence, this is simply neglect.

The one instance that stood out most prominently for me was the spoken and unspoken message that Celi received about "having boyfriends"

> *We didn't communicate anything about boyfriends and all that stuff.*
> *I didn't want to be disturbed in my studies and all that stuff, because I knew the difficulties that came with having boyfriends and not concentrating on your studies there you know.*
> ***What were the difficulties?*** *Like you know, like others when they have boyfriends, I could see that they wouldn't concentrate in the classroom, they failed, you know. Others in my group of friends, I was the one who in my group of friends, my cast, the one who did pass. They failed. They failed their Std 8, the others*

failed their Std 9. I was the only one who came up to Std 10 and all that. So I don't know, I don't know really. That's why I thought maybe, you know, maybe that is why I thought after Std 10, that is a good time. Maybe I can manage myself and all that.

So were you quite afraid of what the prospects of what a relationship might bring? *Um ... I think I was afraid of the consequences, because I knew the results of ... what comes after having a boyfriend: you will fail, you will get pregnant, you know all that stuff so it was big issues that were making me distant you know.* ***So in some way your mother's form of contraception worked in terms of abstinence?*** *At that time, but you know, I don't think it is a good thing, you know.*

... It is just, like you know ... reprimanded and told "No, don't do it, it is just not good" and you don't know why and I think that is why the other kids were just pushed to get some of those experiences...

I think I had quite internalised what I had been told at home. So it was like even if my mother was not there, she was there and she would see me, you know? So it was kind of like that...

You said that your mother was quite quiet, but is sounds like she was very powerful at the same time? *Um, I mean quite quiet in not discussing often some of the issues. But the rules, she would just say "No, don't" and that was it!*

It is not clear from the interview exactly which messages were coming from either her friend's behaviour or from her family, but with her observations of both she came to these conclusions.

Secondly, Celi did not ask for clarity or more information as she feared her mother's response:

What stopped you from asking things at that time? *You see the problem is that your mother is your mother – the parent is the parent and if you say something, you say it. You are not allowed to ask, you know, she is the expert or he is the expert. I don't know – I didn't have any questions to ask – I didn't have any questions in my mind because I was just taking whatever my mother said and saying that this is right – there is nothing else, nothing beyond, nothing else!*

Later, however, she decided that it was time to open up to her mother to discuss some issues:

So all that time I thought, no, I need to open up to my mum, you know I need to know these things and all that stuff. In some way I was rebellious to her you know? ***At that time?*** *Ya, because at that time I was starting ask about these things like, "I want to go for contraception!" "Why, what is that?" you know. She then started realising that I knew much about these things, because I had friends to talk to about these things. So, it was kind of a shock to her. But she was open enough to discuss it, but not in details you know, because I could see you know that she was shocked. She didn't expect that. I don't know if she thought that I was so pure and I don't know these things and maybe that I am living in a vacuum, I don't know. So then I started challenging these issues that I need to know about these things, you know. I must say that I have older sisters, like "cousin sisters" who are like way older than me, like 6 years or 8 years older than me, they still didn't talk about these things with my mum.* ***Did they live with you?*** *Yes.* ***So they lived with you and they had quite different life styles…?*** *They had their boyfriends, they did everything, but we didn't discuss anything with them, they know that I am a kid and don't have to be included in their issues, you know.* ***So they didn't discuss it with you either?*** *No, they didn't discuss it with me either. And when they were caught you know, and my mother would ... would scold them you know about those things. She would say, "don't dare do it, don't just do it because you will be in for the*

> *high jump", you know and all that stuff. And I thought "No…" Every one has some contributing issues for starting late. I know that there is no fixed age but I think those are the things that kept me, you know, ready to sit back wait for myself ...*

Communication with parents was also hindered due to fear. Fear of how they would respond, perhaps risking being scolded. Fear that a parent's perception of them would change. Fear of breaking the rules of the culture, perhaps cultural norms within a hierarchical system within the family (for example in the Xhosa culture). Sandy showed evidence of concern, religious concerns. Moore & Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:38) mention the role of social influences.

Tandi also draws attention to the high risks and emotional issues attached to considering contraception amongst peers (Appendix 1, line 72):

> *Firstly, when we were speaking about contraception, it was a bit of a shame thing. We would say to each other - "look at that one, she is going to 'that white house.'" We used to call the clinic 'that white house'. " She is attending the clinic, she must be bad, you know." Only married people do that, we are not allowed to do that. It had a stigma to go to the clinic for contraception.* ***What was the stigma about because they were talking about sex and having sex, but that wasn't a stigma, but going to the 'white house' did have a stigma. What was the difference?*** *There was the feeling that if you go to the clinic, to the white house then you are a ... "slut" I don't know. Or something like that.* ***That you are having more sex or more boyfriends?*** *It was more boyfriends, it was like that. But if you are only having one boyfriend then you don't have to go there, because I was having a friend of mine, who used to go there but she wasn't a close friend of mine, we were just in the same age group, she used to go there.*

Erikson (1963:262) talks about this "clannishness" of adolescents and their exclusion of those seen to be different from them, as shown by Tandi's group of peers.

For Sandy, it was more important to maintain her mother's acceptance. She therefore, chose to lie to her mother, saying that she was no longer sleeping with her boyfriend and that it had been a mistake. Sandy's mother seemed to be sending a strong message to Sandy about sexual intercourse with her response as Sandy explains:

> *My mum had become extremely religious as well and in her belief it was wrong and it didn't happen. My values had changed from the time that I was very religious. My mum's hadn't. In the bible it says that if you are a Christian then you are not suppose to be with a non-Christian. Now Rich, who is not interested in going to church and in my mum's eyes was a non-Christian. So he was wrong for me. No matter all the good that he had done, he was wrong for me. He picked that up - he picked up that my mum holds that against him. Also with my mum, everything she said I didn't question it - at that stage it was "yes, Mum. No, Mum, anything you say, Mum" but that irritated him.*

This could be seen as an example of a distorted sense of independence in that she needed to defy authority (in this case her mother) in order to gain some control over her life and relationship with her partner (Brendtro et al 1990:49).

Celi also describes her feelings when she started menstruating:

> *I remember when I was 13 I started menstruating – I was too young. But again as I was saying, we were not allowed to discuss anything.* ***Was that scary for you?*** *For me it was scary, but not that scary because I often had friends talking about it.*
>
> *But when it happened to me, I had to go and tell my mother.* ***You were still at home then?*** *Ya, I was still at home, but my mother didn't tell me anything much. All she said was "No, you are old now and you are going to have this every month." She didn't tell me about pregnancy, she didn't tell me about if you have a boyfriend and sleep with him, you will fall pregnant, you need to behave and all that just that you are old and I felt that I was not given enough explanation. But I didn't know what to expect then because I really didn't know what it was all about, so I didn't have high expectations. But when I look back, I think I should have been told a lot more about the situation.*

On the other hand positive emotional elements also accompanied the start of menstruation. Feelings of pride in becoming a woman, as well as excitement were evidenced. These feelings were sometimes clouded by some fear due to lack of facts and knowledge, as Tandi explains (Appendix 1, line 35):

> *I remember when I started my periods, I hadn't discussed anything with my mother about periods or anything or all that stuff. And I got such a fright. ...*
>
> ***So that must have been quite scary for you?***
>
> *Yes, it was Andrea, although I was already aware from my peers outside who were always talking about this and I was so excited to start. And then from there, when my mother saw me, that I had started, you know she never said anything, we never discussed it, we never sat down and said "these are the pros and cons and now you are old" and everything.*

Tandi describes her perspective from a cultural point of view when she drew my attention to an interesting issue. In a letter she wrote to me in response to my invitation for comments she pointed out what seems to be gaps that have emerged between the assumptions of what African cultures see Western cultures (or white people) doing as one of their parenting functions. She assumed that in white families, parents discuss sexual information with the adolescents but that African families do not. Celi also mentioned that not talking to one's children about sexual matter was a "cultural thing", but then changed her mind as she had friends whose parents had discussed it with them. The assumption was that white families discuss sexual information openly. Mwamwenda (1995:66) points out that sexual matters are not discussed in African families and there is inadequate preparation for menstruation and other sexual experiences. In

this way, Mwamwenda (1995:66) see the cycle of secrecy continuing on to future generations. Tandi felt that this was not the case in the past and explains that traditionally (Appendix 1 page 10, line 454):

> *there is a certain ritual of "Intonjane" this is done when the girls started having their periods, to accept them as adults now.*
> *But because of the Western culture, our parents have now drifted apart from our culture. They are following the Western culture, but not fully. They don't consider doing everything done in the Western culture.*

She felt that western culture had crept into the traditional black culture but had not been replaced with what she assumed were norms for western culture: talking to adolescents about sex and sexuality. Unfortunately, it was in the letter and I was not able to continue this conversation to gain a clearer picture of what she was saying. This can also be seen as what Erikson (1963:259) refers to as "systematic instruction" that takes place in all cultures, however, may have been worn away due to the influence of Westernisation and urbanisation.

It may also be seen as creating the potential for a "broken circle" in that it is not encouraging the spirit of independence that is an important aspect of a balanced person if they are to become confident and autonomous (Brendtro et al 1990:46). A consequence of distorted independence may be defying authority (as Sandy did) or becoming involved in sexual risk behaviour (Brendtro et al 1990:49). What seems to be absent here is the concept of "guidance without interference" (Brendtro et al 1990:41).

It would seem from the women's stories and the fact that only one woman (Viv) had any form of communication with her parents regarding sexual matters that this education was insufficient. Providing insufficient information regard sexuality and sex is a direct violation of the South African Children's Charter (cited in Potgieter & Fredman in de la Rey et al 1997:106) in that it is the right of children right to receive accurate sexual information. There is then a large gap between what is actually happening and what is the ideal as seen by policy makers in this country.

Sub-category 3: Choices:

This sub-category was a descriptive code in that I considered how the women made their choices regarding starting their sexual relationship and whether or not to use contraception.

The women's decisions to become involved in a sexual relationship took place in different contexts, some within a longstanding relationship with the objective of advancing the relationship and becoming more intimate. Others however, felt that it was "time" and looked at it as gaining experience. This is in line with what Moore & Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:36) suggest in that there is no norm as to this decision, it depends upon the young person. All the women took an independent decision to begin a sexual relationship for various reasons. In the Circle of Courage philosophy independence is gained through "guidance without interference" (Brendtro et al 1990:43), however it would seem as though these decisions were made with no guidance, but rather some influence. Erikson (1963:262) saw all adolescent love as an attempt to define themselves by "projecting one's diffused ego image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified." Therefore, sexual relationships during this time are more like "genital combat" as opposed to true intimacy (Erikson 1963:264).

Celi initially chose not to get involved in relationships during her high school years despite the fact that her friends were dating. She based this decision on:

> *I was not so much into boyfriend issues, you know, love affairs and all that stuff. In Std 7 I was 14, still not interested. Std 8, Std 9, Std 10, in my high school years, still not interested. I don't know if it was because of the way that I was made. My mother was very strict, she still is and she is a single parent, you know, so she was both a mother and a father to us in the family. So I was not interested in those things, but my friends were outgoing and had a boyfriend and all that stuff, but I was not ...*

Another influencing factor on Celi's decision not to get involved in a relationship comes from the following story:

> *I think that when I was looking around and observing what was happening to people, because I remember there was this other women in the village who was a nurse and she had a house and 4 kids. It was a nice warm house, well furnished, nice relationship in the family and the father was working and all that stuff and the kids are getting an education. Then I don't know what went wrong, but the mother starting drinking and all that stuff, you know. The husband started drinking so the wife was unhappy, because you know I was a friend to the other kids from that family and the father was drinking and the mother started to join him, maybe because she was frustrated about the drinking. So maybe, I think that that was one of the things that was preventing me from engaging in a relationship. I want a serious someone, who won't drink and all that stuff because I know where it leads*

When Celi did became involved in her first sexual relationship it was because "it was time" as she had completed school and thus reached her goal:

> *I started going out with a boyfriend when I was 17, but about to turn 18 because I finished Std 10 at 17.*
> ***So is that when you were allowed to go out with boys?*** *Not that I was allowed to, but I kind of felt like it was "now time" you know. (Giggle) I don't know. There was no one who told me that "okay, it was the*

right stage now to ..." but I am ready now to ... Not because I was feeling something, like having some feelings with boyfriends or something but I felt, no, let me give it a try. So I had my first boyfriend then.

So you decided to experiment then? *Yes, but not because I was feeling something or ... you know, and I must say that like peer pressure was such a huge thing for me, because all my friends had boyfriends, but that didn't mean anything to me, you know.*

Viv had a similar experience but had made the decision earlier in her adolescence:

And then in Matric, that is when I blossomed (laugh!). That was my first sexual experience like in the practical. That is when it happened. The person wasn't significant for me at that time. I can't say it was a bad experience for me. It happened the way that I had planned it.

So you chose the way you wanted it to happen?

That is why people say I have got a warped idea of sex. I also thought that the first person I ever sleep with, even when I was still is Std 7, would never wanted it to be someone I am close to, because I don't want that whole attachment thing and all of that. I just wanted someone to get the pain bit out of the way. I thought I would focus on looking for a meaningful relationship and developing sexually and spiritually.

Tandi's experience was a gradual progression within a longstanding relationship. The relationship started, however, due to peer pressure:

I got into a relationship without discussing it with anyone, just seeing what my peers were doing and I did the same thing.

How old were you when you started your first relationship? *I was around 15 years, but anyway it wasn't that strong thing - it happened to be strong when I was about 17 years.*

... But then at the age of 17 I started, you know, I could say a bit more mature because my friends would tell me about having sex with your boyfriend and all those things. I never discussed any thing with my parents as I have told you. And then when it happened for the first time ... it messed the whole of my life, I could say. It really ruined my life because I fell pregnant the first time.

Moore & Rosenthal (in Coleman & Roker 1998:31) cite peer influence as one of the social factors playing a role in the decision to begin a sexual relationship. Their research showed that this was particularly true for women as they were seen to be more influenced by their peers than males.

The sexual relationship, however, started as a decision between herself and her boyfriend without any pressure (Appendix 1, line 290):

Whose idea was it for you to start having a sexual relationship*? Start having sex? I wasn't against it.*

So you didn't feel pressured? *No, I wasn't against it, not at all, I wasn't against it. I think I would have said something if I were, I wasn't against it.*

As Tandi states, she did not consider using contraception, she did not discuss this aspect of being sexually active with her mother or peers. Her father was a migrant labourer and returned home once a year. He was angry that Tandi had not been informed about contraception.

Potgieter & Fredman (in de la Rey et al 1997:105) believe that women and men make decisions regarding sexual intercourse on different footings, with the males holding the power. One of the five women experienced this within her relationship. The other women felt that they were not pressured in anyway and made the decision with their partner.

Kim's decision to begin a sexual relationship was also within a longstanding relationship. She describes:

> *I guess that is where the **problems** started because he was so much older than me. There wasn't hectic sexual pressure but there was a difference in what he wanted and what I was prepared to do. We used to fight about it and that caused quite a lot of tension. Um, I am not sure what to say….*

She goes on to describe the difference between her first and second relationship:

> *With my first boyfriend it was always what he wanted and his feelings, and this is what is better for us. But with my boyfriend now it was never "But we have been together for x amount of time, so this is the next step." I always knew that with "certain things" he would really be concerned with what I was thinking first. Which made it a lot easier for me, especially to open up to him again or open up to someone again. He was very undemanding, I think I would say it like that.*
>
> *....But I thought, well maybe it is safer with him (*second boyfriend) *being younger. It kind of felt, not more comfortable but safer.*

<u>Sub-category 5: Intimacy:</u>

Erikson (1963:263) believes that intimacy may only occur after the young adult has emerged from adolescence with their identity intact. They are now ready to "fuse his (or her) identity with that of others." Intimacy is thus a readiness and capacity "to commit (oneself) to concrete affiliations and partnerships and to develop the ethical strength to abide by such commitments, even thought they may call for significant sacrifices and compromises" (Erikson 1963:263). Four of women in this sample chose to remain in a longstanding relationship for periods of time. Gilligan (in Kroger 1998:33) suggests that identity and intimacy occur concurrently with women. However, as Sandy pointed out, she used her relationships to assist her in creating a positive self-esteem and therefore may be seen initially as an example of an adolescent seeking identity. Later, closeness developed:

*But Rich was different - Rich wasn't a church guy. He went to school x (*a prestigious boys school*) but wasn't one of the main guys at school. He was one of the average ... actually I didn't know at that time that Rich was the top student. To me Rich was an arb (arbitrary) person - just a normal person - and he had a girlfriend at that stage. From speaking to him over time I thought, "oh, this is actually a nice guy" and then um...*

... At that stage I thought that Rich and I would last for two or three months because he was not from the popular crowd - so still my self-image and the importance of that to me. ***You needed him to be popular?*** *- Yes, so that I could be accepted. So I thought we I will give him two or three months and then it would end - little did I know..*

So how long has your relationship with Rich been? *In October it will be 5 years, but of those 18 months we have been in the same town - the other times have been a holiday or what ever. It is scary to think, because we have lived our own lives and yet as much as I love Rich, I like Rich. I like what he believes in and I like what he stands for and he is my friend.*

She describes their closeness as follows:

Rich ... what ever I do, even if he disagrees, he will always support me, you know he has always been there. Regardless of what I have done. Even if it is over the phone, I can just pick up the phone and say "Rich, this is the story" and he will be there ...

Kim's intimate relationship ended in heartache highlighting the dangers of investing oneself in one relationship. She warns about it later:

What were you afraid of?

