



Dalia Puidokiene

Covert Codes of Women in Prostitution

Pathways for Recovering Roots after Trauma Interface

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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Abstract

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The aim of this study is to analyse the life stories of women in prostitution from childhood to adulthood revealing their personal experiences, which unfold by the main, specific life patterns that this study silhouettes. The obstacles they faced while growing up, the choices they made to decide whether or not to disengage from prostitution and the help they sought are the main areas of focus in this study, which examines how those women managed to live through their life experiences. A more general aim of this study was *to provide a “voice” to a woman in prostitution* revealing what it means to be a woman who is a victim of prostitution.

The issues regarding women in prostitution as well as women trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation often gain significance as a multidimensional problem in our country. This is especially so, when different opinions come from various, contradictory representations. Our society considers prostitution and women in prostitution as existing by two scenarios, relevant to morality and relevant to free choice. Therefore reactions to the behaviours of women in prostitution or to them themselves constitute an odd sort of mix involving insistence on punishment, apathy and an effort to control these women. These sorts of thought patterns cause society to react to women in prostitution by punishing or trying to control them. The individuality of these women’s experiences and the complexity of their problems within their multi-faceted realities are brushed

aside. Unfortunately this means that getting to know the women and their experiences is also brushed aside. This blocks any sort of deeper understanding and, at the same time, any more effective resolutions of their essential problems.

The research materials consist of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with fifteen (15) women in prostitution about their personal experiences, some of these women's letters and materials on observations. The research field notes and the observational materials were gathered by conducting interviews and holding meetings with various "players" on the local scene, analysing project work phenomena and observing some of these women's "work places". This study also involves my personal experiences relevant to my direct encounters with women in prostitution and their personal experiences, as I sought to discover and illuminate the nature and meaning of such a phenomenon of exploitation. These women's personal experiences were understood throughout their transmitted subjective interpretations, which they verbally "lived through" once again. This study involves my reintegration of derived knowledge applying the discovery and synthesis of my intuition and tacit understanding, as I portray my research participants and their personal experiences in a holistic manner. The existential approach to research with a fundamental holistic conception grounds the heuristic strategy that was applied while studying the personal life experiences of women in prostitution in "natural" settings, as I provided psycho-social help to them. I followed the heuristic research design that includes six phases of investigation: the initial engagement, immersion into the topic at issue, incubation, illumination, explication and culmination of the research for creative synthesis.

An interactional model of social work practice, social cognitive and trauma theories base the theoretical framework of this study. Three core ideas of the interactional model of social work practice guided the discovery of the facts involved in the personal experiences of women in prostitution, which I refer to as heuristics. These three ideas are (a) a belief in the symbiotic relationship between people and their social surroundings, (b) some mutual need blocked by obstacles—as per a client and others in light of the systems the

client must negotiate and (c) the strength of needed change. These ideas allowed me to formulate and test new solutions for social work problems. The main ideas involved in the social cognitive theory, where the nature of a person is defined by the “number of basic capabilities” such as symbolising, thinking in advance, vicarious, self-regulatory and self-reflective, were the guides for the situated and contextualised views on the personal life experiences of women in prostitution. Moreover what encouraged me to explain and highlight the necessary changes that must be transferred into social work practice during the help process for such clients was the support of the social cognitive theory. Explicated attributes of the trauma theory were also incorporated into the theoretical framework, which were then explored as characteristic/incidental and significant obstacles in the personal experiences in the life of a woman in prostitution. The trauma theory enabled a critical perspective and exploration on how the certain aspects of trauma, distinguished according to complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), were deeply ingrained in the personal experiences of women in prostitution, which then impelled or directed their behaviours, relationships and resources for changes.

KEYWORDS: *prostitution, women in prostitution, personal experiences, sexual exploitation, heuristic content analysis, specific patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution, trauma, choice and social help*

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Introduction

Contemporary social work and support in Lithuania is still restricted to no more than models of help or to the implementation of various state and international legal instruments and norms in tackling various social problems. However, the human being, who is the most important in the process, is often overlooked. After all, on the basis of the existential point of view, everyone is most aware of his/her own difficulties and responds to the environment in the way it is subjectively perceived and experienced. Van Deurzen-Smith (1997, 16), who cites Kierkegaard (1846), thinks that “actuality is the unity of possibility and necessity” and remarks that only a free human is capable of existing realistically. However, according to the opinion held by Lobato (2001), freedom always has the burden of necessarily involving human choice, which leads to certain consequences. It is probably no coincidence, as Fedosiuk (2007) notes, that legal regulations protect human freedom as the main value. The individual freedom of women in prostitution as well as women trafficked for sexual exploitation purposes is protected by a norm in the regulations on trafficking in human beings. However, it becomes more complicated when referring to levels of prostitution as one phenomenon and analysing a person engaged in prostitution. Then more controversial opinions emerge as a result.

Prostitution, the same as trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes, is a latent crime. Therefore explicit information about women in prostitution is not clear. There could be about 3,000–10,000 (Lehti, 2003; Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija, 2005) or 4,000–6,000 women (Pruskus, 2010) working as prostitutes in Lithuania, depending on which of the previous data analysis on the phenomenon of prostitution by certain foreign experts is considered. A few years ago, the extent of trafficking in women in Lithuania

was the highest among the Baltic States (International Organization for Migration, 2001, 9). It was believed that about 2,000–3,000 women from the Baltic countries (about half of them from Lithuania) were trafficked for sexual exploitation (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Socialinių tyrimų institutas, 2004). Moreover, although earlier studies mentioned Lithuania as a country of origin of victims (Ruškus ir kt., 2005), later Lithuania is not only denoted as a country of origin but also the country of transit between Eastern and Central Europe (Lithuanian Human Rights League and Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 2007). Contemporary studies show that Lithuania is not only a country of export or of transit but also a country of destination for human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes, where victims are mostly children and women (Dottridge, 2010; according to country profiles and executive summary written by Blažytė, 2008).

Tendencies of growth in prostitution are not only on the national level but also on the international scale. Such tendencies encourage an analysis of both the phenomenon itself and the personal experiences of women, who are involved and exploited in the greatest numbers. Foreign researchers have analysed the problem of trafficking in women and of prostitution from different theoretical angles. Månsson (1993) emphasised the consequences of the sexuality and cohabitation culture. O'Connor & Healy (2006) and Farley (2000; 2003; 2004; 2005) highlighted the characteristics of the clients of prostitutes and the male role as well as the demand for prostitution. Several researchers have also analysed features of social work with this risk group (Månsson, 1993; 2003; Månsson, Hedin, 1999; Hedin, Månsson, 2003; Keeler, Jyrkinen, 1999; Grenz, 2005; Hearn et al. 2008). Ekberg (2004) recognised the purchases of sexual services and trafficking in human beings as forms of violence against women in Sweden. Other researchers, such as Raymond (2003, 2004), Raymond, Hughes & Gomez (2001), Raymond, et al. (2002), analysed the phenomenon of trafficking in women as a violation of human rights, the question of legalising prostitution, the demand for prostitution, the link between trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation and sexual exploitation in families and the

connection between migration and trafficking in human beings and its consequences. O'Connor & Healy (2006) highlighted the link between trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes and prostitution. Philippe & Romano (2008) investigated the important and essential conditions for successful rehabilitation and reintegration of female victims of trafficking. Ringdal (2004) performed a historical study of the phenomenon of prostitution from the ancient world to the modern red-light districts of today and beyond. Gitinas (2001) also overviewed aspects of adultery, nymphomania and prostitution as well as aspects of an inferiority complex within human experiences.

Society constantly renews the debate on prostitution as a social problem; however, there are not many academic studies or discussions nor arguments about this phenomenon coming "from the inside". Such a situation can be traced to a failure of governmental policy in respect to prostitution: "The [laws of the] Republic Lithuania has prohibited prostitutes' and procurers' activities without interfering with the buying of sex" (Pajumets, 2004, 21). The Lithuanian Human Rights League in conjunction with the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania produced a summary report in 2006 entitled "Situation of trafficking in human beings in Lithuania" claiming that prostitution "under the laws of the Republic of Lithuania is not a crime but rather an administrative law offense equal to the remunerated use of prostitution services" (Lithuanian Human Rights League/Ministry of the Interior, 2007, 46). Despite this, purchases and sales of sexual services are booming, expanding into new forms and changing locations. Statistical numbers only partially reflect the reality. Studies already accomplished several years ago have shown that the real extent of the problem is much greater than official data indicate (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Socialinių tyrimų institutas, 2004). International, mobile or migrating prostitutes are difficult for investigators to contact due to their lack of a permanent place of residence, according to the experts analysing the phenomenon of prostitution (Čaplinskas, Mårdh, 2001). Moreover, the summary data by Blažytė (Dottridge, 2010, 172) on the country's profile about trafficking in women today

notices, “A significant percentage of victims are underage girls (37%) and mostly between 14 and 18 years old.” Thus there is a tendency to sexually exploit women for prostitution purposes at younger and younger ages.

Earlier studies indicated various reasons for an emerging prostitution: less available jobs for women in the job market, gender discriminatory work compensation policies, high level of unemployment, influence of the country’s economic situation, powerful demand for “sexual services”, low status of females in the society and the problem of unequal opportunities for men and women (Acus, 2001; Pruskus, 2010; Ruškus ir kt., 2005). Analyses of prostitution or trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes appeared by several aspects, as I discovered from various sources in Lithuania. A few researchers raised discussions regarding legal regulation of prostitution in Lithuania (Perkauskienė, 2001) or analysed forms of controlling the health of prostitutes (Čaplinskas, Mårdh, 2001). Other researchers identified features regarding the formation of prostitution as a marginal group in Lithuanian society (Acus, 2001). Still others overviewed trends in human trafficking and prostitution and their effects in Lithuania (Marcinkevičienė, Praspaliauskienė, 2003). It was not until later, particularly because the extent of trafficking in women for sexual purposes was increasing, before different studies began to investigate certain areas of this phenomenon. The International Organization for Migration overviewed many stages of the phenomenon of trafficking and legal documents related to it in Lithuania. It also delivered public opinion survey data, a help system and preventive measures and provided recommendations for schools (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija, 2004, 2005; (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Vilnius Universitetas, 2005). Other researchers analysed the principles and methods that were being applied for the rehabilitation and reintegration of the victims of trafficking in human beings and in prostitution (Ruškus ir kt., 2005). Also the International Organization for Migration produced guidelines for police officers on how to deal with a victim of trafficking (2006) and methodological recommendations on the analysis of criminal cases in human trafficking (2006, 2007).

However, researches in this area focused more on human trafficking as a social problem, which included sexual exploitation of women, as well as the trends, causes, consequences and methods of legal assistance. Meanwhile the causes of sexual exploitation of women by prostituting them and their consequences were only presented episodically. What was not studied were the women's experiences that involved them in prostitution, the difficulties they faced in their personal lives, a help process for them and the importance of the choice regarding either disengagement from prostitution or a continued engagement in it.

Lately discussions on issues of prostitution in Lithuania conclude either with an open debate or with the question of whether or not to legalise prostitution. At this point, two opinions diverge. One advocates the legalisation of prostitution as a means to control this phenomenon. Another is the opposing conviction that the legalisation of prostitution humiliates the dignity of women and negatively affects the moral development, and especially moral values, of members in our society. Some studies analysing the prostitution phenomenon indicated that women enter into prostitution simply because they want to put "what they see as their best asset (...) to good use" (Rogers, 1961). Pruskus (2010) talks about various reasons why women engage in prostitution, including biological and psychological reasons as well as economic and/or social aspects. He points out recent studies that do not show any direct, unambiguous link between the temperament of an individual and engagement in prostitution. This implies the need to study the reality of the personal experiences of women in prostitution, seeking to understand their unique, individual and specific way of life as human beings. Two questions are still open for various discussions. *Is prostitution equal to trafficking in human beings? Is prostitution one sort of violence against women?*

The debates on prostitution and on trafficking in women for purposes of sexual exploitation as social problem issues have intensified during the past few years in Lithuania. These discussions raise different opinions and bring forth different representations. On one hand, there is an attitude that prostitution is not human trafficking.

Therefore, it is argued, women choose prostitution voluntarily, without pressure. Such women's activities must be controlled in order to protect them and their health and to control criminal activities. This kind of opinion attempts to soften the approach towards these women by calling them sex workers, since this is less stigmatising than calling them prostitutes. Another contrasting approach claims that it is wrong to regard the involvement in prostitution as voluntary, because these women are victims of many psychological and social circumstances. The existence of such a traditional dichotomy encourages delving more deeply into the causes or specific moments in the process of becoming a prostitute. Moreover it may be that a woman's engagement in prostitution is a random occurrence and does not depend on any predetermining conditions. Thus a number of questions still need to be raised. *How does a woman become a prostitute? What are the reasons for a woman's involvement in prostitution?* Or, as per the widely existing opinion—*What constitutes "self-involvement" in prostitution?* These issues become very important while searching for answers on how to reduce or prevent the growing scale of prostitution involving younger and younger women and girls.

Social work practice in Lithuania is organised to provide help for different risk groups of clients, including those in prostitution and the trafficking of women. However, according to some Lithuanian researchers (Lazutka, Pivoriene, and Eidukevičiūtė, 2004, 139–140; in Campanini and Frost [Eds.], 2004), social work in this country can still be acknowledged as merely having taken its first steps, although it is developing rapidly. It can be said that there is no practical social work experience with women victimised by prostitution or by human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes. Social assistance for female victims of prostitution and human trafficking is characterised by traits incidental to more of an "individualistic-reformist" stage: to respond to client's needs and to develop effective social services. Social and psychological assistance to victims is usually provided by NGOs. Often they face financial difficulties and these lead to some sort of competition amongst themselves, because a mechanism for continuous funding has not yet been developed in the country. Thus social workers seek methods to help these women

more effectively thereby seeking to change their way of life and helping them to become willing to overcome all the obstacles they will face during the period of their personal transformations.

The only way practical skills and experience can be studied in social work practice as well as in social work research is when there is international cooperation with other organisations or academic institutions. Such an opportunity came up for three major universities in Lithuania (Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University and Klaipėda University), for one of them to cooperate with the University of Lapland in Finland. At the time, I was working at Klaipėda University as an assistant in the Social Work Department. It was a serious challenge to me to go from a level of knowing the problem of prostitution due to practical experience and then organising help for victimised women at an academic, scientific level. I accepted this challenge and the proposal to consider the prostitution/human trafficking phenomenon and the experiences of victimised women. This was especially so, because I saw this social problem “from the inside” due to my social work experience. I saw a niche that was presently quite cloudy. The real life experiences of women in prostitution needed to be revealed “on the spot”, in their lives.

I saw and felt what these women were experiencing while I was working as a social worker since, at that time, I was constantly communicating and speaking with them and remaining the person who was closest to their emotional states. The dialogues with these women allowed me to explore self-searching, reflection, the feelings and emotions these women expressed, their behaviours and representations of themselves *being in* the relationship or *being with* me or in society. In this study, I thoroughly examined what they shared about their current personal experiences and the trials they went through in childhood and in adolescence, when they were entering prostitution and/or when they were trying to tackle their traumas. As they would be revealing their experiences of sexual exploitation and/or abuse and their asserted manifestations of trauma and stigma, I would analyse the connections between their past, the here and now and the future along with their isolation from the outside world. Furthermore this study was also an analysis of these women’s

reality, how they uphold and facilitate their own personal growth and self-realisation as well as how much they conform, if they do at all, to the models appearing in contemporary society.

I employed the *existential* approach for this study (Buber, 1998; 2001; Cohn 2002; van Deurzen-Smith, 2010; Kierkegaard, 1974; 2006; Kočiūnas, 2008; 2009; Kočiūnas, 2004) and merged it with the *heuristic* research strategy and its ideas (Gigerenzer & Brighton, 2009; Moustakas, 1990; Tyson, 1995; Tyson McCrea & Bulanda, 2010). “Three core ideas” about the essential *relationship, obstacles and strength for change*, that I called *resources*, are represented by the *interactional model (IM)* in social work practice (Shulman, 1992), which allowed concentration and conceptualisation. A close relationship with another person motivates a person’s individual growth and change, so that person can gain power over obstacles and recover resources in possession. *Social cognitive theory* (Bandura, 1986) also favours a conception of interaction based on “triadic reciprocity”. According to this theory’s defined “number of basic capabilities”, such as symbolising, forethought, vicarious, self-regulatory and self-reflective, allowed me to explore and explain the personal experiences of women in prostitution. *Trauma theory* (Herman, 1997) and its highlighted “complex post-traumatic stress disorder” helped me to reveal and contextualise the main features and specific patterns which revealed the personal past experiences of women in prostitution that refer to their negative connotations of themselves.

This study contributed to social support practice and provided for victims of prostitution and trafficking in several ways. First it supplemented what we know about the previous life experiences of women in prostitution and their behaviours. It was not only important to learn the significance of the relationships among family members, parents and their children but also to define the obstacles blocking satisfaction of their mutual needs during their socialisation period. Second this study indicates the importance of dialogue in the relationship between a social worker and a client. Third this study also revealed what was important for helping victims of prostitution and trafficking as clients of social workers in the social services process, and what could become the strengths or resources for

personal change and growth in these women's way of life. Finally this study indicated that women in prostitution were not necessarily able to tackle prostitution successfully because of many other obstacles, such as addiction to drugs or alcohol or simply the absence of timely help.

The design of this study was developed as follows. *Chapter One* is the introduction of this study. There is a brief review of the usefulness of knowing the research participants as a part of a marginal subculture of our society. Further the practical and academic meaningfulness of research about the personal experiences of women in prostitution are defined. Finally the importance of foreseeing the most proper and effective social help for these women is highlighted.

Chapter Two introduces the review on the status of women in Lithuania as well as various contexts of the prostitution phenomenon here. The discussion is on the socio-cultural and historical aspects of the status of women in Lithuania, prostitution as a multi-faceted social problem of the country and social policy issues. Here I present the importance of recognising the personal experiences of women in prostitution as a field of social research for creating effective help programmes in social work service provisions for such clients.

Chapter Three contains the methodology part of this study presenting the research question and objective.

Chapter Four covers the nature of this research. It reveals how I entered this study field, the role of a researcher, framework for data gathering and the philosophical underpinnings. Finally this chapter includes a discussion of ethical issues I considered important, which arose throughout the research process.

Chapter Five presents the research data and process of data analysis highlighting the epistemological dilemma of the social "truths" of the research participants. This chapter also includes a presentation aimed at understanding the patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution. The heuristic content analysis (HCA), as a strategy for data analysis, is based on the heuristic methodology by Moustakas (1990) and the main ideas of Flick (1998), Mayring (2000) and Patton (2002). Such a combination allowed revealing and emphasising the most distinguished, specific patterns in the

personal experiences of women in prostitution from their childhood to the time they became victims and later sought help.

Three main chapters encompassed the empirical results and their interpretation.

Chapter Six is earmarked for revealing and analysing the vulnerability of the women in prostitution in the effort to understand their traumatic experiences. This is done by identifying specific patterns that surfaced while relating the personal experiences of these women as they were growing up in their families or other surroundings. The concept of the relationships between them and their family members, relatives or other significant persons within their inner circle is highlighted to examine their personal experiences of sexual exploitation or violence against them and stigmatic experiences.

Chapter Seven contains the reintegration of derived knowledge and discoveries from the examinations of the personal experiences of women in prostitution throughout the process of their making a choice. There is an analysis of why some of these women “do not have any other way” and continue to be engaged in prostitution. The analysis covers what this means to them and how they act in a decision-making process.

Chapter Eight has the analysis of the personal experiences of women who are seeking help and what changes and difficulties they face in the healing process. It deals with how relationships are created, what has worked for them and what has not.

Chapter Nine contains the evaluation of the theoretical and methodological commitment in reflection of the overall study. There is also a discussion about the validity and reliability of the research results and their implications for practice and research. Several aspects are covered here. One is why it was important to study the personal experiences of women in prostitution and the usefulness thereof. Next there is the relevance of the theoretical and methodological framework for achieving the aim and answering the research question. For future considerations, there is a review of what more could be done, what was not done and what opened the way for further investigations. Last but not least, what did this study reveal that is new? Finally the implications for social workers and other expert

help providers, formulators of social policies, institutions training social workers and scholars and researchers are emphasised.

Chapter Ten, the final chapter, presents the concluding epilogue about the personal experiences of women in prostitution appealing to heuristic creative synthesis where it was governed by my perception, feelings, intuition and beliefs. As Moustakas (1990, 32) points out, "Meanings are inherent in a particular world view, an individual life, and the connections between self, other, and the world." Reflecting on the research question after a long period of solitude provided the inspiration for this last part in this study, which entailed going over the preparatory steps in this field of research.

2. Women and prostitution: Range of various contexts in Lithuania

Prostitution is often called the oldest profession in the world, and women in prostitution are linked to a symbol of sinfulness. Such an outlook has survived to this day. Ringdal (2004) asserts that specifically such a position was considered “as a guarantor and stabilizer of morality and matrimony in the rest of society” in the West until the late nineteenth century. The author here holds the opinion that prostitution was frequently seen in both the historical and sociological contexts as institutions of “polar opposites”, “both morally and culturally”. Notwithstanding this, the moral assessment of this phenomenon was always challenging and complicated when endeavouring to integrate it into a social-scientific or historical analysis (Ringdal, 2004, 1–3). Pruskus (2010), who engaged in explaining the phenomenon of prostitution, notices that two essential elements are generally linked with it—an exchange of materialistic values, generally money, for sexual services and a possibility to select one’s sexual partner without any future obligations. The explanations about the appearance and existence of prostitution vary amongst proponents of different theories: it exists due to the link between supply and demand for prostitution, it is an expression of asocial behaviour, it is an assurance for the performance of important social functions, it is a consequence of various circumstances and it is a free, independent personal decision and choice (Pruskus, 2010). These views are not necessarily incorrect; however, they are overly provisional and partial for explaining the personal experiences of women in prostitution. It is also important to note that various resources frequently associate the phenomenon of prostitution with the behaviours of women alone. However, this sort of activity is also characteristic of members of the male sex. Daugirdaitė (2000, 35) asserts that a

division of life's spheres as "public" and "private" or as a polarized distribution of women to the "bourgeoisie" and "prostitutes/working women" classes is very restrictive. According to philosopher Jekentaitė (in Luobikienė, 1998), identifying with one or the other image always brings the risk of self-emasculatation, which is a powerful tool for manipulation. This risk primarily affects women as the public insistently imposes publicly tolerated images hindering full and free development of their identities. The purpose of this study is not to deliberate the phenomenon of prostitution but more to turn to the person within it which, in this case, is a woman along with her personal experience. When an effort is made to extend effective help to a victimised person, it is first necessary to grasp where that person "can be found" at the time. In other words, according to Kierkegaard (2006, 64), whenever there is a desire to actually take some person to a pre-described place, it is first necessary to find that person where he/she is and then start from there. Therefore, to help women in prostitution, their experiences must be removed from the "underground" by removing their covert mask not only at a personal but also at a public level. That is only possible by attempting to become familiar with these women, their personal experiences and what they have gone through. This, as Herman (1997) tells it, can only happen by recreating their history anew.

The opinion that women freely choose the way of prostitution is still vital to this very day. The society of Lithuania is no exception when it comes to believing this. This encouraged me not only to discuss women in prostitution in the context of their situation in society but also the reality of their experiences. What they had to go through directly involves their motives for selecting this road in life in one way or another. By the same, it helped understand the reasons for the personal experiences of women in prostitution how this relates to the consequences. Employing such a manner, in this section, I considered it important to review the contexts of the multidimensional societal and personal experiences of the women in the society of a modernizing Lithuania.

2.1. Status of women and the phenomenon of prostitution in a multidimensional society

What did modern society bring us to? Beck (1992) associates the origin of modern gender order with the emergence of industrial society. The author calls modern society the risk society, which he describes as living in “a world out of control” (Beck, 1992, 108). Moreover he notes that a risk profile characterises modern society—organised irresponsibility when no one is responsible. Thus, it can be maintained, tensions are created in such a way. As Yates (2003) notes, the tensions are anywhere—in the family, in gender relationships and in the community. The society of Lithuania is no exception either.

As one analyzes the personal experiences of women in prostitution, one cannot ignore the pre-history, which formed and influenced the attitude towards women and their position in society as well as in their relationships with men. Beyond a doubt, that created conditions for the formation of stereotypical thinking about women and their labelling and, of course, of their stigma. Ekberg (2004) notices that, when victims of prostitution and trafficking of women are divided into two groups, it often prompts the wrong interpretations regarding the abuse of women by men. One of the essential matters is that, when women in prostitution are not recognised as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and/or a victim of violence, they lose access to justice, one of the fundamental human rights. Often lobbyists who speak in behalf of prostitution argue that the ability of women to control their bodies associates with their right to sexual choice. Barry (1996) objects to such a provision, believing that a woman’s consent is not a factor allowing her exploitation, while consent to violence is already oppression. This author argues that, even in slavery, there was consent to the extent of considering it human blindness or inability to sense choices for other alternatives during those times. Free will always affects a person’s choice; however, as Koestenbaum and Block (2001) claim, it is specifically the element of choice that indicates what alternatives there are or what are seen, which ones a person comprehends. Thus perhaps it is no coincidence that a dilemma comes up when

considering terms like “sex workers”, “victims” or “delinquents” in the context of controversial opinions and negative attitudes towards women in prostitution, which then prompts deeper and more comprehensive examinations of these women’s life stories.

Upon becoming a member of the UN in 1991,¹ Lithuania signed the UN Convention² on *The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, which the *Seimas*³ parliamentary body of Lithuania ratified.⁴ This obligated the Government of Lithuania to eliminate all forms of discrimination as well as all forms of slavery in the country, including trafficking in women and prostitution. Later the Government of Lithuania ratified another important international act against international crime. This was the supplement to the UN Convention,⁵ the *Protocol on Prevention, Punishment and Suppression*

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1. Lithuania became a member of the United Nations (UN) on September 17, 1991 and a signatory to a number of UN organizations and international agreements. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Background Note: Lithuania. December, 2009. <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5379.htm>>.
 2. The UN Convention on *The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, (18 December 1979) was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly by a vote of 130 to none, with 10 abstentions. In Resolution 34/180, by which the General Assembly adopted the Convention, the Assembly expressed hope that the Convention would come into force at an early date and requested the Secretary-General to present the text of the Convention by the mid of the decade to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. It is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information, <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/history.htm>>.
 3. *Seimas* is the name of the Parliament in the national language of Lithuania.
 4. In accordance with Government Order No. 772p, (10 November 1993) for joining the United Nations (UN) Convention, *The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* (in Lithuanian – *Jungtinių tautų konvencija dėl visų formų diskriminacijos panaikinimo moterims*) was deposited on 18 January 1994 and entered into force in 1 February 1994. The Convention was ratified in Lithuania on 10 September 1995, No. I-1035. *Valstybės Žinios [Official Gazette]*, 1995-09-15, No. 76-1764.
 5. UN Convention (15 November 2000) with the supplementary of *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and*

of Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was significant in combating the exploitation of women for sexual purposes. The act explains the mechanism for violating human freedoms involved in the purchase, sales, and transmission of humans and the use of control in suppressing freedoms that presupposes the continuity of such control. However, according to Fedosiuk (2003), the main theoretical problem regarding the standards in human trafficking becomes the difficulties in conceptually explaining the mechanism of violations against human freedoms.

2.1.1. Socio-cultural and historical aspects of the status of women in Lithuania

During the entire history of mankind, the nature and character of a woman has been shrouded in myths, and women often had to deal with contemptuous perspectives towards them. As Tereškinas (2004) states, the category of femininity, as well as the concept of manhood, is relative as well as problematic. Reingardienė (2004, 14) also notes that today “gender is defined as the symbol of the cultural values of manhood and womanhood” and, on this basis, men and women situate in a hierarchy of social institutions and other social interactions. The author considers this to be a social structural phenomenon, a “social institute developed, represented and legitimated on a daily basis” (ibid, 14).