Like someone… The more you invest in someone the more they have the power to hurt you. I didn't know if I could take that chance again. And knowing someone like that and they know you and then all of a sudden there was just nothing. Obviously there were reasons and that. I don't know… I don't know.

... I would be very much in favour of saying "don't get involved too young" – I know I tell my sisters that all the time "Don't get involved, you are too young!" (laughing). Is that what you would have like to have done? Ya, I think so. I know I have learned from it – I have to see it as a learning experience. But it is not something that … I don't know if it was just like that for me, but I wouldn't want anyone at that age to go through that. I think that you have to be emotionally ready, psychologically ready for something as serious as that. ***What made it so serious for you – the first relationship?*** *I guess it was the identity of his love – he made me everything to him and that was big pressure, because … he kind of based his world around me. Then the whole thing was about him being ready and yet I hadn't made up my mind and not knowing if anything went wrong where to go or what I would do or … Long silence.*

To some degree this "identity of love" that Kim experienced may be seen as what Erikson (1963:262) describes as an adolescent love being one's attempt to define oneself by projecting "one's diffused ego image on another and be seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified." He may then

question if this experience was in fact an example of intimacy or of seeking identity. Kim's relationship also highlights the role a sense of belonging (an aspect of the Circle of Courage in Brendtro et al 1990:37) played in her relationship. When her boyfriend made her "his whole world" she felt attached and loved. However, it also highlights the devastation that can occur when the attachment ends.

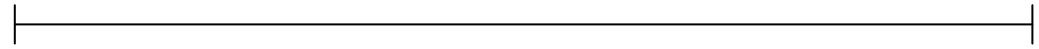
Category 2: Belonging: Inclusion vs. Exclusion

The second category became evident very early in the analysis and it involves the need of the young women to feel as though they belong or fit into various groups (or properties). I was very aware that the name given to this category is one that is used in the principles of the Circle of Courage. Strauss and Corbin (1990:68) call this a "borrowed name" and warn against this technique as words bring with them "commonly held meanings." I remained aware of this and to make clear my understanding of the word I have stated this understanding and added an extra part to the category name i.e. inclusion vs. exclusion.

The properties that emerged within this category were peers, family and boyfriends and the dimensions were whether they felt that they were accepted, included and/or fitted in or on the other hand whether they felt left out or excluded. The theme of belonging was very strong in all the women's stories.

Property 1: Peers

All the subjects spoke about the need or desire to fit into their social peer group and their fear of being different. Therefore, the dimensions on the continuum were as follows:



Fitting in - included — Not fitting in - excluded

(Normal) — (Feeling different)

At different times during their adolescence all the subjects referred to their desire to fit in or be normal within their peer group. Fitting in or not fitting in was often directly linked to whether or not she was dating or whom she was dating. Kim, for example, felt different from her friends as

she was the only one who had been in a long term relationship. She felt alone and that they did not understand her and would have liked to have had someone to talk to:

> *I was very hesitant to approach my friends, because none of them had had a boyfriend for as long as I had, so I didn't think that they would understand. And I remember feeling quite insecure about where to go and who's opinion to ask and who's advise to find out*
>
> *It was quite hard because they could never understand, and I knew they didn't understand and I didn't expect them to, even though I would have liked them to.*
>
> *The first one, they weren't really a big part, I guess because I didn't approach them.* ***Was that difficult for you?*** *Yes, very difficult. Yes, as I said before, it was very lonely. You kind of feel very alienated, especially when things are hard. You want to talk through things but there is no-one there – or it felt like there was no one there.*
>
> *It was quite hard because they (peers) could never understand, and I knew they didn't understand and I didn't expect them to, even though I would have liked them to. Even small things like why I would spend so much time with him and not them. My whole life/social life changed. Before I used to spend all my time with my friends and when we were out together the focus would be on us and developing us*

Towards the end of her first relationship, Kim felt more part of her peer group with regards to speaking to them about boyfriends as they had now started dating more seriously and to some degree joined her in that aspect.

Tandi's experience of "fitting in" occurred in the opposite order. Initially she felt very normal and part of her group (Appendix 1, line 252):

> *I remember if somebody had done that sort of hairstyle, I would also want to do that hairstyle. We used to buy the same T-shirt. Not same, same, same but you know, but t-shirts so that we could look a bit like each other.*
>
> *I started having close friends, you know. Maybe we would be as a group; maybe we would be seen as the big 4 or the big 3 you know.*

However, there were times when she felt different from her peers due to what they knew and were exposed to (Appendix 1, line 255):

> *You know, with some of my peers, they used to go to big cities for their holidays. I never went to the city for the holiday and so when I compared myself with them I would say that they were a bit more beautiful, not beautiful but because they know a lot, they have been to big cities. You know they know a lot, when they were talking about City A, I had never been to City A. So I was a bit inferior when I compared myself to them.*

Tandi was "expelled" from that group and no longer fitted in when she fell pregnant (Appendix 1, line 66):

> *I didn't associate with my peers anymore, I stayed in doors.*
>
> *I remember at school they didn't allow pregnant pupils ....*

...what I didn't understand was, if maybe they were not showing their true feelings about it. You know, they should give their support, they should be close to me, but they were not so close. You know they never even discussed anything with me but they would gossip about it. So you know more gossip makes you more depressed you know ....

This "expulsion" drove Tandi into new groups and friendships, ones where she felt more supported and accepted:

The friend who gave me support was not one that I grew up with, I only knew her when I was doing my matric, because she was from ...(a nearby city) ... *and went over to do her matric in that school – we were in the same school*

Celi expresses feelings of being different simply because she was not interested in boys:

.... I was not interested in those things, but my friends were outgoing and had a boyfriend and all that stuff, but I was not. I started going out with a boyfriend when I was 17, but about to turn 18 because I finished Std 10 at 17

She felt that in order to fit in she had to listen to her friends stories of their boyfriends but did not feel pressurised to actually have a boyfriend:

I kind of felt like I was fitting into their schedule and stuff and they would talk about their boyfriends and I would listen and I would laugh when I had to laugh. But I didn't feel like I was obliged that I had to share something, because you know I knew very well that I didn't have a boyfriend and they knew very well that I didn't have a boyfriend. You know boyfriend stuff and me were like two separate things. So, they accepted me and I accepted them. There was not pressure on me to fall in love and have boyfriends and all that type of thing.

She was also different because she achieved in her school work. This was a conscious decision to be different in order to achieve her goal:

I was the one who in my group of friends, my cast, the one who did pass. They failed. They failed their Std 8, the others failed their Std 9. I was the only one who came up to Std 10 and all that.

Because I was not easily influenced or encouraged by other people from outside. ***That is quite unusual for a teenager?*** *Ya, it is, that is why I am thinking that maybe I was abnormal (laughing).*

Viv felt different from her friends as she conducted herself and relationships differently from how they did. Her peers did not know who she was dating at any particular time; she dated different boys – they were all out of school and much older; and she did not allow herself to become emotionally involved in the relationship and could therefore remain in control and would not be hurt if/when it ended:

By the time I got to high school, I started dating boys who were out of school. So that is what it was like for me. I wasn't like most of my friends. They never knew with whom I was going out with, unless they saw me

with that person. I found that I was different from my other friends. I never liked lovey-dovey cards and the flowers and my friends all were like that. I don't know. For me, I was different. I found that I knew a lot more than my friends, especially in terms of the theory of relationships and sex and all that. Some of them who were sexually active would come to me and say… With me, I just had practical, I mean theoretical stuff and they were into the practical stuff, but they still didn't know much.

However, she does express a need to be "in" or seen as popular:

I don't think it was pressure about being in a relationship, but it was more of when you see people and all the popular girls and I would think that it would be nice to be part of that and be recognised as one of the popular girls at school.

Unlike Tandi, Viv chose to exclude herself from her social setting after the birth of her child:

For a long while I didn't get involved with anyone. After I had the child and everything, um…. What happened? People didn't dump me or anything. There were still those people who were there for me. I had to tell myself to just hang on – I have got someone else to worry about, just hang on in terms of getting serious with someone.

Sandy placed a large amount of emphasis on her need to be seen as popular. Initially she felt that she was part of the "in-group" but moving cities disrupted this for her. She struggled to make friends and felt for a long time that she did not belong to a peer group. By changing her behaviour when she moved cities, she had to change the kind of peer group that she would fit into:

At that stage I was in the "in-group" so it was very important to be with the right guy, you had to do the thing and wear the right clothes. Coming to City A everything changed. City A is extremely clique, and with people moving from primary school straight through to high school they had made their friends. So it was a big thing for me to come in ...

When I first got to City A I tried to fit into the "in-group" at that stage and it didn't work. In city B it was fine for me, I was drinking and I was smoking and doing the cool thing to do. When we left I decided that that was it - I didn't want to do that anymore. So I got over the rebellion there, but that was what they were doing here too, but I decided that that wasn't me - I didn't want that. So then I tried another group, but then I became very withdraw – when they went out I wouldn't go out ...

She links her lack of fitting into a group to her low self esteem. Later, when she was in a close peer group and a strong relationship she felt that her self esteem was far higher:

*It (*self-esteem*) was also, I think, quite low, because of the fact that I couldn't find friends - I struggled to find friends ...*

Rich's best friend was going out with my best friend at that stage. At that stage her and I, we were close. That was my one friend that I had made.

I had got involved in things at school. So the church thing became secondary and I had found myself at school.

Freeman (1993:159), in his assessment of Erikson's work with South African adolescents in mind, felt that "identifications with age mates and leadership figures outside and family are part of this (identity development) process ...(and may even) ... overidentify with their peer sub-group and with heroes of their choice." Balk (1995:280) echoes this, stressing that there are high expectations of conformity amongst peers.

Although most of the women felt that they needed to belong to their peer group, none of them had what would have been viewed as a distorted need to belong. In some instances, however, they felt a sense of belonging was absent to some degree. This caused feelings of loneliness and isolation when they felt that their peer group did not understand them (as suggested by Brendtro and others (1990:47)). Some women (Tandi and Celi) chose to focus their attention on gaining a sense of mastery at the expense of being part of the in-group. They chose to do well as school (Tandi and Celi) and to be a good mother (Tandi). This brought about respect of a different and perhaps more adult sort.

Property 2: Family:

Family inclusion vs. exclusion was a very prominent theme throughout Sandy's story. She constantly referred to various subsystems (father & step-mother; siblings, herself and mother; mother and step-father) and who belonged to them or were being excluded from them at different times during her adolescence. Her father was generally seen as an outsider although she states that she felt that he rejected her. She was asked to make a choice regarding the membership of his subsystem, a choice between her father and her brother:

> *I got a letter from my dad and in the letter he said to me that I had to choose - that is how I read it - my dad says that is not what he meant. So I sat down and I thought about it - it took me back many years - when I was very young I used to do ballet and my dad never used to come and watch me do my little concerts. My dad never came school prize-givings - my dad was never there - and so I thought to myself "Why must I take his side?* Matt *has always been there!"*

She also recalls, looking back at her experiences over time, the feelings that came to mind were those of heartache and hurt. My understanding of this is all the changes and breakdown that occurred over time due to rejection and inclusion/exclusion:

> *The immediate feeling that come to mind is "hurt". My mum and I were talking the other day and our little family (when we speak about our family, we speak about my Mum, my brother and I, because we spent so much*

> *time together) we have been through a lot. We have had a lot of heartache, we have had a lot of things said to us and done to us and I was hurt, I was often hurt. And yet, I don't look ... if I look back at my life, I don't see myself as always unhappy. I have a lot of good memories. Definitely hurt, but I don't want to look back and think "oh my goodness I spent my whole childhood being unhappy" because I wasn't unhappy.*

She did not regard her step-father as part of the "little family" and Sandy and her brother showed the lack of membership by not attending the wedding.

> *If I could say to you that the relationship ... someone asked my mum the other day "How do your kids treat your husband?" and her and answer was "they respect him because he is my husband" and that is exactly it.*
> *They have been married for 5 years or something and been together for ... I really don't know. And I didn't go to the wedding either, neither did Matt. He is very .... I don't know how to explain my relationship with him. He irritates me and he drives me mad. He is a male chauvinist flat out, his whole life is that a woman is meant to be in the kitchen.*

These difficulties within blended families are highlighted by McWhirter & Jeffries (1998:47) drawing attention to the struggles with redefining roles in the family and coping with new relationships. Brendtro and others (1990:47) also point out some of the behaviours and feelings of those who do not see themselves belonging: feeling guarded, rejected, lonely, isolated and distrustful. It would seem that these run true for Sandy in her situation within her "families" of different forms.

Celi expressed her experience of membership of a large extended family and its benefits, but also the difficulty of having an excluded member, a father:

> *... I quite enjoyed the environment that I was in because we were a big – you know a large group of kids at home and we laughed, we talked, we learned to share all our things. ... Yes, but it was only when we were discussing these issues that I realised that maybe a certain element is missing: the father. But at the time I couldn't feel it because my mother was doing everything for us like finances and everything – like bank loans and everything that we needed.*

Celi's extended family situation is an example of the African culture where membership is extended to all those around the family, providing support, information and a sense of sharing. This is similar to Brendtro and others' (1990:37) description of the Sioux traditional values highlighting the sense of community and belonging. However, there is a sense of someone missing (father) in this female dominated home, missing the support that may be accompanied by having a father present.

Another aspect of family membership or inclusion is that of being accepted into the boyfriend's family. Kim expressed this membership with her first boyfriend's family saying:

> *It was kind of like I became part of his family. I loved his folks. I used to spend quite a lot of time with them and I was still good friends with his sister. So we used to go on family holidays and I would spend Christmas with him. I did everything with him.*

She also expresses how difficult it was in her second relationship when she was not as accepted by his parents and they had a different life style creating different boundaries for their son:

> *... his parents are very, um, what is the word ... they are Afrikaans and quiet conservative. Their lives are quite structured. They aren't rigid, but they like to have all their ducks in a row type of thing. So that was very different getting used to that.*

Sandy also had similar experiences in her different relationships, fitting in to some families but not others.

> *Funnily enough, speaking about his mum - we didn't get on. His dad and I got on, but she didn't like me. I wasn't good enough for her son... So* Rich *was the one that she relied on. And then here I come along and I was taking her son away. Because you also relied on him? Very much on him - very difficult. It was difficult for him because she didn't like me. So whenever they did a family thing I said I am not doing this, because I couldn't handle the tension between us.*

In Viv's experience, she feels that she was excluded from his family. This had a different effect upon their relationship, it created a challenge to make the relationship work:

> *His family don't like me much. They are putting a negative pressure on us in that they sort of expect us to break up. But that is not the way that he wants it. So he has also got that pressure to make it work. So his pressure is being reversed. They want us to break up. That pushes him to make it work. With me everyone wants it to work and therefore I have to make it work.*

Viv's father was excluded from the family when he left and went to Rehab. Her parents divorced. The information that Viv was pregnant was withheld from her father. She does not inform him (out of fear) even though she feels that it is important to do:

> *When he eventually found out.* ***So you kept it from him for a long time?*** *Ya, because my father had to go to Rehab and all of that.* ***So he was involved in his own business?*** *Ya, but I never told him. I think my mother did after they were separated. And I think that he went over seas – I can't remember. Anyway, she decided that she must just tell him so that it was not a shock. But everyone around us knew. So she told him and then eventually I spoke to him and he said that he was offended by the fact that I hadn't told him.*

These stories, once again, illuminate the need that these young women had to belong to their extended social network. The theme of belonging is evident in both Erikson's model (in Jensen 1985:70) in terms of seeking identity and belonging to a group as well as in the Circle of Courage in terms of belonging to a community (Brendtro et al 1990:37).

Finally, in some instances some tensions arose within the boy/girl relationship– there was a need to be included in their family as well as belonging to her current relationship. Kim expresses this tension when she says:

> *I think I just became more rebellious – the more they* (parents) *said "no" the more I wanted to do it. Um, not the more I wanted to do it but the more I wanted to see him. But then again, I wanted their approval as well. I wanted them to like him, you know, as much as I did.*

Sandy also experienced this conflict when she told her mother that she had become sexually active with her partner. Her mother's response was so horrified that she feared that she may be excluded from that relationship and so chose to deceive her mother in order to maintain both relationships:

> *What had happened was the first time that* Rich *and I slept together I told my mum. She went ballistic. My mum actually went hysterical. ... Because you see, I am her perfect daughter - it wasn't me it was* Rich*.*
> *I am scared of my mum.*
> ***What are you afraid of?***
> *You know, even to this day, before I do something, I think to myself what is my mum going to think? My mum's view of me is very important to me. I need her acceptance, I need her to say "yes, you are still all right" and I think I will have that for the rest of my life, because my mum is my mum and my dad, because they got divorced when I was 3. So my whole life my mum has been there. So this is very, very important - my mum.*
> *So after she found out, I lied and said that* Rich *and I are no longer sleeping together and that it was a big mistake and whatever so that she wouldn't hold it against me and that she would accept me. And she would also let me go out with* Rich*, because after that we weren't allowed to be alone together, we weren't allowed to do this or that so she really came down on us.*

This draws attention to what Erikson (1963:261) calls a crisis and Gouws & Kruger (1996:110) call the work of adolescence – separating from the family system – that often brings with it conflict and tension, testing of boundaries and the battle of the wills. The conflict and tension often exists within the young adolescent as they risk being rejected by their family or by their boyfriend.

Property 3: Boy / Girl Relationship: Being Needed:

Feeling loved and understood was a strong motivating factor for starting or staying in a relationship. Feeling loved and understood was also a part of belonging to that relationship.

Tandi talks about how she felt that she belonged in her first relationship by the simple words that he spoke (Appendix 1, line 49):

> *It started in class. We would first buy sweets for each other and he would say, "No, Tandi is mine" At first we would get shy and then ... It was just a play-thing first and then it developed like that ...*

And then describing how she felt in the relationship (Appendix 1, line 90):

> *... it was good, it was good, he was so caring, he loved me ... he was so protective, he loved me very much (laughing). We were so close and everybody approved of our relationship and said one-day maybe you will get married*

Kim talks about being completely in the relationship, but also highlights some of the difficulties that it bring:

> *I guess it was the identity of his love – he made me everything to him and that was big pressure, because ... he kind of based his world around me*

And then suddenly it ended and she was no longer the centre of his life and she experienced hurt and felt lost:

> *The kind of break up was a terrible break up. It was very sudden. It was very emotional. It was everything and then the break up and then it went from all to nothing. Even now we don't really talk much. Which is sad because we were so close. And then I wasn't with anyone for a very long time. I was very skeptical of getting involved with someone again...*
>
> *I was feeling very, very down and depressed about it. I was very unsure and uncertain. I was totally lost as to why we broke up. It was almost out of the blue. I was angry as I thought that I deserved an explanation. I also missed him. I was quite lonely. When you spend practically everyday with someone for 2 years and then… I wouldn't say I was lonely, but it felt like something was missing.*

For Viv, it was very important for her to feel understood within the relationship, this helped her feel in control:

> *He was a nice guy in that everything we did was at my pace. He understood that I was a lot younger that he was. I think he was in matric or the first year in varsity. He was the best. He understood me – where I was coming from. If I felt uncomfortable about doing anything we wouldn't do it.*

Sandy was careful to choose a boy who would be acceptable to her peers and therefore predicted a short-lived relationship with one particular boy who was not part of the "in group":

> *At that stage I thought that* Rich *and I would last for two or three months because he was not from the popular crowd - so still my self-image and the importance of that to me.* ***You needed him to be popular?*** *Yes, so that I could be accepted. So I thought we I will give him two or three months and then it would end - little did I know...*

Erikson (1963:262) sees the experience of adolescent love as an attempt to define one's self and develop an identity. It would seem that all of these women were attempting to define themselves within their relationships; whether it was to "be in control" as it was for Viv, or to be seen as popular as it was for Sandy. These were all seen as identity formulation. However, it also, once again, stresses how important it was for these young women to belong within their relationships and to their "communities" of peers as Brendtro and others (1990:37) express in terms of the Circle of Courage.

Category 3: Identity

Moore and Rosenthal (1993:30) understand Erikson's meaning of identity as:

> "a coherent sense of self, based on a commitment to present and future roles, ideology, and values regarding future relationships. Ego identity develops out of a gradual integration of all identifications, so that adolescents who move satisfactorily through this stage have an inner confidence about who they are and where they are going. The opposite is identity diffusion, the inability to co-ordinate past identifications with new roles, the inability to find a niche in life, and the confusion and alienation which accompanies this state."

The category of "identity" is a descriptive theme and the properties are: "how I see myself" (self perceptions) and "how I perceive others see me."

Property 1: How I perceive myself:

For this property I tracked issues concerning descriptive words that they used to describe themselves in relationships as well as issues concerning their self-esteem and what they felt they did well or did

not do so well. Table 2 shows a matrix of the women's responses, and they are then discussed more fully linking them to the literature.

Table 2: The women's feeling about themselves:

	Celi	Tandi	Kim	Sandy	Viv
Feelings re self	▪ I was a strong person ▪ I felt like a special person ▪ Abnormal	▪ Good mother ▪ Proud of self for succeeding in school work	▪ I love too much	▪ Need to be with popular guys/ groups ▪ Low self esteem – built up in strong relationship	▪ Controlled ▪ In control ▪ Different from my peers

Celi had a very clear picture of herself and how she coped with adolescence:

> *... that I was quite like a strong person, a strong individual who can really stand up on what she believes in or he believes in. That is what I can say about myself and I say like, I don't like to congratulate myself or stuff, but it is like a good quality, it is a good quality to believe in yourself and do what you want to do rather than being pressurised by others ...*
>
> *... Because I was not easily influenced or encouraged by other people from outside.* ***Is that quite unusual for a teenager?*** *Ya, it is, that is why I am thinking that maybe I was abnormal (laughing).* ***Because you were strong?*** *Ya*

Erikson, as interpreted by Freeman (1993:160) saw the identity with age mates as part of the process of identity development. However, Celi states her independence and ability to not succumb to peer pressure, a concept often associated with adolescence, so much so that she considers herself to be "abnormal".

Tandi saw herself as being a good mother at that time as well as achieving in her school work (Appendix 1, line 186/190):

> *I was doing well, Andrea. I was such a good mother*

However, she constantly compared herself with her peers in order to develop her identity and status. For example the issue about not being able to go to the urban areas for holidays, a desirable thing that her friends did which made her feel (Appendix 1, line 259):

> *... a bit inferior when I compared myself to them. But, at least, I was doing quite well with my books when it came to bookwork – Laughing.* ***So you compared well in that area****? Ya, in that area****.***

Both Tandi and Celi use their achievements to define themselves acknowledging the importance of the "spirit of mastery" in that they had done something well, felt competent and motivated (Brendtro

et al 1990:48). They also displayed a sense of independence in that they were willing to be different and autonomous from their peers in pursuit of achieving well as school (Brendtro et al 1990:49). When Tandi fell pregnant, her identity changed very suddenly (Appendix 1, line 59):

> *And then after that (*pregnancy) *I became a grown up so quickly, so that is why I said that I didn't enjoy it that much ...*

Kim defines herself in terms of how she was in her relationship:

> *I guess I hung in there for a long time.*
>
> *... What else ... I guess I was a good girlfriend – I never cheated on him.*

Kim also describes herself as being rebellious but needing her parent's approval at the same time (showing her need for independence as well as her need to belong):

> *I think I just became more rebellious – the more they said no the more I wanted to do it. Um, not the more I wanted to do it but the more I wanted to see him. But then again, I wanted their approval as well. I wanted them to like him, you know, as much as I did.*

Sandy explains how she saw herself building her self-esteem:

> *The more I spent time with him the more I realised that he was a human being, he didn't have to be a part of the popular group, and the more my self-image got better so ...* ***How did it get better like that?*** *Because* Rich*, he would encourage me - he would pick up what was happening in my life. He accepted me for who I was. Also you know, coming from a broken home with my father living in City B and my brother living in City* B *you know it broke me down.* Rich *accepted that - he accepted that ...*
>
> *... When he wrote to me he made me feel important, I will never forget one of the first letters he wrote to me he was doing maths and it wasn't 1 + 1 it was 1 +* Sandy *and that made me feel good.*

Sandy goes on to talk about how her self-esteem continues to develop - also in relation to those around her:

> *I felt that I had been rejected by my dad...*
>
> *... But um... I didn't feel too bad and by that stage I had made good friends at school. I had got involved in things at school ...*
>
> *...* Rich *and I were strong; my mum and I were strong. So I didn't feel that bad. I was hurt and I was angry because it is my dad, my hero, but my self-image didn't suffer. By then I felt good about me - I could accept me and I could love me.*

Viv saw herself as being very different from her friends as she conducted herself differently within relationships:

> *I wasn't like most of my friends. They never knew with whom I was going out with, unless they saw me with that person. I found that I was different from my other friends. I never liked lovey-dovey cards and the flowers and my friends all were like that. I don't know. For me, I was different. I found that I knew a lot more than my friends, especially in terms of the theory of relationships and sex and all that.*

Although the women express these opinions about how they see themselves, many of them are defined by the people around them. This draws attention to what Erikson (1963:128) suggests is a sub-culture; where they are preoccupied with how they are seen by others. This is also relevant in the following sub-category: how others see me. This again draws attention to the concept of the Circle of Courage where the need to belong and to be accepted through one's behaviour is crucial. Their identity was linked to their relationships as opposed to simply a process or stage of development as Erikson proposes.

Property 2: How other see me:

The characteristics of this property were looking at how they felt those around them perceived them. Concerned about how others might see her, Tandi chose not ask her mother about sex (Appendix 1, line 435):

> ***What stopped you from asking your mother what you needed to know****? She was so strict. I would never have asked her.* ***What were you afraid of?*** *Yo! (Laughing) Andrea, I was scared of that woman, yoo, no …Scared that she might ... no … she would say … what is the word to use? … she would say, " those are bad things, those are bad things that you are asking me about. Where did you learn those things?" And all that stuff …* ***So she would think bad of you if asked about those things?*** *Yes, definitely. I would never ask her!*

When asked why she didn't ask about contraception Celi responded:

> *I don't know if she thought that I was so pure and I don't know these things and maybe that I am living in a vacuum, I don't know.*

Celi saw herself as being rebellious when asking about contraception. She risked changing her mother's perception of her (being pure):

> *So all that time I thought, no, I need to open up to my mum, you know I need to know these things and all that stuff. In some way I was rebellious to her you know?* ***At that time?*** *Ya, because at that time I was starting ask about these things like, "I want to go for contraception!" "Why, what is that?" you know. She then started realising that I knew much about these things, because I had friends to talk to about these things. So, it was kind of a shock to her. But she was open enough to discuss it, but not in details you know, because I could see you know that she was shocked. She didn't expect that. I don't know if she thought that I was so pure and I*

don't know these things and maybe that I am living in a vacuum, I don't know. So then I started challenging these issues that I need to know about these things, you know.

Celi was risking changing her mother's perception of her and becoming more independent in that she was confident and assertive and taking control of what she needed to know (Brendtro et al 1990:49).

Celi's perception of how her peers saw her was as follows:

But when people told me, you know, some other guys, you know, they would come and say, "Oh, you are different" you know, "you are so self-conceited, you don't want to meet with other guys" and all that stuff and I kind of wondered then, "what is it, what is different about me because I think it is normal?" I don't see myself as like abnormal or someone who is conceited, but I just think that it is just not me, you know – I can't just do these things, you know.

The fact that Celi mentions this factor shows me that it was something that she saw as relevant. However, it would also seem that she was content with the choices that she had made regarding her adolescent relationships.

She also describes her peers as envying her, because she did what they could not do. She could focus on school and not have boyfriends:

Because if I look back again then, I could see that my other friends still envy what I did. They will always look up and say "If we did what you did, we won't be here today, we won't have babies, we won't be out of school and all that stuff."

Kim's peers told her:

... that I love too much.

While in her relationship she felt that her boyfriend saw her as his whole world, but this seemed to be a disguise for his own needs:

– he made me everything to him and that was big pressure, because ... he kind of based his world around me. Then the whole thing was about him being ready and yet I hadn't made up my mind and not knowing if anything went wrong where to go or what I would do

Viv takes a rather critical view of how others saw her:

Sometimes I think that it wasn't a need for me but for the people around me. I could have been a nicer person, because I wasn't always the most pleasant person to be with. I don't know why. Some people say that it was because I was always like a boy. I used to play rugby and cricket in the first team with the boys and stuff like that. So that is the only thing: maybe I could have been a nicer person or kinder to my friends. For example,

> *if someone came to me with something I thought was ludicrous or something that happened to them then I would just say, "Listen, that is rubbish, have you considered this or this." I could have been nicer with regards to my approach.*

The elements in this sub-category all assist in creating and developing the young womens' self image and identity, whether they were positive or negative. Other factors mentioned by the participants were: mastery (how well they did things), independence (the decisions that they took to assert themselves with their parents or their peers) and the extent to which they belonged (within their family, or relationship with peers or boyfriend). All these aspects form part of the Circle of Courage (Brendtro et al 1990). The focus of Erikson's (1963:261) stage of identity can be seen as: how the young person feels they appear in the eyes of those around them compared with how they see themselves and where this leads them with regards to choice of career. This negates some of the important sexuality issues raised by these women and relationship issues and how it links to their identity. Their focus is not necessarily only on career choice but also on themselves in relational terms. This is in line with Roberts and Newton's criticism of Erikson cited in Laubscher & Klinger (in de la Rey et al 1996:64). They felt that his theory was based on research conducted by males with male adolescents and therefore its claim that young people at this stage are only focused on career choice is based on masculine needs and identity. They found that female adolescents were inclined to be more focused on maintaining relationships. Given that all the women interviewed in this study had chosen to pursue tertiary education indicates that they did pay some attention to career issues, but it was also evident that relationships were as important as was their need to belong.

Category 4: Support System:

I discovered that the young women chose different people (the properties) to turn to in their time of need, who they would ask for assistance, help, advice or comfort at different times in their adolescence. The dimensions that I considered for these properties were external (people outside of the family unit) and internal (immediate family members) support systems.

A general trend did not emerge, but rather, they turned to people who were available to them and who they trusted at that time in their lives or relationships.

Kim felt that she was able to turn to her family (internal) support system in her "year of glum" when she was recovering from her "traumatic" and "hectic" break-up from her first boyfriend.

However, it is interesting to note that she did not see them as her support system when she was feeling alone and isolated with regards to information regarding contraception and sexual matters. For this she turned to an external source (Family Planning Clinic) which she did not find very accepting and felt as though she was being judged.

During the second relationship, her family seemed to be there to support her in her decision to start it:

> *... Mom always used say "are you sure?" and "if you think it is right then she will support me what ever I do. That reassured me that no matter what happens, if it happens to end badly they would be there for me.*

During Celi's first relationship, she also felt unsure and alone – wondering if she was abnormal:

> *I felt quite alone because I really didn't know how it was like, you know? To have a relationship or what to expect or what not to expect. So I was all by myself and I had to experience all those things alone. And I felt not open enough to discuss it, because I didn't know they were normal and things like that, because it was the first time.* ***So sometimes you felt quite uncomfortable to actually talk about what was actually happening in this relationship, is this right or is this wrong?*** *Ya, because I felt that other people were just having smooth relationships and all that stuff – maybe I was just ...* ***So you felt that maybe there was something wrong with you that this was not going smoothly?*** *Yes, but I got to discuss these things when I had already broken up with my first boyfriend and then I said, okay, these things happen to other people as well.* ***What helped you to realise that?*** *I compare myself to other people, because when my friends were telling stories around their boyfriends, they were similar to these stories and ooh, I thought they were abnormal, I thought they were the right stories, I thought they were common for everyone.*

And when trying to decide whether to move out of one relationship and into another she turned to her cousin-sister (internal):

> *I think I was helped by my cousin, my cousin sister, my younger cousin sister – I am a year older than her – and she kept on saying, "no, this is a guy, I know that this one is giving you problems, just give him a try" and all this and I said "no, no, no, but I love this one" (you know the first one). "No just give him a try, because I know what you have been through with this first guy" and all that stuff. So I tried it and it worked.*

Tandi's support system changed as her identity and circumstance changed. During her early adolescence she was drawn to her peers in the "T-shirt gang". However, when her role changed to being a mother she seemed to rely more on her mother, one close friend as well as upon herself (Appendix 1, line 411):

> *The friend who gave me support was not one that I grew up with, I only knew her when I was doing my matric, because she was from City A and went over to do her matric in that school – we were in the same school*

> *But you know the way that she gave me support; she was like my own sister. Maybe she was like that because she could see that I was really hurt*

For Sandy, her support system was her brother (internal) who she went to for advice:

> *My brother. Matt has been very important ...*
> *I would phone Matt and ask him for advise before I spoke to Uncle Bill (Uncle Bill being my step-father). So, ya, he must have been.*

Viv does not talk much about her support system except when she had had her baby and it affected her life style:

> *For a long while I didn't get involved with anyone. After I had the child and everything, um…. What happened? People didn't dump me or anything. There were still those people who were there for me. I had to tell myself to just hang on – I have got someone else to worry about, just hang on in terms of getting serious with someone*

With the significance of peer relationships increasing (Gouws & Kruger 1996:117), one would expect the young person to turn to this new source of support in a time of need. However, it is interesting to note that this is not always the case. In some circumstances they felt more comfortable, or felt it necessary, to approach other sources (for example parents, extended family or the Family Planning Clinic). Brendtro and others (1990:59) point out that at a time of crisis, adolescents and even young adults are likely to turn to their parents. This again draws attention to the way in which young women exert their independence in their decision making (Brendtro et al 1990:49).

Tandi also draws attention to choosing a support system where she felt that she belonged referring to her friendship as being like her sister as well as her friend's willingness to generously give of her self and her support (Brendtro et al 1990:37-44).