Scholars who analysed the development of women’s role in society noted the change in it over decades. The first “sex researches”, also called the “landmark studies of male and female serial behaviour, that helped usher in the ‘sexual revolution’ of the 1960s and 1970s” (Brown & Fee, 2003, 896) were performed by a group of scholars overseen by Professor

Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was ratified by the Government of Lithuania on 22 April 2003 and entered into force on 25 December 2003. *Valstybės Žinios* [Official Gazette], 21 May 2003, No. 49–2166.

Kinsey.⁶ As the authors state, Kinsey, being “a pioneer of sex research”, replaced “conventional ideas of normal sexual behaviour with a new biological definition” from “so-called sexual perversion” to “biological normality” by using the results of his works. However, in the opinion of Kring (2006), the tension between genders towards each other in the contemporary world has not only failed to decrease but, on the contrary, has increased. This author notices that “it appears heavy handed to obligate women more diverse sexual developments into seamless compliance with the male sexual script for the purposes of analogy”. Nevertheless he asserts that analysing “sexual contacts between children and adults” was “out of sync with our current understanding of the effect sexual abuse has on the emotional well being of children” (Kring, 2006, 96–98). According to Tomura (2009), despite the fact that perceptions, interpretations and attitudes toward women in prostitution vary between cultures and societies, the role and social status of prostitutes differ depending on the particular socio-political and legal systems, public health conditions, attitudes towards gender and spiritual climate of each society. Ringdal (2004) notes that the market for sex has enjoyed formidable customer demand throughout history.

Seemingly stable female characteristics such as modesty and humility, which were valued at one time, are now considered

6. Kinsey et al. (1948; 1953) analyzed the sexual behaviours of human females and males. They pointed out that, over the course of human history and in various cultures, there has been some recognition of human desire for coitus with an individual to whom he/she is not wedded. Various means have been devised to cope with such demands for non-marital sexual experiences. According to the authors, all cultures recognize the desirability of maintaining the family as a stabilizing unit in the social organization. In no society, anywhere in the world, does there seem to have been any serious acceptance of complete sexual freedom, although some cultures allow considerable freedom for both females and males in non-marital relationships. Scholars explain such inconsistencies as the mammalian background of human male behaviour. The extra-marital coitus of females is interpreted as a deviance from the social convention. It threatens a husband’s right to regular coitus with his spouse, the prestige of the husband and his kin and neglect of wifely duties and obligations in the home, which definitely leads to marital discord and/or divorce. It is morally wrong and, consequently, a sin against God and against society (Kinsey, et al., 1948, 409–416).

drawbacks (van Deurzen-Smith, 1997). As Utrio (1998) notes, the mindset about a wife that has existed since medieval times is that she “must obey her husband’s orders, even if they are offensive and stupid, she must respect her husband, whoever/whatever he is” and, if a woman is aware that she is smarter and stronger than her husband, she can never show it publicly and cannot afford to admit it even in her heart. Plus, according to one patriarch from the beginning of the eighteenth-century, a wife is not “the ruler of herself and none of her desires must come true if a man does not give his consent” (Utrio, 1998, 167). She must be entirely submissive to her husband’s rule and obey her husband, even if grudgingly. Such an exchange model in the roles of male and female reflects the situation in families: “a man ought mainly to lead, advice, teach, and be the highest authority for their wives being only as housewives” (Foucault, 1999, 451). Thus women had to be faithful despite their husbands being unfaithful and obedient despite beatings by their husbands for no apparent reason, in other words, to be as “meek as sheep to the knife-edge” (Utrio, 1998, 168). Patriarchal domination constantly supported and based the theory of worthlessness as an inherently female feature. Kavolis (1992, 36) argues that “over thousands of years of Christianity, women were less important than were men”. The story in the Old Testament of the Bible about the creation of the world was considered as truth for thousands of years, and people lived according to its laws. Such a view about women undoubtedly destined and influenced the Christian perspective. God creates woman by taking a rib from Adam, and she is “not according to God’s but according to the image of man” (Utrio, 1998, 15). Meanwhile Chapter 1, line 27 of the first Book of Moses talks about the creation of man and woman at the same time in accordance with the image of God, as supplementing one another (Šventas Raštas [Holy Scripture], 1990, 8). According to the Judaic-Christian tradition, a woman is considered the cause of evil, which escalates her sense of guilt. According to the mythical tales of the *Book of Genesis* concerning the guilt of woman in causing the sins of the world, God gave her to her husband in captivity to give childbirth in pain, and matrimony was to be a period of pain and despair (Daugirdaitė, Kezys, 1994, 106–107). There is yet another position on a woman’s

role in society based on the Christian worldview. A woman is understood as someone who devotes herself more to others, forgets her own “I” and feels the pain and sorrow present in the environment more strongly than any man does. She also, suffers more than a man in life and experiences more threats and risks in her life. Such a woman is the Mother of God with Child in her arms, who gives and fosters the noble powers of the spirit, creates a spiritual world for her child and guides the powers of her child’s soul (Zdebskis, 1998). Daugirdaitė (2000, 34) notes that the “true” nature of manhood and womanhood cannot be defined. According to her, women were not being analysed as cultural creators but as marks of male privileges and strength. It is specifically the patriarchal culture, especially the modern one, which has split people into “a public male” and a “private female”.

The society of Lithuania during the Soviet period suffered the violence of totalitarian thought resulting in the overall violation of human rights. According to Reingardienė (2001), public discourse did not consider constraints on individual freedom or violence against women, such as the violation of her rights and fundamental freedoms, just as it did not consider this as a crime. This author believes that neither social nor cultural discourse empowered identification and discussion about violence against women in the private sector. Furthermore there were no ideological mechanisms to examine the nature and extent of this phenomenon. Women’s bodies were often in “the arena of nationalistic, political and governmental struggles” (and I would venture to say they still are now), as per Tereškinas (2002, 18).

Kuzmickaitė (2003), who researched the post-World War II generation and the current immigrants from Lithuania in the United States, which included individuals and families, notices a pronounced post-Soviet heritage of the ethnic Lithuanian family. This was especially noticeable in their interpersonal relationships and their statuses. The author asserts that “having to come to the United States, immigrant families discover various cultural approaches that they find different from (...) Lithuania”, such as “distinct laws about parental obligations, (...) school responsibilities for parents, and new forms of parenting (...)” (Kuzmickaitė 2003, 160). The one feature

that the author noticed as a challenge for Lithuanian immigrant parents was the parental “power of the family”.⁷ The second feature that the author accentuated was “the masculinity” of the Lithuanian men. The author points out that Lithuanian male immigrants had to regain “their masculinity in the patriarchal American society; as they tend to earn more money than women do, they thereby gain more power and control at home” (ibid, 162). One more aspect, “gender inequality” for the female immigrants in the labour market was inevitable. As the author asserts, “Although in Soviet Lithuania, women had an opportunity to earn similar wages as men, in Chicago, they had less well-paid jobs in comparison to Lithuanian male immigrants” (ibid, 161). The author summarises, “Women talked about the money as a source of support for families in Chicago or in Lithuania, while men related money to power issues and satisfaction” (Kuzmickaitė, 2003, 162).

Earlier a Soviet woman in Lithuania, also known as “a career woman” and “a woman of worries”, encased two main models: the officially advocated role of an active, public-spirited worker, and an unofficial role—the image being developed was, above all else, that of a loving mother and wife. The image of a woman being unfolded in the 1980s by Lithuanian prose writers Baltrušaitytė, Jasukaitytė, Mikulėnaitė, Urnevičiūtė or Vilimaitė represented a woman who cares for others—the family, children and loved ones. However, by the end of the 1980s, the ideal of a housewife began to change the ideology of a public-spirited woman. Meanwhile popular culture began to issue images of a woman consumer as well as a sex object. The representation of motherhood also started to change. This was particularly noticeable in the arts, wherein a woman was often revealed in terms of some dramatic aspect of her life. By the 1990s, works of prose change the role of the family woman, the mother into a single woman for whom a family is not the only sphere of life. The image of an extravagant, sexually liberated woman begins becoming entrenched. Such a woman can be found in fiction by Ivanauskaitė

7. In American culture, parental power was shared or negotiated among parents and their children, differently than done in the Lithuanian culture.

and Čepaitė, where a woman is represented as an intellectual, who considers and questions the traditional concept of gender differences, defining a woman as a kind of “love slave”. The latest prose universalises insecurity, violence and coercion (Daugirdaitė, 2000).

Professor Kavolis (1992) surveyed the history of Lithuanian culture and identified five modes of thought by which men and women are comprehended—folkloric, theological, sociological, psychological and metaphysical. In his opinion, Lithuanian literature almost continuously presents the image of a woman as less coherent than a man is. Men and women both envision the interaction of some sort of dangerous, uncontrollable and unbalanced power and inability in women. The relationships between men and women are interpreted differently by applying one another mode. One of the hypotheses being raised would be the traditional Western male thought about male and female images: women and men are perceived as opposite to one another, as radically different in spiritual orientations and, therefore, as antagonists in some sort of crucial struggle. The theory linking women with nature and men with culture is also such an expression. Men represent the principle of legitimate rule in this sort of confrontation, whether the man is perceived as coming from a divine origin or as from culture indicating the ways to nature and the means to control it. “The manly way to overcome” one’s weaknesses is the way Daukša stated it (Kavolis, 1992, 152). In male-dominated societies, “women are taught from childhood to wait for ‘special’ events, the fulfilment of destiny, i.e., for the prince in order to spend the rest of their lives giving birth and bringing up his children.” According to Vaičiūnaitė (1990 March 28, *Šiaurės Atėnai*), “In Lithuania women are downtrodden (more than in Latvia or Estonia). What is valued is the practical mate with a sanctimonious mask.” Thereby women’s liberation is perceived as dangerous, the opposite of how it is perceived for men. The saying that expresses this is “a freely-behaving women” [akin to the “easy woman” in America] (Daugirdaitė, 2000).

As per the opinion of Leliūgienė (1997), various dangers that negatively affect the development of human socialization are characteristic of any society. The adoption of morality traits, which are different for

every age within a different historical period, reflects the socio-cultural dimension of that society. Often society and religion are conditional for various problems, which provide niches for the appearance of different groups of people who become victims of adverse circumstances for socialisation. Women who have experienced or are experiencing violence, abuse and exploitation constitute some of the members of numerous such groups. Human victimisation influences the socialization process and its results, which contain internal contradictions.

The conclusion that it is not possible to explain why the lower status of women is so deeply ingrained in all societies by applying biological theories or historical materialism is not without reason. That woman is considered weaker than a man—the weaker sex—is one conclusion that can be derived on that basis. However, by the same, this becomes dangerous to them, because it overwhelms feelings and puts the mind to sleep. Beauvoir claims that only existential philosophy can realise an explanation. On the one hand, according to Gruodis (1995), “A man is unwilling to grant a woman her freedom, because it is convenient for him to have her—another—as a mirror always reflecting him as more superior than he really is.” He takes care of a woman not only materially but also existentially. On the other hand, a woman often does not act like an equal, not independently, as if she agrees with the current situation and only looks for comfort for herself. Beauvoir states, “If a woman yearns to be free, she can be—she has to take destiny into their own hands” (Gruodis, 1995, 276).

Indeed the latest prose by Lithuanian female authors is akin to a dialogue between the version of femininity presented by the popular culture and the attitude of a conservative society. Thereby this new approach is akin to a means for finding a new identity for a woman, a balance between tradition and modernization (Daugirdaitė, 2000). The market economy, which is tearing apart traditional ethnic norms, is also tearing apart the needs for a public life and a private life, which had been ingrained for a long time in social relations and cultural objects (Tereškinas, 2001). As Fromm (2003) claims, the means for forming a person’s social character are fundamentally cultural. Society provides youth with values, guidance, orders and such through parents. According to the author, each form of society (or social class) requires

the use of human energy in a specific manner that is necessary only to that particular society. Thus the process of converting general psychic energy into a specific psychosocial energy occurs through an intermediary—a social character. The members of a society must be *willing* to do what they *must* do for the proper functioning of society.

2.1.2. Prostitution as a multi-faceted social problem

Upon joining the European Union after the collapse of the Soviet regime, many of the problems inherent in other countries became typical in Lithuania as well. One of those problems that has spread the most widely is human trafficking for purposes of the sexual exploitation of women and for prostitution. This earns huge profits for syndicates in the world of crime. Unfortunately, as NGO representatives purport, this social problem lacks the attention it requires from both legal and governmental systems in Lithuania (Babachinaitė et al., 1999).

The phenomenon of human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes is considered part of a global prostitution industry and an issue to be resolved as well as a social problem of a particular country. This has been noted by various academicians, including Bindel, 2006; Hughes, 2005; O'Connor & Heally, 2006; Raymond, 2003, 2004; Ruškus, 2005 and Wilson, 2000. Trafficking in humans has been acknowledged as a form of global human slavery (Barry, 1996; Ekberg, 2004); The Council of Europe (COE) writes that it has reached “such an unprecedented level, that we can refer to it as a new form of slavery” (2005, Part II, Preamble, 33). Some have also described it as “having no rights”, as being “invisible” (Fairstein, 1993; in Farley, 2000) and as a severe violation of human rights (Ekberg, 2002, 2004; Fairstein, 1993, in Farley, 2000; Hoigard and Finstad, 1992; Raymond, 2003; Raymond et al., 2002; Stoltenberg, 2000). Some scholars such as Bolzanas & Drakšienė (2004), who analysed the origin of the phenomenon of human trafficking, link it to the times of slave trade, when a slave was regarded as an object (server, homo, mancipium). Other authors (Acus, 2001; Pruskus, 2010; Ringdal, 2004), who analysed the phenomenon of prostitution, note that the Great Eastern, Antique and Western civilisations adversely

evaluated prostitution and often legally persecuted this practice. Prostitution, however, changed its form and spread out widely into different social circles in a variety of countries at the time. It was considered a “social evil” and “the public sign of abnormality”. Philosophers, the major religions, governmental institutions and social groups fought against it, but it still survived (Acus, 2001, 56–57).

A charismatic feminist, Josephine Butler (1828–1906) was the first person to mention the concept of the white slave traffic publicly, which drew attention to the sexual abuse of women by involving them in prostitution. This woman spoke openly about this at the first anti white-slavery congress in Liverpool, in 1875. Here a struggle ensued not only against organized crime but also against insatiable male sexuality, immoral procurers and government-regulated prostitution (Guy, 1991, 12). Nevertheless, an origin for this problem is found in every society globally. As historian Guy (1991, 6) notes, “The middle-class British and European women learned that the road to Buenos Aires led to white slavery, the international traffic to young women for sexual exploitation.” According to O’Connor and Healy (2006), the sex industry covers all forms of sexual exploitation. It meets customer needs with no prejudice of any sort regarding a person’s exploitation and no discrimination regarding the involvement of any child or woman into prostitution. Barry (1996) also attributes bogus marriage agreements to human trafficking, whereby women from poor countries unintentionally find themselves under conditions of slavery. Often such women cannot bear the violence and exploitation within a bogus family and seek a better life by resorting to other extreme solutions, such as engaging in prostitution. Farley (2000), who analysed the phenomenon of prostitution, states that all forms of exploitation, violence, rape, sexual harassment, trafficking in women and prostitution harm women and all forms of prostitution hurt the women engaged in it. The strong factors that cause prostitution to thrive are a lack of awareness concerning gender inequality in private and public sectors as well as poverty and a poor economic situation that focuses on supply instead of on demand. Another very important factor influencing and supporting violence against women, including prostitution as one of the forms of trafficking in women,

is the insufficient attention to human rights, not only worldwide but also in Lithuania. Meanwhile there are many international human rights mechanisms (conventions, directives, agreements, protocols, policy statements and reports) requiring urgent and effective measures from governments to protect individuals from human trafficking, sexual exploitation, aggression and other forms of violence. Lithuania also signed the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings CETS, Nr. 197 on 12 February 2008. As Ekberg (2002) notes, the legalisation of prostitution (a topic that comes up rather frequently in Lithuania) would breach all the major international human rights instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as well as downplay the violence of prostitution.

The issue of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes remains one of the most complicated social sore spots in Lithuania to this day in terms of its multiplicity as well as its complexity. This involves the aspect of an outlook on this problem as much as on its forms of expression. An analysis of the extent of human trafficking, including prostitution, in Lithuania is based on various resources and statistical summaries from various organisations. This analysis is notable for its dormancy and does not show the true situation in the country. Certain researchers like Čaplinskas & Mårdh (2001), Pruskus (2010), Sipavičienė, Tureikytė & Rogaitė (2005) and Ruškus (2005) notice that it is difficult to provide an exact number of how many women work as prostitutes in Lithuania, because there are no exact numbers. Approximate information can only be gained from secondary resources, such as the numbers of arrests for prostitution or the administrative cases opened regarding the practice of prostitution (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Vilnius Universitetas, 2005, 26). The data from the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania from 2002 to 2007 is based on information provided by state and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on the victims of human trafficking. This data names “about 1,000 victims declaring a decreasing trend in the number of victims (up to 100 fewer victims annually)” (2007, Bazylevas & Staškovskaja). However, the trend of decreasing victims is more controversial than substantiated.

Representatives of juridical institutions claim the decrease in victims on the basis of protocol cases tried according to the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuanian acronym: LR ATPK) Article 1821 on administrative practices regarding women making a living from prostitution (Lithuanian Human Rights League/Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 2007) (See Table 1. Protocol cases as per Article of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania, 1999–2006 [on adults]).

Table 1. Protocol cases as per Article of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania, 1999–2006 (on adults)⁸

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	278	211	272	399	645	662	469
Year	2006	2007 ⁹	2008 ¹⁰	2009 ¹¹	2010 ¹²	2011 ¹³	
	266	233	317	378	326	413	

8. Lithuanian Human Rights League (LHRL) & Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. 2007. *Situation of Trafficking in Human Beings in Lithuania*. Summary Report prepared by M. N. Stačiokienė, 2006. Programme for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings 2005–2008. Vilnius: Lithuanian Human Rights League, 48.
9. Pruskus, V. 2010. Prostitucijos fenomenas. Gatvės prostitucija Lietuvoje: raiška, sklaida ir kontrolė [Prostitution phenomenon. Street prostitution in Lithuania: Expression, dissemination and control]. Vilnius; Vilniaus pedagoginio universiteto leidykla, p. 167.
10. *ibid*, p. 167.
11. Ataskaitos apie prekybos žmonėmis prevencijos ir kontrolės 2009–2012 metų programos įgyvendinimą 2010 metais duomenimis [Reports on 2010 data regarding the implementation of the prevention and control of human trafficking in 2009–2012]. Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.vrm.lt/index.php?id=566>.
12. *ibid*, Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.vrm.lt/index.php?id=566>.
13. *ibid*, Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.vrm.lt/index.php?id=566>.

Later, however, the data after 2008 regarding protocol cases as per the Code of Administrative Offenses Article 1821 on administrative practices shows a noticeable increasing trend in the number of persons earning a living from prostitution. Although Lithuanian laws do not directly criminalize the actions of women in prostitution, a fine is levied against women for the provision of sexual services, as per the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania.¹⁴ This Code was supplemented to levy administrative penalties for clients of prostitution in 2005.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the kinds of fines foreseen by the Code of Administrative Offenses for women in prostitution and their clients again confirm an imposition of a sense of guilt and shame for suffering sexual exploitation.

As it stands, there is no uniform data on prostitution, trafficking in women or victimization due to human trafficking. Different resources¹⁶ provide differing data on victims of trafficking of women for sexual exploitation purposes or prostitution (see Table 2. Victims of human trafficking as per data from three different resources in Lithuania).¹⁷ This is just one more fact reflecting the situation in the

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14. As per Article 182¹ on engagement in prostitution of *The Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania 1994–2005* (Section 1, p. 245), a fine is specified from 300 to 500 LTL, for repeat offenses from 500 to 1.000 LTL or administrative detention up to thirty days. The amounts of these sanctions were established in 1994 (*Official Gazette* 1994, No 58-1132). Lithuanian Human Rights League (LHRL) & Ministry of the Interior (MI) of the Republic of Lithuania, M. N. Stačiokienė, 2007, 46.
 15. Lietuvos Respublikos Teisingumo ministerija [The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania]. 2006. The amendment of Article 182 of *The Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania*, Section 1, p. 245 came into force on 16 June 2005. Engagement in prostitution or remuneration for prostitution services is subject to a fine from 300 to 500 LTL. Vilnius: Teisinės informacijos centras [Legal Information Centre], 2006: 245.
 16. Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 2009 *Project for the Programme for the Control and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings and Prostitution 2009–2012*. Data provided for 2005–2008. 2009 July 13, No. 648-01, Part II, Paragraph 14.
 17. Table No. 2 is based on information provided by the Department of Informatics and Communications and International Organization for Migration office in Vilnius using its depersonalized database and statistics of the Social Security

country regarding the lack of uniform statistics about women who have been drawn in or victimized by human trafficking for sexual exploitation. It is necessary to research whether or not these quite drastically differing data reflect the true human trafficking/prostitution situation in the country and by how much. Nevertheless, the data substantiates the fact that the concept of who is considered a victim of prostitution or trade in women for sexual exploitation clearly differs, when it is viewed from the perspectives of different organisations or institutions. Representatives of the NGO sector unwillingly concur with the purported decreasing trend of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. They argue the appearance of new forms of oppression and the increased dormancy regarding the aforementioned problem pointing out that the numbers of persons seeking help from them have not decreased.

and Labour Ministry. The latter two institutions receive information from non-governmental organizations about assistance provided to women who are potential victims and those victimized by human trafficking and prostitution (Ministry of the Interior/Pramoğu akademija, 2007: 18–19).

Table 2. Victims of human trafficking as per data from three different resources in Lithuania

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
IRD	25	27	11	25	20 ¹⁸	22 ¹⁹	29 ²⁰
TMO	135	110	56	86	-	-	-
SADM	287	402	438	621	- ²¹	118 ²²	-

- IRD – Department of Informatics and Communications (Lithuanian acronym) indicating statistical data on pre-trial investigations of human trafficking victims per the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania, Article 147

- TMO – International Organisation of Migration (Lithuanian acronym) indicating statistical data from the depersonalized data base on victims of human trafficking presented by NGOs

- SADM – (Lithuanian acronym) Ministry of Social Security and Labour indicating statistical data on present and potential victims of prostitution and human trafficking who received help

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18. Ataskaita apie Prekybos žmonėmis prevencijos ir kontrolės 2009–2012 metų programos įgyvendinimą 2010 m [Report on 2010 data regarding the implementation of the prevention and control of human trafficking in 2009–2012]. Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.vrm.lt/index.php?id=566>.
 19. *ibid*, Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.vrm.lt/index.php?id=566>.
 20. *ibid*, Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.vrm.lt/index.php?id=566>.
 21. *Prekybos žmonėmis prevencijos bei kontrolės 2009–2012 metų programa [Programme for the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking, 2009–2012]*, Resolution No. 1104 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, approved on 2009 September 19, was passed and went into power only at the end of the third quarter of 2009. Thus the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (Lithuanian acronym: SADM) did not implement the planned instruments in 2009. See *SADM 2010 March 01 Veiklos ataskaita [Activity Report]* No. D1-4, p. 44. Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.socmin.lt/index.php?-1191824460>.
 22. Measure of Programme 2.11, “Remti valstybės ir savivaldybių institucijų ir įstaigų, nevyriausybinių organizacijų projektus, skirtus socialinei pagalbai nukentėjusiems nuo prekybos žmonėmis ir priverstinės prostitucijos ir jų grąžinimui į visuomenę ir darbo rinką, įgyvendinant Prekybos žmonėmis prevencijos bei kontrolės 2009–2012 m. programos 2010 m. priemonę [Support of national, municipal and NGO projects earmarked for social assistance to victims of human trafficking and forced prostitution to reintegrate them into society and the labour market by implementing the Programme for the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking, 2009–2012.” Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.sppd.lt/lt/informacija/socialines-programos/Ataskaitos/>.

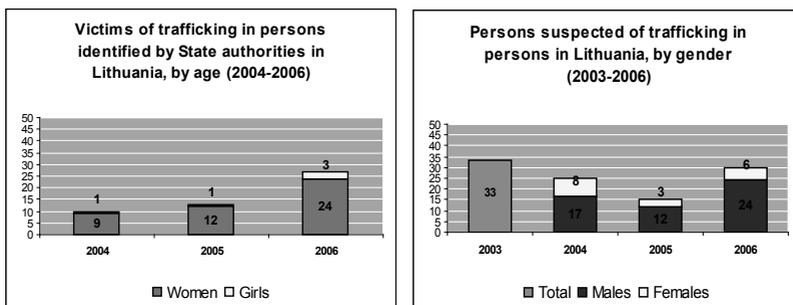
Despite the variety of international as well as national ratified legal documents and the efforts made by organisations and governmental institutions, not only is the scale of human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation not decreasing but it is growing. Networks of casinos and striptease clubs are expanding, and the means to recruit women for sexual exploitation are changing. Wijers and van Doorninck (2002) critically examine issues regarding current strategies on trafficking in women by presenting the concept of human trafficking in the context of multi-faceted views. The authors notice that trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes is a complex problem related to different fields and interests: migration, organized crime, prostitution, human rights, violence against women, feminization of poverty, gender division in the international labour market, unequal relations in international economics and the like. The opinion held by these authors is that the solution to the problem varies depending on “how the problem is defined, that is to say, what is seen as the problem that needs to be solved” (Wijers, van Doorninck, 2002).

Currently the analysis of the human trafficking phenomenon and the efforts to understand its concept in Lithuania are usually based on the UN’s formulated definition in the special 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. The elements comprising specifically this UN Protocol reflect of human trafficking: actions, measures and goals (Piotrowicz, 2002). This signed and ratified UN document is used as a basis by organisations, depending on the nature of their activities in Lithuania. Legislative acts and documents relevant to issues on human trafficking are also synchronised with this particular document.

Orfano (2007) reviewed the phenomenon of trafficking in women in Lithuania and noticed its main causes: unemployment, lack of future perspectives and desire to earn money quickly. As Marcinkevičienė and Praspaliauskienė (2003) noticed while analysing the phenomenon of trafficking in women and prostitution in Lithuania, this issue was already being raised in the country in 1995, when the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania began receiving data about Lithuanian female citizens who were working abroad illegally. Both the stories of victimized women in

the Lithuanian press and the growing numbers of female deportees attested to this growing social problem. However, according to these authors, trafficking in women in Lithuania was only understood as prostitution, which was in the sphere of law enforcement authorities as a crime (Marcinkevičienė, Praspaliauskienė, 2003, 13–14). This unavoidably influenced the outlook on this problem and its consequent resolutions in the country. The numbers of victimized women did not correspond with reality, and the evaluation by different experts differed significantly. The International Organization for Migration, which deliberated the trends and scope of trafficking in women in 2000–2005, note that the number of victimized women in Lithuania is the highest in the Baltic countries. As certain experts asserted, it was believed, “Annually there were about 2,000–3,000 women trafficked from the Baltic States, half of them were from Lithuania” (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Vilnius Universitetas, 2005, 25). However, in recent years, the UNODC 2009 Report, *A Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, shows the problem is declining trend in Lithuania (see Figures 1).

Figure 1. Persons convicted of trafficking in persons in Lithuania by age (2004–2006) and by gender (2003–2006)²³



The experts who examined the means of entrapping women into human trafficking note that these victims are usually young,

23. Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, *A Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, 2009, UNODC.

unemployed and brought up in dysfunctional families or in institutionalized homes for children or orphaned due to the loss of one or both parents. Meanwhile, in the representative opinions of non-governmental organisations, when the Government of our country views the problem of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes as illegal migration, it turns the victimized women into criminals (Babachinaitė ir kt., 1999). Sarrica (2009), who analysed the data on the human trafficking situation in Europe gathered by UNODC in the framework of the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT), mentions Lithuania, amongst others, as a country of origin of victims. In her opinion, “Other Central European and Baltic countries appear to be the origin of human trafficking victims destined for a limited number of countries” (see Figure 2) (Sarrica, 2009, 11).