Category 5: External Social Influences:

The attributes or characteristics (properties) of the category: social influences are those people or institutions that, in some way, impacted on their relationships. These were:

- Family:
  - her family

- his family
- Community:
  - Church
  - Clinic
  - School

Family: Her Family:

Kim describes her family's influence and how it differed in her two relationships:

> *Well they weren't very happy about it. Dad was very much, well, Mom said that he was the protector and wanted to his daughter to be protected and wasn't very happy about it. That was the first one.*
>
> ***Why do you think that was?***
>
> *... But I can see now their concerns and why they were so anti it I guess.*
>
> ***How did they show their concerns?***
>
> *At first they didn't say much. They were quite happy to meet him and see what he was like...*
>
> *.... They used to chat and that but he was reserved. He would check him out and that.*
>
> ***Did they influence any of your decisions in your relationship?***
>
> *I think I just became more rebellious – the more they said no the more I wanted to do it. Um, not the more I wanted to do it but the more I wanted to see him. But then again, I wanted their approval as well. I wanted them to like him, you know, as much as I did.*

And the second relationship:

> *... the second time around they were also very skeptical.*

Sandy's mother influenced where she developed relationships when she first moved to City A. She explains:

> *My mum was very strict and at that stage "KN*" (local night club*) was the place to go, and my mum wouldn't let me go, ...*
>
> *... So I got very involved in the church. Very much an 180 degree turn.*

Celi's family did not seem to influence her actual relationships as much as influencing her decision not to have relationships until she was 17 years old. Celi's message was that boyfriends brought:

> *... I think I was afraid of the consequences, because I know the results of ... what comes after having a boyfriend: you will fail, you will get pregnant, you know all that stuff so it was big issues that were making me distant you know.*

Also, the hierarchy of the family affected whether she asked questions for clarity or not:

> *You see the problem is that your mother is your mother – the parent is the parent and if you say something, you say it. You are not allowed to ask, you know, she is the expert or he is the expert. I don't know – I didn't have any questions to ask – I didn't have any questions in my mind because I was just taking whatever my mother said and saying that this is right – there is nothing else, nothing beyond, nothing else!*

Tandi's family was not involved with whether or not she was able to have a boyfriend or the decision that she made during the relationship. However, Tandi feared her mother, and this impacted on some of the choices that she made regarding going back to school and meeting her expectations (Appendix 1, line 125):

> *My mother, you know was a strict person, a strict person. But you know, behind that she is a caring person. But she was, you know because I was the oldest, she wanted me to do everything according to ... you know when you are the oldest you have to be the role model to your sisters. That is what she wanted from me. She always wanted me to do the right thing. And I was so scared of her, really. But I could see that, you know, she was better than my father because I wasn't that very much close to my father because at least she had that caring part although you know she would always shout at me and that, but she was a caring person.*

Viv's also says that during her adolescence her family did not get involved in her relationships at all. This relationship is the first that they have been interested in:

> *None. Except for this one. Absolutely none, because even if guys came over to my place, my mom would never know whether I am going out with that person or not. She never got involved. Even my brother wasn't interested – he never got involved. But with this guy, everyone knows him and my mom likes him ...*
> *... For me, it puts a lot of pressure on me to make it work. It puts a lot of pressure on me, because I know that everyone likes him. If we break up everyone will want to know why, what happened. There will be so many people involved in this relationship. More than anything else is the pressure to make it work.*

<u>Family: His Family</u>:

Kim discusses how her second boyfriend's family impacted upon their relationship by setting boundaries of how and when they spent time together:

> *It was hard because he is very much a "mommy's boy" so they were ... not reluctant to let him go, but I suppose that is natural, but they kind of – wouldn't allow him to go out; I had to be gone by a certain time, we couldn't see each other on school nights. They would like come first and then me – it was school first and very much family orientated. It was hard because I felt that he was quite old enough to make his own decisions. If he wanted to stay out until quarter past twelve and not twelve then it was OKAY, you know!*

Viv also felt that her boyfriend's parents were impacting on the relationship by placing pressure on them:

His family don't like me much. They are putting a negative pressure on us in that they sort of expect us to break up. But that is not the way that he wants it. So he has also got that pressure to make it work. So his pressure is being reversed. They want us to break up. That pushes him to make it work. With me everyone wants it to work and therefore I have to make it work.

Once again, this draws attention to the pull between the young person's need to be independent (making her own choices) and at the same time her need to belong to and be accepted by both her family and by his parents and families. These are both aspects of the Circle of Courage (Brendtro et al 1990:37-46).

Community Influences:

The influences in the community that the women mentioned were: the church (Sandy) and the Clinic (Kim and Tandi).

Community Influences: Church:

Sandy talks about the church and how it created a place for her to belong when she arrived in City A and had no friends. She describes this time as being very happy:

So I got very involved in the church. Very much an 180 degree turn. It was very difficult for me because I didn't want to be here - I wanted to be in City B. My dad was going to fight for me in a custody battle, but that didn't follow through. So being involved in the church, I was actually happy, very, very happy.

Later in her adolescence the church influenced her relationship with her mother. After telling her mother that she had become sexually involved with her longstanding boyfriend she later chose to lie to her mother to protect her relationship with her boyfriend:

... the fact that my mum had become extremely religious as well and in her belief it was wrong and it didn't happen. My values had changed from the time that I was very religious. My mum's hadn't. In the bible it says that if you are a Christian then you are not suppose to be with a non-Christian. Now Rich*, who is not interested in going to church and in my mum's eyes was a non-Christian. So he was wrong for me. No matter all the good that he had done, he was wrong for me. He picked that up - he picked up that my mum holds that against him. Also with my mum, everything she said I didn't question it - at that stage it was "yes, Mum. No, Mum, anything you say, Mum" but that irritated him. If it was his folks he would say "Yes or No" and speak his mind whereas I wouldn't, instead I would moan to him.*

What prevented you from speaking your mind?

I am scared of my mum.

... So after she found out, I lied and said that Rich *and I are no longer sleeping together and that it was a big mistake and whatever so that she wouldn't hold it against me and that she would accept me. And she would also let me go out with* Rich*, because after that we weren't allowed to be alone together, we weren't allowed to do this or that so she really came down on us.*

Community Influences: Family Planning Clinic / "White House":

The second community external social influence that impacted upon some of the relationships was the Family Planning Clinic ("The White House"). The women mentioned two experiences regarding the Clinic. Firstly, Kim felt that when she needed information and advice about contraception, she felt judged and isolated. For Tandi, the clinic was called "the White House" and had a stigma attached to it:

... when we were speaking about contraception, it was a bit of a shame thing. We would say to each other - "look at that one, she is going to 'that white house.'" We used to call the clinic 'that white house'. " She is attending the clinic, she must be bad, you know" ...

... There was the feeling that if you go to the clinic, to the White House then you are a ... "slut" I don't know. Or something like that. ***That you are having more sex or more boyfriends?*** *It was more boyfriends, it was like that. But if you are only having one boyfriend then you don't have to go there, because I was having a friend of mine, who used to go there but she wasn't a close friend of mine, we were just in the same age group, she used to go there. And you know, she wasn't comfortable when she was with us because we used to say "I will never go there" or "what if an older person saw me there?" "It is a dirty thing, you can't do that. Only married people go there to ask for contraception." So no wonder we had that wrong impression about contraception, until I heard it and should have done it.*

This shows how adolescent fickleness in terms of doing the right thing to fit in or belong to the in-group impacted on Tandi. Her peer "community" regarded visiting the "white house" as dirty and this influences Tandi's decision. She initially addresses her as "a friend" and then hastens to correct it to "an acquaintance" who is seen to be doing something different or unacceptable i.e. going to the "white house". For Tandi the consequence of conforming to the in-groups behaviour was great as she fell pregnant, impacting on the rest of her life. Erikson (1963:262) mentions this "clannish" behaviour of adolescents as they test each other's fidelity and exclude those who are different in order to remain in the in group.

All the above examples show the degree to which the outside world (both micro and macro) affected or impacted upon the decisions that the women made. Erikson (1968:128) draws attention to the

importance of how others see them as opposed to how they seem themselves and this impacts on the way in which they make decisions. The aspects mentioned are part of Erikson's view of creating an identity. They also show how vulnerable young people are to external influences, both positive and negative. In some instances the external influences were protecting the young women; for example the emotional support that Kim received from her family. On the other hand these influences may be placing the young person *at risk* in that it prevents them from taking necessary action, for example not using contraception in Tandi's example.

Category 6: Role Models/ Relationship models:

This descriptive category tracked the models upon whom the women based their relationships. In some instances they looked for people who seemed to have the relationships that they wanted. Also, they became aware of what they did not want in a relationship from either parents or community members or from the media ("Soap Operas").

Kim identified both what she did not want and what she did want from her different role models:

> *I think that the most obvious one is your parents. Ya, um… I don't know. At that time things weren't really that great at home, so that wasn't really a positive influence or example. I think it was my grandparents – they have been together forever and so I thought, well, you know it can happen. They have obviously been through their hard times but they are still together and totally in love and nearly eighty*
>
> *I guess I have had so much influence from TV and that. I don't know if that had a dramatic influence on me, but I used to watch the "soaps" where everyone is breaking up and having affairs, so that is not a very positive role model.*

Tandi chose her extended family's marriage as a model (Appendix 1, line 352):

> *Um, my aunt of course, my aunt. Because you know my aunt, she was involved with one man, they got married and they are still together now. So I wanted it to be like that. As I told you I always imagined myself as a married person with one man.* ***What was her relationship like that you wanted to model it on that relationship?*** *They never quarreled in front of their children. I have never seen them fighting and doing all that stuff. I used to stay with them quite a lot. I never saw them being angry with each other. They really loved each other. It was different for my parents, because they could, usually fight in front of us, you know. It was just that they had a good relationship compared to what I was seeing in my family...*
>
> *....* ***What role did your uncle play?*** *My uncle was a loving person. He really loves his children, a lot. Is he protective of his children? Not that protective, not that protective, but he really loved them. If he comes from*

work, because you know, he wasn't working far away, he was staying at home, he would ask for his children. He would buy nice things for his children and by nice clothes for his children. Even if he was just going around the village, you know he would take his car and take his children with him. He would always just play with his children, which I never did with my father. So they were quite separate from you, so you saw your aunt and uncle playing with their children and spending quality time with them. They were like real friends with their children.

... No I think it was just my mother's relationship – I don't want it to be like that. You know my mother's and my father's relationship – I don't want it to be like that. I know that my mother is a good woman – I know her, but I just don't want my relationship to be like theirs. It wasn't a good relationship, but she stayed there because of the sake of us, I think so, you know that is why I really love her. ***Because she "nyamezela"*** *(Xhosa word for endurance – a term used by women who stay in unhappy marriages)? Yes, she "nyamezela" because of us - yes.*

Viv speaks very strongly about what she did not want (being hurt) and avoided this by not becoming attached:

I don't know. I think it was my friend's experiences. It has to be that, because with my mom or if I look at my parents for instance, when I was growing up I always saw them as being very close. They were just perfect together. Obviously they had their share of problems, but they always stuck together ...

... So I think it was my friends who got their hearts broken and all of that. I think that is where I got it from ...

... So how did that impact on the way that you were in relationships?

That just confirmed that I didn't want to get myself attached to anyone. She would say: "I want to break up with him, but I can't because I love him so much." If you think about it, he took away the love she could easily get out of the way. But now she can't because her feelings are in the way. Even if she said to him that it is over, she knows if he comes walking through that door, all those emotions will come pouring out and she will take him back.

Celi also looked at those around her as her mother was a single parent:

I didn't have ideas then modelling my relationship, but I think, because of where I come from, when I look back now at the experiences and all that stuff. I think maybe, as I have told you my mother was a single parent, maybe I was always looking for something serious, a serious boyfriend, somebody who will be a huge help for things. No, when I think now, I was looking for someone who is going to be committed, someone who is going to love me and is going to marry me so that I can have a decent life and all that stuff. And we would have a complete family, like rather like I will be the wife and he will be the husband and we would have kids like a whole family, one family, rather that have one parent missing and there is no father or different fathers to the kids and all the disorganisation and all that. So I was always looking forward to that – a stable relationship.

All the women were able to consider who they felt was a role model for them in relationships and in some cases what they did not want in a relationship. The McMaster Model (in Balk 1995:243) suggests that the structure and organisation of the family influences the behaviour of the adolescent and also serves as a forum where they learn about roles and functioning in relationships. Gouws and Kruger (1996:113) see the family as the spring board or base that sets the values and beliefs of the young person until they begin to questions these and develop their own views, as these women seem to have done. For Brokenleg (1998:13) and Brendtro and others (1990:37-38) kinship extended to all community members (where they feel as sense of belonging) with whom one came into contact and therefore learning and teaching took place through modeling by those adults and older children. These young women took note of those around them and chose what they wanted to learn from these experiences, creating what Brendtro and others (1990:41) describe as a sense of independence.

Category 7: Coping Strategies

For this category I tracked the methods used by the young women to "make it" or survive adolescence.

Celi chose to concentrate on her school books and not to get involved in a relationship until she was old enough to "manage" herself. In this way she was gaining a sense of "mastery" (Brendtro et al 1990:39) over her books first and then herself. Erikson (1963:259) describes this as the stage of Industry in that they are seeking to become productive and learn through systematic instruction (or school). She did however, get involved in peer talk about relationships but she would just listen and "fit into their schedule" laughing at the right time:

> *It was just that I told myself that I was not ready then and I didn't want to be disturbed in my studies and all that stuff, because I knew the difficulties that came with having boyfriends and not concentrating on your studies there you know.*
>
> *... That's why I thought maybe, you know, maybe that is why I thought after Std 10, that is a good time. Maybe I can manage myself and all that.*

For Kim, one of her coping strategies was to take time out for over a year, her "year of glum", in order to work through the hurt and pain from the first break-up. During this time she turned to her parents and siblings for support.

Viv's coping strategy was very clear cut and to the point: "don't get emotionally involved and then you will not get hurt!"

> *... If I got involved with anyone it would be on my terms.*

She also made sure that she constantly remained in control, cutting out aspects that could potentially bring problems or pain. She did this with her partner with whom she fell pregnant:

> *And even with the person, we didn't know each other well enough for all of that. We had only been seeing each other for 2 months or something when it happened ...*
>
> *... Part of me wanted to just wish it all away but then I just learned to live with it and cope. I would tell myself, "exclude him." I know that it was wrong but I still told myself to exclude him and then you will be just fine. And that is what I did - I never said anything to him.*

For Tandi, she focused all her energy in two places: being a good mother and doing well in her studies (Appendix 1, line 184):

> *Um, ... they say that some people, when they are depressed, they have something that they take out their depression on. Maybe I took that depression onto my books, because I was coping very well with my studies, I was doing very well.*

Tandi tells this story about how she managed through this tough period in her life (Appendix 1, line 189):

> *I was doing well, Andrea. I was such a good mother. My mother did insist that I planned to have this baby because I really loved him, so, I was doing well. It was not that easy, Andrea, because sometimes, you know ... because my mother was still a strict person. I would come back from school and she would just give me the baby and she would go out. And then you know I would have to start from the nappies, then to wash the baby, feed the baby and then I still had my homework to do. Maybe the baby would sleep at about 8 or 9. And then by 9 o' clock I would start doing my homework. Sometimes the baby would get sick and I would be writing exams the next day and all that. My mother would say "I am not going to sleep with your baby, I have slept with* <u>you</u>*, you were my baby. Each and every mother sleeps with her own baby, so you sleep with your own baby!" So it wasn't quite that good, but you know, I always console myself. I said "nobody forced me to do this, let me just suffer the consequences."*
>
> ***What did you learn from your mother from what she was telling you?***
>
> *Andrea, I have to tell you. I love what she did to me, because although I didn't understand at that time. I thought it was cruelty at that time, I thought this woman is really cruel. But now I do understand why she was doing all this.*
>
> ***Why do you think she was doing that?***
>
> *She was trying to show me that what I did was not right and if she was agreeing with me all the time then maybe I would have fallen pregnant again, because that is what happened with my other peers. She didn't want any*

one to interfere – even her sister was saying, why has Tandi got her baby on her back when she is going to the river to fetch water. She will say "No, no, no, let her carry her own baby, I used to carry my own baby, each and every mother must carry her own baby." So I really love her, I love her, because you know, I felt so strong after that. I love her, Andrea, although at that time I didn't understand it, I was angry with her, I used to cry a lot. And you know, she didn't even pity me she just said "Just cry and then after that take your baby!"

The impact of Tandi's environment was the hardship that living in a rural community brought as well as those of being a teenage mother and scholar. Through this hardship she was still able to hold a positive self-image of being a good mother and scholar as well as keep up the expectations of her family. Tandi shows a level of generosity in being a good mother, a sense of independence in doing things on her own as well as a sense of belonging to her daughter and family. Her mother assisted in creating this independence by offering what Brendtro and others (1990:41) call the principle of "guidance without interference." This sometimes seemed cruel to Tandi but she later acknowledges that it helped her in the long run (See Appendix 1 Page: 5 line 201).

In discussing some of the protective factors for youth at risk, Burt and others (1998:39) felt that individual competencies and abilities, parental competencies, as well as environmental factors such as other influential adults, neighbourhood resources, effective schools and institutions had a role to play. These women mostly relied on themselves and individual competencies and choices to cope with their circumstances, with some support from their families and peers.

Category 8: Needs and Recommendations:

This category was directly linked to the final question asked in the interview:

"*If you look back now at your memories of your different relationships that you had, is there anything that you would recommend to people who work with adolescents / teenagers that you feel might have been useful to you at that time?"*

The objective of this question was to offer some voice to the recommendations that these women offered with regards to their needs. Table 3 shows these needs and recommendations.

Table 3: Needs and Recommendations

Kim	▪ Information about sexual matters and contraception ▪ Someone to talk to who does not judge

	▪ Tell young people not to get involved too young ▪ Tell them they are not alone
Viv	▪ Adolescents need physical protection – like condoms ▪ Adolescents need as "sound mind" (sober) so that they can make decisions ▪ Never go at other peoples pace (sexually) ▪ Don't be pressurised ▪ Listen to your heart ▪ Contain your emotions (contradiction to above statement)
Sandy	▪ Help teenagers develop a good self image ▪ For them to love themselves ▪ To realise that popularity in not everything
Tandi	▪ Professionals need to have a good understanding of the changes as they can be drastic or gradual ▪ Don't allow them to get their information (re sex) from "outside" ▪ Let adolescents ask questions and do not tell them "No, that is for older person. You are not allowed to speak about that" ▪ Support ▪ Be there for them
Celi	▪ Be empathic – "in their shoes" & they should understand & feel what the adolescent feels ▪ Go at the pace of the adolescent ▪ Each individual is different ▪ Provide "enough" information about sex and contraception ▪ Children distance themselves from their parents because they are not open enough ▪ Encourage parents to talk to their children and to check out what they need

The central trend in the needs and recommendations was the desire to know more about sexual issues. Secondly, they needed emotional support and understanding. Erikson talks about a "crisis" that the individual faces at each particular phase in their development where they are "beset with fumbling and fear" (1963:255). It would seem that these women needed to know more about their changes and development, specifically sexual changes and sexual identity, an issue not sufficiently acknowledged and explored by Erikson, in that he saw it simply as experimentation.