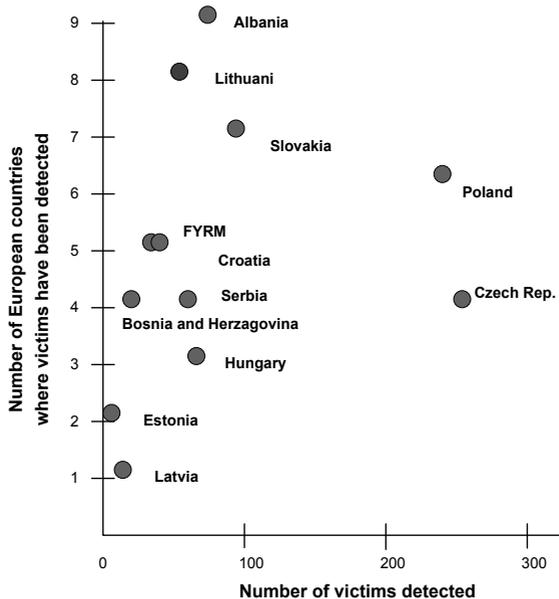


Figure 2. European countries of origin of victims detected in Europe by numbers detected in countries where detected (2005–2007)²⁴

24. Elaboration UNODC/UN.GIFT data; in Sarrica, 2009, 11.

Certain resources based of data from the Federal Criminal Police Office of Germany note that, even as early in 1997, there were 125 young women brought in from Lithuania to engage in prostitution in Germany who appealed to the authorities of this country. Such a number of individuals from Lithuania by far exceeded those from neighbouring countries—for example, Poland (4) and Czech Republic (15) (Sakalauskas, 1999, 145).

Table 3. Percentage of cases registered in Germany of female trafficking victims from Lithuania²⁵

Country	Year (%)		
	2000	2001	2002
Lithuania, %	34.8	28.6	24.3
Bulgaria	No data available	No data available	8.9
Romania	No data available	No data available	1.7
Poland	No data available	1.5	1.5
Ukraine	1.8	2.1	1.2
Russia	0.6	0.4	0.6
Latvia	15.5	14.2	No data available
Belarus	3.5	9.0	No data available

Later the International Organization for Migration substantiated the information based on data from the German Embassy in Lithuania on victims of human trafficking registered in Germany from Lithuania (see Table 3). The official 2000–2002 data in Germany indicates that the numbers of Lithuanian female victims trafficked into Germany exceeded the numbers of victims from other countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, the Ukraine and others, taking first place (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Socialinių tyrimų institutas, 2004, 33). Meanwhile, Lithuania took eighth place according to women registered as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation amid more than 17 countries, as per data taken from the *Fourth Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur Bureau* (2005) on

25. Source: Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Socialinių tyrimų institutas [International Office of Migration/Institute of Social Research], 2004: 33; UB - BKA Vilnius, according to the data of the German Embassy in Lithuania.

the Most common countries of origin of (possible) victims registered by the STV per annum (see Table 4). This data was submitted for the 2000–2003 period (Korvinus, 2005, 4).

Table 4. Most common countries of the origin of (possible) victims registered with the STV²⁶ per annum, 2000–2003, an excerpt

Country/Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total
Bulgaria	19	40	59	48	166
Nigeria	41	15	45	21	122
Russian Fed.	19	27	16	11	73
Romania	10	4	22	31	67
Netherlands	25	11	18	11	65
Ukraine	12	18	5	14	49
China	19	10	8	8	45
Lithuania	10	10	13	9	42

* Note: STV is Stichting Tegen Vrouwenhandel [Foundation against Trafficking in Women]

Sipavičienė (2006), who examined the phenomenon of human trafficking, notes that trafficking in women closely relates with the prostitution business. According to her, local development of the entertainment and sex industries and sales of women to foreign countries are the two sides of the same coin (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Socialinių tyrimų institutas, 2006). The Seventh Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur Bureau (2009, 427) also mentions, “The term ‘exploitation’ is usually elaborated in terms of forced prostitution or the confiscation of earnings.” On average some 300–550 men seek and find a sex partner each day in the neighbourhood of the Vilnius train station alone, as per the calculations of experts from the Ministry of Interior (Bazylevas, Žekonis, 2003). A decreasing tendency of victims from Lithuania already appears in the data presented by the Fifth Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur Bureau (2005) on the most common countries

26. Source: Korvinus, A. (*National Rapporteur*) et al. 2005. “Trafficking in Human Beings - Supplementary figures”. *Fourth report of the Dutch National Rapporteur*. Table 2.2 (from source: STV (2001; 2002; file for 2003). The Hague: Bureau NRM.

of the origin of (possible) victims registered by the STV per annum (Fifth Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur, 2007, Table 3.2, 48–49). Nonetheless, Table 5 shows that the country, compared with the others, remains in seventh place. Later, the data in the Seventh Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur Bureau (2009) about the situation in Lithuania only mentions three victims—one “came from Lithuania and two victims came from Poland or Lithuania” (Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings. 2009, 427).

Table 5. Most common countries of the origin of (possible) victims registered with the STV²⁷ per annum, 2001–2005, an excerpt

Country/ Year	2001 (N/%)		2002 (N/%)		2003 (N/%)		2004 (N/%)		2005 (N/%)		Total (N/%)	
Bulgaria	40	14	59	17	48	19	55	14	52	12	254	15
Netherlands	11	4	18	5	11	4	59	15	98	23	197	12
Nigeria	15	5	45	13	21	8	39	10	28	7	148	9
Russian Federation	27	10	16	5	11	4	14	3	13	3	81	5
Ukraine	18	5	5	1	14	5	8	2	10	2	55	3
China	10	4	8	2	8	3	9	2	5	1	40	2
Lithuania	10	4	13	4	9	4	3	1	3	1	38	2
Czech Republic	8	3	6	2	3	1	2	0	18	4	37	2
Moldova	9	3	14	4	1	0	6	1	2	0	32	2

* Note: STV is Stichting Tegen Vrouwenhandel [Foundation against Trafficking in Women]

Foreign scholars who examine routes of trafficking in women in the Baltic countries mostly categorized Lithuania as a country of origin in human trafficking (Lethi, 2003). Public opinion surveys carried out by the International Office of Migration in 2002 substantiated this opinion. The data showed that as much as 53.4% of Lithuania’s population believed that “many” and “very many” young women are taken abroad by deceptive means to work as prostitutes

27. Fifth Report of the Dutch National Rapporteur, 2007, Table 3.2, 48–49.

(Sipavičienė, Gaidys, 2002). Two other categories also characterise the country—goal and transit. As NGO organisation practitioners working in this field note, Lithuania is used as a transit country to transport women from Eastern Europe to Western brothels (Babachinaitė and others, 1999). According to International Organization for Migration data, a significant portion of women in the prostitution business consists of illegal immigrants from Russia, Belarus, Moldova and the Ukraine, despite the visa requirement for citizens from Eastern countries. Researchers who analysed the situation of prostitution in Lithuania reported it as mostly a transit country where many prostitutes stay only temporarily and travel to the West, where they are often re-sold (Sipavičienė, Tureikytė, Rogaitė, 2005, Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija/Vilnius Universitetas). Data of the Police Department under the Ministry of Interior (2001, 19) indicates that trafficking in women for sexual exploitation links with organized crime and associates with the illegal prostitution business, which operates in three areas: in the street, at illegal companies and brothels and by exports. For this study, the areas selected for discussion involve the most frequent forms of sexual exploitation of women occurring in Lithuania. Trafficking in women for prostitution takes place behind closed doors and it is considered as covert crime. Agencies that advertise their “services” disguise their ads by offering “flowers delivered to your home”, “massages”, “escort services” and other controlled operations involving prostitution.

A truth known for a long time is that trafficking in women for sexual purposes or prostitution brings huge profits not only to organized crime but also to any operation within the system of prostitution legalised or regulated by the state. Some EU countries consider the sex industry as one of the most profitable businesses. As Jonas Witgren related in the 2009 publication of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, “Trafficker syndicates operating in Western Europe alone earned \$100 million to \$1.1 billion in 1993” (UNECE, 2009, 96, citing Jonas Witgren, 1994). Eriksson (2004) asserts, “Some 70% of the 252 million pounds that European Internet users spent online in 2001 was spent in various pornographic

sites” (Eriksson, 2004, 16, citing Månsson et al., 2001). Meanwhile, in Lithuania, according to the data by the Ministry of Interior, some 15–20 solidly operating such firms realise profits of up to \$1.5 million USD annually. Meanwhile the profits of agencies in Vilnius alone are \$5 million USD annually (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija, Socialinių tyrimų institutas, 2004, 26). Thus this massive collection of profits occurs by using the bodies of women and children and their personal sexuality, then assimilating all their existences and, at the same time, destroying them (D’Cunha, 2002). In regard to victims, Stačiokienė (2007) describes prostitution as not being limited to one social group, although emphasis is placed on a high-risk group, which often involves girls who grew up in institutionalized homes for children or in families without strong emotional ties (Lithuanian Human Rights League and Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 2007). Thereby the situation existing in the country reflects the multi-faceted nature and complexity of prostitution. More attention is paid to the involvement of women into prostitution as an issue of morality, organized crime, breach of public law and order or migration. Meanwhile the individual experience of a woman is not given much meaning. Thus it seemingly leaves the significance of personal experiences unspoken.

2.1.3. Prostitution in Lithuania: Social policy responses

Over ten years ago, discussions began about human trafficking as one of the most complex and least known social problems in Lithuania. Governmental policy and public opinion regarding prostitution formed relatively recently in Lithuania. It can be said that it is not yet fully affixed in public consciousness. Meanwhile discussions are often heard in society questioning the existing outlook on this phenomenon (Bilotaitė-Jokubauskienė et al., 2004). Already back in 1997, before human trafficking had been clearly identified as a problem in Lithuania, the Police and Public Cooperation Coordination Council was established to provide socialization and adaptation services for persons victimized by law breakers. Methodological and advisory publications were issued for women and

girls providing guidance for protection against violence, abuse and prostitution. By that time, it had already been observed that commercial sexual exploitation of people, including children, is a covert phenomenon. Academicians in the country, such as Babachinaitė, Bondzinskaitė, Dvilaitis, Gustienė and others (Centre for Crime Prevention in Lithuania, 1999), and representatives of various legal institutions and NGOs who conducted the review on the social situation of crime victims in Lithuania claimed there was no uniform accounting of data available as yet on the sexual exploitation of people, including children, for commercial and non-commercial purposes. Although various data were being gathered by institutions of health care, social security and employment, education and science and others, they were neither systematised nor analysed. Therefore the true situation in the country was unknown (Jūrienė, 1999).

During the past few years in Lithuania, there have been an increase in debates about trafficking in women for sexual purposes, including prostitution, viewed in the context of a social problem, and diverse opinions on this have been heard. One approach is that prostitution is not part of human trafficking and that women choose prostitution voluntarily, without compulsion. Consequently, this view holds that such women must be controlled to protect them and their health along with the control on criminal activities (Pruskus, 2010; Ruškus, 2005). Another opinion tries to mitigate the prevailing radical view towards women in prostitution by calling them sex workers which, as per this opinion, is less stigmatising than calling them prostitutes (Pruskus, 2010; Čaplinskas & Mårdh, 2001). Yet another, different approach argues that it is not right to consider such women “volunteers”, i.e., women who voluntarily opt for such a way of life, but rather that conditional factors pull them into prostitution (Ruškus, 2005). As Farley (2004) notices, prostitution has been proposed for a policy of development, sometimes as the sex sector of a state’s economy, especially for newly industrializing and developing countries. This view ignores the past experiences in the childhoods or youth of women in prostitution (O’Connor, Healy, 2006) and does not properly evaluate women’s traumatic experiences as a result of a number of social-psychological circumstances.

Sutherland (2004) notes different prevailing positions such as radical feminism and sex radicalism.²⁸ It requires further research to determine to what extent and how clearly such approaches occur in Lithuania. Although women involved in prostitution are not considered victims of human trafficking very often, in either case, the purpose of exploitative activity is included along with violence against and control of another human being (Puidokienė, 2008). The existing political, social and economic systems of the country are more often attempts to declare the principle of equality rather than to practice it. The country, which adheres more to an abolitionist policy,²⁹ considers prostitution the free choice of mature people. Meanwhile only persons involved in prostitution receive “attention” from responsible authorities (Pajumets, 2004). Different administrative penalties are levied for earning a living by means of prostitution or engaging in compensatory use of prostitution services in Lithuania.³⁰ The opinion and position that persons providing sexual services are criminals are conditional to the existence of such a law in the country’s legal system. Consequently activities related to prostitution are criminalised, including earning a living from prostitution, exploiting others to be engaged in prostitution and paying for sex even when with an adult (Blažytė, in Dottridge, 2010, 173). This presupposes and forms a negative approach to the problems of such women. An overview of police statistics shows that police officers generally notice the

28. Radical feminists characterize prostitution as an abuse of human rights, regardless of whether it is forced or voluntary, whereas sex radicals, representing a compelling opposition, focus on the human rights of sex workers, focusing on self-determination for sex workers that include decent working conditions and freedom of movement (Sutherland, 2004).

29. The abolitionist view is that the “legal system regards the selling of sex as business, and the relations between the seller and the buyer as free association between adults.” Countries with abolitionist policies “tolerate the buying and selling of sex for money (...). The aim of the abolitionist policy is to revoke laws that regulate or prohibit prostitution” (Pajumets, 2004, 17–18).

30. Article 182, Section 1, p. 245 of the Administrative Code of the Republic of Lithuania (LR ATPK) is the basis for fines or administrative detention. The amendment of this article took effect on 16 June 2005 (Lietuvos Respublikos Vidaus reikalų ministerija [Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania], 2006).

providers of sexual services, whereas their customers remain invisible. As representatives of some organisations note (Tarptautinė Migracijos Organizacija, 2006), police officers in Lithuania are not struggling with prostitution as a social phenomenon but rather battling the prostitutes themselves.³¹ Such a position simply confirms that a woman is considered a sex object, and a defence of her low status is difficult or impossible in most cases. The buyer of sexual services is merely a shadow among the other participants in the sex business—the women in prostitution and their panderers who organise the prostitution and take the lion's share of the profits. Attention in discussions on the problem of prostitution in Lithuania, as well as in any other country, for the most part is directed on the women in prostitution. Meanwhile the client remains unnoticed. Thus the question arises—how does this happen? Keeler and Jyrkinen (1999) hypothesise that possibly the causes for the insufficiency of attention on customers lie in deeper phenomena relevant to the economics of the sex trade and the huge incomes involved in this business. However, it is important to shape public awareness appropriately if egalitarian relationships between men and women are to be implemented. Thus, every effort made in the country should guide towards fostering human values and refuting, what Adler (2003) calls, judgements by the commercial weight of a person's achievements or failures.

Scholars such as Pajumets et al. (2004), who analysed the governmental policies relevant to the understanding and resolution of the

31. The officers the Ecology and Prevention of Law Breaking Department, Public Law and Order Services of the Vilnius County Police Headquarters, who execute a set of means provided by the "Plaštakė [Butterfly]" Plan, conducted a surveillance of the Vilnius neighbourhoods of Naujininkai, Old Town and Lazdynai and the access streets to the city's railway and bus stations on 4 October 2005. At this time, eight women who were providing sexual services for material compensation were detained. Five were first time arrests; thus they were fined 300 LTL (as per the Administrative Code of Law, Article 182, Part 1). Protocols of administrative law violations were drawn on the other three, and they were turned over to the court for resolution. The Administrative Code of Law, Article 182, Part 1 foresees a fine of 500 to 1,000 LTL, or detention up to 30 days...> (VPK pranešimas [Report by the Vilnius City Police Headquarters], 08 September 2005).

prostitution issue in the Baltic States, separate several national models that have evolved throughout history. One that most manifests in Lithuania is the *prohibitionist*³² legislative model, also known as *criminalisation*. Amendments³³ and adherence to the country's legal regulations confirm that such a model prevails. These amendments accent the human rights aspect and the necessity of protecting the human dignity of women who have been drawn into prostitution. Particularly NGO representatives in the country declare and support such aforementioned amendments. The Preamble of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights³⁴ declares, "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world ..." (*Valstybės Žinios [Official Gazette]* 2006-06-17, Nr. 68-2497). The 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms³⁵ also prohibits demeaning human dignity. Nevertheless, certain legal

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32. The approach of *prohibitionism* is to criminalize prostitution, i.e., to regard the phenomenon as a crime that undermines society's morals and ethics (Pajumets, 2004, 17). Prohibitionism, as Dana (2001) points out, deems prostitution, both the seller and the buyer, as immoral.
 33. Women providing sexual services as well as their customers are punishable as per the Administrative Code of Law of the Republic of Lithuania, Article 182, Section 1, p. 245. The article was amended and went into effect on 16 June 2005 (Lietuvos Respublikos Vidaus reikalų ministerija [Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania], 2006).
 34. The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (the UDHR) was passed and published by the United Nations and published in 10 December 1948. Lithuania became a party to it on 12 March 1991 (*Valstybės Žinios [Official Gazette]*, 17 June 2006, No. 68-2497). The Declaration quite clearly presents provisions that are applicable to trafficking of women and victims of prostitution. Such provisions include that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (Article 1), "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person" (Article 3), "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: all forms of slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited" (Article 4) and "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 5).
 35. 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms passed on 04 November 1950 (*Valstybės Žinios [Official Gazette]*, 16 May 1995).

scholars (Jovaišas, 2004) claim that the international documents on human rights and the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania³⁶ establish a different regime for the protection of human dignity and its legal defence. This becomes important when explaining and interpreting civil and criminal laws. The other policy on prostitution that manifests quite clearly in certain European countries (Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Greece and others) is regulationism³⁷ by which countries see themselves as morally neutral in regard to prostitution. Only some aspects of this model are apparent in Lithuania. Its system is closer to the *neoregulationist*³⁸ model. A neoregulationist policy bans brothels and procuring and regulates the activities of individual women in prostitution (Pajumets, 2004, 17).

Thereby prostitution is prohibited in Lithuania; however, despite the prohibition, provisions of sexual services continue to exist. Summaries by police officers and NGOs providing assistance to women in prostitution attest to this. Furthermore the women who come in to test for sexually transmitted diseases also confirm the same. The legal system of the country is much more closely related to an abolitionist policy, which views prostitution as male oppression towards women (though legally it is not validated as violence against women) and identifies procuring and pimping as human trafficking. However, as Barry (1996) states, countries with an abolitionist policy basically tolerate the buying and selling of sex for money. The government only interferes in cases of women coerced into prostitution or of minors selling sex. Such cases are rare in Lithuania, and abusers often remain unpunished. Askola (1999), who based his observations on Johnson (1999), notes that traffickers have insatiable appetites, profit margins are enormous and the risk is low. Traffickers are rarely punished and,

36. The *Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania* is the supreme law of the country. It establishes the rights and freedoms of its citizens.

37. Regulationism “states that regulators of prostitution see themselves as being morally neutral. (...) This policy is based on the liberal principle that each person has the right to decide how s/he uses her/his own body and that that decision has to be respected” (Turunen, 1996, 22, in Pajumets, 2004, 17).

38. Neoregulationist systems “ban brothels and procuring, but regulate the activities of individual prostitutes” (Latvia example) (Pajumets, 2004, 17).

even if they are, they rarely go to prison (Askola, 2001). However, despite the prevailing manifestations of abolitionism, the manifestation of *neoabolitionism*³⁹ is felt. According to this view, the women who are drawn into prostitution are considered victims of a patriarchal society, and prostitution is considered a form of abuse against women (Pajumets 2004; Danna, 2001). Such an approach is especially supported by NGO representatives in Lithuania. An open issue for discussion is how characteristic to the country is the neoabolitionist legal system approach, which gives special emphasis to women's human rights and the need to protect human dignity.

Conditions for the exploitation and coercion of women, violence against them, slavery and crime flourish in the absence of a clear policy regarding the concept of women in prostitution or a model that can be used to base revisions of previous laws or the development of new laws. According to the claims of Danna (2001), who uses the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 1949 Convention⁴⁰ as basis, "It is clear that the will of the woman who prostitutes herself is not given any consideration about prostitution which, in fact, is seen as a danger for the welfare of the family and of the community." Lithuania also takes into account various other conventions⁴¹ when implementing preventive

39. *Neoabolitionism* "gives special emphasis to women's human rights and the need to protect human dignity." Such systems "punish the procurers and the clients, but not the prostitutes" (Pajumets, 2004, 18).

40. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others* (Approved by General Assembly Resolution 317(IV) of 2 December 1949, went into force on 25 July 1951 as per Article 24). Available on Worldwide Web, as follows: <<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3aeb38e23.html>>.

41. Conventions: The United Nations 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Trafficking in Persons and of the Exploitation of Others, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (*Valstybės Žinios [Official Gazette]*, No. 51-1933, 2002) and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention (Palermo protocol). According to these conventions, states agree to punish any person who, in order to gratify the passions of another, procures, entices or leads away for purposes of prostitution or exploits another person for prostitution,

and control measures in the area of human trafficking. The Palermo protocol⁴² is especially abolitionist (Askola, 2001, 22). However, the ratification of the Palermo Protocol in Lithuania included the clause specifying that the country does not consider itself committed to resolve disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Protocol at the International Court of Justice (Žiobienė, 2006). The assumption is that such a clause presupposes an appropriate approach by responsible persons towards victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes and prostitution to resolve their problems. Another important document for the country is the 1979 Convention.⁴³ Although Lithuania has joined and ratified the 1979 Convention, practice shows that cases of women being exploited for prostitution are common. Despite the development of women's rights being influenced by trends of international developments of rights (Birmontienė, Jurėnienė, 2009), practice often indicates gross violations of women's rights. It is important to note that, in Lithuania, the implementation of the third national Program for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings⁴⁴ is near completion in endeavouring to resolve this issue of human trafficking in the country. Nonetheless, data on women in prostitution or victims

even with the consent of that person (Article 1). The keeping of brothels must be punished similarly (Article 2 Palermo protocol) (Lithuanian Human Rights League/Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, 2007, 33).

42. Palermo Protocol was ratified by Lithuania on 22 April, 2003 (*Valstybės Žinios [Official Gazette]*, 2003, No. 49-2166).
43. 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (18 December 1979, 34/180) went into force on 31 September 1981. The aim of this Convention is to abolish all forms of discrimination against women in the economic, social, cultural and political fields. It clearly highlights all forms of trafficking in women and the prohibition of the exploitation of prostitution (Article 6, OHCHR). Lithuania joined the 1979 Convention on 10 November 1993 (No. 772p, Government Ordinance of Lithuania), and the Convention went into force in February of 1993. The *Seimas* of the Republic of Lithuania ratified it on 17 February 1995.
44. The third Program for the Prevention and Control of Trafficking in Human Beings for 2009–2012 was adopted. The second Program for 2005–2008 was adopted in 2005. It followed the previous Program, which covered the period of 2002–2004.

of human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes are not being gathered systematically in a central database administrated by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania.

The issue of whether or not prostitution is the sexual exploitation of people, a gross violation of human rights and a complex form of abuse against another person, is not yet being considered in the sphere of jurisprudence. A natural question arises. What stops the state from following the examples set by other advanced countries—recognise prostitution as trafficking in women for sexual purposes, as cruel violence against women, as their exploitation and as a blatant violation of their human rights and provide appropriate sanctions? Lithuania has joined the 1979 Convention by which the Government has committed to eliminate all forms of slavery and female prostitution by virtue of corresponding laws. Meanwhile other European Union countries (such as Sweden) have officially recognised prostitution as an intolerable form of abuse against women and children. Women and girls who live in a democratic and modern country can feel free of all forms of male abuse against women (Ekberg, 2004). The efforts to eradicate the flourishing of coercion, to protect and defend human dignity and honour by recognising these as supreme values, which must become the main purpose and moral obligation of the country. Unfortunately merely a glance at the attention being paid women in prostitution indicates that this seems forgotten. A discussion of this problem by different instances, individual and otherwise, would constitute a move towards professional resolution of this problem by various organisations jointly working together (Puidokienė, 2008). In other words, recognition of the complexity of this problem is essential to reach effective help and needed changes. Social work, which resolves numerous problems in modern society, is considered one of the structural parts for the complex resolutions of such problems. Webb (2006), who had analysed the change in resolving social problems and the features of social work in an atmosphere of risk, describes modern society as complicated due to the rapid changes occurring within it, the variety of choices, the growing amount of available information and an ability to foresee the limits in the scope of attention and the

problems in an unstable environment. This way a complex perspective on the difficulties that arise in society unavoidably becomes a part of this process. Not only did the predominate, differing views on victims and potential victims fail to contribute sufficiently in resolving this problem but they also impeded the way of successfully overcoming the difficulties victimized women faced. This caused me to consider discussing in the next section the significance of becoming acquainted with the personal experiences of women in prostitution and the necessity of this in the process of helping them. My own personal practice in social work providing help to such women helped me realise this fact. A hope of finding the means of responding to the needs of these women could be expected only by getting to know these women from the inside and only by regenerating the links they once had but had lost with others.

2.2. Personal experiences of women in prostitution: Field of knowledge for effective social help

Plummer (1995) notes, “The truth of our lives lies in better communication: in telling all.” However, here the author notes, “Sexual stories can be seen as issues to be investigated in their own right” (Plummer, 1995, 4–5). The fact that women in prostitution agree to reveal the truths about their lives as per their experiences can help others understand them better. However, it is important to remember that each one of us, as Hankiss (1981, 203) notes, “builds his or her own theory about the history and the course of his or her life by attempting to classify his or her particular successes and fortunes, gifts and choices, favourable and unfavourable elements (...)”. As long ago as 1917, Mary Richmond (1917, 376), one of the first pioneers in social work in the United State, raised the following question in her social diagnosis work, “What is true of everybody living under the conditions which a modern civilisation imposes?” She holds the opinion that every social worker must first answer that question to him/herself in his/her own way. This is the way I took for this study endeavouring to understand not only women

in prostitution by transmitting the personal experiences they had embodied and what they considered as their own truths but also what such truths meant to me in the sum of the relationships we had developed. I attempted to understand and reveal what was different, subtle or unique by glancing at the personal experiences of these women through the reflexiveness of my own experience. This happened through the authentic relationships we had managed to develop during my meetings with them.

Despite time or geographical location, a “deviance” about or a “sex work” attitude on women in prostitution predominated for a long time and still prevails to these days. The various studies and researches on prostitution still reveal and confirm many features of their stigmatization (Bindman, 1998 in Kempadoo & Doezema, 1998; Brents, Hausbeck, 2006; Chillmon, Ricks, 2003; Farley, 2003, 2004; Farley et al., 2003; Guidroz, Berger, 2005; Guy, 1998; Koken et al., 2004; Kong, 2006; Lawrence, 1996; McCarthy, Hagan, 2004, 2005; Meaghan, 2002; O’Neill, 1996; Oselin, 2007; Philippe, Romano, 2008; Pruskus, 2010; Ruškus et al., 2005; Strega et al., 2009; Thappa et al., 2007; Tomura, 2009; Vanwesenbeeck, 2001). The conclusion could have been expected in the research by Brents and Hausbeck (2006) titled, *What is Wrong with Prostitution?* They find that the stigma associated with prostitution is a significant problem for prostitutes as they manage their identities and negotiate their lives outside the brothels. McCormick (1997), reviewing performed studies, notes that, since the 19th century, both groups (feminists and scholars) analysed and perceived this phenomenon and the involved persons differently:

Both groups, along with the general public, have stereotyped prostitutes variously as pariahs who spread disease, victims of either dysfunctional families or an exploitative patriarchy, or self-confident, sex-positive women who take pride in their economic independence from men. Of course, none of these stereotypes does justice to the reality of women’s lives (McCormick, 1997, 62).