These young women also seemed to be seeking a sense of mastery over their environments and themselves in that they wanted to know more about the changes that were happening in their bodies as well as what was happening in their relationships with peers and boyfriends. They were seeking a sense of "balanced belonging" in that they felt that it was important for adolescents to know that popularity was not everything. They were also looking for a sense of independence and autonomy; one that offers trust and support for decision making as well as understanding. Finally, they seemed to be asking for a greater level of generosity from their parents in giving them information about sexuality and contraception. This request emerged most prominently.

In summary, from the above discussion regarding the themes, categories, sub-categories and properties from the data, aspects from Erikson's psychosocial model as well as aspects from the Circle of Courage were evident.

Aspects of Erikson's model that emerged were:

- Biological changes
- Industry vs. Inferiority: competence
- Seeking Identity: through sexual experimentation
- Seeking Identity: through comparison with peers
- Seeking Identity: through developing a sub-culture with peers
- Pursuit of career
- Intimacy
- Autonomy

Aspects of the philosophies of the Circle of Courage that emerged were:

- Seeking a sense of belonging
- Seeking a sense of independence
- Seeking a sense of mastery

The above shows the richness of the relevance of both of these perspectives. However, something seemed to be missing. Before systematically comparing the two above mentioned perspectives (see Section 4: Thematic Conceptual Matrix, page 135), I decided to revisit the data.

Searching for Generosity and Sharing

Having completed the descriptive and the open coding, I began to notice gaps between the literature and the data. Concerned that I had overlooked aspects, I returned to the data the re-examine it for clarity and certainty. The aspect of the Circle of Courage that I had not discovered was the "spirit of generosity." Brendtro and others (1990:44) describe this as the "highest virtue", the ability to give unselfishly with the belief that "things were less important than people." This spirit or virtue may be seen more as an adult behaviour. Looking back, I had to consider what it was about myself that had caused me to miss the information about generosity as, with a second examination, it came through richly.

After returning to the data, I found this story of Celi's about generosity and belonging:

> *No, but I quite enjoyed the environment that I was in because we were a big – you know a large group of kids at home and we laughed, we talked, we learned to share all our things. That is why I picked up that other kids who were at high school who were, you know owning their own things and they don't want to share and all that and I was thinking "Oh, my God, if they were at home they would know how to share and they would know how to ... you know, know how to tease each other." Others, they didn't even want to be teased because they are not used to it because they are alone and all that stuff.*

For Kim her generosity was of herself. She gave much of herself in her relationships, especially with her first boyfriend, but after she was hurt she did not feel that she would be able to be as generous in the future:

> *Like someone… The more you invest in someone the more they have the power to hurt you. I didn't know if I could take that chance again. And knowing someone like that and they know you and then all of a sudden there was just nothing. Obviously there were reasons and that. I don't know… I don't know.*

Viv was able to give generously of her "theoretical knowledge" about sex, passed on from the video's provided by her parents:

> *For me, I was different. I found that I knew a lot more than my friends, especially in terms of the theory of relationships and sex and all that. Some of them who were sexually active would come to me ...*

Tandi provided the role model for her younger siblings, offering them what she did not receive from her parents in terms of providing information and knowledge regarding contraception (Appendix 1, line 117):

> ***Did your mother speak to your sister about contraception or did you?*** *I did speak to her about contraception.*
>
> ***So you took on that educative role?*** *Yes, I did speak to her; I am even speaking to my brothers about girls and that at least you must be aware now. We have got an older brother and I always speak to him about girls you know. If he gets involved he knows that he will be a father (laugh) and be doomed!*

This also provides an example of what Brendtro and others (1990:44) describe as the "spirit of generosity" in that she is giving information to her siblings, offering learnings from her experience. She is also taking an independent stand in what she believes in which is different to that of her mother, who chose not to discuss these issues with her children.

Finally, all the women gave generously of themselves during the interview. They all risked sharing information about their histories and their memories about a time in their lives that some of them found quite difficult but also therapeutic to talk about.

4. THEMATIC CONCEPTUAL MATRIX

In order to complete the task of this research study, as well as to summarise the above analysis, I have provided a Thematic Conceptual Matrix on page 133 showing very clearly the synergies and contrasts between the themes from the data, Erikson's psychosocial model and the Circle of Courage.

At first glance, Table 4, found on page 133, shows evidence that there are aspects of both Erikson's model and of the Circle of Courage in the themes that emerged from the data. At closer examination, a deeper understanding can be obtained.

4.1 Sexuality:

Under the theme of sexuality, the women expressed concerns about changes, how much or little information about sex and contraception they received, choices that they made and how they made them, as well as levels of intimacy.

The significant changes that they expressed concerned: biological changes, changes in relationships and changes that signified the start or end of adolescence, for example the start of menstruation and falling pregnant respectively. Biological changes or a "physiological revolution" (Erikson 1963:261) are considered, by Erikson and others (Jensen 1985:40; Craig 1996:59; Freud in Mishne 1986:6; Hoffman et al 1994:343), to be one of the cruxes of adolescence. The second important aspect that Erikson (1963:261) notes is the adolescent's concern with how they appear in the eyes of others as compared to how they see themselves and this affects their relationships with others. Although Brendtro and others (1990) do not deal directly with this "stage" in life in their philosophies of the Circle of Courage they do consider relationships in a holistic way and the changes as independence grows and develops, exploring less with regards to biological changes.

Considering the levels of communication regarding sexuality and sex neither Erikson's model nor the Circle of Courage explore this factor directly. However, let us consider the underlying ego strengths that Erikson (1963:259) offers during the stage "Industry vs. Inferiority" as levels of "competence." This is seen to be developed through "systematic instruction" and therefore learning from those around them, specifically adults and older peers. Although Erikson (1963:258) refers mainly to "entrance into life" in terms of learning in the school setting it can be extended to different aspects of life. Aspects of this "stage" of life can be related to the Circle of Courage's concept of gaining a sense of independence in that significant adults are providing "guidance without interference" (Brendtro et al 1990:41) with the objective of empowering young people. Two of the women chose to "break the silence" of communication of sexual issues when they chose to speak to friends and younger siblings. In this way they were offering a level of generosity and caring by the provision of knowledge (Brendtro et al 1990:50).

Choices regarding sexuality can also be seen as an example of Erikson's (1963:258) concept of gaining a sense of competence and the Circle of Courage's (Brendtro et al 1990:41) concept of gaining independence with regard to making choices and having to live with the consequences. However, within this category, Erikson (1963:262) considers sexual experimentation as an adolescent's method of gaining a better understanding of his or her own identity.

Finally, with regards to sexuality, the level of intimacy was explored. According to Erikson's (1963:263) definition of intimacy the experiences of these women may be seen as a combination of both identity formation as well as intimacy, the post-adolescent stage of life. This category also highlighted the need of the young women to feel a sense of belonging within these close relationships where they felt they had some significance, understanding and acceptance (Brendtro et al 1990:35). One of the women drew attention to the fact that she was told that she loves too much, thereby offering a sense of giving and caring within that relationship, an aspect of a sense of generosity, giving of herself (Brendtro et al 1990:50).

4.2 Belonging: Inclusion vs. Exclusion

The theme of "Belonging" focused on the level of inclusion and exclusion that they young person felt with regards to various significant relationships, namely, peer, family and boyfriend and being needed. Both Erikson's model and the Circle of Courage consider the idea of the need to belong as important and relevant. Erikson (1963:262) stresses the adolescent tendency towards "clannishness" to the point of being cruel in their need for sameness with their peers in order to expel the risk of being seen as different. This is displayed in the tendency to establish "subcultures" in order to gain a better understanding of themselves and to form an identity. A sense of belonging is one of the basic principles of the Circle of Courage. This extends to a sense of kinship and community (Brendtro 1990:37) and as described above, a "clannishness" with peers. In addition, the need to belong to family was revealed. However, some women chose, at the risk of losing some of their sense of belonging, to work towards a sense of mastery in order to focus their energy on doing well at their school work. This can be likened to Erikson's (1963: 259) ego strength of "competence."

4.3 Identity:

The term "identity" is one "borrowed" from Erikson's (1963:261) model and relates directly to the stage of adolescence and the need to seek an identity as opposed to role confusion. The concepts from his work that arose in this theme were issues regarding self-esteem as well as pursuit of a career. Also the tension between how they perceived themselves against how they felt that others saw them became evident. He saw this as crucial in developing self-esteem and identity.

Three concepts of the Circle of Courage became evident in the development of identity, namely: a sense of belonging, independence and mastery. As stated above the constant comparison between themselves and their peers and the pressure to behaviour in similar ways, for example, dress and hairstyles, shows evidence of their need to belong to the group. Secondly, some of the young women chose to concentrate on doing well at something, being a good mother or doing well at their school work, helping them define themselves. This showed a sense of mastery and enhancing what Pinnock, (1997:73) on the Circle of Courage, describes as a young person's basis for individual worth. Without this he saw them retreating into helplessness and feelings of inferiority.

Finally, there was evidence of the young women displaying a sense of independence as they made choices about their behaviour, becoming assertive with peers and parents, and the pursuit of career as

opposed to being in relationships, as Celi did. Pinnock (1997:73-4) saw independence as "a product of both mastery and belonging in that the purpose of any external discipline and support ... (was) ... to build inner discipline and social worth."

4.4 Support System and External Social Influences:

Erikson cited in Moore and Rosenthal (1993:30) mentions the importance of appropriate social support structures in identity development, referring to the wider social institutions such as educational institutions where they are given the opportunities "not to be adults." On the other hand, the Circle of Courage and the Sioux tradition sees this support system as essential. If executed properly, the young person receives sufficient support to feel they belong to the community, whilst being afforded enough leverage to develop a sense of independence. This is the principle of "guidance without interference" (Brendtro et al 1990:41).

Erikson (1963:262) considers the extent to which adolescents influence each others behaviour in his discussion regarding their need to be loyal to each other, enhanced by their tendency towards "clannishness." However, the Circle of Courage (Brendtro et al 1990:38) stresses that the presence of a strong sense of belonging enhances a young persons receptivity to guidance and therefore they will only seek a false sense of belonging and be influenced by peers if they feel that they do not belong or are not accepted. In other words, the level of belonging and independence will determine the extent to which the young person may be influenced by those outside their family and community.

4.5 Role Models:

The philosophy of the Circle of Courage stresses that "it takes a community to raise a child" similar to that of some of the African cultures (Brokenleg 1998:130) with little distinction between biological parents and other significant adults. Therefore all significant adults as well as older sibling played a role in modelling behaviour to the youth. Erikson in his work with the Sioux

people (Brokenleg 1998:131) expressed concern at this phenomena believing that it would be destructive to the child. However, in this study, the women chose who they wanted as role models – some of them looking further that their nuclear family to their extended family as well as community members. This shows their ability to display a sense of independence in choice as well as a sense of belonging to a whole community and learning from them. When these women became role models to their siblings and peers they were then displaying generosity and care for those around them in sharing the information and knowledge that they had, for example sex education.

4.6 Coping Strategy:

The theme "coping strategy" links to two concepts from Erikson's theory namely, industry and autonomy as well as two concepts of the Circle of Courage, namely, mastery and independence.

Developing a sense of industry or competence is gained through "systematic instruction" and reaching a point of being able to complete a task (Erikson 1963:259). In this way one learns about achievement or alternatively failure. Erikson's (1963:260) main focus for this stage is competence with regards to school work and learning as opposed to competence in relationships and coping with life in general. A sense of mastery can be liked to the concept of competence in that the objective is to gain some control over ones ability to control their environment and themselves, learning to problem-solve and maintains persistence in their attempts to achieve (Brendtro et al 1990:48).

Secondly, in coping one may be seen as building a sense of autonomy or will power (Erikson 1963:252), an earlier stage of development, where the child is learning that they have choices. In this early stage of development, Erikson (1963:252) stresses the need for the child's environment to encourage them to stand alone while offering them some protection. This can also be likened to Brendtro and others' (1990:41) concept of independence through "guidance without interference" and the need to learn through experience in making choices and therefore creating external and internal discipline.

4.7 Needs and Recommendations:

Finally, from the needs and recommendations offered by the young women, they expressed a need for further "guidance" with regards to sexual information from the significant adults around them.

They felt that they did not receive it from the adults but relied upon their peers, sometime receiving incorrect or only part of the facts placing them at risk.

One of the women stressed the importance of assisting teenagers in developing a strong self image and self esteem. Erikson (1963:261) saw this as the work of the stage of adolescence and that this was accomplished through constant comparison between themselves and those around them. Pinnock (1997:74) echoed this idea saying that a young person's sense of self worth comes from how

TABLE 4: THEMATIC CONCEPTUAL MATRIX

THEMES:			**ERIKSON'S MODEL**	**CIRCLE OF COURAGE**
Sexuality	Changes	Biological & relational	Biological Changes	
	Communication: Knowing vs. not knowing	Facts Emotionality	Industry : Competence	Independence Generosity
	Choices	Sexual matters	Industry : Competence Identity: Experimentation	Independence
	Intimacy		Identity formation & love	Belonging, Generosity
Belonging: Inclusion vs exclusion		Peers Family Boy/Girl Relationship	Identity: Sub-culture Crisis: between family and peers/boyfriend	Belonging Generosity Mastery
Identity	Perceptions	How I perceive myself How I perceive how others see me	Identity Self esteem Pursuit of career	Independence Belonging Mastery
Support System		Internal vs external	Identity: need for social support system	Belonging Independence
External Social Influences	Family	Her family His family	Identity	Belonging
	Community	Church/religion Clinic		Independence
Role Models	Parental vs. External	Who they chose as their role model		Independence Belonging, Generosity
Coping Strategies	Things I did well	What they did to cope / survive	Autonomy: will power Industry: competence	Independence Mastery
Needs and Recommendations		What these women believe adolescents need to help them cope through this time in their lives	Identity – self esteem	Mastery, Independence Belonging Generosity

others viewed him or her, but also from being committed to the positive value of generosity and caring for others, which in tern increased how other saw them. This is echoed in the women's needs to be supported and understood and for people to be empathic to how they feel, helping them to gain as sense of belonging too.

In their recommendation that they receive more information regarding sexuality and contraception are displaying a need to master their environment and gain a sense of independence through informed choices and decisions.

5. DISCUSSION:

During the analysis of the data collected I became aware of a growing metaphor as to how the two frameworks fitted together to form the whole that was emerging. Using the metaphor of the human body, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development seemed to provide a strong structure and framework. The stages gave framework for different developmental tasks at different times. Although the women's stories focused on the stage of adolescence showing issues concerning identity formation, there were also example of other stages (for example competence, intimacy, and generatively). From that perspective, Erikson's stage theory tended to be too rigid and linear to provide a full description and understanding of the stories as well as their complexity. On the other hand, the aspects of the Circle of Courage seemed to fill this structure with meaning and spirit – as the blood fills the body. This approach focuses on a holistic view where all four "spirits" became evident during different times in the women's adolescent years (See Table 4). In this way they may be seen as complimenting each other, each with their own functions to add to the complexity and the richness of the experience of adolescence.

An example of the complementary nature of these two models can be seen in Erikson's (1963:262) concept of identity and how adolescence become "clannish" in their need to identify with each other to feel that they belong to a group and can thus define themselves accordingly. The Circle of Courage identifies this as one of its main needs of any human being – a need to belong to a group or community (Brendtro et al 1990:37). The young women desired this sense of belonging in the majority of their relationships, namely, family, peer and boyfriend; in their support systems, in their sense of themselves and their identity; as well as their exploration of their sexuality.

Another example of their complementary nature can be seen in Erikson's (1963) exploration of life stages and providing specific reference to adolescence as a stage of life with biological changes taking place and the development of ones identity. The Circle of Courage does not offer specific reference to this stage of life, but regard relationships throughout the young person's youth as contributing to the development of self esteem and worth with the objective of empowering children (Brendtro et al 1990:35).

Erikson's model does hold many Euro-centric assumptions, for example, the concept of the need for individual identity and nuclear family units. The Circle of Courage on the other hand, with its similarities to the African culture in many respects, provides a cultural spirit with an alternative view-point, such as the importance of belonging to a larger group and the importance of achievement for the group as opposed to the individual. It is not however, only applicable to the experience of the three African women, but also for the two white women, showing that for these five women it provides useful insight into their experiences. This blend in many ways epitomises that blend of South African diversity that these women showed. However, it must be noted that these five women all experienced urban living and therefore they may be seen to have been influenced by Western cultures and ideas.

6. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, this chapter has presented a thick description of one of the women's stories in order to show its complexity, fullness and structure. The thick description is displayed in the Context Charts that take the form of two diagrams in order to increase in depth. The Time line shows evidence of aspects of Erikson's psychosocial theory but also points out its limitations in that he does not allow for stages overlapping or existing simultaneously – an aspect of this story. It also does not show aspects of relationships and influencing factors. These were displayed in the second context chart. This chart showed evidence of aspects of the four "spirits" of the Circle of Courage as described by Brendtro and others (1990).