O’Neill (1996) points out that social stigma as well as criminal experiences by women in prostitution is further compounded by the masculine organisation and development of the sex-for-sale

industry. The definitions used to depict this phenomenon alone conceal a level of harm and cause confusion about the real nature of women in prostitution—“voluntary prostitution”, “forced trafficking”, “sex work” and “commercial sex trade” or to describe a woman’s status in prostitution as “migrant sex worker”, “beautiful merchandise” (Chinese words) and “socially disadvantaged women” (Farley, 2003), “commercial sex worker (CSW)” or “female sex worker (FSW)” (Thappa, Singh, Kaimal, 2007, 69). According to Farley (2003), some of these terms, e.g., socially disadvantaged, appear rather ostensibly used to avoid stigmatization. Weitzer (2005, 936), professor of sociology, who often does not agree with the positions of anti-prostitution activists, this time agrees, “It is true that the conventional term prostitute is stigmatizing.” Although some authors (O’Neill, 1996) think that we stigmatize women less by calling them “sex workers”, they still suggest moving away from the idea that women in prostitution are deviants or somehow those “others”.

For one *Research for Sex Work Newsletter* (Department of Health Care and Culture, Netherlands, 2003) writes:

In most countries sex workers are stigmatized, discriminated against, prosecuted, and harassed. They are often seen as immoral people or as victims of unscrupulous traffickers who exploit the lack of opportunities of underprivileged inhabitants of poor countries. However, what should be addressed are the conditions, rather than the nature, of sex work. (Wolffers, van Beelen, 2003, 1981).

The opinion held by Kempadoo & Doezema (1998), Nagle (1997) and O’Connell Davidson (1999) is that attention and the priority often focus on the conditions of sexual services, the sex work and the form of labour or occupation this actually is. However, the woman herself becomes secondary here and less meaningful—she is not the object of focus and thus she is even more pushed away from society. Jeffreys (1997) states that such thinking distorts terms and compares a woman’s right to choose as that of being used as raw material in the gigantic sex industry. Farley (2004, 1090–1092) takes an ironical position on the obscure dual position where, on one hand, these women are “abhorrent” and, at the time, the question is raised, “Wouldn’t it be at least a little bit better if it were

legalised? Wouldn't there be fewer stigmas and wouldn't prostitutes somehow be protected?" However, the author notices that the one point of agreement from all sides of the debate is that women in prostitution are stigmatised.

Thinking that stigma issues are not relevant for women in prostitution and that those women are by nature oriented towards money or pleasure is convenient for upholding the idea of sex work. The lack of attention on specific negative circumstances of women involved in prostitution only strengthens prejudice towards them and the manifestation of stigmas. Upon analysing the social scientific work on sex work, Vanwesenbeeck (2001, 243) notices that the search for pathology in some individual prostitute or for biological explanations of their "evil characters" or "sick personalities", as "thoroughly cultivated within psychoanalytic tradition", did not result in unambiguous proof. On the contrary, she asserts, "(...) strong evidence was produced that stereotypical images of prostitutes are simplistic (...)" (Vanwesenbeeck, 2001, 244). Earlier researches describing these women as having "bad reputations" or being labeled "whores" before they entered prostitution also influenced the negative outlook in regard to these women (O'Neill, 1996, 243–244). Later, according to Vanwesenbeeck (2001, 244), "the evidence from a large body of research started to reveal associations between sexual trauma and psychological or psychiatric disorders." Bindman (1998) points out that the distinction between a prostitute and everyone else helps to immortalise and preserve her exclusion from the ordinary rights society offers to others such as, for example, rights to freedom from violence.

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* defines a prostitute as "a person who offers herself or himself for sex with somebody in return for money" (Crowther, 1995, 931). Meanwhile *Dabartinės Lietuvių kalbos žodynas [Modern Lithuanian Language Dictionary]* (2000, 625) defines a prostitute as "a woman engaged in prostitution" and the phenomenon of prostitution as "women selling themselves, debauchery". This comparison of the two dictionary definitions, one in English and the other in Lithuanian, shows that the latter clearly attributes this phenomenon only

to women, although practice shows that prostitution is characteristic to both sexes, men included. It links prostitution with living a dissolute life describing it in term which translate to “debauchery” and “depravity” and the person living this life, a “dissolute libertine”, hussy, slut, immoral” (Lietuvių kalbos institutas, 2000, 488). At the same time, the Lithuanian dictionary confirms the existing negative attitude towards women as much as to the phenomenon. Meanwhile the Oxford Dictionary (1995) employs a less judgemental approach. Thus the existing variety on this outlook in the country often becomes a serious obstacle to the provision of assistance, both legal and social, to victimized women.

Ahmad (2001) notices that, in many cases, the behaviour of men who buy women to satisfy sexual needs is justified to a greater extent. The author asserts that this happens “because of greater mobility, and changing sexual attitudes and economies. (...) The spread of consumer cultures (...) with sex becoming increasingly commercialised (...) where more men have greater spending power, which they can spend on commercial [sex]” (Ahmad, 2001, 643). According to Farley (2004), prostitution is viewed as “a form of labour (sex work), where prostitution is considered an unpleasant job but not different from other kinds of unpleasant jobs, such as factory work”. Moreover the author notes, “Prostituted women are viewed as simply another category of workers with special problems and needs” (Farley, 2004, 1089 in accordance to Bullough & Bullough, 1996; Kinnell, 2001; Nairne, 2000). The author claims a number of organisations worldwide⁴⁵ uphold the position demanding the legalisa-

45. Worldwide organizations supporting prostitution as “a form of labour (sex work)” and considering it an unpleasant job but not different from other kinds of unpleasant jobs include GAATW; STV, Dutch; CARAM, Cambodia; EUROPAP; TAMPEP, Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Austria; CARE International; TFP, North America; Anti-Slavery International; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International, USA; Amnesty for Women, Hamburg; REACH OUT, Hong Kong; BHCW, Bangladesh; Medecins sans Frontieres; FROST'D, New York; CAST, Los Angeles; PACE, Vancouver; Nueva Era en Salud, Panama; WHO; UN/AIDS and ILO (Farley, 2004, 1091). Full names or explanations of these organizations appear in Appendix 10.

tion of prostitution and this form of work (Farley, 2004, 1091). That creates favourable conditions for a perverse identity of women in prostitution to form and develop.

Regardless, international law considers prostitution as human trafficking and women in prostitution as victims of sexual abuse. Every EU country that has ratified and signed these laws is committed to follow them. Fedosiuk (2007), who deliberated the standards defining the crime of human trafficking as per the latest edits of these laws,⁴⁶ undertook explaining the problems for applying them in Lithuania. He claims that the legal construction of human trafficking was formulated in international law, adapted to EU laws and additionally transferred into national criminal law. This scholar observes difficulties in comprehending and applying these legal standards not only from a legal standpoint but from one of values as well, since taking women abroad for purposes of prostitution contradicts freedom. Once a woman becomes involved in an illegal prostitution network with or without her consent, this author concurs that her freedom will be unavoidably curtailed in the future. Perhaps, then, it is no mere happenstance that, as experts who provide assistance to victims of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes note, these women often have nowhere to go and sometimes see no other choice than to return to prostitution, whether or not they want that (Babachinaitė et al., 1999). This sort of situation confirms how necessary it is to change the existing negative attitudes toward these women and to provide them with realistic assistance.

46. The latest edits on human trafficking went into force on 23 June 2005. This Law No X-272 amended and supplemented Articles 48, 60, 145, 147, 157, 212–215, 226, 249, 251, 252, 256, 267, 270, 272, 274 and 280 as well as the annexes of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania by supplementing the Code with Articles 147¹, 199¹, 199², 267¹, 270¹ and 308¹ (hereinafter referred to as the Law) (*Valstybės Žinios* [Official Gazette], 2005, No. 81-2945) (Fedosiuk, 2007).

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁴⁷ protects people's freedom⁴⁸ and equality.⁴⁹ The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania,⁵⁰ which is the supreme law of the country, also safeguards human freedom⁵¹ and dignity.⁵² The European Commission's Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the United Nations 2000 Protocol⁵³ consider women who have suffered from the "exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery" as victims of human trafficking (UN Protocol, 2000, Article 3 (a)). Seemingly both national and international laws defend a person and his/her rights by prohibiting human exploitation and debasement of human dignity and honour. In other words, international law names women in prostitution as victims. Unfortunately, it is a complicated matter to recognise that women who are exploited by prostitution become sexualized bodies for sale, which are adapted, fragmented and exploited for male sexual fantasies and

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47. United Nations, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 was approved by General Assembly Resolution 217(III) on 10 December 1948, in force on 10 December 1948. Lithuania joined the 1948 Declaration on 12 March 1991. (*Valstybės Žinios* [Official Gazette], 2006-06-17, No. 68-2497). Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>>.
 48. *ibid*, Article 1. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."
 49. *ibid*, Article 4. "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."
 50. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania became effective on 02 November 1992. It was officially announced in *Lietuvos Aidas* Newspaper, No. 220 10 November 1992 and *Valstybės Žinios* [Official Gazette], No. 33-1014, 30 November 1992. Available on the Worldwide Web, as follows: <<http://www3.lrs.lt/home/Konstitucija/Konstitucija.htm>>.
 51. *ibid*, Article 20, "The freedom of a human being shall be inviolable."
 52. *ibid*, Article 21, "The dignity of the human being shall be protected by law."
 53. United Nations, 2000. *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*, supplement to the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, Article 3. Available on Worldwide Web, as follows: <http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_%20traff_eng.pdf>.

biological needs for sex. Such is the case all over the world and in our country as well.

Different authors interpret and explain the concept of human freedom and dignity differently. According to Fromm (1965), personal freedom is turned into an unbearable burden, when economic, social and political conditions on which the entire process of human individualization depends cannot become the foundation for the positive realisation of personality. Moreover human life becomes purposeless and meaningless, when a relationship with a primary provider of security is lost. The person who has lost a relationship of primary security attempts to find any other sort of relationship with people and the world, even if it means the sacrifice of obedience to another, simply to evade a sense of insecurity (Fromm, 1965 [1941], 52). Jovaišas (2004) notes that, when human honor is demeaned, unavoidably dignity is as well, although these two categories are not identical. Spruogis (2004, 10) asserts, "Human dignity must be an object of a society in which she/he lives that realistically recognises the value of each person developing the conditions necessary for such." Venckienė (2005) notes a multi-faceted, complex nature of human dignity and its internal alternation. However, as Lobato (2001, 175) asserts, the most important foundation of human dignity and rights is the person him/herself. Regardless of how many different interpretations and explanations of human dignity we might discover, a key focus is still on the person him/herself as a social being. Despite this, how much and what sort of attention do women in prostitution receive, especially when the issue of their human dignity is in question?

As per the definition of social work, the principles of human rights and social justice are considered the basis of social work. Social workers are agents of change in the society and amongst individuals, families and communities whom they serve (Bagdonas, 2004). The 1998 Lithuanian Social Workers Code of Ethics states that the main idea of social work is the protection of a person as an individual (LSDA, 1998, LSDEK, Preface, 1). Upon analysing issues regarding the values and system of principles in social work, Kavaliauskienė (2005) references a value of a social worker as being the belief that

“all people have a purpose although it may seem strange or destructive”. The goal of social workers is their effort to reveal the meaning and goals of certain behaviour, not to “place labels”, stereotype or react in any negative way towards it (Kavaliauskienė, 2005, 79). Thereby my intention for this study was to discover what lies hidden in the personal experiences of women in prostitution, what its prehistory is and how it relates to their involvement in prostitution. I also considered it important to deliberate the sorts of relationships that linked these women with persons close to them in their childhoods and adolescence. How can these associate with their ending up in prostitution, with their present and with their accepting or seeking assistance? After all aren't these women in prostitution those who presumably “voluntarily” chose to provide sexual services the same victims of human trafficking? They should have pretensions to a different attitude towards them by society and to receive assistance other than a mere supply of condoms, which are meant to ensure safe sex for men.

Moreover, defining who is considered a victim is especially important when providing help. As Oselin (2007) notices, literature on the social sciences has not comprehensively examined or analysed the motivations for leaving prostitution in any systematic or comparative manner except for offering a few case studies. All the more, there is no deliberation about how stigma and traumatic experiences influence the daily lives of women in prostitution or the changes within their lives. The identification of women in prostitution as victims of human trafficking could be the primary starting point in the help process to bring positive changes to these women's lives. For one the provision of help for victims is made more difficult by the differing concepts regarding trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes and women in prostitution. Furthermore the conclusions of national research and the practice of working with victims attest that the punishability of panderers is seemingly dependent on testimonies by victims. Meanwhile crimes go unrecognised and criminals, unpunished.

The definition of a victim provided by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (1995) states, “A person (...) that is injured, killed or destroyed as a result of crime, bad luck, an

accident” (Crowther, 1995, 1326). In comparison *The Current Lithuanian Language Dictionary* (2000) describes a victim as “a person who suffered or died from some misfortune” or “accepting a loss or damages on someone else’s behalf”. Kast (2001) analysed the role of a victim and described a victim as follows:

A victim – that is a person who avoids conflict, backs off, and says ‘yes’ but does not necessarily agree with that. If somebody pushes such people, they apologize and criticize themselves for taking up so much space in the world. These people quietly say, ‘I am abnormal but you all are doing everything very well (...)’.

The aim of an abuser is to enslave his/her victim, steal her consciousness and despotically dominate every aspect of her life. His/her goal is to foster his/her own will in a victim who will be obedient and who will find sexual fulfilment in such obedience. Herman (1997) claims the reinforcement of control over another person is based on depriving the person of power as well as disassociating that person from other people. Horror and powerlessness are implanted, and the sense of interconnectedness of the “I” with other people is destroyed. Farley (2004, 1117), who spent a number of years examining the experiences of women in prostitution, notices that they remain quiet as a result of intimidation, terror, dissociation, and shame, which is also characteristic of women suffering domestic violence. She argues that, when the saying “silence is consent” is aimed at women in prostitution, it is misleading. According to the findings of research conducted by Philippe and Romano (2008), recognition of the status of victim is essential because it gives a victim a liberating effect; it does not pile on depressing and suppressing responsibility upon the self. For one this legitimises the suffering of a person and thereby prompts a request for assistance and protection. On the other hand, the authors also notice another very important aspect of the aid process, which is the “labelling” of a person who has suffered a trauma as a victim. According to the aforementioned researchers, “Is not that a Gordian knot, which irrevocably links affected women with their pasts and thus impedes the entire process?” (ibid, 330). Thus an assessment of the status of victim remains a sensitive and open issue, one that requires especially responsible deliberation. This

is necessary to avoid upholding the process of stigmatization against a person who has already been victimized previously. Skinner (2002) holds the opinion that it is incorrect to believe the phenomenon of exploiters demonstrating their power and superiority over victims of exploitation manifests in one direction only. His opinion is that both sides are interrelated and both participate. The victim also controls the exploiter, the same as the exploiter controls the victim in the sense that the victim provides conditions for the abuse by behaving submissively. Undoubtedly the environment, social structure and cultural heritage contribute in forming these kinds of conditions of human exploitation and submissiveness, which then act by approving, maintaining and strengthening such interrelationships. Fromm (2008) holds a different opinion and claims that such narrow thinking only permits us to see the behaviour but not the person who is behaving, in one way or another. This author considers a person's character, formed by the parents' character, which is dependent on the structure of their social culture, as the most important factor in human frustration causing its frequency and intensity. Fromm (2003) explains that an individual's character "as the basis for his adjustment to society":

The character of the child's character is moulded by the character of its parents in response to whom it develops. (...) The child acquires the character which later makes him adjusted to the tasks he has to perform in social life. He acquires that character which makes him want to do what he has to do and the core of which he shares with most members of the same social class or culture. (Fromm, 2003, 43–44).

It is specifically a person's character that first determines what makes him/her frustrated and secondly, the intensity of his/her reaction (Fromm, 2008, 112). Thus it becomes important in this study to consider the previous experiences of women in prostitution from childhood until now, the interrelationships in their families or with their surrounding environment and the connection with the stigma⁵⁴ and trauma, and how much it is concealable, if at all.

54. The first to analyze the concept of stigma, who emphasized its Greek origin, was Goffman (1963, 11). He associated it with bodily signs, as something that

The foundation for the concept and construction of stigma as a phenomenon was established by Goffman, 1963; Wright, 1960; Katz, 1981 and Jones, 1984 in Stangor, Crandall, 2003, 62. Stangor & Crandall (2003) expanded on it later. They explained its specific characteristics that appear to be universally stigmatizing or in stigma development.⁵⁵ These authors notice that the basis for comprehending stigma is that, first and foremost, stigma exists in a person's own thoughts and stigmatizes that person as a cultural social construction more than any universally stigmatizing physical characteristics can. Laar and Levin (2006, 1) distinguish three levels of the negative effects of stigma on a person: "individual, interpersonal, and structural or institutional". As these authors note, the characteristics of the stigmatized individual may also affect what is perceived as threatening and what resources the person has and chooses in order to cope with the threat. They also note that the prior individual experience with stigma influences the later stigma process as well as threatening environments. Thus it is important to analyse the manifestation of stigma in the personal experiences of women in prostitution and how it interacts at all three levels.

The experiences, traumas, consequences, stigmas and negative perceptions toward the women who have suffered prostitution and/or trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes are more questioned than they are analysed for their essence to achieve a better understanding and find appropriate methods of help for victims or potential victims. In their analysis involving the resolution of issues relevant to the trafficking of children in Lithuania, Gečėnienė and Mališauskaitė (2003) notice that several previously conducted

is "designed to dispose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier". Persons possessing such signs were delegated to a separate class of people as those who are "different", "defective" and "ritually polluted" slaves, criminals or traitors.

55. Stangor and Crandall (2003) present a theory of stigma development, "We propose that stigma develops out of an initial, universally held motivation to avoid danger, followed by (often exaggerated) perception of characteristics that promote threat, and accompanied by a social sharing of these perceptions with others" (Stangor and Crandall, 2003, 62–63).

studies on human trafficking and prostitution provided some interesting data on the extent of such a manifestation and the means used for involvement; however, none of these studies directly touched on the problem of sexual exploitation of either children or of adults more deeply and more comprehensively. Other authors (Ruškus et al., 2005) who examined the demand and supply for social services by people victimized due to human trafficking and prostitution paid attention to the stigma on women in prostitution. The study they conducted revealed that, due to the unfavourable public opinion, condemnation and social stigma, many of these women do not notify governmental authorities about the crimes that had caused their victimizations. Scholars believe that this phenomenon is usually associated with criminology, the stigmatization of women and negative stereotypes. The information basing different analyses on the problem of prostitution tends to be informal and subjective more often, which is not measurable and thereby not very legitimate. One finds a lack of matters that could be spoken and named publicly and clearly. Thereby it is important to examine the experiences of sexually exploited women as well as the difficulties and obstacles therein in the effort to help them change their lives and futures as well as to develop the methods most acceptable to them for their assistance. Their obstacles are also important to consider to reduce their social exclusion and to protect them from, what Ruškus et al. (2005, 31–55) name, their singling out, away from other citizens, from the traditional and conventional social networks in the country as well as from the negative, accusative and condemning attitudes that predominate in the country. Scholars claim that the label of “prostitute” in society is unambiguously judged negatively, which also affects these women by their loss of adequate responses for acceptance into their own social circles.

The following chapter presents how I constructed this study, the manner in which the study participants were selected and how the interviews were conducted. Furthermore it describes the gathering and reporting of other information relevant to the experiences of these women. Material on field notes and other records kept by the researcher are also included.

3. Studying women's personal experiences in prostitution: Research question and the objective

Before I started my research, I was a leader at the social services centre organising help to meet the needs of these women. I had many ambivalent feelings towards them. Sometimes I felt pity and a great desire to do everything I could to ease the pain from their terrible experiences. Other times I was greatly enraged together with these women towards, as Beleckas (1990, 3) says, the “animal-like” exploiters and pimps. The author notes, “Being people” (though the aspect of humanity might be questionable here) they “turn the same human beings—women—into animals” by taking advantage of women’s vulnerability or distorted self-perception of the situation. I also felt angry towards people who condemned these women because of their experiences, behaviour or self-presentation. It was difficult to understand, much less to accept the surrounding views of the alleged “naivety” of these women or their intellectual deficiency, namely because their lives are the way they are. In many cases, I noticed that a person who is “different” from “others” or from “the masses” is abolished from society and suffers from a publically condemning attitude. These women experienced negative judgements, stigmatisation and rejection openly and publicly from the people in their surroundings. During one of the observations, a talk with a man who is looking for, what he calls, “hot babes” beautifully illustrates this:

As we were walking towards the observation site (Hotel N), a man struck up a conversation with me at a trolleybus stop. He asked, ‘What city is this?’ We answered him, ‘Kaunas.’ Then the man told us, ‘I’m from Utena {researcher note: speaking in a local dialect}. I’m looking for some hot babes’ [Dovilė, from observer notes, 2005.02.25].

A stigmatizing and stereotypical attitude in respect to women in prostitution is readily noticeable in moments of daily life and in

the press or other public information resources that discuss the phenomenon of prostitution and the people acting within it. Some authors analysing the prostitution problem (Bilotaitė-Jokubauskienė et al, 2004) observed the tendency of the mass media to form a negative opinion about these women.⁵⁶

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56. According to observation of Bilotaitė-Jokubauskienė et al (2004, 38), social problems are created and supported by different claim-makers, and today's popular culture encourages the importance of sexual needs and values. Free market economic policies influence public morals and increase tolerance for such social problems as prostitution. It should be noted that the prevailing negative attitude towards the victims of prostitution and trafficking for sexual exploitation has been maintained and strengthened by the local and national media writing about women in prostitution. Intriguing headlines of the magazine and newspaper articles and radio broadcasts undoubtedly contribute to the formation of the negative public opinion of the woman:
- “Prostitucija - kaip ‘geras darbas’ (Prostitution - as a ‘good job’)”. V. Normanas, *Vakarų ekspresas*, 2011-04-08.
- “Lietuvių prostitutės: nuo gatvės merginų iki elitinio eskorto (Lithuanian prostitutes: from the street to elite escort girls)”. I. Saukienė, www.DELFI.lt, 2008-11-07.
- “Populiarėjanti sekso vergijos forma – vedybos pagal katalogą (A form of sex slavery becoming more popular - marriage by catalogue)”. I. Saukienė, www.DELFI.lt, 2007-09-28.
- “Klaipėdos prostitutės – neišnaikinamos (Klaipėda prostitutes – ineradicable)”. Ž. Skersytė, *Vakarų ekspresas*, 2007-07-23.
- “Pasiūla auga, nes paklausa neslopsta (Supply is growing as demand is not decreasing)”. M. Motiejūnienė, *Kauno Diena*, No. 188 (17649), 2005-08-16.
- “Sekso vergės savo praeitimi nesigiria (Sex slaves do not boast of their past)”. D. Valevičienė, *Kauno Diena*, 2004-06-22.
- “Prekyba žmonėmis ir prostitucija Lietuvoje klesti (Trafficking in human beings and prostitution flourish Lithuania)”. I. Žirlienė, *Kaunas Radio and Television News Service*, 2003-08-20.
- “Prostitucijos versle lietuvės populiarios (Lithuanians are popular in prostitution business)”. *ELTA*, 2002-10-21.
- “Sekso vergių maršrutai driekiasi į Šiaurės šalis (Sex slave routes extend to the Nordic countries)”. D. Bogdaniienė, *Lietuvos Rytas*, 2003-08-30.
- “Palangoje įkliuvo meilės vergės (Love Slaves trapped in Palanga)”. D. Čiužauskas, *Respublika*, 2003-07-05.
- “Lietuvės — paklausios prekė užsienyje (Lithuanian women - demanded goods abroad)”. M. Petruilienė, *Lietuvos Žinios*, 2003-10-20.
- “Vilniaus prostitutės vienos kitas moko saugaus sekso (Vilnius prostitutes teach each other safe sex)”. *Lietuvos Rytas*, 2003-01-24.

The question about how prostitution originates can be raised when discussing the growth tendencies of prostitution and, not only on the national but also on the international scale. I considered this question, “What are the reasons for women’s involvement or, according to a widely existing opinion, “self-involvement” in prostitution?” There are several prominent problematic areas when regarding the tendency for ever younger women to engage in prostitution: the issue of personal choice, the effect of past events on present life and participation of a significant “other” in a person’s life as well as the decisions that “other” person makes. These issues reflect the relevance of the thesis. I decided to focus on *women’s life stories* and their *personal experiences* before their becoming engaged in prostitution in my effort to lead them to disengage from it. I was looking for methods that would help me scientifically to reveal and empirically to validate the **object** of my study—*the personal experiences of women in prostitution that reveal their life stories*. In such a way, the **main areas of focus** of the life stories of women in prostitution are their subjective experiences that I categorised as *experiencing trauma, making a choice and seeking help*. I was concerned with the life events of women in prostitution that occurred during women-environment interactions or subjective experiences of self-in-the-world. I was also inspired to achieve a more general **aim** by this study. I wanted to provide a “*voice*” for women in prostitution as well as to attempt to explain an issue that became pronounced in the very beginning of the work: *What does it mean to be a prostitute in Lithuania?* These aspects influenced the formulation of the main **research question**:

What specific patterns emerge from the personal experiences of women in prostitution that cause (influence) two kinds of decisions they make: (1) to engage in prostitution and to disengage from it and (2) to get help.

“Teismas atvertė sekso vergės bylą (The court opened a case on sex slaves)”. *Lietuvos Rytas*, 2001-01-26.

“Lietuvos moterimis aprūpinami užsienio viešnamiai (Foreign brothels are provided with Lithuanian women). *Veidas*, 2000-12-19.

I was seeking to examine how women in prostitution were managing their life, being-in-the-world before becoming involved in prostitution and while getting out of it and to learn *what specific patterns* unfold from their personal experiences. Specific patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution unfold with the help of the following specific research questions:

- What the specific moments reveal the personal experiences of women in prostitution as they go through life?
- What obstacles did they face during their personal experiences?
- How did they manage the obstacles in their life?
- How did it come out or manifest in their relations with others (family members, friends, expert help providers)?
- What resources did they have for making a choice about whether or not to continue engaging in prostitution or disengaging and quitting prostitution?

These questions allowed me to understand better and consider more along the lines of May (2008, 7), who stated, [The] “arguments and their assumptions about (...) how we can know the social world” of women in prostitution and comprehend their personal experiences is by focussing attention on a particular issue.

Why was it important to reveal specific patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution? Additionally, how are specific patterns understood for this study? The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* explains *pattern* as “a way in which s-th happens, moves, develops or is arranged” (Crowther, 1995, 850). Patton (2002, 453) notes that *pattern* “usually refers to a descriptive finding”. While analysing sensitive issues in the experiences of women's life stories about victimising sexualisation, Smith (2000, 14) construes *the paradigm of pattern* or, as she calls it, “the life course developmental progression of person-environment interaction” that “identifies as a coherent expression of life structure and subjective experience of self-in-the-world”. I referred to specific *patterns* in this study as “coherent expressions” about the life events of women

in prostitution or their experiencing themselves being-in-the-world while analysing sensitive issues of their personal experiences.

I sought to reveal *specific patterns* in their personal experiences, which became highlighted from constant reinterpretation of the information received. Once such highlighted specific patterns were revealed, it was possible to get to know and explain better the context of the lives of women in prostitution and the essential moments causing their identities to form. As Schachter Modell (1983) asserts, the pattern is crucial representing not only the person's view of life but also revealing that of the others—people, community or society—who are with this person. According to the author, the pattern “takes shape around a basic theme” and is “worked out” by a subject (Schachter Modell, 1983, 1). Therefore the *specific patterns* running through the revealed personal experiences of women in prostitution also allowed me to explain the existing two-dimensional scheme of the attitude towards women in prostitution—was their choice voluntary or was it due to circumstances?

Perttula et al (2009, 59) point out, “*Social work* in Lithuania is not yet sophisticated enough for concentrating on specific methods and detailed theoretical thinking”. Moreover, the authors note, “Lithuanian social work is far away being represented as interaction between manager and customer.” Thus, for one, the role of the social worker is important in this period of change in developing and putting workable intervention programs for helping women in the process of prostitution into practice. Furthermore this would allow designing influential social support and policy not, as Jordan (2008) notes, with “perverse incentives”, but the opposite, with more effective means oriented to strengthen the values of an individual. The aim of this work was to reveal the women's personal experiences and specific patterns throughout the highlighted heuristics of their life by presenting the specificity of the phenomenon “from the inside”. That was important for bringing up new issues for discussion and setting further guidelines for the study of prostitution as a complex social-psychological problem. Meanwhile the most helpful way to reveal the experiences of women involved in prostitution, in my opinion, may be by fulfilling two conditions:

the women's desire and motivation to participate in the study and the relationship and dialogue between the research participants and me in the field for the study.

4. Studying women's personal experiences in prostitution: Nature of qualitative research

Several years ago, I had already begun delving into the issues of prostitution and trafficking in women for purposes of sexual exploitation as I was practicing social work. Thus this was my chosen field of study. My purpose was to reveal what seemed the most important in my opinion—the quality of assistance provision in response to a female client's needs and its importance and significance in social work practice. The right choice still had to be made regarding the most appropriate theoretical as well as methodological methods. These had to assist in disclosing and highlighting the need for comprehensiveness when involved in the practical side of social work with this client group. Thus my investigation began with a discussion on and a search for an answer to a more general question: What does it mean to be a prostitute in Lithuania? At the time, I thought all I would be able to do by getting to know them well was to find ways to help them, by responding to their needs. My conversations and social work practice with such clients substantiated this idea—first, to be able to help a woman who has been victimised by prostitution and human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation, one must become well acquainted with her. This meant it is important to get to know the actual or imaginary obstacles preventing such a woman from reaching her own inner resources and to help her understand what she truly wants in life and what she needs to achieve it.

Merleau-Ponty (2005) points out that science only confronts the real world occasionally. It considers any sort of being as an “object in general” and often refuses to settle into those same objects. The author discusses “operational” thinking with some irony noting that contact and relationship with a specific person, an acquaintanceship

arising from a natural process of information exchange is seemingly “lost”, once employing such a philosophy of science. Tyson and Bulunda (2010), referencing Floersch (2000, 2004) and Fook (2002), note that practitioners need an understanding coming from “situational epistemology” based on the point of view of the “one experiencing the experience” for acquaintanceship. Therefore, I considered it important first to create a suitable climate for making the sort of contact that can lead to a close relationship with a woman in prostitution to revealing her experiences from the inside. I already knew from my experiences in the practice with these women that they do not open up immediately, from the very first meeting. Moreover their sharing was often fragmented and disconnected, and the facts and details often got mixed up. It was not until a closer relationship became established, before they would become more and more inclined to open up. Thus this study is based on the proviso that the way these women understand and interpret their experiences, what meanings they provide to them, how they share their experiences with others and what helps them to open up more must come from themselves because this is, as May (2001, 14) states, “The only thing we can know with certainty.” This study also relied on my own personal experiences and reflections gained as a researcher and as a practitioner, from my communications and relationships with women in prostitution.

4.1. Entering the field: Nothing in life happens by coincidence

This study is based on six years of experience providing psychosocial services for victims of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation purposes. In 2003, at the beginning of my work as a social worker, I did not expect my work to develop into a scientific study in the future. I still keep in touch till now with the woman who was my first client. This woman needed quick and prompt help, back then in 2003. No sooner did I begin speaking with this woman when I realised I had heard her voice before. During a later conversation

with her, I realised I had consulted this woman by telephone a few years ago while I was working for a help line as a volunteer consultant. Now, being near the woman, I realised our meeting was not accidental, since nothing in life is accidental.⁵⁷ I understood that I must assist her immediately, here and now, otherwise she would face fatal consequences. Later there were many other women suffering from sexual exploitation or involvement in prostitution for whom I provided support while working at the centre. Each had her own painful personal experiences, trials and different ways of overcoming all that. Their stories allowed me to feel and understand what primarily stood in their way or injured them. The obstacle standing in the way of the women getting needed help proved to be the unwillingness or inability of people whom they had approached in search of help. They needed someone to understand the anxiety they were experiencing as they tried to circumvent various external threats. These women were broken inside and they were feeling the dangers from the outside world very intensely. To cap it all, they were often inclined to reject the help they needed so much, possibly as a consequence of all the rest.

While working in a non-governmental women's centre, we often deliberated in our frequent conversations with clients what their existing situation means to them and what would help them change. Each and every one would claim it was understanding and acceptance of the reality of their *being*. Such thinking did not give me peace and prompted me to analyse more deeply and to search for effective means to help them. My previous practice and the experience and skills I acquired in a variety of social work⁵⁸ no longer satisfied me when I had to provide help to victims of human trafficking and prostitution. Some of the methods I used to apply earlier seemed entirely inappropriate with these clients. Thus new methods had to

57. As Plotinus (*Enneades*, IV, lib. 4, c. 35) asserts, "Chance has no place in life, but only harmony and order reign therein" (Schopenhauer, 1974, 199).

58. My practice included volunteering for the youth help line providing psychological counselling, social work at the health centre for people with mental disabilities and work with female victims of domestic violence.

be found to help these women overcome the traumas they had suffered. Moreover there was little practice in working with such clients in the country; thus opportunities to learn and analyse this sort of specific help for victims were limited. This was the beginning of the road drawing me into a more in-depth study on women in prostitution or women trafficked for sexual exploitation purposes.

In 2004, upon my invitation to study in the doctorate programme, I began scientific examinations on the personal experiences of women in prostitution or female victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes. I expected the research to begin at the Klaipeda Social and Psychological Services Centre, which would be the most suitable place to observe the experiences of trafficking or prostitution victims the best. As a social worker at the centre, I could be closest to them emotionally; thus, by interacting and talking to them, I would be able to approach their perspectives and sensations regarding what they were experiencing, what their feelings and emotions were, how they behaved and how they presented themselves in society.

I gathered a variety of information when I began my study on this phenomenon and the research on the experiences of the women involved. The information included articles and videos about involving women in prostitution. I analysed various literary works on socio-cultural and historical aspects of women's situations in society and the family that illustrated prostitution and human trafficking as multi-dimensional problems. Furthermore such literature covered issues of the social policies on prostitution and human trafficking of women in Lithuania. Furthermore I analysed the national and international legal codes relevant to the sexual exploitation of women, prostitution and human trafficking. Observations of women providing sexual services at their "work" places were conducted in joint with students from the Faculty of Social Sciences at Vytautas Magnus University. I kept field notes on my visits to striptease clubs, nightclubs and places where women "worked" providing sexual services. I wrote-up notes on the more important details from my observations after my talks with clients. Furthermore I wound up working a great deal with responsible representatives from other

non-governmental and governmental institutions in the course of my practical work and in implementing a number of projects relevant to problem resolutions in prostitution and human trafficking. Notes on these and the instances of greatest importance to me were written-up by me in a diary. I combined several methods, including interviewing and observations, to help me best analyse the personal experiences of women in prostitution within the context of their social life.

4.2. Role of the researcher

In many countries of the world, including Lithuania, women in prostitution are people who are exploited, discriminated, marginalised and segregated. They are people at risk. I was convinced more than once while providing help for these women that most people around them tended to regard these women in a more condemning than supportive manner despite the array of long-term perspectives. In my talks with social workers involved in this field, they told me about two obstacles they had observed in their work. One was society's lack of acceptance, the rejection of these women. Then, equally as often, there was these women's resistance to the help offered them:

'I was confronted with the lack of self-confidence of clients as well as their distrust to those around them and unwillingness to interact and open up.'

'I was confronted with a victim of trafficking who had no place to live, had lost faith and motivation; at first, she did not want to accept help disbelieving that we can help her.'

'(...) fatigue, stress and that society does not recognize the problem (...)' [From "Reinforcement and Development of Shelter and Reception Facilities, and Support Services for Female Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation", a survey of social workers implementing the Nordic Baltic pilot project, 2007–2008].

Society predominately considers women in prostitution "different", "of a lower intellect" and "second-rate." Help for them to

change is not considered worthwhile, because it would lack meaning and appropriateness, because it is purportedly “their own choice” and because it is purportedly a life style “acceptable to them”. This prompted me to analyse their personal experiences more deeply to discover appropriate responses and counter arguments. The prevailing unsupportive viewpoint on women in prostitution and the obviously negative attitudes towards them bothered me from the very beginning of my work as a social work practitioner. Social work with women involved in prostitution allowed me to see the link between prostitution and human trafficking as one phenomenon. The purpose predominating in one and the other were sexually exploiting women, taking advantage of their helplessness and vulnerability and violating human rights. Often the women who were my clients, the women involved in prostitution or, as the majority believes, independently and/or voluntarily providing sexual services, were actually recruited by pimps and sold by deceptive means locally or abroad, thereby becoming victims of trafficking in women for sexual purposes.

However, in my opinion, the topic of women in prostitution who are being trafficked or sexually exploited is fundamentally an epistemological problem and difficulty. My practical work with those women as social work clients formed or confirmed my different attitude and opinion about them as not being specifically “different” from “others”. Inside I felt an inner opposition towards the negative attitude about these women, and this encouraged me to search for an answer to what extent a person’s decision can be conscious or unconscious. Internally I disagreed with the prevailing idea that becoming involved in prostitution is as person’s “conscious choice”. I raised this question to myself—*Was it possible for a person to desire physical, emotional or spiritual abuse?* If this could possibly be true, then it was certain circumstances that influenced such a so-called “choice”. I believed there were other reasons involved for women finding themselves in situations where they become a thing or an object to help men act out their distorted sexual fantasies and desires. Such a bias on my part only became stronger by the stories these women told about their childhood, their life in a family or in an institutional home and their related feelings.

Ruškus et al. (2005), who analysed the rehabilitation and integration of the victims of the female trafficking and prostitution, note that there are several models for interpreting this concept in Lithuania.⁵⁹ The different aspects of the concept of a victim mean that “different groups distinguish the different characteristics of the victims and respectively highlight and sketch its reintegration efforts” (Ruškus et al., 2005, 42–44). I referred to two of the approaches this study presented. The first is that a victim of prostitution is a woman who experienced psychological and physical violence. This concept is expanded by adding the experiences of sexual and economic exploitation and the negative outcomes, which influenced these women’s lives and the resultant traumas and stigmas they experienced. The second is based on the understanding of how difficult living conditions in childhood, their families or institutional homes and/or difficult interpersonal relationships pressure women into becoming involved in prostitution. As for myself, I was convinced that the existing negative attitude and the features attributed to women in prostitution create favourable conditions in society for its formation of a, as Goffman (1963, 12) calls it, “virtual social identity”.⁶⁰ Perhaps this is the reason why most people raise these two questions—*Is a woman in prostitution a victim or a criminal? Do these women*

59. These authors claim that certain organizations first denote the consequences from psychological and physical abuse, while others believe the victim is the result of forced prostitution due to unsuccessful migration of labour. Another viewpoint on a victim is based on the consequences of the failed socialization of these women, their growing up under complicated living conditions, experiencing material poverty and rejection or growing up in segregated institutions. The authors observe another concept on the phenomenon of female trafficking and prostitution that ignores the concept of victim and consider woman as condemned to work in prostitution due to various economic, psychological and social factors (Ruškus et al, 2005, 42–44).

60. Goffman (1963, 11–13) asserts, “Society establishes the means of categorizing persons and the complement of attributes” (...) and builds “the routines of social intercourse” (...) [that] (...) “allow us to deal with anticipated others without special attention or thought”. An “attribute” or “category” imputed to the individual that (...) “makes him different from others”, (...) “a tainted, discounted one” that also (...) “constitutes a special discrepancy between virtual and actual social identity”, which is called *stigma*.

want to behave in such a way on their own? My own practice in social work confirmed that the vulnerability, weakly functioning adaptability and disturbed responses to offers of help coming from women in prostitution, who are sexually abused, would become serious obstacles over the entire help provision process with them. Ruškus et al (2005, 47) also notice that, “due to their illegal and stigmatizing activities, they are marginalized; i.e., they find themselves beyond the boundaries of normal society”. The predominance of conflicting opinions and perspectives about women in prostitution also become important obstacles for them when attempting to overcome prostitution successfully, to change their lifestyle or to receive social help provisions. Thus, in this study, a woman in prostitution was considered as both a psychologically and socially influenced woman who was systematically sexually exploited. Also I was following a holistic view towards women in prostitution by paying the greatest attention to causal explanations that reveal their personal subjective experiences before entering prostitution or seeking help.

The tradition of qualitative research, according to the heuristic research strategy (Moustakas, 1990), allowed me, as Fielding (1993, 156) points out, “to shed the new light on the darker corners of our own society”. Thus I was looking for a path-break towards my research participants. In this study I sought, as Fielding (1993) states, to “explore some hitherto obscure niche of social life” of women in prostitution during a rehabilitation period for some of them or remaining in prostitution for others. On one hand, it was important to find not only the best research method to convey the personal experiences of women in prostitution but also to examine the obstacles and relationship they met, and the resources they found during the social help process. On the other hand, the heuristic research strategy allowed me to turn back within myself, to my own thoughts and feelings throughout my experiences and self-reflections during the research process.

4.3. Framework of data gathering: Triangulation as a methodological tool

During the entire research period, from 2005 to 2008, I conversed with 30 women who were formerly or currently involved in prostitution or trafficked. Furthermore informal and formal in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 women who willingly agreed (see Appendix 1) to participate in this research and share their experiences on the basis of purposeful criteria sampling. I not only conducted in-depth interviews with the respondents (see Appendix 2) but also had many informal conversations that I recorded with their knowledge and consent. I also examined the cases and records of professional assistance on several clients to understand the respondents' personal life experiences better. Several clients brought their personal photos, sometimes on their own or sometimes at my request to show some important moment in their personal life. They gave me some photos as a gift saying, "I want to give you this picture." We also watched and analysed released filmed footage on prostitution and human trafficking with some respondents, which provided informative material for later discussions. Several respondents participated in projects I organised for developing different video materials on the issues of prostitution and human trafficking.⁶¹ Some respondents gave consent to give interviews to journalists. Later, after these interviews, they wanted to meet to discuss their experience and feelings. Also some respondents gave their consent to participate in discussions or seminars I was leading for volunteers in different organisations on prostitution and human trafficking. Such events were opportunities to get to know the respondents better in a natural environment, as they interact with other people and directly confront public opinions about them. Later, after such events, we would make time for discussions, and I would always try to write down the incidences that seemed important to me. Thereby the information being accumulated about the research participants became quite varied. Due to the variety of the contexts for gaining

61. These projects were conducted in Sweden and Belgium as well as in Lithuania.

data and the resources, I considered it important to employ the triangulation strategy, which strengthens the reliability of the research.

Patton (1999b; 2002, 93) asserts that “triangulation of data sources and analytical perspectives” increase “the accuracy and credibility of findings”. Tyson (1995, 233) also notes, “Triangulations can help the researcher to recognise the bias inherent in any single perspective.” I triangulated in several ways in this study. The triangulation of sources providing data for the research that gave complementary views towards the researched problem is shown below (see Figure 3. Triangulation of data resources).

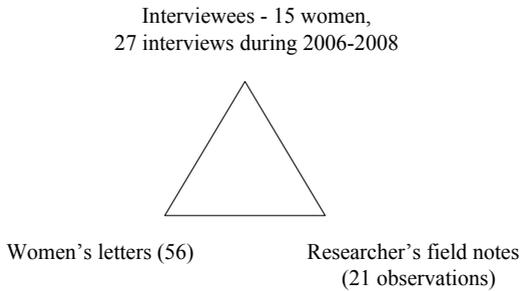


Figure 3. Triangulation of data resources

Some interviewees had been my clients in my social work practice; therefore I was acquainted with certain of their family members who had been included in the help process. Consequently they also provided information via correspondences or meetings. The mother of one client gave me permission to use the letters she wrote to me for my study.

There was a special phrase one of my respondents said during our informal conversation in the process of an interview, “Now, when I think about it, I could have had a better childhood” [Field notes, 2006 April 14]. This phrase encouraged me to study women’s personal experiences from childhood until they began seeking help to disengage from prostitution. Childhood experiences of women before they began engaging in prostitution led to their other periods

in life - adolescence and adulthood. Thus I analysed the personal experiences of women in prostitution throughout their entire life, starting with childhood and moving into adolescence up to their adulthood (see Figure 4. Triangulation of the personal experiences of women in prostitution during life periods under study).

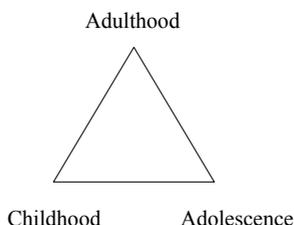


Figure 4. Triangulation of the personal experiences of women in prostitution during life periods under study

The personal experiences of women in prostitution encompassed three focus areas in their life stories (see Figure 5. Triangulation of focus in women's life stories).

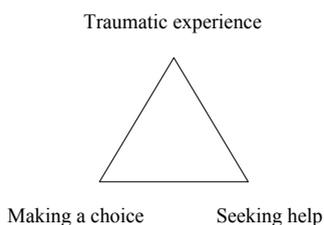


Figure 5. Triangulation of focus in women's life stories

Women's letters

There were also correspondences with some research participants by e-mail. One research participant offered to write about her experiences, so perhaps later, as she said, "I could publish a book so other girls could read it and learn from my experiences to protect themselves from nightmarish experiences" [Field notes, 2006 October].

She wrote to me about it in her letters. Another research participant sent me her composed poem and asked me to give her feedback. She entitled her poem *Laukimas (Anticipation)*. It was written while she was still in prostitution working as a topless dancer in a strip-tease club. According to her, that was a “very emotionally and psychologically difficult” time for her.

May anticipation rest in peacefulness,
Where a flash of hope glimmers within.
Bordered thoughts, blinding emptiness,
Day dashing by ... so long the dashing day
(Irma)

The lines of this poem revealed her feelings of loneliness, anxiety, inner pain and emptiness but, at the same time, hope and faith.

Researcher's field notes

My own observations, as well as those along with others took place in 2005–2008 (see Appendix 3, Table 3).⁶² The five observations I conducted were at the different, so-called “work-places” of women in prostitution: at night clubs, striptease clubs and a parking lot (20 hours). Observations of women at “work”, at their “work-places” would last for several hours, especially when it took time for them to show up at their “work place”. I would usually arrive earlier so I could take a look around their “work” environment.

Writing-up the research field for the observations had important aspects to include as answers to the following questions. “What social situation does the observer see? What data is needed and how it is gathered? What are the ways in which they are important?”

62. Observations were conducted with the participation of others, i.e., students from Vytautas Magnus University, Klaipeda University and LCC International University as well as employees and volunteers from the Klaipeda Social and Psychological Help Centre. Thirteen observations were made by a group of sociology students from Vytautas Magnus University. Monitoring was done with these VMU students at one of the rehabilitation centres for addicts (2 hrs.), where female victims of prostitution were residing as well. The important issues, moments and conditions for conducting the research were discussed in joint with the students.

What becomes distinguished in the situations under observation? What essential topics and aspects become distinguished in the situations under observation? The other participating observers were asked to write-up reflective descriptions from the fieldwork experience at the end of an observation. The reflections performed by the students enabled me to distinguish the main research trends or possible themes and make them more specific.

The excerpt presented below is from a write-up of an observation. My colleague, one of my former clients and I went to observe the situation at a parking lot by the international ferry terminal, i.e., to observe the women working “*furos* [trucks]”.

Three of us went to observe the girls servicing cargo truck drivers: my colleague, one of my clients and me. A great many vehicles were lined up in the parking lot. Some of the drivers were sitting and probably watching TV. Others seemed at rest. My former client explained how to recognize where, as she said, ‘work is happening’ and where it is not. If the blinds of the driver’s cabin are drawn, it means there is already a girl in there and, if they are open, no one is there. A girl approaches and asks, ‘What are you waiting for?’ This way the drivers are aware of who you are and what you are talking about. Actually most vehicles did not have their curtains open; just a few had their curtains closed. I checked whether there was already ‘something going on’. My client said, ‘Probably not, because it is too early. The drivers are probably resting. The curtains are also drawn when they rest.’ I inquired how to recognize when a girl had already arrived. My client with me told me, ‘We arrive in a taxi. That is already a distinguishing sign that truck drivers recognize. Besides, other women don’t walk around here.’ As we were observing the environment from our car, I asked if we look somehow suspicious right now. My client with me confirmed, ‘Yes. Sometimes police officers circle around here. Then we warn each other.’ I asked, ‘Do they check inside the vehicle?’ She replied that had never happened to her. However, she said she had no doubt all the police know everything, what is happening, where and how. Besides some drivers have the phone numbers of the girls and simply call them to come over. I asked if she knew any of the drivers here personally. She laughed and replied, ‘I don’t know. I should take a look who’s parked here today. After all they do change.’ Unfortunately today we did not see anything more than we expected. My former client noticed, ‘peak hours’ are on weekends; on weekdays there’s less action. She also noticed that there were not all that many vehicles parked (we counted 12). ... [Field notes, International Ferry Terminal, Truck parking lot, 2005 June 24, Friday, 17–19 pm].

The researcher's write-ups were entered and organised by a local network's professional interdepartmental working team.⁶³ The map of the local network is in Appendix 8, "Interdepartmental cooperation: local network map". A variety of issues concerning the trafficking in women and prostitution were discussed during these group meetings. These meetings allowed seeing the approach to the phenomenon of prostitution as well as the attitude towards women in prostitution from the existing perspective of representatives from various organisations. We could see what different organisations considered a victim of prostitution to be, and how they describe a woman in prostitution. Furthermore we learned what kinds of assistance were given to the victimized women and what various preventative activities were organised and implemented.

All these my observations and field notes helped me to comprehend the object of my research better as well as to understand better the personal experiences of women in prostitution and the existing attitudes towards them.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews

The study was performed at the Klaipeda Social and Psychological Support Centre, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) providing assistance to female victims of violence including trafficking and prostitution. In other words, my study took place "in the field", where social support was being provided for women being prostituted and trafficked. I discussed the experiences of the study participants with members of this group. I also talked with them about how they understood the prostitution issue, whether or not it was

63. In 2007–2008 I implemented an international project *Cooperation against Trafficking in the South East Baltic (CATSEB)*, which focused on strengthening local inter-agency cooperation in addressing the problem of human trafficking. Within the framework of this project, I organized the 15 Local Network Group Meeting (LNG). Representatives from 17 local, various kinds of organizations participated in these meetings: the police, prosecutors, children's rights protection, social welfare department, NGOs, institutional care homes for children, migration and child crisis centre (see Appendix 8).

“voluntary” and what the prevailing attitudes were towards the phenomenon itself and the women in it.

The following is an excerpt of a write-up of one event that prompted me to give more thought and attention not only to my own relationship with my respondents but also to their positions in respect to me.

Today, one client, U., who lived at the centre shared how she went to meet with pimp L. accompanied by two centre employees (psychologist Lina and social worker Reda). U. could not let him go since she was in love and thought he was the man who only wanted what's best for her. A meeting with L. was needed to gather the documents U. needed. The pimp said, 'I am a better psychologist than you.' He manipulated the woman's feelings beautifully. He not only had her documents but also compromising photos of her in sexual acts and knew how important they were for U. Therefore, from time to time, he would threaten U. saying if she wouldn't come back to him, he would send pictures to her parents and throw away the documents. Thus it was very important to get back everything like the photos as a possible blackmailing tool against her and the documents to receive assistance. So the employees and U. were trying to get back the necessary items. U. shared how shocked she was at what happened later. On the way together, the social worker indiscreetly said to U. that she 'has extensive experience in dealings with men' (cl. w.). After she returned to the centre, U. said, 'When she (my comment: the social worker Reda) said that, everything went black. I certainly did not expect that. I wondered what I was doing being in that centre. Spit on everything... I wanted to jump out of the moving car right then and there. But then I thought, after all, Lina (the psychologist) does not think so and she does a lot for me. I stayed only because of her. I know for sure that I will not speak to Reda anymore, not a word.' Clearly, this situation and the social worker's conduct shocked me as well. It was a good lesson for me too about how important it is to find the right words when talking with a client [Field notes, 2005 December].

I would remember this situation as soon as I would start interviewing respondents. I have experienced myself how sensitive these women are to the environment. However, this case drew my attention to the importance of interpersonal relationships as a significant criterion in many ways: in help provision relationships, in relationships with people in the nearby environment (who can be parents, friends, that same pimp and employees). Thus I knew I had to pay attention to interpersonal relations and their roles in this study.

Six of my research participants with whom I conducted face-to-face, in-depth interviews were my former clients. I had provided assistance for them while working at the centre. The other nine research participants were clients of other employees at the centre. Thus, in this way, two groups of respondents emerged in this study—my clients and clients of the other employees.

In-depth interviews were conducted in 2006–2008. The first pilot interview was conducted in 2005 and the remaining ones in 2006–2008 (see Appendix 2, Table 1). One interview lasted, on average, from one up to three hours per meeting within the same or the next day. Most interviews were held in the centre; a few were taken at the respondent's home. This allowed seeing and better understanding the women's environment and certain moments in their life.

We needed to meet more than once with the research participants, because it was very difficult or even impossible to gather all the information about their experiences over the course of a lifetime. Preparing for the interviews sometimes took up to several hours. I met with the study participants mostly on weekends when they and I had more free time and could talk freely without being interrupted. The first meeting with one of the first participants took place in a park, because she did not find time to meet at the women's centre or elsewhere. Before arranging the meeting time, she warned me that she did not want to remember anything about "things that happened" and would not "tell anything about it". However, she started talking "about that" immediately after we met.

Sometimes, at the beginning of a conversation, the respondents being interviewed would be restrained and timid and try to change the topic of the conversation. Later, though, they would talk about their experiences and feelings without stopping, as if wanting to cast off the burden they carried. Some women emphasised that they want to talk about it, especially if it will benefit other women and will protect them from such experiences. All the interviews took place in the Lithuanian language. Interviews were taped and then transcribed with every attempt made to convey the words as well as the pauses, insertions and jargon used by women.

One participant noted in the beginning of the conversation, “It will be hard not to swear when I’m talking, because I’m used to it”. She went on that, because of that, “I feel very uncomfortable.” She felt “ashamed” in front of me. She said, “It is hard to display myself the way I was.” “Now,” she said, “I will try to be different” [Interview, Milda, 2007 June 6]. There were difficult moments faced with some respondents while touching on sensitive and hurtful issues related to their negative experiences. One of them called these “the disgusting relationships” [Field notes, 2006 August].