Secondly, the analysis chapter has extracted themes from all five stories through the use of open and descriptive coding. This enabled systematic analysis seeking aspects of Erikson's psychosocial

model and of the Circle of Courage. Finally, the Thematic Conceptual Matrix provided a comparison of synergies and contrasts between the frameworks presented and the experiences of these five women. The matrix and the discussion have clearly shown the extent of the similarities, differences and the complementary aspects. Given that these five women originated from vastly different backgrounds and experienced different social influences such as migrant labour, divorce, female headed households and nuclear families they also shared life events such as of menstruation, sexuality, the anxiety and excitement of a first relationship. Also they experienced the impact and influence of those around them, for example family influence, peer pressure and various support systems. However, it must be noted that a limitation of this study is that these findings may not be applicable to all South African adolescent women for two reasons. Firstly, this was a very small sample consisting of five women. Secondly, although they came from very different cultural and socio-economic back-grounds they have all attended tertiary education and therefore may have been influenced by this urban and western phenomenon.

CHAPTER 5:
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. CONCLUSIONS

The primary aim of this research study was to gain a better understanding of five women's experiences of adolescent relationships and the impact of family and community upon these relationships. The objectives were:

- to hear and understand the stories of young women's memories of their adolescent boy/girl relationships in order to provide a thick description;
- to analyse this data in the light of Erikson's Psychosocial Stage Theory as well as the Circle of Courage seeking synergies and contrasts; and finally
- to start a base of empirical research by exploring the relevance of these theories for understanding South African youth by focusing on young female's sexuality and their significant relationships.

In order to provide a context for this study, western definitions of adolescence have been examined. Theories emanating from western cultures tend to focus on the individual. There is, however, a growing recognition of the role of society and the social context. Eric Erikson was one of the first theorists to acknowledge the role of society and he developed the "psychosocial" developmental stage theory. Traditionally, this model has been used by professionals working with adolescents internationally, as well as within South Africa.

Adolescence is recognised as a stage in life which is filled with contradictions, stresses and conflicts, both intra- and interpersonally. The cause of this emotional turmoil is understood to be change, and includes biological change (the onset of puberty) as well as change in the way the adolescent behaves and responds in relationships (with peers, parents, family and other institutions).

Historically South African laws have been characterised by racism, sexism and classism. These laws were instituted in order to create a privileged status for white people, protecting them from the hardships of poverty and unemployment. However, very limited protective factors were in place for

African people, who were faced with poverty, forced removals and the breakdown of family structures. For many South Africans, the western definitions of adolescence did not apply.

During the last ten years South Africa has experienced radical change, politically as well as socially. The new government has done away with discriminatory laws, providing an opportunity to create new policies to suit the needs of this diverse nation. The Inter-ministerial Committee (IMC) has taken up this challenge and has brought Youth at Risk to the forefront, changing the framework of working with these at risk and vulnerable people. The foundation of the new policy is the Circle of Courage which is based on the philosophies of Sioux parenting practices cited in Brendtro and others (1990). The primary focus of this philosophy is on the adolescent's significant relationships and the impact of these relationships on the adolescent. There is also an emphasis on the development of the whole person. Similarities have been found between the history and beliefs of the Native Sioux and that of black South Africans. The philosophy has been placed in a South African context by Don Pinnock (1994), but little research has been conducted to verify its relevance to South African youth. The qualitative nature of this study provided the opportunity to present the uniqueness and the depth of the women's stories, a gift I felt privileged to receive. In order to maintain the complexity and richness, I chose to present one story in an in-depth manner in the form of a "context chart." This takes the form of a Time line and a chart showing Micro / Macro Influences and Relationships in Tandi's life.

The thematic analysis showed that although the women came from very different social and cultural backgrounds very similar themes and descriptions of feelings arose. Sexuality was an aspect that all the women spoke about. A common thread was the feeling that they lacked sufficient knowledge, information and support regarding this issue.

Having a sense of belonging emerged as a major theme. This was supported by past research which shows that adolescents need to feel that they belong to a family (Balk 1995:237) and to a peer group (Balk 1995:280; Gouws & Kruger 1996:117), as well as to a cultural group (Brendtro et al 1990:37).

Finally, the Thematic Conceptual Matrix provided evidence that Erikson's psychosocial theory and the Circle of Courage have a significant number of synergies, as well as having very different fundamental bases with regards to these women's stories (focus on biology vs on one's relationship

with the community). I believe that these fundamental differences provided a good balance to present the full story of these women.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, I wish to offer some of the recommendations suggested by the women during the interviews. One of the strongest recommendations made was the need for clear and precise factual information about sexuality, sex and contraception for young people. Many of the young women relied on their peers for information as they were not receiving clear messages from their parents. The information they did receive was often incorrect and blurred by societal myths and taboos. The responsibility for providing this information rests with both parents and educational institutions. One of the women suggested that a gap exists between cultural norms and an adolescent's needs. This gap needs to be filled with education and support from trained teachers and helping professionals. This is essential, especially since the South African Children's Charter (Potgieter & Fredman in de la Rey et al 1997:106) states that it is a child's right to receive knowledge and information regarding sexuality.

The respondents also felt that they needed to be supported and understood. They saw adolescence as a stressful stage in their lives filled with challenge and change. Support in the form on non-judgmental assistance is recommended, providing a sense of belonging, at the same time creating opportunities to become independent and encouraging a belief in their competence. Also it creates modelling of generosity and sharing of resources.

Further recommendations are as follows. Firstly, as noted in Chapter 3, section 3, a limitation of the study (page 70-72) is that due to the fact that this study deals with the sensitive topic of "sexuality" people who are interviewed may have felt reluctant to share all of their story. I felt that this was compounded by the fact that four of the five women were interviewed only once, the fifth women being interviewed twice. Although a level of trust was established, this could have been enhanced over a longer period of time, had there been more contact, and the opportunity for further interviews. In future studies this could provide further information.

Secondly, the women were asked to recall their memories. Over time some information and feeling may be forgotten or seen as irrelevant. It may be beneficial to conduct a similar study with women

during their adolescence for a different perspective of their current needs and relationships as opposed to a retrospective view.

Thirdly, the scale of this study does not allow for any form of generalisation to the wider population. These women were not truly representative of the population of South Africa, although they were from different cultural groups and backgrounds. The participants had all reached a higher level of education and this would have affected their views on life, which would possibly be very different from South Africans who are illiterate. Although all these women experienced different forms of challenges, I believe that they managed to survive adolescence with resilience. Further research is required to investigate the synergies and contrasts and applicability of the philosophies of the Circle of Courage with people who have not survived with such resilience. This would create a fuller picture of the different experiences of the South African population.

3. CLOSING COMMENTS

Besides the academic information that this study provided, I believe it provided another aspect of information and insight. In closing then, I reflected on the experiences of the five women of the interviews as well as my experience of the interviews and the data analysis. For the women, three of the five women stated that they had benefited from the experience as they had never really thought back to this time in their lives. Also, one of the women commented that the process had been therapeutic for her thinking about this confusing and stressful time in her life. Although this was not the intention, it resulted in worthwhile outcome. I believe that this experience provided them, to a greater or lesser degree, with some space to focus on themselves and reflect on their experiences with the possibility of further growth and development of resilience.

This experience has had a profound impact upon me. It has afforded me the rare opportunity of sharing the life stories of five brave young women as well as an opportunity for me to ponder my own adolescent relationships and the impact that others had upon my choices and decisions. From the onset, I saw reflexivity as a crucial factor, and this has assisted in enhancing this experience. For this profound experience I am grateful for the generosity of five women who provided me with their gift of their 'story' enabling me to learn and, in turn, to provide some useful information for

other South African people regarding young women's experiences of adolescent boy/girl relationships.

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Appendix 1

INTERVIEW WITH TANDI

Preamble:

Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. What I would like to do to start off with is to go through a few details with you and then if you have any more questions you can feel free to ask.

What I am going to be doing is speaking to a no. of women all between the ages of 21 - 25 about their adolescent relationships, boy-girl relationships and parent relationships during their adolescent times between approximately the ages of 12 and 18 years. There are a couple of details that I will tell you about before we start:

- **All the interviews will remain strictly confidential**
- **I will be taping them and then I will transcribe them**
- **All your personal details will be crossed out so for example if you say you are doing sociology 3 - that kind of detail will be changed. Or if you talk about your hometown that kind of detail will be changed as well. The idea is that there is no way that someone will be able to be identified by what they say.**
- **No-one will hear the tapes besides me so your voice will not be able to be identified either.**
- **My supervisor will not hear the tapes either, however, she will read the transcripts.**
- **I will keep the tapes until after my thesis has been passed by the external examiner and then they will be destroyed.**
- **Once I have transcribed the interview, I will give it back to you so that you can have a look at it so that you can see that what you meant is there and I have not miss interpreted what you said**
- **Lastly, you can stop me at any time, if you are feeling uncomfortable or that you want have a break or end the interview that is fine just say so. Okay?**

Is there anything else you would like to ask before we start?

No, not at the moment.

1. **Adolescents is a time in peoples lives where boy/girl relationships begin to take on a more significant role, can you tell me about this time in your life?**

(Giggle)

Okay well, adolescence was a time, really it was a time of ... it wasn't such a good time for me because I have never discuss anything with my mother. It was like ... I just heard everything from outside. Because you know, I remember when I started my periods, I hadn't discussed anything with my mother about periods or anything or all that stuff. And I got such a fright. (Interruption in the Interview – telephone ring)

So that must have been quite scary for you?

Yes, it was Andrea, although I was already aware from my peers outside who were always talking about this and I was so exited to start. And then from there, when my mother saw me, that I had started, you know she never said anything, we never discussed it, we never sat down and said "these are the pros and cons and now you are old" and everything. And there comes a time now, because I was a bit grown up and I could see that my friends have some boyfriends and all that things, so I thought that I should. I got into a relationship without discussing it with anyone, just seeing what my peers were doing and I did the same thing.

How old were you when you started your first relationship? I was around 15 years, but anyway it wasn't that strong thing - it happened to be strong when I was about 17 years.

What was that relationship like? It was just kissing.
How did you choose him to be your boyfriend? It started in class. We would first buy sweets for each other and he would say, "No, Tandi is mine" At first we would get shy and then ... It was just a play-thing first and then it developed like that ... (laughing). We like to buy sweets during the break time, eat lunch together and then it developed and developed. But then at the age of 17 I started, you know, I could say a bit more mature because my friends would tell me about having sex with your boyfriend and all those things. I never discussed any thing with my parents as I have told you. And then when it happened for the first time ... it messed the whole of my life, I could say. It really ruined my life because I fell pregnant the first time. **So your first sexual relationship you fell pregnant?** That is when my father ... he was not aware that my mother was not speaking to me, because I remember he asked - "didn't your mother tell you about the use of contraception and all that stuff?" I said "No" and I can't remember what he said to me then, but he did ask me. And then after that I became a grown up so quickly, so that is why I said that I didn't enjoy it that much. I think maybe if I had a close relationship with my mother then maybe that wouldn't have happened. I am not saying that she made me do that, but maybe, if maybe we were open to each other and more like my friend then it would be a different situation.
So when you were 17 you fell pregnant and had your baby. Do you feel that your adolescence ended then - you said that you "grew up"? Ya, I grew up at that time because I had lots of responsibilities looking after that baby. Everything changed, everything totally changed. I didn't associate with my peers anymore, I stayed in doors. Fortunately for me, my parents didn't take me out of school. I went back to school but when I came back I had to look after the baby. So it was just the end of adolescence - everything ended.
You said that your peers spoke about your periods and your peers spoke about relationships, what did they say to you about contraception?
Firstly, when we were speaking about contraception, it was a bit of a shame thing. We would say to each other - "look at that one, she is going to 'that white house.'" We used to call the clinic 'that white house'. " She is attending the clinic, she must be bad, you know" Only married people do that, we are not allowed to do that. It had a stigma to go to the clinic for contraception. **What was the stigma about because they were talking about sex and having sex, but that wasn't a stigma, but going to the 'white house' did have a stigma. What was the difference?** There was the feeling that if you go to the clinic, to the white house then you are a ... "slut" I don't know. Or something like that. **That you are having more sex or more boyfriends?** It was more boyfriends, it was like that. But if you are only having one boyfriend then you don't have to go there, because I was having a friend of mine, who used to go there but she wasn't a close friend of mine, we were just in the same age group, she used to go there. And you know, she wasn't comfortable when she was with us because we used to say "I will never go there" or "what if an older person saw me there?" "It is a dirty thing, you can't do that. Only married people go there to ask for contraception." So no wonder we had that wrong impression about contraception, until I heard it and should have done it.
What happened within this relationship of yours with your boyfriend? When I fell pregnant? **Yes.** No, it went on until we broke up. My child was one year or one and a half years at that time. You know when we broke up, he got involved with another girl and then, you know I was so heart broken because I really loved him and I couldn't love anybody else you know.
What was the relationship like between the two of you? Before, it was good, it was good, he was so caring, he loved me ... **How old was he?** He was 18, he was so protective, he loved me very much (laughing). We were so close and everybody approved of our relationship and said one-day maybe you will get married. But I didn't have those intentions; *As others were doing it. I was conforming to what my peers were doing.* I was just doing it for the sake of doing it. **Because you**

were involved in the relationship? Ya, it was good!

Before you started dating boys or having a boyfriend what was it like in terms of your dream of a relationship? What was in your mind then?

I used to imagine one of the boys in class, being in love with him, I would say, oh, if I could get involved with him. He was like ... he had a strong body, that is the man that I always dream of having - a good body, a loving man. I would also dream that I would get married and have a family and all those things. That is what I usually imagined, but school as well, not before my school. First I had to finish my school and then I would you know...

Were you able to finish your school with your baby? Ya. **That is quite an achievement?** Ya thanks for that. It was like you know, I just told myself that you know I had let down my parents. Let me just pick up myself, let me not look behind me because what is done is done. Let me just carry on with my life. I had this responsibility of looking after this baby. It all now depends on me, if I don't get educated then who is going to look after my baby. My mother felt, they did give me that opportunity of going back to school so that was very great for me. So I used that opportunity.

Tell me about your family - are you the oldest child? I am the oldest. **Who is below you - brother or sisters?** One girl and then two boys. **What was their response, because you were the role model of the family?** Yes. My sister never said anything, because maybe she was heart broken. Because I remember, when we broke up with my boyfriend then I told her and that is when she said to me "I did not approve of this relationship earlier, but I didn't want to tell you." I could see that she was happy, because she said I should never get involved with him again. Maybe she was heartbroken but she didn't have the guts to tell me how she felt about the whole thing, because I never asked her.

Did your mother speak to your sister about contraception or did you? I did speak to her about contraception.

So you took on that educative role? Yes, I did speak to her; I am even speaking to my brothers about girls and that at least you must be aware now. We have got an older brother and I always speak to him about girls you know. If he gets involved he knows that he will be a father (laugh) and be doomed!

You described your relationship with your mom as not being very close. Can you tell me a bit more about your relationship with her?

My mother, you know was a strict person, a strict person. But you know, behind that she is a caring person. But she was, you know because I was the oldest, she wanted me to do everything according to ... you know when you are the oldest you have to be the role model to your sisters. That is what she wanted from me. She always wanted me to do the right thing. And I was so scared of her, really. But I could see that, you know, she was better than my father because I wasn't that very much close to my father because at least she had that caring part although you know she would always shout at me and that, but she was a caring person.

So there was quite a lot of pressure on you to do things right? Yes.

And when things didn't go right - what happened then? Oh, she was very disappointed. I still remember the look on her face, she was very disappointed. She was very disappointed.

What happened to your relationship with your mother after that? We became so close. I am so close to my mother now. You know, if I am staying here in EL, when I go back home, we are even sharing the same bed. Me and my mother we would talk almost the whole night, speaking you know. I am so close to her. I think it is that I missed those old days when I wasn't so close to her, because we are very close now.

What helped to make you closer now?

(Long silence.) You know Andrea I don't know. Maybe, it is just that, after I had disappointed her,

I learned not to do that thing again. I just showed my parents that I regret what I have done. So maybe they could see that I was punishing myself. And she could see now that I didn't do it deliberately, I don't know, maybe. But we became so close. We became so close. Maybe it is just because you know, she could see that I was going to manage to be somebody, I hadn't given up after the mistake that I had done. I was determined to please her, not to please her but to make myself into somebody. Because you know if you fall pregnant at that early stage, you give up easily, you give up easily.

Did you see your peers who fell pregnant giving up? Yes. They gave up and some of them are only returning to school this year, some last year. It wasn't easy for me, Andrea, because I remember at school they didn't allow pregnant pupils. But then my principal said to me I could go home. I mustn't return until after the exams, because I was due in October. She said that I could come back and write November exams. When I went back to her to write the exams, she told me to go away. You know that is when I went back home, and that is when I really felt that what I have done is quite wrong because my mother was crying. And she said to me, I must change - I must go to another school next year. I said to her "No, I am going to the same school, I am not going to change schools. Nobody forced me to get pregnant - I asked for it myself. I must go back to the same school."

Why do think she wanted you to change schools?

She was angry, with the school, not even with me now, because I was the one who has done something wrong. She was angry with the school. She said, "why must they say that you can come back to write exams and now they are telling you to go back?" It is like, you know, they are making a fool of me and all of that. I said, "you know, it is quite right. It is okay. I am going back to that school - I am not going to change schools.