4.4. Philosophical underpinnings: Heuristic-existential approach

The goal for this section is to provide a simplified description of the philosophical underpinnings of a general framework that helped to construct the body and process of this study, as well as to contribute and develop scientific knowledge. Tyson (1995) emphasised some important aspects of a research philosophy that help [to] “generate and appraise” knowledge. According to the author, that includes “the role of values in the research, how one appraises scientific theories, the relationship between theories and observations, and the relationship between theory and participant/researcher and participant/subject” (Tyson, 1995, 4–6). These aspects were the most important guidelines that inspired the organisation and development of this heuristic-existential research exploring the personal experiences of women in prostitution. Professor Tyson (1995, 4), who provides important significance to the issue of values in social and behavioural research, claims “Values are one aspect of believes about scientific knowledge.” Being a social work practitioner, I can confirm that the values an employee holds during the time of providing help to a client has an especially important role. The talks with women in prostitution about their personal experiences also confirmed this. The pain these women experienced when facing a condemning, judging or stigmatizing outlook about them from persons in their surroundings were mentioned in earlier chapter sections. They

obviously lacked support, understanding and simply acceptance for their choice. Moreover they were often blamed or judged, presumably deserving what they are getting since they had chosen themselves. Therefore, from the very beginning of this work, I considered remaining neutral in respect to the experiences of these women, something I felt was especially important both in the process of providing them with help and their participating in the research. Nonetheless, while talking with the women, I realised that I am not neutral about their experiences. I realised that what they had gone through and experienced upset me both as a woman and as a social worker. Morally I was unable to remain neutral about the personal experiences of these women. That meant I had to find the means to aid in achieving objectivity of the research results.

In the opinion of Tyson (1995), a researcher becomes more objective in an attempt to get to know the phenomenon being deliberated from various perspectives. Thereby I considered the selected existential approach, which is based on a strategy of heuristic exploration, as the most appropriate for this study. In this case, my own inner searching, based on my own personal experiences and knowledge, participate in examining the experience of another person. The following is how van Deurzen (2010, 18) describes objectivity and subjectivity:

Being objective toward oneself would mean that one was capable of seeing one's own predicament in perspective, that one view one's own characteristics in the guise of a caricature and that one would consider one's strengths and weaknesses as entirely relative. At the same time being subjective toward others would mean that one would gain the ability to identify with other people's yearnings and preoccupations, that one would understand them instead of condemning them and that one would constantly expand one's consciousness by exercising one's ability to travel inside of another's mind and experiences.

Van Deurzen (2010, 47) refers to existential exploration as first-hand experience, when the researcher's as much as the respondent's subjectivity is accented, when her so-named "first-person experiences" begin with understanding and description. Therefore, for this study, I first used my own "inner" world experience as support while, at the

same time, focusing on the meaning these women ascribed to their environment and the events in their life. In other words, I considered it important to seek and find the place where these women had been. As Kierkegaard (2006, 64) claims, “If one wants to truly lead another person to a defined place, first the person must be found where he/she is and then begin from there.”⁶⁴ That meant I had to seek to understand something the way the research participant understands something, whether or not it was acceptable to me and whether it corresponded with my own viewpoint or differed from it. A constant inner conflict ensued—how must I retain the kind of distance from these women, so it would not become an obstacle preventing their opening up but, at the same time, it would not pull me seemingly blindly into what concerned me? Kierkegaard (2006) calls this a position of service rather than one of ruling, of being patient, humble or incapable of understanding what another could understand. The existential viewpoint was what permitted paying attention to what is seemingly passed over, unseen or doubted, in other words, to that which is in-hiding. Thus, seeking to explore and understand the issues about personal experiences of women in prostitution from diverse perspectives at the same time I pursued to remain unprejudiced, unbiased, and objective as much as possible.

Tyson (1995, 4) emphasises the “respect for the client’s right to self-determination” as the “most important” value for social workers as such. In this study, this was the most important value for me, as a researcher and as a person, a standpoint towards women in prostitution I held as my own and my own self-determination. I sought to remain not as someone who issues provisions, pressures or controls the research participants but the opposite, as one who respects their own choices about how deeply they are able or want to tell or reveal their personal experiences to me. I openly shared my goal with the research participants and sought to participate in the daily life of certain research participants as much as I possibly could. In other words, I conducted the research, as Wolcott (2009, 17) says, “*among* others rather than *on* them”. Sometimes, in the data gathering

64. This is a translation from a Lithuanian translation to English by Vijolė Arbas.

process, I was questioned by some of the research participants about my opinion or my own views towards women in prostitution. In such moments, I was open with them with my personal sharing; I did not evaluate their behaviours or positions. My inner position towards women in prostitution was more supportive, what obviously encouraged them to open up more and more. Sometimes, as I would be listening to the women's stories, I would share my own feelings and the rising emotions about the behaviour towards them by the others who were near to them at the time. We were akin to "fellow travellers", to use the words of Yalom (2002, 8), during our talks and meetings. I sought to eliminate that difference between them and myself that I would sense, regardless, while I would be interacting with them. Thus one of the most important conditions of existentialism was *Existence-together* or *With-existence*. It helped to develop interpersonal relationships and, at the same time, to see the difficulties these women had gone through. From an existential standpoint, *With-existence* is considered one of the essential contexts assisting a person to open up and helping to become acquainted and understand that person (Cohn, 2002; Kočiūnas, 2004).

Thus, in this study, the personal experiences of women in prostitution were understood, as Cohn (2002, 64) states, by "every present moment" which "still contains the past it left behind while already pointing towards a future". Kočiūnas (2009) notes that the "self" of a person is understood as always only relatively fixed but, in reality, being in a process of continuous exchange all the time. Thus, according to the principle of inter-relatedness, personal experiences of women were understood as a complex network of relations with others, or the social world. Therefore I considered it important to understand these women's life context by virtue of their relationships with me as much as with other people they met during that time as well as to interpret whether or not meaning is being provided to the events in their lives. Patton (2002, 352) notes, "Opinions and feelings are likely to be more grounded and meaningful once the respondent has verbally 'relived' the experience." Moreover it was important to understand how these women experienced and comprehended the hardships that arose in the context of natural

freedom, its limitations and the responsibility for one's own choices, the meanings ascribed to the events and circumstances of their lives, the instances causing anxiety and, finally, their experiences of time as the synthesis of past-present-future. It was also important to discover how these women comprehended and recognised the limitations of their life and how they acted when confronting the various existential givens. Perttula (1998, 22) explains a person's experience as "personal experiential meanings concerning this world, including the self, (...) [which] are constituted in accordance with the basic structure of the conscious mode of being". Thus, in this study, the personal experiences of women in prostitution were understood throughout a painstaking analysis of their transmitted cognitive and interpretative process.

As I sought to understand the personal experiences of women in prostitution and the world of their life, I used for my basis the *existential view* of human life covering, as per van Deurzen (2010), four broad spheres called the dimensions of existence—physical, social, personal and spiritual (see Appendix 6). Such a "four-dimensional" view of human experience allowed for better and clearer understanding of the personal experiences of these women, despite these spheres intertwining and overlapping with each other. According to van Deurzen (2010), we all recognise our bodily existence, our existence with others, our existence with our own self and our existence with the system of meanings. The author states that every person is regulated by his or her physical (natural, material) forces, social or cultural network, his/her own personality and character and, lastly, by spiritual meanings through which persons experience the world. Based on these dimensions of human existence, the main topics that helped to disclose the personal experiences of women in prostitution were formulated (see Appendix 7). Universal existential conditions, such as the being-with, meaning in life, choice and sense of isolation, freedom, responsibility, recognition, safety, loneliness and/or others, which unfolded during the research process, and the women's individual relationship with them were considered as well.

Tyson (1995, 473) notes, that "discovering new facts about human nature (...) engage both the knower and the known". This

empirical investigation based on the existential approach was a serious challenge to me. My purpose was to transmit how they and I experienced the relationship or meeting one another—what it was like, what was important to them or to me in a certain meeting and how that helps to disclose the injuries or deformities these women suffered from their earlier experiences. Thus the existential outlook directed my attention more onto the dialogue, experiences and realistic assessment of the meetings with research participants, those that could be resources in the process of changing oneself or that proved to be obstacles. I tried to integrate existential ideas into the process of inquiry, experiences of events or creation of relationships in collaboration with the research participants. The most relevant way for searching and understanding the personal experiences of women in prostitution and, as Moustakas (1990, 15) says, of “self-inquiry and dialogue with others” was, as I saw it, through the use of heuristic strategy. The heuristic way of investigation and design starts from the initial engagement and immersion into the topic and question and continues further in the incubation, illumination and explication process and ends in the creative synthesis of personal experiences.

According to the heuristic research strategy, the first phase called the *initial engagement* occurred when my “passionate concern” for the aspects of the personal experiences of women in prostitution compelled me to look more deeply and widely at the phenomenon under research. That involved me not only in describing and depicting the personal experiences those women had shared with me but also invited searching my own inner self. My personal implications were using self-dialogue and self-reflection to discover and clarify the research topic and question. That also inspired me to think over my own tacit awareness and knowledge about the explored phenomenon and the thoughts, feelings or my personal experiences about significant relationships with those women. The main principal I upheld in this study was *being with* or *being for* my research participants. As Colombero (2004) notes, being with or being for are conditions that help to open up, lead to mutual trust and community, feel safe and understand the essential elements of a person’s existence in the world and their meanings. As May (2001, 57) points out, according

to Acker et al. (1991, 40), “The research process should become: a dialogue between the researcher and researched, an effort to explore and clarify the topic under discussion, to clarify and expand understanding.” Thus initially I was not only concerned with generating the climate needed for opening up and concentrating on the problem under investigation but also with being together with the research participants and sensing what is happening between them and me. Such an experiencing of reality together with them was the process by which an intimate connection formed and feelings and emotions came alive leading to the experience of dialogues. Buber (2001) considers dialogue the sort of attitude people take with one another, when the wordless *I-You* depth opens up, when one turns towards another and when the responding and greeting echo causes the other person to speak out. As I interacted with the respondents, I sought the sort of meeting that would lead us into a mutual opening up and a mutual experiencing and sharing of what is intimate and personal. Gutauskas (2009, 89) observes, “If another is met like another I (...) [then] it changes my sphere of comprehension.” This way the quality of an interrelationship becomes the essential matter in a meeting between people (Kiaunytė, Puidokienė, 2011). What concerned me in the process of having a meeting was how women in prostitution understand themselves and how I can help them disclose their uniqueness. At the same time, I also focused on the women’s understandings and interpretations of their social environments, their obstacles, strengths or resources for changes in their life. My chosen existential approach for this study provided me with the way to gather “facts” by being the part of the social world, which I was studying. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, 13) assert that a researcher can “represent social reality in a relatively straightforward way (...) through (...) getting close to it”. By the same, the authentic relationships being formed between the women and myself were like a mirror reflecting our freedom as much as our limitations.

My self-searching continued during the next phase of *immersion*. I lived with the research question, as Moustakas (1990, 28) says, “in waking, sleeping, and even dream states” while designing the method for data collection and later transcribing the data. Sometimes I truly

felt as though I was going through and experiencing, what those women had gone through, feeling disgusted and nauseous over that, which others had done to them. Herman (1997) notices that the dialectics of trauma are actually a threat to the emotional balance of the person examining it. Seemingly I was going through a great many contradictory feelings at that time, starting with absolutely identifying with these women and blending into their experiences, all the way to denying their feelings or feeling deadened. I realised I needed to talk about what I was going through at the time myself. My colleagues who were close by and the students who had participated in the observations with me helped considerably (see Appendix 3, Table 4). I shared my experiences and what I was going through with them and discussed what I had seen with some of them. I often gave myself questions during such times—if it was so hard for me to simply be alongside these women going through their various ambiguous feeling, then how do these women manage to actually live through all this? I remember that, in my quest for answers, I asked one of my clients what she felt now after so many years had gone by since the sexual exploitation she had experienced for purposes of prostitution. Much to my surprise, the client replied that she felt well. When asked what well meant, she was taken aback (apparently my question was hard for her to understand at the time) and said she did not know how to explain that. Quite a while later, after numerous talks with her, I understood that this woman's feelings were totally closed off for the time being, not only to me but also to herself. Therefore opening up required the trust of one another before it can become, as Buberis (1998) says, a “healing meeting”.

The next period, called an *incubation* phase, constituted of my own moving away from the intense, concentrated focus on the explored phenomenon and research question. This inspiring retreat allowed me, as a researcher, better understanding about my inner working of tacit recognitions. That also helped me better clarify an understanding of events relevant to the researched phenomenon. The incubation process enabled the growth of my intuitive understanding about the question and led me to see things in a new ways that revealed, as Moustakas (1990, 29) says, [the] “additional qualities

of the phenomenon or a vision of its unity". The *incubation* period also helped me to extend my awareness about the research question to new perspectives or discoveries allowing me to retreat rather than intensely diving into the phenomenon under investigation. In other words, at the beginning of the research, I always felt, as Polanyi (1964, 34; in Moustakas, 1990, 29) says, scrambling "among the rocks and in the gullies of the flank of the hill". Thus retreating later was absolutely essential to see where I am and what I am doing better. The consciousness and new findings about the research question, which increased throughout the *incubation* period, was like "a breakthrough into conscious awareness" in an *illumination*, the process during the *fourth phase*. That helped me to disclose and integrate, as Moustakas (1990, 29–30) says, the "missed, misunderstood, or distorted realities" or "hidden meanings" into a new entirety.

During the fifth phase, *explication*, I analysed the new meanings that had surfaced in the illumination phase and broke through into conscious awareness. As Moustakas (1990, 30) asserts, [when] "illumination opens the door to a new awareness, a modification of an old understanding, a synthesis of fragmented knowledge (...) the heuristic researcher enters into a process of explication (...) in much more detail". Thus this phase allowed me to verify fully what had aroused my perception. For the *explication* process, my own awareness, feelings, thoughts or viewpoint were very important. These Moustakas (1990, 31) defines as "a prelude to the understanding that is derived from conversation", which I utilised by "focusing, indwelling, self-searching, and self-disclosure".

The last phase, *creative synthesis*, occurred once I familiarized myself with all the data. In other words, all essences details were explicated reflecting the wholeness of the personal experiences of women in prostitution. Afterwards the formulated paraphrases were explicated by integrating the other theoretical sources on trauma (Herman, 1997) and the social cognitive theories (Bandura, 1986).

Thus the heuristic tradition suggested ways of thinking to me about the researched problem and about the ways for exploring and theorizing it. Moreover the heuristic strategy of research based on an existentialist outlook allowed me to understand better in order to

explain the features of these women's experiences and what they had to live through. I was only given a chance to generate real relationships with them by being close to them, which provided disclosures for me as well as for them themselves. As Tyson (1995, 334) notes, "What has been established (...) as necessary for the phenomena may consist precisely in that extra-conceptual reality which consists of the real relations and processes in which people stand to each other." Thus, according to the heuristic-existential approach, I can grasp *how* women understand themselves and how their past events influenced their personal life and/or the attitudes of others towards them. To say it another way, I was able to discover how women see their life that is persecuted by the misfortunes of fate and different trials and how they find meaning in it by accepting all the difficulties placed upon their shoulders. To ask in the words of Frankl (2008, 8), how do they find the strength within themselves "to say Yes to life regardless"?

4.5. Ethical reflections

Patton (2002, 405) notes that "interviews are intervention", which may leave some consequences to the interviewees, because an interview is a reopening of their old wounds that "leaves them knowing things about themselves that they (...) were not fully aware of before the interview". Lee (1993, 97) also notices that telling somebody else "those aspects of one's self which are in some way intimating or personally discrediting" is "a difficult business", which is equal to a confession. Thus, for that reason, ethical issues were carefully considered.

The informal and formal in-depth interviews for this study were conducted with 15 women who willingly agreed to participate in this research and to share their experiences and feelings. At the beginning of the first meeting with the participants of the study, we discussed the conditions for their voluntary participation in the survey. We also considered the aim of the research, the topic and object of the study, the interview procedure, potential risks and consequences

of the interview, conditions of confidentiality and the confidential use of materials for scientific purposes only. Thus we entered into a written agreement (see Appendix 1), which considered certain important issues. Two copies of this consent were signed in writing both by the study participants and by me as the researcher. To protect the anonymity of the survey participants, they signed the agreement using their chosen nicknames. The most important aspect, which was mentioned in this agreement, was the psychological and emotional influences on the women, as they once again returned to their own painful remembrances. Therefore I assured psychological help for them if they were to need it after their interviews.

Several participants refused to sign the contract, reasoning that they do not see the need to do so; they believed the contract is not necessary for them, because their word to participate is enough. Some of the women, when being offered a written agreement for their cooperation in the study, refused reasoning that they do not want any publicity, even though, I emphasised that the anonymity of every woman's story would be maintained. One study participant asked to be allowed to say *stop*, if the questions appeared too heavy emotionally. I felt that she did not want or, at the time, was not yet emotionally and psychologically prepared to speak about her experiences. I agreed with her request but it turned out not to be necessary. Later, after the interview, I asked whether there had been any unacceptable questions or had she changed her decision during the interview. The woman replied, "I forgot the request during the interview and, if you hadn't reminded me of it now, I might not have even remembered." She also added, "For me it was not difficult to talk, and I even liked the conversation after which I felt free and relieved, as if I had been released from my own burden" [Field notes, 2007 January]. However, one respondent refused to talk about the sexual abuse she had suffered from her father after she had quite willingly consented to participate in the investigation and share her experiences. She agreed to talk about all the rest but, as she said, except "that". An excerpt from our conversation follows:

R: Could you tell me more about the sexual abuse by your father?

J: I do not want to talk about it. I do not want to remember it. Please do not ask me anything more.

R: Is there something wrong about my asking you?

J. No, it's okay. I do not want to talk about it anymore.

I felt I was creating a distance between us by trying to question any more on what happened at this time. It was a shame she did not agree to tell me more, because I felt inside that there were was much important information for the research [Field notes, 2007 January].

This situation taught me that I needed to be ready for possible surprises during an interview. At the same time, however, I only agreed with her choice, even though it upset me.

5. Research data and process of data analysis

5.1. Epistemological dilemma or research participants and their social “truths”

It was quite difficult to determine the selection criteria for the participants of this study. As Weitzer (2005, 941) notes, [It] “is difficult to conduct a research on individuals who are stigmatized and involved in illegal behaviour”. As I was organising the study, I wondered which women in prostitution I would choose as respondents. Since I was already providing social and psychological assistance to victims of prostitution and trafficking in women, I had experienced the difficulties in making contact or developing relationships with them and gaining their trust. Sometimes it took from a few weeks to several months for the women to trust me and open up. The excerpt presented below is taken from the field notes on a talk with one of the clients. It shows that there are times these women are not inclined to make any sort of contact with a help provider at the centre, especially when they had been brought in to the centre by police officers. And, they were certainly not inclined to open up and talk about what they had experienced or what they are going through:

The client was brought to the centre by a police officer. I invited her into the office. I offered her a seat ... I asked if she would like some tea or coffee. She replied that she did not want anything and she had no time. When I asked about what she would like to talk, she said that she had nothing to talk about. ‘What do you want to know? I do not have anything to say. I told everything to K’ {Researcher’s note: K is the name of the police officer}. ‘I do not understand why he brought me here. What do you want to know? I do not see where we end (...) How much more time will we talk here? I do not need any of your help and I do not promise to tell you anything here (...) I want to

smoke (...) Can I, here?’ I replied that this was a non-smoking area. There was another area for smoking. ‘That’s a pity,’ she replied. ‘Then, let’s speak quickly. I do not have much time. Ask whatever you want (...)’ [Field notes after the conversation with client E. [the name is changed], 2005 April 5, Tuesday, 14 p.m.].

Obtaining a client’s trust requires many efforts, skills and simply human interactions with much sincerity and empathy on the part of a social worker. However, after trust was gained, a client was able to speak about everything that had caused them depression and anxiety. The following is one example taken from a letter written by a research participant about her unexpectedly opening up:

(...) Concerning father – I was thinking a lot about that. I do not have any right to judge him or condemn him. I am not a perfect person myself. But I will open up to you. Maybe I will feel better after. You probably understand that you have become the closest person to me. [Original letter from client O. Speech is not edited. 2005 May 5].

This was a serious challenge for me. I needed “to get accurate, factual information”, as Yegidis & Weinbach (2009) note, that would help me to achieve the research aim for this study. I tried to find research participants in other help provider organisations to trafficking victims. Unfortunately, to my disappointment, I received a negative response from the leaders of some organisations. They responded that the women do not know me, they are afraid, they simply do not trust anybody and they do not want to say anything more. Such responses were understandable to me. Even I was especially protective of female victims myself while I was providing assistance to them, guarding them from various inquiries. They had enough inquiries as it was whenever a preliminary investigation was opened.

I got the idea to include women who were my clients in the study. As Davies (2008, 3) points out, “We cannot research something with which we have no contact, from which we are completely isolated.” I saw both advantages and disadvantages in that case. One advantage was that I had good contacts with them, which allowed open communications. However, I was worried about ethics. Wouldn’t this infringe on both my practical work with my clients

and the research. The fact that I myself provided social assistance to the victims of human trafficking and prostitution concerned me, and I had doubts about whether it was right and proper to include my clients in the research. There were also apprehensions about whether I would affect the study results by having my clients participate in the study. How well will I be able to maintain a distance, as per tried and true methods, as Davies (2008, 4) points out, “in which interaction is kept to a minimum”, by including my clients in the research. How will I remain detached? To what extent will the clients be able or be willing to be open with me, not as an employee but as a researcher? I was wondering to what extent they would agree to participate in the study if they had not been my clients. Maybe they will agree to participate in the study only because they are my clients. What would it mean for them to participate in the study? How much of a sincere and genuine desire would there be? Maybe they would be reluctant to respond honestly to me, because I had helped them. Nonetheless, inwardly I thought more and more that I had to look for the most rational decision reflecting the needs for a new approach towards clients in the practice of social work. I had to choose, as Heineman Pieper (1989, 8) would say, “any problem solving strategy” that would lead “to relevant, reliable, and useful information” (in Tyson, 1995, xiv).

Previous researches on female prostitution (Beresnevičiūtė et al, 2006; Bilotaitė-Jakubauskienė, 2004; Čaplinskas, Mårdh, 2001) covered some of my fears and the choice I had to make about including some of my clients in the survey. According to Beresnevičiūtė et al (2006, 15), “The survey of qualitative study was limited due to lack of connection between the researchers and the providers of sexual services.” Čaplinskas (2005, 63) argues, “The random selection of participants is not possible, because prostitution is illegal in Lithuania.” In such a context, it is more difficult to find male or female subjects for the study. It is hard to motivate participation in the study due to the fear of identity disclosure of, for example, prostitutes, pimps or customers (Čaplinskas, Mårdh, 2001; Bilotaitė-Jakubauskienė, 2004, 4). However, according to Fielding (1993, 156), the “way of rendering the spirit (...) researcher must be involved in the ongoing,

daily world of the people being studied.” This implied that only by my being involved as much as possible in the environment of my possible study participants could I obtain reliable information for the research. Social work practice with the victims of prostitution confirmed this position. Opening-up was only possible over a significant period of time. I could only “catch” the “real” moments of the personal experiences of my research participants by encompassing/involving my own systematic desensitisation as well as the same for them and the elimination of certain procedures or positive reinforcements, especially by applying self-control and stopping thoughts. Gathering up such bits and pieces of sharing was, to use the words of Coulshed & Orme (1998, 171), “like jumping onto a moving bus”. I understood that the only way I could “jump on to a moving bus” was by “being on the inside”. Thereby the best idea, as Tyson (1995, 203) points out, is to “prioritize analyzing the conceptual consistency and social relevance of the choices being made in designing research as well as the biases introduced by each choice”. That could be possible by implementing the heuristic paradigm.

“Being on the inside” meant I had to visit more than once at different striptease clubs, make contacts and observe the surroundings. I had to accompany these young women more than once to their so-called “work places”. In certain cases, I also had to meet panderers (pimps) in the effort to “disengage” the young women, who had by now become my clients, from the webs of threats and intimidations these men wove around them. Furthermore I had to meet with the families of these women as well to get to know them more intimately. It could be said the research was conducted in the field of social work by concurrently supplying them with help and, by getting to know them more deeply in their various life situations at the same time. All of them knew about my research and about the information being gathering for it. They were inclined to cooperate by working with me as much as possible and helping me. Therefore, in part, I was participating in a time in the life of the research participants or, as Taylor (1994, 36) says, in that “part of the social world” of women in prostitution either while they were still “working” or while they were already seeking help. Although

this caused me some anxiety about the possibility of influencing the research data, nonetheless, I continued moving forward. The one thing I knew was that I had to get data that was as objective as possible, which required meeting with the research participants a number of times. The study of the phenomenon of prostitution and the experiences of the women acting within it, even after some had disengaged from prostitution, was one of those fields of research that unavoidably required, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, 49) say, “to penetrate” or to overcome various “gatekeepers”. Entry into this field required my creativity, courage at times, naturally my assuredness and sincerity and/or the ability to respond quickly and appropriately to the appearance of some complicated situation. I also needed such traits with the research participants themselves to gain their true openness and trust as much as I needed them with the so-named “gatekeepers” who were alongside. Below I submit the field notes from one of my visits to a striptease club and the experience of making contacts with the young women. I conducted the monitoring at the striptease clubs at night along with other staff members and volunteers from the Women’s Help Centre:

Today we decided to visit one striptease nightclub. What prompted our visit was one of the Centre’s staff members who saw a group of dancers from the club smoking outside while passing by the nightclub. This woman told us, ‘They were standing outside nearly naked wearing only peignoirs.’ Our colleague observed, ‘They apparently no longer even have any sense about whether or not they are dressed.’ Thus we decided to go there that night. One of my colleagues and I agreed to meet at the entrance about 10 p.m. She suggested taking one volunteer along with us. So there were three of us. I asked my colleague to find out how to get into the club. When we came, the administrator of the club (who, as we learned later, was one of the club’s dancers) asked whether we knew where we had come. She noted, ‘Women usually do not come here alone.’ We had to make up a story quickly so we could get in. We told the administrator we were from an organization which was expecting a visit of a large group of fourteen foreign men who had asked us to scout for nightclubs where they could relax. The club’s administrator gladly agreed but said she needed to talk this over with the owner of the club. Before going in, my colleague suggested buying flowers for the girls. It seemed strange to me but I agreed. The administrator escorted us to the second floor where the girls performed. We

sat down in a remote spot, actually the only place that was free at the time. The room where the girls danced was small, only some 30–40 m². There were few visitors at the club, only several men. Later more came. There were stairs leading from the second to the third floor, which were blocked by a partition (that meant ‘entrance is not allowed’ or, to be exact, ‘not simply for anyone’). Later I learned from one of the dancers that that is a ‘private area’ (my explanation: an area where a women provide services by request as per client needs including sexual services) (...) Meanwhile the partition was for security. It was quite dark in the room, and it was impossible to see the faces of the visitors from a distance. A stage with a pole where the girls danced was in the middle of the room. The music selections were appropriate for the surroundings. The selection changed every time the dancers changed... The dancers wore light, short dresses, which looked like bedtime peignoirs that they took off during their dance leaving them bare except for their panties...

Each of us ordered a cocktail so we would not appear overly different from the rest. We felt like we were being watched the entire time. However, we tried not to pay attention to such attention (as much as we were able). We watched the girls dance. Some actually did dance professionally. After all, we did have flowers. I decided to give them to one in gratitude for her excellent dance. She was very surprised but she took them and thanked me. After a while, she came over and sat down next to me. We started talking. We talked about everything – her dancing, how she had learned to dance and whether she was doing this for long. I sensed that she liked talking to me very much and that a contact was forming. She would get up and leave, then come back and sit to talk. She questioned me, saying it was strange to see three women at a striptease club; it was out of the ordinary. Even here I was sincere telling her that we wanted to see the club ‘from the inside’, what goes on inside, how the girls dance and how the clients behave with them. Later, when their working time was nearly at an end and when we had made quite a good contact, she let it slip out that she feels tired from the workload here and, overall, she feels somehow lost in life. I realised this was a fateful moment. Thus I invited her to meet somewhere in town, not at the club, simply to have some coffee and talk more, because it was so noisy in this place. We exchanged telephone numbers and agreed to meet the next day. Therefore I consider that evening to be indeed successful [Field notes, Striptease club, 2006 July 22, Friday, 22–05 p.m./a.m.].