That was quite brave of you, because people at the school would have known what had happened. How did you feel, because of what had happened? Lots of shame. A lot. **So you had to go and face that shame?** I didn't want to changes schools, really. I said to my mother that I am going back to the same school. **It would have been easier to change schools?** It would have been easier, but I didn't want to, Andrea, because I would be accepting defeat. Let me just go to that same school, because if I went to another school, it would be the same stigma - "she left that school because she was pregnant. Maybe she will get pregnant even here." Let me just stay at the same school and just show them that it was a mistake - I didn't do it deliberately. And they accepted me. I redid my Std 9 year and passed and then I did my Std 10 year and I passed.

And then did you come straight to university? No I didn't come straight to university, because of financial problems. I had to spend a year because my father and my mother worked for the money for that year for me to go to school, so I had to spend another year, maybe a year of ...(punishment?) sort of, I don't know how to say it but, you know, I would be finished a long time ago maybe, maybe last year - I would be finished with my varsity, but that I year of staying. *My father was the only one who was working, but my mother was involved in decision making, i.e. to decide that now there was not enough money for me to go to school that year. I should go the following year.*

You said that you thought your adolescence ended at 17 when you fell pregnant. What were your 18 and 19 years like? Well, it was more like motherhood for me, because I didn't get so much involved with my peers, even at school, I didn't get ... You know something change in me, Andrea. I didn't even get involved in sport or any of those sorts of things. I got so withdrawn - I was involved in my books, that is all.

How did you cope with your books, being so withdrawn? Um, ... they say that some people, when they are depressed, they have something that they take out their depression on. Maybe I took that depression onto my books, because I was coping very well with my studies, I was doing very

well.
So even though you were feeling quite depleted about other things in your life you were doing well in this? Yes. **Did you feel well about your motherhood?** I was doing well, Andrea. I was such a good mother. My mother did insist that I planned to have this baby because I really loved him, so, I was doing well. It was not that easy, Andrea, because sometimes, you know ... because my mother was still a strict person. I would come back from school and she would just give me the baby and she would go out. And then you know I would have to start from the nappies, then to wash the baby, feed the baby and then I still had my homework to do. Maybe the baby would sleep at about 8 or 9. And then by 9 o' clock I would start doing my homework. Sometimes the baby would get sick and I would be writing exams the next day and all that. My mother would say "I am not going to sleep with your baby, I have slept with <u>*you*</u>, you were my baby. Each and every mother sleeps with her own baby, so you sleep with your own baby!" So it wasn't quite that good, but you know, I always console myself. I said "nobody forced me to do this, let me just suffer the consequences."
What did you learn from your mother from what she was telling you?
Andrea, I have to tell you. I love what she did to me, because although I didn't understand at that time. I thought it was cruelty at that time, I thought this woman is really cruel. But now I do understand why she was doing all this.
Why do you think she was doing that?
She was trying to show me that what I did was not right and if she was agreeing with me all the time then maybe I would have fallen pregnant again, because that is what happened with my other peers. She didn't want any one to interfere – even her sister was saying, why has *Tandi* got her baby on her back when she is going to the river to fetch water. She will say "No, no, no, let her carry her own baby, I used to carry my own baby, each and every mother must carry her own baby." So I really love her, I love her, because you know, I felt so strong after that. I love her, Andrea, although at that time I didn't understand it, I was angry with her, I used to cry a lot. And you know, she didn't even pity me she just said "Just cry and then after that take your baby!"
What role did your father play during that time? My father, shame! He was on the mines by that time. But he used to come. He didn't like what my mother was doing. I remember the first day, my baby was 2 weeks – no he was one week, I was sleeping with him. My mother was sleeping in the house and I was sleeping in the rondavel – I was sleeping there with my sister. My father came back from the mines. It was in the middle of the night. He said … he was mad with anger, he said, "how can you sleep with such a small baby, what if she rolled over the baby and killed the baby?" and he shouted at my mother. And my mother said, "I don't understand, you shout at me? I used to sleep with her. Each and every mother must sleep with her own baby. I slept with my babies, she must sleep with her own baby" and it was like that and you know, he really didn't approve of it, really.
So he was quite protective over you?
He was protective, he was protective. *My father was protective, in fact he was angry. But was taking all his anger onto my mother, and my mother was taking her anger in turn to me. This was like a cycle, Andrea.* But you know my mother wasn't given a chance, not at all. I think what was happening was my father was angry with me but he didn't want to show it to me – he was showing it to my mother. When my mother was showing her anger to me he was hiding his anger from me, to protect me – it was that circle, so…
How often did your father come home? He would come home twice a year, twice a year. No he would come once and then stay for a month and then go back and then come back the next year and come back for a month.

So you didn't see very much of him? No, I didn't see very much of him, I didn't see that much of him. But the time that he was at home he was very protective, very protective.

2. **Okay, we have spoken about quite a few of your experiences and we have also identified some of the feelings. Can your remember any other specific feelings that you had during your adolescence? You had quite different experiences.**

Pardon?

You have spoken about being angry with your mom, about being angry with yourself; you have spoken about having some shame. What about in your earlier years?

Okay, in my earlier years. No, I was such a happy person – laughing. Um, it is nice, you know, to grow up from being a young person to an adult – getting into an adult stage. You experience many things. I was happy with my friends and my happy-going peers. It was such a happy experience until I got involved in that relationship, but anyway I did enjoy it first. I enjoyed it first. **You enjoyed that relationship first (the 17 year old relationship)?** Not the 17 year old one, before. **Your 15 year old one?** Yes. The one from 14-15. That was quite good, because we were starting to grow up, you know, having … (indicating growing breasts) this growing up and all those things so…

So you felt that your breasts were developing and that you were becoming a nice women now? Yes and we started looking after ourselves too. We like to make our hair a lot and (giggle) and all those things.

And you became more aware of yourselves and looking pretty? Yes, (giggle) we were looking pretty. **And that felt good?** Yes. It felt good to me, really good. **Did you compare yourself with your peers?** A lot. A lot. Yes, I remember if somebody had done that sort of hairstyle, I would also want to do that hairstyle. We used to buy the same T-shirt. Not same, same, same but you know, but t-shirts so that we could look a bit like each other. **And when your compared yourself to your peers, how did you feel?** Um… You know, with some of my peers, they used to go to big cities for their holidays. I never went to the city for the holiday and so when I compared myself with them I would say that they were a bit more beautiful, not beautiful but because they know a lot, they have been to big cities. You know they know a lot, when they were talking about East London, I had never been to East London. So I was a bit inferior when I compared myself to them. But, at least, I was doing quite well with my books when it came to bookwork – Laughing. **So you compared well in that area?** Ya, in that area.

You have spent a couple of years in East London now, when you go back, do you see those same peers? Are some of those people still there? Yes they are still there. **So what are the comparisons now?** (Laughing) Oh no, the comparisons now are big. They say, "Oh, *Tandi*, you are looking a bit big now, you are very beautiful and now you are even becoming fat. You are no longer skinny, you know!" and "you are so beautiful" and all those things.

It is important in your culture to put on weight, hey? Ya, it is important for our culture. It is important. **They see you now as the city person when then you were the rural person and they were visiting the city?** Ya. **So that was quite a change?** Ya, it is quite a change. I remember one of our neighbours said to me, or rather said to my mother "You will never even get *Tandi* to give you one of her dresses because she dresses more like an English women!" I laughed at that because you know I am so thin and I like myself. I don't want myself to get fat – not at all! **That's conflictual for you because your culture says you must put on weight to make you look healthy and well, and the white or English culture says that you should stay thin, so you are quite stuck in the middle?** Not exactly, I know what I want and I am not going to please other people, I will just be myself, ya. I know that you struggle when you want to loose that weight. Once you have got, you get fat, and then you struggle to become thin again. I don't want to (laughing).

Okay, so you had those feelings when you were comparing yourself to your peers? Ya.
Your first relationship, can you remember some of the feelings that you had then? What do you mean – with my boyfriend? **Yes, when you "fell in love"? Sorry, did you fall in love or did you feel it was time to be in a relationship?** I think I did fall in love, because, as I told you it started as a friendship and from there it developed. Um, well, firstly, (giggle) I am trying to think. I think it was a good experience, when we really fell in love it was um … He was a bit mature …I could say … **Was he older than you were?** He was 18, yes he was one year older them me. **Are you talking about your 17 year old relationship, sorry I thought we were talking about your 15 year old relationship.** It started from 15 – (I looked confused) It is the same person. **Sorry I thought they were 2 different men.** No, it is the same person. It started earlier and then it went like that … **So you started going out with him when you were 14 and then it developed until you were 17 and that is when you first had a sexual relationship with him and then you fell pregnant?** Yes. **Whose idea was it for you to start having a sexual relationship?** Start having sex? I wasn't against it. **So you didn't feel pressured?** No, I wasn't against it, not at all, I wasn't against it. I think I would have said something if I were, I wasn't against it. **So you fell in love and you just kept going and developed into a very long relationship?** And it is still long, because we are still back together. We mended things up about 3 years ago. I felt that I should give him that chance, so … I still love him, so let me just give him the chance, I proved him wrong, it is not late – I could still land up with another man, which I don't hope for anyway, I don't want to.
So, you broke up when your child was one and a half and how old is your child now? My child is 6 years. We broke up for about 2 years. He came back to me and asked me to forgive him, during that two-year period, but I didn't want to, I really didn't want to because I was angry with him. Until then my aunt, you know, asked me if I really love him and I said yes, so she said to me, "why don't you give him a chance?" So I said, "what if he does the same thing again?" So she said then "you would never prove him until you have given him a chance, just prove him." **It sounds like you aunt is a big influence in your life?** She is, although it was the first time we had spoken about that thing – it is my mother's sister.
Are there any other feelings that you can remember during that time? For example when you broke up? Ooh, Andrea, I was very, very hurt and depressed, I used to cry a lot and there was nobody I could talk to, because you know I had never discussed anything with my mother. I only used to speak to my sister. Oh, I forgot, I had a close friend of mine who we were doing matric together. You know, she kept me going, because she would say to me "You know what? You loose two things at the same time, because I was doing matric at that time, you loose two things at the same time now and you loose this relationship and then you fail your matric. Just try you know, not to ignore it but to focus on your studies now." She kept me going and I passed my matric and I left the school … and he failed … thank God … (laughing) … **Revenge?** Yes and he failed and I thank God (laughing).
So that companionship was really important for you? Yes, yes, it was. **It sounds like she gave you a lot of strength that you needed at that time and you weren't getting in other places at that time?** Yes.

3. **You spoken about of your experiences and some of the things that were really important. Did you always feel that way or was there a sudden change for you in your adolescence?** I don't understand your question.

Did you feel that there was a sudden change and this was now adolescence or you described having your baby as the end of adolescence? Do you remember anything significant happening at the start of your adolescence or did it just happen? As I have told you, Andrea,

what made it start, was firstly, that I started to become more aware of myself. That is when it started, and then I started having close friends, you know. Maybe we would be as a group; maybe we would be seen as the big 4 or the big 3 you know. It started like that. That is when I just felt you know that ... there was that thing that even when I was at home there was that feeling that I should see my friend today, I really want to see my friends and organise to meet somewhere. So I could see that I was becoming more involved with friendships, you know … **As opposed to your family?** Yes, as opposed to my family, so that is what was happening and it started like that. I became more involved with my friends and more aware of myself with what we were doing, I became involved in what they were doing.

So was that a sudden change or was it quite gradual for you? Um, I could say that it was … it was sudden, Andrea. It was sudden.

Can you think about a time when it started? When it started … it was sudden … it started … You know, firstly, I wasn't allowed to go to parties. That was the first thing, my mother never let me or allowed me to go to parties. For the first time I did go to parties, because my other friends were already going to parties. So when I was about 14 years, there was a party and it wasn't far away. So when I did go to that party my friends said to me, "you know that party was really good with you" because maybe it was because I had never been to a party before. They said, "today it was such a good party, why don't you go the following day?" Then I had to go and hide and then I had to sneak. So I kept on doing that more and more often. Then my mother realised that, you know, that I was sneaking out of my room and out of the house every day … (laughing) and then she said, no, she asked me and I told her that I am just seeing my friends for a party then what she did was she allowed me then, she let go and I went to party. But how it started was we really became close. At first we were just party friends and then school friends, because fortunately we were doing the same class. So that was the start of my adolescence. That was the real start – when I was sneaking out to parties.

4. **Can you tell me on what or on whom you modeled your adolescent relationships? You had one long-term relationship, what or on whom did you model this relationship on?**

Um, my aunt of course, my aunt. Because you know my aunt, she was involved with one man, they got married and they are still together now. So I wanted it to be like that. As I told you I always imagined myself as a married person with one man. **What was her relationship like that you wanted to model it on that relationship?** They never quarreled in front of their children. I have never seen them fighting and doing all that stuff. I used to stay with them quite a lot. I never saw them being angry with each other. They really loved each other. It was different for my parents, because they could, usually fight in front of us, you know. It was just that they had a good relationship compared to what I was seeing in my family. **Can you tell me a bit about what you were seeing in your family that you didn't want?** Let's not talk about that … **Okay. You said that your father wasn't there very often, so when he was there you were seeing what you didn't want?** Yes. **So what you saw at your aunts home was what you really wanted?** Yes. **What role did your uncle play?** My uncle was a loving person. He really loves his children, a lot. **Is he protective of his children?** Not that protective, not that protective, but he really loved them. If he comes from work, because you know, he wasn't working far away, he was staying at home, he would ask for his children. He would buy nice things for his children and by nice clothes for his children. Even if he was just going around the village, you know he would take his car and take his children with him. He would always just play with his children, which I never did with my father. **So they were quite separate from you, so you saw your aunt and uncle playing with their children and spending quality time with them.** They were like real friends with their children.

Does your aunt have daughters? Yes. **Do you know if she spoke to her daughters about contraception and menstruation?** She is not that old anyway. I don't know. **Because that is something that you would have liked your mother to do?** Yes, yes, but I think she did - I think she is quite a good mother, quite a good mother.
Are there any other relationships around you that are really important to you that you modeled yours on or not on – like "I don't want my relationship to look like that"? No I think it was just my mother's relationship – I don't want it to be like that. You know my mother's and my father's relationship – I don't want it to be like that. I know that my mother is a good woman – I know her, but I just don't want my relationship to be like theirs. It wasn't a good relationship, but she stayed there because of the sake of us, I think so, you know that is why I really love her. **Because she "nyamezela" (Xhosa word for endurance – a term used by women who stay in unhappy marriages)?** Yes, she "nyamezela" because of us - yes.
What is the time? – I have to go in 10 minutes.

5. **Where did your family fit in your relationships during adolescence? How did they influence your relationship?**

Not really. **Were they involved at all in terms of when you could see your boyfriend or not?** Not at all. We never discussed our problems or talked about it. **Your younger sister had a viewpoint at the end?** At the end, yes. **And now – because you are back with him?** She was angry with me. She said, I knew it. Laughing – she knew we would get back together. She said, anyway, she said, if then that is what I want then that is fine. She just wants what is the best for me that is what she told me that is what she wanted … (telephone call) **So your sister was really angry with you for getting back together with your boyfriend, but she kind of knew that you would do it anyway.** Yes.
Other people outside your family, your friends – your one close friend who played a really important role in supporting you? Yes. (Laughing) She, um, okay, she … I didn't meet her, I didn't meet her, I still haven't met her because she is in Cape Town. She is working there as a nurse. I haven't yet told her. We kept on phoning each other but, but, … I remember I asked her over the phone one day "what would you say if maybe your friend hides something from you that you felt it is important for her to tell you, what would you say?" And she said to me "Well, I would just think that maybe it is not the time for her to tell me" and I said "Okay". **What do you think that she might say if she knew that you were back with him?** I don't know, but maybe she would be angry, maybe she would be a bit ashamed of me, I don't know, I am not sure. But you know the way that she gave me support; she was like my own sister. Maybe she was like that because she could see that I was really hurt. Or else maybe, she would say "That is fine, if that is what I want" I don't know what she would say, but I think that she would be against it (giggle).
Your other friends, what influence did they have on your relationship? My other friends? **Friends or other people?** They laughed at me. **Who laughed at you?** When I broke up with my boyfriend, almost all of them. **What do you think they were laughing about?** Maybe they didn't approve it the first time, maybe – **(the break up or the relationship?)** - the relationship – they didn't like it, because they didn't give me that support as I have told you. The friend who gave me support was not one that I grew up with, I only knew her when I was doing my matric, because she was from here in East London and went over to do her matric in that school – we were in the same school. **What do you think they didn't approve of about the relationship?** I am not sure, Andrea, I really don't know. I really don't know. I am thinking … Because Andrea, we were so in love, you know. You know some people do become jealous, do wish for couples to break up, sometimes. Ya, do you every have that feeling? **(I nodded)** Ya, it is just normal, but what I didn't

understand was, if maybe they were not showing their true feelings about it. You know, they should give their support, they should be close to me, but they were not so close. You know they never even discussed anything with me but they would gossip about it. So you know more gossip makes you more depressed you know. **So that pressurised you more?** Ya.

6. **If you look back at your relationship now, or rather your relationships then, is there anything that you would recommend to people working with adolescence or teenagers that you think might have been useful for you at that time?**

Um, okay … Firstly, being in adolescence it means to that person a change in her life, a change, there is a sudden step to another step now in your life. It is important, you know, for a person working with adolescence to understand that first. Understand now, this time means a change and that maybe it can be drastic you know, it can be you know sudden, it can be gradual. Just be there for the adolescent – listen to her. Tell her about all the stuff, all the things that involve adolescence. Talk to her, be a friend to her, don't let, you know, if you are her mother, don't let her go outside to get some wrong information and all those things and all those stuff. That is what I think.