I revealed these issues and my worries concerning the participation of my own clients in the study with several women with whom I had a strong contact. They were my first chosen survey respondents. The

main criterion for selecting them was our close mutual contact and communication. To my surprise and joy, I got their support, understanding and also an incentive to invite them to participate in the study. Of course it delighted me and increased my own motivation to invite my clients to participate in the research. Thereby I received much support and motivation to deal with this problem most deeply from the women themselves. They confirmed that they knew and trusted me and agreed to share their personal experiences. They were only able and willing to talk about themselves due to such a relationship. The most important condition they all mentioned for opening up was unconditional acceptance, understanding them the way they are and their trusting me. According to them, first of all, they really trusted me, and I felt that. Secondly their participation in the study, as they identified, would allow others to see their real experiences and reasons of involvement in prostitution, “showing the violent side as opposed to the ‘supposedly’ safe environment” [Field notes, 2005 March 12]. Another important aspect—the meanings of attitude and relationship—clarified during a talk with one of the respondents who said, “I’d want to be looked at like a human being” [Field notes, 2005 April 15]. This helped to concentrate on one of the areas of focus for this study and later to formulate one of the tasks of the research relevant to the stigma suffered by prostituted women.

One general criterion for selecting participants was their being over 18 years of age, i.e., adults. There were no restrictions regarding the sexual orientation, religious belief or nationality. I present the information about the respondents below (see Figure 6. Information about respondents).

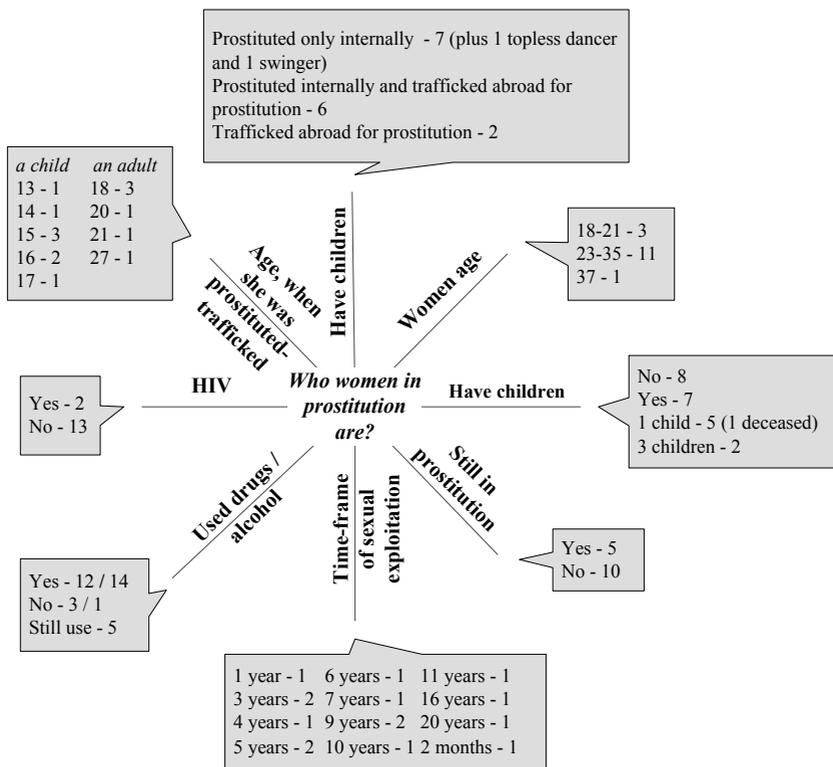


Figure 6. Information about respondents

The average age of the respondents was about 28 years and ranged from 18 to 37 years. All study respondents were citizens of Lithuania. More detailed information about research respondents is provided in Appendix 4, Tables 1–8.

Slightly more than half of the respondents (7) had children, although one had a child who was deceased. Two respondents had three children, but only one of them was raising her children herself. One who was not raising her children had two children assigned to foster-parents and the other one was still at an institutional home for children. The other four study participants had one child each; three were raising their children themselves, and the child of the fourth one was being raised by the grandmother.

The duration of sexual exploitation varied from two weeks to up to twenty years. Three of the research participants had been subjected to the sexual exploitation of prostitution for a very long time (one – 11, the other – 16 and yet another – 20 years in duration). Of these women, one is still in prostitution (for 11 years). Five have been in prostitution from 6 to 10 years. Of these women, two are still in prostitution. The rest of the research participants (6) have been in prostitution for 5 years and less (of these women, one is still in prostitution). Only one of all the surveyed women in prostitution was sexually exploited for only two weeks.

The age at which they got involved in prostitution also varies. More than half of the responding women (8) were involved in prostitution while still underage (one since age 13, one – since 14, three – since 15, two – since 16 and one – since the age of 17 years). Three women got involved in prostitution at age 18 years. Two respondents got involved in prostitution when they were 20 years of age or slightly older (21 years) and one was trafficked for prostitution when she was 27 years old.

The sexual exploitation experiences of the respondents for prostitution also vary. Seven of the respondents had only been prostituted locally and two were only trafficked abroad. Meanwhile six of the respondents were both prostituted internally and trafficked abroad. One research participant was a topless dancer and one was involved in group sex where participants are known as swingers (*svingeriai* in Lithuanian). Two of the fifteen respondents are HIV infected. Ten of the research participants are no longer engaged in prostitution, while five others are still engaged.

Information about the respondents' immediate surroundings is presented below (see Figure 7. Information about respondents' immediate surroundings).

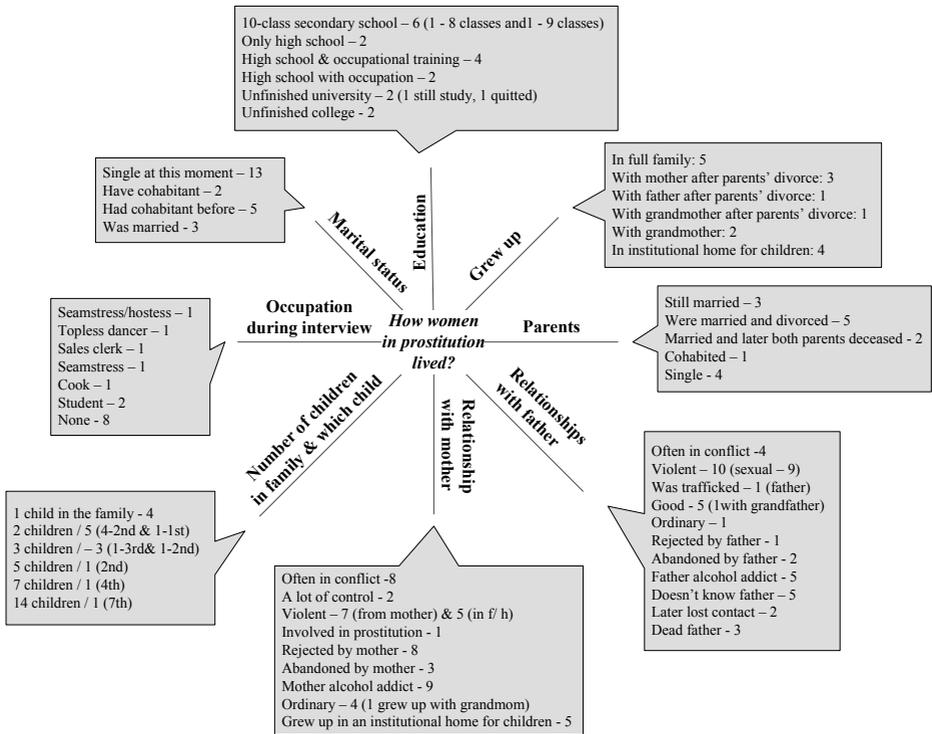


Figure 7. Information about respondents' immediate surroundings

Four of the research participants had acquired vocational training: seamstress by two, hostess course by one, sales clerk by one and cook by one. None of the other eleven had acquired any vocation.

Two of the respondents started university studies, but one had discontinued her studies. Four of respondents had completed 10 grades of secondary school; two of them had attended and graduated from evening school. Two of the study participants had not completed secondary school—one completed eight and the other nine grades. Six respondents graduated 12 grades of high school, and four of them had also obtained vocational training.

Three research participants were married and had a family. Two of them had disengaged from prostitution, and one was still engaged. Five had a cohabitant, and one of them continues living

with a partner till now. The summarised information about the research participants appears in Appendices 3 (Tables 1–3) and 4 (Tables 1–14).

5.2. Understanding patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution

How can the *specific patterns* in the personal life experiences of women in prostitution be understood and revealed by an analysis of the interviewing process? Zohar & Marshall (2004, 126–127) note that our general *motives*, ordinary *behaviour*, and *culture*, in which our consciousness is immersed, interact with each other. They assert, “Our motives are what drive behaviour, a shift in motives leads to a consequent shift in behaviour (...) that creates and then reflects our culture.” As the authors present a *feedback loop* (see Figure 8), they emphasise the importance of understanding promoted or/and protected changes of interplay which are evolving (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, 127).

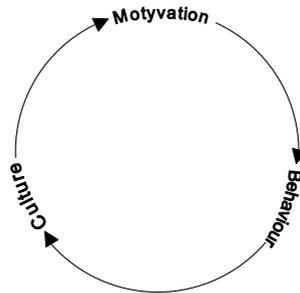


Figure 8. Organisational Shift Dynamics: A feedback loop

Thus the spontaneous expressions, phrases or concepts used by women in prostitution about their subjective experiences (feelings, emotions, assurances, knowledge, incidences or trials) predominated in their language, as they were telling their own life stories that constituted their patterns of expressing and perceiving. Also descriptive

findings and heuristics revealing inductive content analysis became known throughout the relationships with these women during interviews, informal communications or the observation process.

Regarding the social cognitive theory, Bandura (1986, 18) states, “Behaviour, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other.” I combined these ideas taking *cognitive*, *behaviour* and *environment-culture* factors as I was analysing the personal experiences of women in prostitution for this study (see Figure 9).

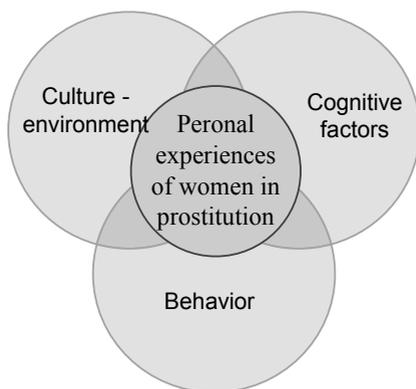


Figure 9. Interaction of different factors in the personal experiences of women in prostitution

Shulman (1992, 3) also develops “some of the central ideas” of *the interactional model* of social work practice, where a client participates in “a dynamic interaction with many important social systems”. The author emphasises the importance of *relationships* “between people and their social surround”, the *obstacles* that “can block” them and “the client’s *strength for changes*”. Thus a representation of the subjective experiences of women in prostitution, of the self-in-the-world, was revealed by *obstacles*, *relationships* and *resources*, which disclosed the women’s life stories. That involved an unfolding of internal *cognitive* and external *behavioural* factors interplaying in the *environmental-cultural* context. The intent was to discover which of these

findings, which I called *heuristics*, were initiating changes to get them to disengage from prostitution or not disengage or, in other words, to discover how the different determinants are interdependent and how they manifest. These women, having internalised what they had outlived, experienced and/or perceived in their life events and externalised by *being-there* and *being-with* me during our interviews, conversations or interpersonal relationships. The women in prostitution conveyed their perceptions about their personal experiences in life, as the women understood them, through the processes of their own subjective interpretations. Thus I examined what and how *obstacles* or *difficulties*, which women in prostitution faced, and *relationships and resources* varied throughout their personal experiences in the specific context of their life's events. Additionally I looked at how the aforementioned determinants stand out, are evolving and interlink in the contexts of their life's experience *through their traumatic experiences, making a choice and seeking help*.

In this study, the *existential* approach is merged with the *heuristic* research strategy and its ideas (Gigerenzer & Brighton, 2009; Moustakas, 1990; Tyson, 1995; Tyson McCrea & Bulanda, 2010). The integration of two theories, the *social cognitive* (Bandura, 1986) and *trauma* (Herman, 1997), helped to comprehend and explain the cognitive, behavioural and cultural-environmental factors that were highlighted in the personal experiences of women in prostitution. These revealed their traumatic events as well as generalised and presented its dialectic. Alterations of consciousness, called “double-think”, describe and explain the spectrum of personal interactions with or adaptations to these events. My in-depth exploration of the heuristics of the personal experiences of the research participants and the way they made sense of their own worldview was grounded on trauma theory and its main *complex post-traumatic stress disorder* aspects it's developed (Herman 1997, 121). The reason for such a merger is both to support the alternatives of social work practice and to encourage a broader and more holistic orientation towards practical social work with victims of prostitution or human trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes. Six phases of the *heuristics* process, “initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination,

explication and creative synthesis” helped gain a deeper understanding, as Moustakas (1990, 19) says, of the “nature, roots, meanings and essences” of the personal experiences of women in prostitution. That also stimulated self-reflection, self-dialogue, self-search and discovery about the research question and the problem in me. Thus, in this study, I not only presented the attitudes of others towards these women but also my own view as well. I sought to discover and highlight the ambiguities and contradictions of “new facts” about the personal experiences of women in prostitution. In accordance with some of the ideas of Tyson (1995), it was important to reveal “how they understand themselves” and “how they are understood by other” and to formulate “new solutions for social work problems” (Tyson, 1995, 473–474).

As grounded by the *existential* approach and four existential dimensions, or what van Deurzen-Smith (1997, 138) called “ontodynamics”, everyone is involved in “a four-dimensional force field at all times”. The author notes that the truth about a person’s life is more multifaceted than we imagine or sometimes see it. Thus it was important to me first to find out how much women were affected by physical or biological forces, such as health, poverty, safety and the like. Secondly, what and how significant were the social or cultural surroundings in the choices these women made, and how did this relate with their choices? Thirdly, how did they manage to adapt to their personal and distinctive understanding of reality processes? Finally everybody is interconnected with all-inclusive significant structures through relationships by which the world is accepted and meaning is given to it on a spiritual level. I considered that there is a link among all these dimensions, and it is important to distinguish the explicit as well implicit references in these different contexts throughout these women’s relationships or interactions with the world, if only for the purposes of certainty (see Figure 10).

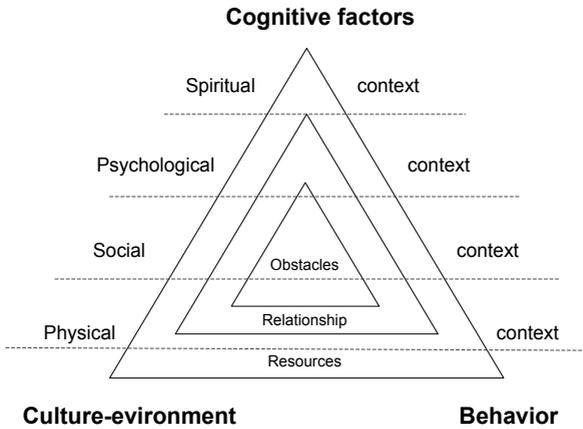


Figure 10. The different contexts for analysing the personal experiences of women in prostitution

This approach helped me to comprehend the personal experiences of women in prostitution more deeply and precisely and to penetrate the *specific patterns* in the different contexts of their lives.

I sought to analyse the data from the stories of personal experiences of women in prostitution within the specific contexts of their lives by grounding them on the *heuristic explicative content analysis* procedure. The *specific patterns* I revealed through these women’s “coherent expressions” were disclosed by inductive category-subcategory development. The procedure of *heuristic explicative content analysis*, based on the ideas of Patton (2002), Mayring (2000), Flick (1989) and Moustakas (1990) are presented next.

5.3. Process of heuristic content analysis

Heuristic content analysis (HCA) as a strategy for data analysis is used to refer to the “data reduction and sense-making effort” that, according to Patton (2002, 453), “takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings”. Heuristic content analysis enabled discerning the essential features

of the studied phenomenon and its trends and biases. Heuristic content analysis is used to reveal, determine and emphasise whether some potentially sensitive issues in the life stories of women in prostitution manifest in their personal experiences from childhood to when these women became victims, later made their choices and sought help. I generated biases according to the holistic viewpoint on the personal experiences of women in prostitution by using content analysis. I developed a set of coding categories for the heuristic content analysis determining revealed patterns characterising the personal experiences of women in prostitution. An examination of the personal experiences of women in prostitution over time, i.e., over their childhood, adolescence and adulthood, yielded some broad types of heuristic research designs. Accordingly the in-depth interview and/or letters that each research participant provided were coded as implementing the following heuristic design: *experiencing trauma, making a choice* and *seeking help*. The *research steps* are presented below (see Figure 11). The *heuristic content analysis* procedure model is presented later (see Figure 12).

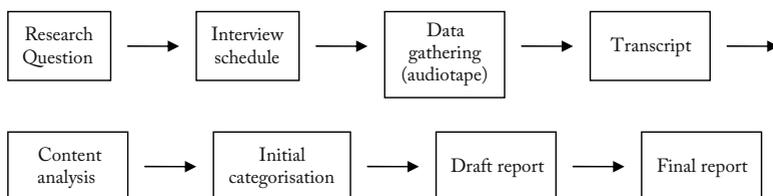


Figure 11. Research steps

Step 1. *Defining the problem, discovering the question and gathering the data.* The heuristic research process necessarily contains the *initial engagement*, which is meant for discovering the research topic and question through self-searching and self-dialogues. Such knowledge was derived through “tacit, intuitive or observed phenomena” by entering “fully into the topic” that clarified the topic more and illuminated “the terms of the question” (Moustakas, 1990, 27). During the next phase, *immersion*, “anything connected with the question (...) people, places, meetings, readings [my practical psycho-social work with

clients], (...) pursuing intuitive clues or hunches (...) [became] raw material” (Moustakas, 1990, 28). The data was gathered by the answers to one question after another in the interview administered to each woman in prostitution, letters and notes from observations compiled into a researcher’s diary. Later only those parts of the data were selected that were relevant for answering the research question (Myring, 2000).

Step 2. *Organising data for the heuristic content analysis.* The *immersion* process was a continuation of self-searching, as every story was read repeatedly. Meanwhile I endeavoured to obtain “a sense of the whole” experience (Tesch, 1990; in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, 1279) by the specific moments in the women’s lives and “to determine what’s significant” (Patton, 2002, 463). The *incubation* process enabled growth of my tacit or intuitive understanding about the question and led to seeing things in new ways that revealed, as Moustakas (1990, 29) says, [the] “additional qualities of the phenomenon or a vision of its unity”. That facilitated my retreat “from the intense, determined focus on the [research] question” (Moustakas, 1990, 28) and encouraged “the first cut” of organised data into areas of focus or topics. That was made by reading all the data and making comments (see the end of Algé’s interview text excerpt).

Algé’s interview text excerpt

Algé

1. T: How were you sold?

A: I left with him through, as it’s said, a few friends, because they made the offer to me. // So I’d go to work that waitress or bartender’s job. // I listened to them if they’re telling the truth, or lying. // And I was told they’re telling the truth, // well and I believed it and I rode out with one who was also a Lithuanian woman. She’s a year younger than I am or two years. // Money was paid for me [exactly two thousand Euros, // cause my cost was more expensive than for Asta. //

THB-prostitution experience/deception/obstacles/trauma/

Sub-step 2.1. *Deriving codes.* Every story by a woman in prostitution was named by her given or (in some cases) my chosen nickname. Later the first letter of the name/nickname was used as the code name* (see Table 6. Coding chart excerpt from respondents).

Table 6. Coding chart excerpt from respondents

#	Respondent Nickname	Code name	Number of question & answer	Number of unit of meaning	Examples
1	Algè	A*	1, 2, 3...	1, 2, 3...	A1.1, A1.2, A1.3...
2	Rima	R	1, 2, 3...	1, 2, 3...	R1.1, R1.2, R1.3...
3	Irma	I	1, 2, 3...	1, 2, 3...	

Note: * The code letter is the first letter of the respondent’s nickname.

The questions and answers put into text were numbered (see Algè’s interview text excerpt).

Sub-step 2.2. *Developing a manageable classification/data chart for some areas of focus or topics.* Comments or notations were made throughout the reading of the entire research data, which helped to focus on some area and to organise the data into topics (see the end of Algè’s interview text excerpt and Figure 12 Area of focus to topic). I separated three distinct and more pronounced contexts of personal experiences of women in prostitution calling them *areas of focus*, which helped to characterise and explain the research question. I named every area of focus as follows: *experiencing trauma* references from the past of women in prostitution during their childhood and adolescence, *making a choice* references later life experiences and *seeking help* is the last one. *Area of focus* is a specific, exceptional part of the text that revealed a personal experience of a woman in prostitution in the context of her life.

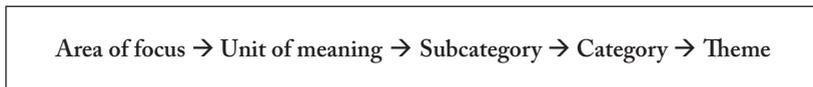


Figure 12. Area of focus to topic

Sub-step 2.3. *Developing a unit of analysis.* The answers of the respondents often contained several meanings, which I split up into *units of meaning*. *Meaningful units* encompassed phrases, sentences or, in some cases, paragraphs that highlighted explicit as well as implicit references or “coherent expressions” about the personal experiences of women in prostitution at different moments of their life. Fragments

of passages that were significant to a research question or some particular related context were highlighted. I formulated these as “analytical” objects, which were “analysed one after the other” (Flick, 1989, 193). These units helped me to characterise *specific patterns* unfolding in the personal experiences of women in prostitution.

The units of meaning were numbered by assigning them a code name (see Table 7. Coding chart of Algė’s interview text excerpt). The numbering of units of meaning was made in a following way: the first number represents the number of the answer and the second, the number after a full stop. This represents a different meaning of an answer, which is the unit of analysis called the *meaningful unit*.

Table 7. Coding chart of Algė’s interview text excerpt

#	Meaningful units	Sub-category	Category	Code
1	<i>Aš su juo išvažiavau per savo, kaip sakant, kelis draugus, nes jie man pasiūlė</i> [I left with him through, as it’s said, a few friends, because they made the offer to me].	Entry into prostitution due to friends	Network of human trafficking for prostitution	A2.1
2	<i>Kad aš važiuočiau padavėjos ar barmenės tą darbą dirbti</i> [So I’d go to work that waitress or bartender’s job].	Entry into prostitution due to deception	Network of human trafficking for prostitution	A2.2
3	<i>Aš klausiau jų ar jie tiesą sako, ar meluoja</i> [I listened to them if they’re telling the truth, or lying]./ <i>Ir man pasakė, kad tiesą šneka</i> [And I was told they’re telling the truth], / <i>nu ir aš patikėjau ir aš išvažiavau su viena irgi lietuve. Jinai vienais metais už mane jaunesnė ar dvejis</i> [well and I believed it and I rode out with one who was also a Lithuanian woman. She’s a year younger than I am or two years]./	Entry into prostitution due to deception Careless/false confidence Inability to assess the situation	Network of human trafficking for prostitution Experience of trauma Obstacles	A2.3 A2.4 A2.5
4	<i>Už mane buvo sumokėta</i> [sumokėta hygiai du tūkstančiai eurų] [Money was paid for me [exactly two thousand Euros]./ <i>nes aš brangiau kainavau negu Asta</i> [cause my cost was more expensive than for Asta]./	Sold into prostitution Distorted perception of self/ own ego	Network of human trafficking for prostitution Experience of trauma	A2.6 A2.7

Step 3. Developing the labelling scheme. During the *illumination* period, I clarified and diffused ambiguous or contradictory passages by involving contextual material. The *illumination* process allowed

me to percept the essence and wholeness of a personal experience of a woman in prostitution and to cluster “qualities into topics inherent in the question”. Thereby “a modification an old understanding, a synthesis of fragmented knowledge” presented new levels of awareness relevant to the research question (Moustakas, 1990, 29–30). Each unit of meaning was conceptualised and labelled as a sub-category. “Indigenous” (Marlow, 2001, 214; in D’Cruz & Jones, 2004, 154) and inductive sub-categories (Mayring, 2000) were developed during the data analysis and classified into the system after “several readings of the data” (Patton, 2002, 463). *Sub-category* means the label of a meaning (feelings, such as loneliness, fear and so on; relationships, such as complicated, violent-prone, poor with mother, strong with father, friends; economic difficulties, such as lack of permanent employment or money, poverty; behaviour, such as drug and/or alcohol use; stigma, such as low self-esteem, labelling the self and so on). This constitutes “the smallest element of material” under analysis (Flick, 1998, 193). Some units of meaning illustrated “more than one” sub-category or category (Patton, 2002, 463; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, 1279). The different sub-categories and categories, depending on the same unit of meaning, were “coloured (...) by different colours” what was helpful later “to track the source” when “pasting different quotes into a topic” (Patton, 2002, 463). The codes, depending on different respondents, were coloured as well (see Table 8. Illustration of clustering – convergences and divergences).

Step 4. From sub-categories to categories. *Sub-categories*, describing different characteristics of units of meaning, were generalised into *categories*. In other words, recurring regularities were sorted into a *category* (e.g., feelings, relationships, trauma, violence, network of human trafficking for prostitution, stigma and so on), a statement that includes a group of sub-categories. Categories answer the question: *What?* The assessment was by two criteria—“*internal homogeneity*” and “*external heterogeneity*” (Patton, 2002, 465):

Criterion 1: “concerns *the extent* to which the data belong in a certain category, which is held together or ‘dovetailed’ in a meaningful way”

Criterion 2: “concerns the extent to which differences among categories are bold and clear”

Step 5. Convergences and divergences. I chose this step in the data analysis as grounded by Patton (2002, 465–466), who was looking for and examining *convergences*—figuring out what things fit together and looking for *recurring regularities* in the data. Trying to discover new knowledge and depth or seeing the entirety of a phenomenon under search, sub-categories with similar aspects or features, i.e., according to Miles & Huberman (1984, 218–220), “which go together and which do not”, were grouped or *clustered*. A phenomenon in this study could be better comprehended “by grouping”. Afterwards I conceptualised objects that have “similar patterns or characteristics” (see Table 8. Illustration of clustering). Later, the verified process of *divergences* was when patterns or categories were “fleshed out”, done by the “processes of extension, making connections among different items” and “proposing new information” (Patton, 2002, 466).