So you thought that at that time there was nobody to listen to you or for you to ask questions? Yes. Let her ask questions. Don't say "No, that is for older persons. You are not allowed to speak about that …!" Tell her, tell her everything. **What stopped you from asking your mother what you needed to know?** She was so strict. I would never have asked her. **What were you afraid of?** Yo! (Laughing) Andrea, I was scared of that woman, yoo, no …**Scared that she might?** No … She would say … what is the word to use … she would say, those are bad things, those are bad things that you are asking me about. Where did you learn those things? And all that stuff … **So she would think bad of you if asked about those things?** Yes, definitely. I would never ask her! **So adolescence need somebody to listen to them and to get information. What else to they need? What else might have been helpful for you at that time?** At that time. Support. **Was that before you fell pregnant or after?** Even before. Just support her in what ever she is doing. But I don't say, Andrea, just always be there for you. But just try to show her by being supportive, and not shout at the child when you know that she is asking you. And what else, Andrea? (Indicating with her hand that she must go)

Also what influence parents to act or deal with adolescence differently is the culture where they came from (parent and child). For example in my culture its a taboo to speak about adolescent issues such as having periods, dating etc. This therefore means that my culture played an important role in my teenage years. Therefore, for anyone dealing with adolescence / teenagers important to consider their cultural back-ground, consider ways in which these issues are dealt with. For example in my culture, it is not that these issues are not dealt with, but in a certain way. There is a concept of "Ukuhlela" where girls are inspected by older women to see if they are still virgins. Also there is a certain ritual of "Intonjane" this is done when the girls started having their periods, to accept them as adults now.

But because of the Western culture, our parents have now drifted apart from our culture. They are following the Western culture, but not fully. They don't consider doing everything done in the Western culture.

7. **Having spoken about your adolescent relationships, is there anything that you are thinking or feeling now that you would like to comment on?**

I am thinking about something, but I wouldn't like to comment on it, I am. **Is it too painful for you to talk about?** Yes. **What then, do you need now in order for you to be able to …** I need to

work on it so that I can cope with it. I am seeing someone about that problem. **So you are getting the support that you need?** Yes. **I don't want to leave you hanging.** No, I am dealing with it. **Okay. Is there anything else that you would like to say just to finish off?** No.
Thank you very, very much for agreeing to do this interview with me No problem - **it sounds like it was difficult for you at times.** It was, it was (laughing). (More serious) It was Andrea.

I would like to finish off by stating that, adolescence is a stressful period in one's life, adolescence / teenagers are confused, they are confused about who they are, what they want, and about what is happening outside. They are involved in a long search, so as an adult, give the child a space and as already stated support and show understanding, the space that I am referring to is to let the young person choose whatever she feels like meaning, if you do criticize do so in a manner so that the teenager won't feel rejected / or would be angry by what you are saying.

Appendix 2

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WOMEN WHO TOOK PART IN THIS STUDY:

The women who took part in this study came from diverse contexts and circumstances that are to some degree characteristic of the South African society. Each woman's unique story and circumstances brought about challenges and some risks, and each drew on different resources and strengths to cope with them.

Tandi's Story:

Tandi is a Xhosa speaking, black woman who was born and raised in a rural community in the former Transkei. She was raised predominantly by her mother, as her father was a migrant labourer working on the mines. She describes her mother as being very strict and Tandi was rather afraid of her. Tandi also describes her mother as being caring. Tandi's father was protective, but there was conflict between him and her mother regarding her mother's methods of caring for Tandi and her baby. Tandi describes their relationship as a cycle of anger, with her father being angry with Tandi but taking it out on her mother and her mother directing her anger at Tandi. She was the oldest sibling of two brothers and sister and was expected to be a role model to them.

Tandi was a social adolescent with many peers her age. They belonged to "the T-Shirt" Gang and called themselves the "Big 4." During this time she became more self-aware and would compare herself to her peers; how she looked and what she knew about "life." At times she felt inferior as her friends would go to the big cities for holidays, but her family were not able to afford this luxury. Balk (1995:280) stresses the importance of belonging to a popular group. Tandi did feel superior with regards to her schoolwork; she felt that she did well in this area. As Gouws & Kruger (1996:117) describe, this is a time in the young person's life when they share their time and ideas with their peers. Tandi and her peers openly talked about sexual matters and being sexually involved. However, the topic of contraception was seen as a taboo subject. The myth was that only people who were married and those who had many partners needed to be concerned with contraception and would need to attend the "White House" (Clinic). An acquaintance was ostracised when she was seen going to the clinic. Gouws & Kruger (1996:282) points to this fear of being left alone and the inherent pressure placed on young

woman to conform. This fear of being ostracised and therefore not conforming placed Tandi at risk when she did become sexually active. Tandi's mother had not discussed sexual matters or contraception methods with her, something that angered her father at the time of her pregnancy.

At the age of 17 she had her first sexual experience with her long standing boyfriend and fell pregnant. She describes this time as "the end of her adolescence" as it "messed up" her whole life. She had to leave school in the middle of her Standard 9 year. She was told that she could write her exams at the end of the year, however, when she arrived to take part in the exams, she was told that she would have to repeat the entire year. After much negotiating with her mother (who wanted Tandi to go to a new school to rid herself of the shame of the pregnancy) Tandi returned to her old school to complete her last two years of schooling.

During this time, Tandi was faced with many challenges. Her mother showed her no pity and she had to take full responsibility for her baby as soon as she returned from school. She was also still responsible for her chores in the home, for example fetching water from the river, washing clothes and now nappies and caring for her baby throughout her exams. She felt herself becoming very depressed. Her old friends now laughed at her and gossiped about her. Her only friend at school was a new pupil from another school, who provided great support for her. Tandi felt that her complete focus on her school work and her dedication to her child as she attempted to be a good mother, helped her through a difficult period. During this time, she also developed a strong relationship with her mother.

Tandi remained in the relationship with the father of her baby for a further 18 months. They then broke up for 2 years but have been back together for 3 years.

After school Tandi worked for a year (as punishment for letting her parents down) before she started university to pursue a degree.

Celi's Story:

Celi is also an African Xhosa speaking woman, brought up in a rural community in the former Transkei. She grew up in a large extended family environment with cousin-sisters and a younger brother living with her. She had very little contact with her father, meeting him only once (when she was 14 years old) before he died. Her step-father had a second wife with whom he lived. This meant contact with him was also limited. Her family was provided for by a single

breadwinner, her mother. Her mother and her aunts were all nurses and this encouraged her aspirations to achieve a good education that would give her a career when she grew up.

In Celi's family a large amount of emphasis was placed on school achievement and on not being distracted by boyfriends. Her mother was very strict and would not allow her to have boyfriends. She was given no information about sexual matters or contraception. When she started menstruating, her mother spoke to briefly about the fact that she was now a woman and that this would continue for the rest of her life. She was not given any information about sexual activity or the risk of pregnancy. She chose not to get involved and to be disciplined until she had reached her goal of finishing school. At times it was difficult, as she felt different from her friends who were talking about relationships. She would sometimes be ridiculed and was called names for not taking up offers of dates and relationships.

After school she worked for a year to accumulate finance in order to study further. During this time she felt that perhaps she could manage herself as she had passed her standard 10 and was, therefore, ready for a sexual relationship. Initially, her expectations regarding relationship were not met. She decided to look for someone "who turns her on" and was willing to take 50% of the responsibility and initiative. Her second relationship began soon after the first ended and she was with that partner at the time of the research.

Viv's Story:

Viv is an African Xhosa speaking woman who grew up in an urban township. She describes her family as being looked up to and respected in the community. Her father was the local doctor and they lived a comfortable life in an "almost ideal" family.
Viv started getting information about sexuality when she was in primary school where teachers and pupils openly discussed the subject. However, in high school, an élitist single sex school, it was regarded as a taboo subject and was, therefore, not openly discussed. Viv's mother gave her a sexual information book in primary school with the invitation to discuss it. Viv felt that this was too embarrassing and declined the offer.

Viv was very guarded in relationships. Her motto was "avoid becoming emotionally involved at all costs as you are likely to get hurt" and "you need to keep your feelings in check or you may loose control." In this way she kept every one at arms length and was never hurt in a relationship. Her parents had no influence in her relationships and were very seldom aware of

who she was dating at any particular time. She describes her view of her first sexual relationships and how she wanted it to be, as being "warped." This perception came from the fact that her view was different from others: she wanted to be in control and take the initiative and it would be with someone she was not close to in order to avoid attachment. As Potgieter & Fredman (in de La Rey et al 1997:105) point out, young women are socialized to believe that to be assertive is unladylike. It would seem that Viv saw being assertive as "warped." In matric she "blossomed" (had her first sexual experience, as she had planned it). Soon after this, she fell pregnant. The male was someone that she did not know very well and the contraception they were using "failed." Viv's method of dealing with this situation was to exclude him by not telling him. Her pregnancy brought about a change in her life style; she was no longer able to do some of the things she once did like partying, drinking and smoking.

She saw her peers as not playing a significant role in her life as she was quite different from them, not being interested in romance and girly things. However, she did feel pressured to be seen to be dating popular boys at school. The role of her peers was prominent in showing her what she did not want in a relationship.

During her pregnancy her father left the family and her parents divorced. Her father was an alcoholic and he left in order to undergo treatment. Viv does not seem to feel that this event had a large impact upon her.

Viv was able to complete her schooling before the birth of her child and attended university immediately.

Sandy's Story

Sandy is a white English speaking woman. Her parents divorced when she was three years old. For many years after that time her parents battled about custody and then maintenance, until late into her adolescence. When she was in standard six her mother moved with her to City A. This was a stressful time for her as she had to leave her brother in City B as he chose to stay there.

She describes herself as easily influenced by her surroundings, seeing herself as needing to fit into the popular group and to be dating a popular guy. She felt that her self esteem was very low at this time and that was why this was so important to her. She changed her type of friends; moving from the rebel crowd to the church group and dating a popular boy at the church. For 3

years she struggled to make friends at her new school.

Sandy had an ongoing battle with her father who requested that she make a choice between contact with him or her brother as he had rejected her brother. After much pain she decided that her brother had been far more supportive to her and chose to side with him. It was only during her university years that the family finally reconciled. She felt that her "broken home" had a large impact on her self esteem. It was only when she was in a relationship where she felt valued and trusted that her self esteem was able to develop.

Her long standing relationship with a not-so-popular boy provided her with support, acceptance and encouragement throughout the heartache and pain of her family situation. At this time she was no longer very involved in the church, but her mother was. When she discussed her first sexual relationship with her mother, it was not received very well. Her mother went ballistic and became hysterical. Her mother saw Sandy as the perfect daughter and, therefore, felt it was due to pressure from her boyfriend that she had become sexually active and not very Christian like. Sandy's values had changed and were now different to her mother's. As Gouws & Kruger (1996:113) and Jensen (1985:293) point out, adolescence is a time where young people start to move away from simply accepting their parent's values and beliefs and create their own. In order to maintain her relationship with her mother and her boyfriend Sandy chose to lie to her mother, saying that she was no longer sexually active. She recognised the fact that she desperately need to be accepted by her mother and, therefore, did what was necessary to maintain that.

Kim's Story:

Kim is a white English speaking women from a middle class family. She grew up in suburbia. She lives with her parents and two sisters and attended the local school. Her adolescent relationships began with a crush and going steady and then breaking up and heartache. She was the first of her group of peers to remain in a longstanding relationship and felt quite alone and isolated, as they did not understand her situation. In this longstanding relationship, she felt pressurised into doing what he wanted and needed, sexually. She felt lost in that she did not know to whom to turn for advice. When she went to the clinic she felt judged. During this relationship he made her his whole world and that felt like quite a responsibility. The end of the relationship was traumatic and sudden and her fairly tale had been shattered; she realised that there would not be a "knight in shining armour." For a year after this relationship she felt afraid

to enter into another romantic relationship as she felt that when you invest so much of yourself in someone they have the power to hurt you and she could not take that chance again. She calls it her "year of glum." During this time she relied on the support of her family and close friends.

Her second longstanding relationship started as a friendship. She felt this was important so that she could be comfortable and feel safe, but also have some excitement. The fact that he was younger than she was, also assisted this. She was cautious and had her eyes wide open. She was involved in this relationship at the time of the research.

Common Characteristics:

Although diverse, all the 'stories' have a number of common characteristics:

- All of them experienced adolescence – although they were very different and unique experiences, they all went through a period in their lives that they could identify as adolescence.
- All the women developed relationships with peers.
- They also all established relationships with boyfriends and were in longstanding relationships at the time of the interview.
- All the women grew up and lived in a patriarchal society and therefore experienced some form of prejudice within society simply because she was a woman; be it expectations, challenges or assumptions;
- All the women faced some form of challenge during this period of time. As Scott Peck (1978:15) says: "life is difficult";
- All five women "survived" adolescence to a large degree, despite the challenges and risks that they faced. They were able to survive with resilience in that they seem to have had the capacity to accomplish what Carnonell and others (1998:259) describe as being "unaffected by, to recover from or even to gain strength or to grow from difficult life experiences or circumstances."

In reaching a university level of education, my assumption is that these women have some resilience in that they achieved what the Search Institutes (1997) study of Developmental Assets describes as having motivation to learn and continue education. They were able to overcome (in varying degrees) the challenges put before them in order to focus on advancing their careers; something that is often not easy for women in a patriarchal society or for women who are single parents.

Appendix 3

LETTER TO RESPONDENTS

3 September 1999

Dear

Transcriptions

Please could you take a look at the transcriptions and add anything or add further explanatory comments where you wish to. The idea is that you have the opportunity to check that you feel that your anonymity is being preserved (you will see that I have changed your name to _____ as well as those people mentioned in the interview). It is also to provide you with an opportunity to clarify issues that you feel haven't been made clear. Feel free to write in the margins or go onto a new page. Some of the sentences may not sound correct. Please don't worry – I have transcribed exactly as we spoke and it is okay if it is not perfect.

When you have finished, please could you send it to:

Andrea Welsh Breetzke
C/o 4 Feb Road
Vincent
East London ,5201

I have arranged for the seal transcripts to be collected and sent to me for confidentiality.

If you are on e-mail and would like to mail your reply to me, please do so. My e-mail address is : welshbreezke@hotmail.com

Once again many thanks
Andrea

Appendix 4

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE FEELINGS OF THE YOUNG WOMEN DURING THEIR ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS

	TANDI	VIV	SANDY	CELI	KIM
Theme of Story	COURAGE TO GO ON	CONTROLLED	TURMOIL & TENSIONS	FOCUS ON BOOKS	LEARNING THROUGH PAIN
Feeling re self	▪ Good mother ▪ Proud of self for succeeding	▪ Controlled	Low self esteem – built up in strong relationship	Feels like a special person	▪ I love too much
Feelings within a relationship (Sexuality issues)	▪ Cared for ▪ Protected	▪ In the moment ▪ Comfortable ▪ No hurt ▪ With it away ▪ Anger ▪ Careful = no hurt ▪ Fear of failure ▪ Fear of hurt ▪ May no cope	▪ Hurt ▪ Unclear ▪ Flat spin ▪ He made me feel important ▪ Accepted ▪ Supported ▪ He was hurting because I was hurting	▪ Fear of relationships ▪ Being watched ▪ Unsure ▪ High expectations – let down	▪ "He made me everything to him" ▪ hectic – sexual pressure ▪ lonely ▪ ambivalence ▪ wonderful & excited ▪ understood ▪ needed & cared for ▪ Need to feel safe
End of relationship	▪ Heartbroken ▪ Couldn't love anyone else ▪ Hurt ▪ Depressed ▪ Alone	▪ Nothing negative ▪ Choice to end it	▪ Heartache	▪ Not what I want therefore end it ▪ Not getting 50% worth	▪ Lonely ▪ Crumbling ▪ Not a fairly tale ▪ Year of glum ▪ Sudden & emotional ▪ Wake up ▪ Lost ▪ From all to nothing
Sex education : Source & Feelings	None from family – all from peers Shame	Embarrassing because from parents	None Sex = against mothers Christian beliefs – therefore needed to lie – not having sex	None – angry due to lack of information Message: boyfriend = trouble – no concentration - fail school - pregnancy - scolding	None Alone
Family relationships	▪ From distant to close relationship with mother ▪ Very strict mum - cruel ▪	Good home life <u>Almost</u> perfect – but then divorce Mum re divorce: "deurmekaar up stairs"	▪ Tension ▪ Inclusion vs. exclusion ▪ Conflict ▪ Rejection from Dad	▪ Supportive family – focus on books ▪ Powerful mother ▪ Very strict ▪ Matriarchal	▪ Protective ▪ Good support system ▪ Seek approval ▪ Tense – not a good role model
Feelings re Peer relationships	▪ Expelled from group ▪ Shame & Dirty ▪ Subject of gossip ▪ Better in books	▪ Anger at how friends are used & abuse ▪ They see me as difficult, selfish	▪ Need to be accepted by having a popular boy friend	Different Pressure – to have a boy friend	▪ Alone ▪ Not understood ▪ Ashamed (re use of contraception)
Other influencing factors:	Pregnancy: ▪ Messed up my whole life ▪ Ruined my life ▪ Let my mother down ▪ Bad role model to younger sister	Birth of baby: ▪ Wish it away ▪ Family busy with divorce – ignored this/me ▪ Feared telling father	▪ Role of the church and Christianity = provided a family ▪ Problems with sexual relationship = offensive to mother = lied to keep approval		