Table 8. Illustration of clustering - looking for convergences and divergences

Subcategory	Category	Cluster	Code
	Economic difficulties		
	No help from relatives (<i>Artimųjų pagalbos nebuvimas</i>)		
No help received from relatives (<i>Artimųjų pagalbos neturėjimas</i>)		A14.4 // M8.4, M8.6, M8.7 // B2.4 // J2.1 // T2.6, T2.8, T6.12, T6.13 // L56.3, L56.4 // V142.5, V142.7, V144.1 // S4.2, S4.3, S4.4, S4.5, S84.6, S90.1, S94.3 // E16.1, E16.4 // D144.46	
	Difficulties with employment (<i>Darbo sunkumai</i>)		
Lack of permanent employment (<i>Neturėjimas pastovaus darbo</i>)		M52.3 // T4.8, T4.9, T6.2 // I8.14	
Job Search (<i>Darbo paieška</i>)		M72.2 // O6.1 // J2.2 // R20.3 // T24.3 // V110.6	
Unsuccessful job search (<i>Nesėkminga darbo paieška</i>)		M4.1 // J14.5 // T16.4, T16.6, T20.1, T24.3	
Low pay (<i>Mažas uždarbis</i>)		O4.3 // J2.3, J14.4 // Z2.2	
	Poverty (<i>Skurdas</i>)		
Insufficient money for life (<i>Neturėjimas pinigų iš ko pragyventi</i>)		M8.5 // J14.5, J58.1 // K14.2, K12.11, K26.2, K26.3 // T4.8, T4.9, T6.2, T6.3, T6.12, T6.13, T8.2, T8.6, T8.8, T22.6, T24.2 // V22.1	
Lack of residence (<i>Neturėjimas gyvenamosios vietos</i>)		A10.2 // M8.3 // R4.1, R6.3, R10.3, R14.3, R16.6 // B18.2 // L56.5 // V32.1V140.2	
Poor, difficult life, poverty (<i>Varganas, sunkus gyvenimas, skurdas</i>)		M8.5 // R10.4, R18.2 // T2.2, T2.6, T4.8, T4.9, T6.2, T6.3, T8.8 // Z2.2Z2.3 // S90.1	
Bank loan (<i>Įsiskolinimų bankui turėjimas</i>)		J52.7, J58.1 // K12.3, K12.7, K12.10, K12.11	

During the *explication* phase, a new level of conscious awareness, the “topics, qualities and components of a topic or question” that occurred in the *illumination* process were examined “in order to understand its various layers of meaning”. This phase allowed me to concentrate on my internal frame of reference and my own experience as well as to elucidate fully “the descriptive qualities and topics that characterise the experience being investigated” or to recognise “new constituents” (Moustakas, 1990, 31). Throughout this phase of the heuristic content analysis process, I explicated the major highlighted components of the personal experiences of women in prostitution. A narrative depiction of three major areas of focus of personal experiences of women in prostitution was formed by applying “verbatim material and examples” (Moustakas, 1990, 32). I also placed myself in the narrative depiction juxtaposing experience of other research participants to mine.

Step 6. Creative synthesis. The final phase of the heuristic content analysis, *creative synthesis*, was achieved by tacit, intuitive and discovered thorough self-search knowledge and experiences that illuminated and explicated the research results. I called them life patterns of women in prostitution and presented them in the summary part of Chapter 6, 7 and 8. The *heuristic content analysis* process of personal experiences of women in prostitution is presented below (see Figure 13).

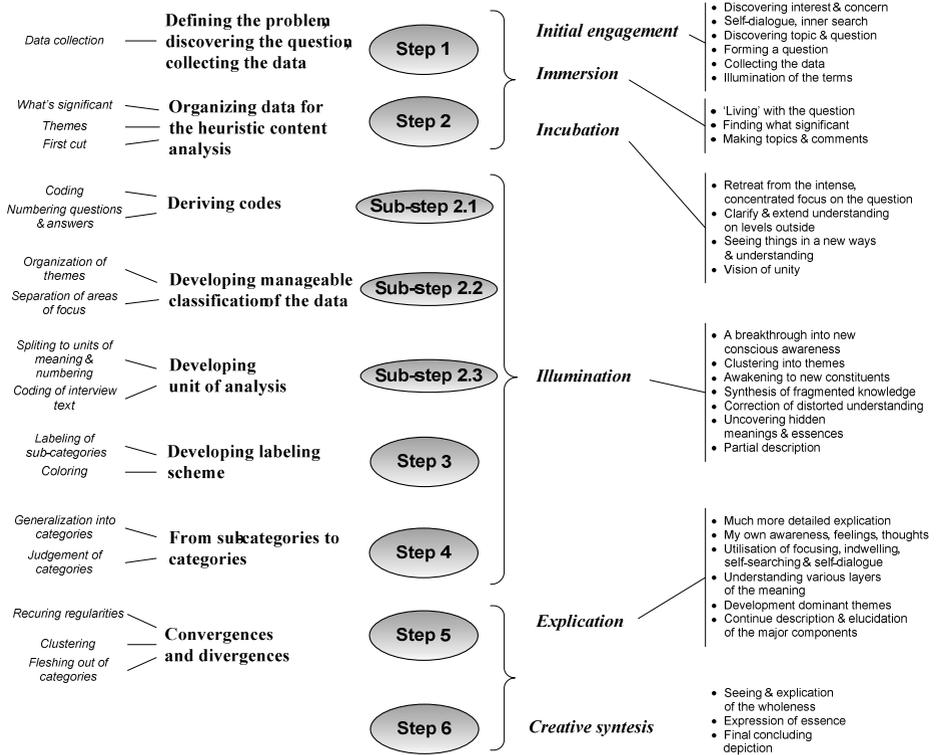


Figure 13. Heuristic content analysis process in the personal experiences of women in prostitution

The data results and interpretations are presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The results and interpretations about the personal experiences of women in prostitution during their *traumatic experience* are presented in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 includes the personal experiences of these women involved in *making a choice*. The last, Chapter 8 presents how these women were *seeking help*.

6. Paradoxes of women in prostitution: Reality of early life

*I've learned that people will forget what you said,
and people will forget what you did, but people will
never forget how you made them feel.*

(Maya Angelou)

6.1. The ongoing past of troubled women into the present

Various social factors, including the socio-cultural context of the locale where a person is born, lives and matures, come into play during personality formation. These factors form a personality's self-perception and self-judgement, create a person's own "I" and affect the ways the "I" responds to the surrounding environment (Berk, 2003; Fromm, 1965; Grigas, 1998; Jacikevičius, 1994; Milašiūnas, 2007; Pečkauskaitė-Šatrijos Ragana, 1998; Pieper Heineman & Pieper, 1999 and 2003; Rogers, 1985). Valickas (2009, 1050–53) claims, as based on Bandura's social cognitive theory, that "the thoughts and actions of most people are social by origin" and that "cognitive processes and configurations are important sources of motives, emotional experiences and actions". The author notes that this theory distinguishes three major modelling sources—the family, subculture and mass media—which enable a person to adopt "new actions, attitudes, behaviour norms or emotional reactions". Moreover, a person creates a life by enacting choices of greatest importance to the self guided by one's own understanding of values, one's own understanding of what is meaningful/meaningless and faith in the foundation of one's own worldview and personal philosophy (Kočiūnas, 2008; van Deurzen, 1997). However, long-lasting, traumatic experiences in childhood, during the especially sensitive

periods of personality development, chop at the roots of personality formation and greatly interfere in its development (Finkelhor and associates, 1986; Gailiené, 2008; Herman, 1997; Karmaza, 2007; Moustakas, 1961; Solomon, Siegel, 2003). In such a case, a person cannot be understood by character, dysfunction type or one or another structure from the perspective of proprium (or individuality) but only by associating the person's life story with specific ways of being in that person's world.

While investigating the life stories of women in prostitution, what become meaningful are their early life experiences, which, in one way or another, influence, form or direct their choices and opportunities in life. Relationships within the family or the immediate surroundings of these women constitute the important sphere for one or another sort of socialisation during childhood or adolescence leading to the creation of their individual "I". Thereby this study first endeavours to answer the following questions: Who were these women in their everyday lives before becoming involved in prostitution? What were their specific *relationships* with significant others? What kinds of *obstacles* did they face during their childhood and adolescence? What *resources* did they have to overcome obstacles? In terms of these questions, the life stories from childhood to the time these women became victims of prostitution distinguished their lack of certain features: safety, well-being, recognition, love, propinquity, autonomy, individuality, mutual understanding and meaningfulness.

This study began with a "narrow", *heuristic context analysis* on women in prostitution by a brief analysis of the convergent and divergent passages from the life experiences both of the women who are still engaged in prostitution and of the women who are now disengaged. The "wide" heuristic context analysis (Flick, 1989, 194) that came later included information outside these passages to elucidate their texts. The findings of different scholars were examined (Bandura, 1986; Finkelhor and associates, 1986; Herman, 1997; Kast, 1998, 2002, 2006; Moustakas, 1961; 1990; Pieper Heineman and Pieper, 1999, 2003; Shulman, 1992; Zohar & Marshall, 2004) for relevancies regarding the *obstacles*, *relationships* and *resources* in

the lives of women in prostitution. The intent was to discover what was initiating changes that could prompt them to disengage from prostitution. Internal – *cognitive* and external – *behavioural* factors unfold throughout and interplay with the *cultural* context of where they lived or what surrounded them. The findings characterising *specific patterns* in the subjective experiences of women in prostitution were examined in a four-dimensional field of forces—the physical, social, psychological and spiritual.

The ways the women who participated in this research engaged in prostitution and the experiences they went through are varied. They include those who had provided and those who are still providing sexual services in the streets and in brothels or by using newspaper ads. They also include the human trafficking victims, topless or strip club dancers and participants in swinger groups. Some of these women's experiences encompassed more than one form of sexual exploitation, e.g., being prostituted internally and trafficked abroad or being prostituted internally and participating in swinger groups and so forth. The life stories of these women could be said to be both very different and very similar, at the same time.

The life stories of women in prostitution presented in this chapter are separated into two parts—one part is on the women who continue to be in the mire of prostitution (five women) and the other, on the women who managed to break the cycle of their sexual exploitation and are no longer engaged in prostitution (ten women). For the data analysis, I controlled for the impact of the women's choice to leave prostitution or to continue. I tried to understand variables that influence women to leave or to stay in prostitution. The analysis of the patterns in the early experiences of women in prostitution begins with the life stories of the women who continue to be victims of prostitution.

6.1.1. “*Condemned to life*”: *Transferring responsibility for one’s own life to others as a survival tactic*

Schopenhauer (2007, 309[7]) depicts, “(...) there are times when children might seem like innocent prisoners, condemned, not to death, but to life, and as yet all unconscious of what their sentence means.” Toma and Zita are young women (Toma is 26 years old, and Zita is 31); however, they have spent a rather large part of their lives in prostitution (10 and 11 years accordingly). As I listened to their early life stories, I could seemingly feel their experiences and the horrors they underwent. More than once I thought about how unenviable the realities in their lives actually were in which their “*significant others*”, as coined by Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 167), had behaved most cruelly with them.

When Zita was four years old, her parents were killed, leaving her an orphan. Her grandmother agreed to raise her. Although the grandmother loved the little girl, according to Zita, they always *experienced poverty* and scarcity: “Grandma did not work. She only got disability and some money for me. Lovely clothes, toys—we only got them from charity, and that was rarely” (Z2.2).⁶⁵ Zita rushed to get married before reaching adulthood since she felt *tension, anxiety and fear* about losing her grandmother who was her only source of support. As Zita recalls, “I was in a hurry, because grandma got sick, and I was afraid, she’d die, and I’d be left alone so, as soon as I had an offer, I agreed to get married” (Z4.2). As Kast (2006, 43) claims, fear manifesting as unpleasantly experienced, increasing agitation, a sense of the unreal and tension overcome a person who senses a complex, multi-faceted situation of dangers. Moreover experiences that are incomprehensible to a person due to an unclear end to the situation, due to the threat of being isolated from others and due to the necessity for evaluating one’s own life or making independent decisions arouse a variety of fears and increase inner suffering thereby influencing that person’s behaviour significantly (Horney, 1964). Thus, by looking for security and a faster way to free herself

65. See Appendix 5, “Conventional Symbols Used for Interview Transcript Citations”, for this and all the other respondent citations.

from the anxiety enveloping her that involved “being afraid that I’d be left alone”, Zita rushes to get married and, thereby, *hands over the responsibility for her life to others*. Hereafter the woman continues to suffer painful experiences. Her pregnancy results in a stillbirth, and as Zita says, “From that day onward I’d call my life hell” (Z6.4). Spielberg (1979) assures that the reactions of a person to specific situations in life are highly dependent on the way he/she comprehends and interprets those life’s events.

Later the woman had to *experience* different types of *abuse*, including *sexual abuse, discrimination, stigmatisation and a demeaning attitude towards her* in her family, not only from her husband but also from his friends. Painful experiences constantly come to her mind reminding her of words condemning her:

You good-for-nothing, you can’t even have a baby, what kind of a woman are you, you’re empty (Z8.5).

(...) I was considered trash. I was jeered at in all kinds of ways, beaten, torn up (Z16.1).

(...) That evening he was fouling me himself and urging his friends to act that way, and then the morning after he pounded on me and called me a whore (Z18.4).

(...) My husband threw me out of the house (Z18.3).

As such the woman who is considered “trash”, “good-for-nothing” and “empty” by others seemingly adjusts submissively to the existing situation in life along with the “devaluated social identity” that others cast upon her (Crocker, Major, and Steele, 1998, 505). Remembering this she says, “It hurt a lot to listen to that. But I suffered, because I didn’t have where to put myself” (Z10.1). Then, thinking about herself, she says, “If only I hadn’t been so dumb...” (Z24.2). Herman (1997, 42) noticed that, for a person who has experienced a traumatising event, “any sort of form of resistance” could seem “futile”, thusly dragging him/her down “into a state of surrender. The system of self-defence shuts down entirely. The helpless person escapes from her situation not by acting in the real world but rather by altering her state of consciousness.” Rothschild (2003, 89) asserts that traumatic events “can greatly influence one’s self-concept” and,

when a person perceives him/herself as a victim, this increases his/her “vulnerability to further victimisation” due to having missed “the tools (reactions and resources) he/she needs to prevent it”. Even now the woman remembers the horror of the abuse she experienced and her “capitulation” like a terrible nightmare: “Imagine what I had to suffer, when the four raped me, did their thing, whatever they wanted. It was horrible” (Z18.1). In time, once the painful relationship with the person close to her became dangerous, Zita broke it off claiming, “I’m not interested in what happens to him” (Z22.1). When a situation causes great anxiety, a person seemingly “axes” the experience itself and withdraws into the self, away from relationships with others. Nonetheless, this is something that not only fails to lessen tension but, most likely, “disallows experiencing the relationship along with self respect” (Zbarauskaitė, 2008, 178–179).

Zita believes that the traumatic events she experienced, especially the last one of violent sexual abuse, opened the door to where she is now, into what she ironically refers to as her “career”: “After that happening something changed in me ... and I started my ‘career’” (Z18.1-5). As van der Kolk (2003, 168) observes, various traumatic events “confront people with such horror and threat that it may temporarily or permanently alter their capacity to cope, their perception of biological threat, and their self-concept”. Alekseičikas (1980) also notices that deep, spiritual shake-ups and overly great tension can cause a sense of depersonalisation whereupon a person feels as if lost, as if the world has distanced. Such a person detaches from the external world and, that way, protects him/herself from inner demands; however, such a state of being could disrupt his/her further endeavours. Thus, as Zita experiences multi-faceted, long-term, traumatic events in her life and tries to protect herself from repeated pain, she attempts to change the direction of her life by relying on the resources she has at the time. Bandura (1986, 39) asserts that “judgments regarding environmental factors enter into the choice of particular courses of action from among possible alternatives”. Bandura also accents that freedom is achieved through “thought, using skills at one’s command, and other tools of self-influence which choice of action requires”, including “self-generated influences as a

contributing factor". The causality of an action also encompasses a person's responsibility, at least in part, even if the past has predestined that person's behaviour. Therefore, as Bandura tells it (1986, 39–41), "behaviour is determined by a multiauthored influence", i.e., from "a host of personal determinants", inborn or acquired opportunities, perceptions, developed skills and means of internal influences, all of which are essentially, purposefully acquired skills, as well as from external circumstances. The reasons that prompted Zita to break off the relationships that had traumatised her earlier by the unbearable abuse in her family and to find the strength to respond to the anxiety within her can only be assumed. Spielberger (1979, 72), who analysed stress and anxiety, claims that people experiencing great stress and anxiety attempt to lessen it with psychological defence mechanisms. This author states that a person can reduce a "state of anxiety (...) by banishing threatening stimuli from the conscious mind" or by "distorting (...) perception of a potentially harmful situation so they are considered less threatening". Zita's psychological defence to banish the experience of *anxiety* and stress is her effort to identify with the aggressor as she adopts the position of the torturer: "I'll get even the same way" (Z24.4). However, the turn she takes in her life or, as she says, her "career" testifies about the inefficient choice of strategy she makes to banish stress. Meanwhile, as Spielberger (1979, 73) writes, "The underlying problems that caused anxiety remain unchanged." Zita's own words confirm this: "The farther I go, the harder it gets. I usually pound one down, to be braver. I don't take drugs. Just once in a while, but I'm not sitting on a needle" (Z28.10-11). As van der Kolk (2003, 168) notices, the consequences of an experienced trauma vary from breakdowns in a person's psychological functioning to the "greater risk of developing alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, attempting suicide, smoking" and having a large number of sexual partners, which causes sexually transmitted diseases. Furthermore, the risk increases of developing various physical maladies such as "obesity, ischemic heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, skeletal fractures, hepatitis, stroke, diabetes and liver disease". Obviously, when Zita says, "I'm not sitting on a needle", it shows that she does not recognise her dependency on narcotics and

alcohol, which she uses merely “to be braver”. However, her denial of the existing situation only takes her farther from overcoming her traumatising experiences.

Toma, similarly to Zita, also lost her father early in life, when she was only eight years old. Although, unlike Zita, she did grow up in a *family*, its environment involved continual drinking parties, arguments and conflicts. According to Toma, her father’s endless imbibing of alcohol related to his death, and his “cause of death—long time drunkenness” (T2.4). Toma remembers that, after her father’s death, her *mother started drinking all the more and did not care for the children* growing up in the family. Toma relates, “Parties wouldn’t end for weeks, mother changed boyfriends like socks, until she started living with one of her shot glass buddies (T2.6). The research by Kashani and Allan (1998) about the impact of family violence on children and adolescents points out that the link between parental alcohol abuse and family violence is fairly strong. Later the “so-called” stepfather (researcher note: the mother never married this man) appeared in the family and *sexually abused* the girl. Certain studies reveal that, when a stepfather appears in a family, the mother-child relationship, their interactions of closeness and warmth and the mother’s involvement with and care for the child worsen (Day and Acock, 2004; McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994). Still other studies reveal that a mother’s repartnering involving cohabitation has negative effects on the mother-child relationship (King, 2009). Zita’s experience bears testimony that, no matter how complicated her interrelationship was with her mother, once her mother’s live-in partner showed up, it became all the more complicated. Studies by Daly and Wilson (1980, 282) indicate that the likelihood of child abuse noticeably increases when children are “living with one natural and one stepparent”. Russell (1984) maintains that a lack of bonding between a stepfather and stepdaughter may influence abuse rates. As for relating the sexual abuse by the mother’s cohabitant, Toma, in her opinion, had no one to tell: “Mother cared nothing about such things, and going to anybody else I didn’t dare, because stepfather was a very angry man” (T4.3). The experience of Toma substantiates the statement that molested women

have a “more distant relationship with their mothers” (Finkelhor and Baron, 1986, 74–77). Furthermore, by being “emotionally distant or unaffectionate” with their mothers, these women are at “at much higher risk” (Finkelhor, 1984, 26). When poor relationships predominate in a family, a child growing up in it is “at higher risk” and more “vulnerable”, “amenable” and “less able to stand up for herself”. Such a child can be “more afraid to tell her parents about the abuse” because she does not expect any support from them. Goodwin (1990, 60) notes, “(...) multiple motives may contribute to the wish for continued involvement with the family.” It may be “the (sometimes unconscious) perception of the severity of the parent’s pathology and realistic concerns” about the parent’s “psychosis”, “a realisation that confrontation of the father is a direct way to challenge the entire array of fears and phobias related to victimization” and a realisation about parents being able “to unleash painful and terrible grief”. Toma constantly experiences *fear, non-existence of a relationship with mother* and temper tantrums by the stepfather manifesting for no reason, as she says, “He’d beat me too, for that he didn’t need reasons” (T4.5). That and the never-ending sexual harassment along with the experienced *physical and psychological abuse* forced Toma to hide everything and suffer in silence. In the young woman’s opinion, her and her older brother’s “so-called stepfather did not love and even hated” them (T2.7). Meanwhile “with little brother as much mother, as much stepfather practically gave no care, because alcohol was a lot more important to them than a child” (T2.8). Being unable to bear the isolation, feeling bad within her family life and lacking the nearness, attention and love from the persons close to her, especially from her mother, she tried to show her mother what she wanted to tell her by her behaviour of *running away from home several times*. This way Toma was trying to get her mother’s attention in the hope that “maybe something would change” (T6.4), maybe that way she would be noticed. However, according to the girl, “Nothing changed, maybe it even got worse... Mother... didn’t even notice... didn’t even ask, me to come back home” (T6.5–6). Moustakas (1961, 38) asserts, “(...) the parents’ presence (...) contributes positively to the child’s sense of security and confidence (...), enables him to

continue to be an individual with unique interests and unique ways". In other words, parents "help the child to continue to grow (...), but when the child is abandoned", according to this author, "his terror lives inside". The "terror living inside" Toma directed her to where she is now: "I was worried about getting money for bread and for my little brother, so I could buy something" (T8.8). Research has also shown that alcohol abuse by parents and violence in the family strongly associates with child neglect, consequently manifesting in a child's maltreatment (English, 1998). Jovaiša (2009) claims that concord between the parents, a non-existence of anger, coarseness and outbreaks of violence in the family along with care expressed for one another destine a child's firm, moral and social maturation.

Both women, formerly (and even now) long-term victims of manifold violence, who lived through terror, rage, heartbreak, hopelessness, powerlessness, worthlessness, havoc, constant fear, anxiety, loneliness and a stigmatising sense of devaluation, lacked effective self-protection. As Herman describes (1997, 119), persons who formerly or currently experienced or are now experiencing long-term, multi-repetitive traumatising experiences characteristically have a "complex cluster of symptoms" that exhausts them. Herman names this, a "*complex post-traumatic stress disorder*". Therefore, according to her, "Survivors of prolonged abuse develop characteristic personality changes (...), deformations of relatedness and identity, problems with relationships (...)" and an inclination "to repeated harm, both self-inflicted and at the hands of others." Thereby Toma and Zita are seemingly attempting to protect themselves, to change or, at least, temporarily regulate their emotional states and ease their unbearable emotional pain and constant dysphoria. They continue selecting the self-destructive, masked methods of the socially adapted, deceitful "I" as if "agreeing" to be, as Schopenhauer (2007) coined, "condemned to life".

6.1.2. *“If only I’d have grown up in a normal family”: A stranger in one’s own home*

Kotryna, Diana, and Bronė are three other women who, the same as Zita and Toma, are still engaged in being prostituted. The way their present lives have unfolded is something they *associate with their former environment and the means of upbringing* during their childhoods and adolescence:

When I moved into the ‘common flat’ {transl. note: direct translation for living quarters, usually a room, with shared kitchen, toilet and bath}, that’s when it all started with the other girls, who were already into doing it (D192.4).

If the means of bringing us up had been different, then, I think, even I’d have been different (B14.3).

I simply relaxed. The booze, good times, drugs, no lack of guys either (...) contributing to it was that company and probably the parties (K8.4–K12.1).

As Bandura (1986, 33–34) professes, “People give direction to their lives” by employing standards of values and internal judgements, “emotional ties” and “some of the personal resources” for contacting and upholding their relationships and ties. Nonetheless, in the opinion of this scholar, the types of changes that will be caused by fortuitous encounters and their influences are not only determined by the personal characteristics of a person, but the social environments and the people living within them “make some types of intersects more probable than others”. Furthermore Milašiūnas (2007, 207) tells us, “How we felt in childhood determines the way we feel in today’s world” or, put another way, it is the kinds of “internal operating models” and attitudes formed as a consequence of the relationships with one’s intimates and other persons. Nonetheless, a new experience can change certain attitudes from childhood, even though it is not possible to change them all. How strongly the attitudes from childhood become incorporated also depends on later “inner world stability”. The effort to protect the inner operating models and to prevent an onslaught of “the threat of inner instability” causes a seemingly “unconscious” effort to create “the kind of external reality that better corresponds with the inner one”. Thus the fact that Kotryna, Diana and Bronė, the

same as Zita and Toma, repeatedly fall into situations akin to their experiences in childhood and adolescence, which seemingly “sooth” the attitudes they formed earlier, show how strongly these attitudes are entrenched. These women may not fully understand their “choice”, their “relaxation”; however, they seem to “unconsciously” grasp that the non-existence of safe relationships in their immediate surroundings in childhood appear “to have chosen” their later “appropriate” interactions or ways of reacting to situations that arise presently. Therefore it is no mere happenstance that Kotryna, Diana and Bronè associated their present with the inappropriate ways of upbringing in childhood and the environment that continues to attract them.

The early life experiences, in childhood and adolescence, of all three women, Kotryna, Diana and Bronè, are different except that neither one of them *grew up in full nuclear families*. Bronè and Diana grew up in institutional care homes for children. According to Bronè, mother “simply lost” her (B2.2). Diana’s parents did not raise her either: “Father disowned me from two years old ... didn’t recognise me, while mama gave me up completely, because her rights were restricted” (D164.1-2). Meanwhile Kotryna’s mother raised her and her four brothers and sisters alone. The performed investigations revealed that the loss of a birthparent negatively affects the further life of a child by forming a lesser sense of self-worth, depressive moods, uncertainty in his/her life and confused feelings, thoughts or behaviours (Brodzinsky, Schechter and Henig, 1992; Brodzinsky, Smith and Brodzinsky, 1998; Smith and Brodzinsky, 2002). Finkelhor and Baron (1986, 73) point out seven studies (by Bagley and Ramsay [in press]; Finkelhor, 1984; Fromuth, 1983; Herman and Hirschman, 1981; Miller, 1976; Peters, 1984; Russell, 1986), which “have found higher vulnerability to sexual abuse among women who had lived without their mothers or fathers at some time during childhood.” Therefore the belief Bronè holds is grounded: If she had “grown up in a normal family”, then “life would have turned in a different direction” (B2.4).

As Pieper Heineman and Pieper (2003, 13) note, “We are all born to love whatever care we get and to want more of it.” From the time she was little, Bronè, who grew up in a care home for children, holds the opinion that the employees at that home simply

“*greatly hated*” the children living there and “considered them psychos” (B2.13). Bronè testifies about the stigma she experienced and the negative attitudes directed not only at her but also at all the other children growing up there that negatively affected her own self appraisal. A stigmatised person who experiences rejection or receives negative feedback from others may attribute that not as a shortcoming of one’s own negativity but as the prejudice of others, thus protecting his/her self-esteem (Hebl, Tickle and Heatherton, 2000). With the feelings she continues to have to this day of anger, disappointment, hurt and hunger for a close relationship, she recalls, “Growing up there, I never experienced either love or warmth” (B2.10). Since the order of things there was something she “would not wish on anyone”; it “was cruel and iron-hard” (B2.5) and “life was a nightmare” (B6.2). Back then Bronè had lived through feelings of *neglect, alienation and loneliness*, which have caused her nothing but pain and suffering and which have been prompting her to this day to seek the sorts of relationships with others that cause, as Moustakas (1961, 30) puts it, “betraying” [her own] “individuality” and submerging herself “in dependency relations”.

Researchers who have tested/studied and compared the physical, psychological and social functioning of children and adolescents, aged 6–17 years, living in institutional care homes and in community homes, have found that children in care homes had “poorer general health and more frequently exhibited aggressive, immature, and delinquent behaviour”. They also more frequently experienced feelings of anxiety and depression, had poorer self-esteem and faced more limitations in daily activities due to emotional, behavioural and physical health problems than did the children living in the community (Carbone, Sawyer, Searle and Robinson, 2007, 1164). Pearce and Pezzot-Pearce (2001, 26) note that even foster parents in a foster home may “personalize the child’s behavior” (which often appears in a child as “pre-existing stress”) thusly reflecting “their inadequacy as caregivers”. The inner conflicts and tensions of caregivers become clear displays of “inappropriate expressions of anger to the child and poor child management strategies” which, consequently, can result in “abused or neglected” children. The authors

emphasise that “harmful child management strategies” are related to “an escalation of the child’s negative behavior and heightened feelings of inadequacy in the foster parents”. As such “the child’s internal representation of others” is reinforced “as dangerous and untrustworthy and of the self as unlovable”, which decreases the likelihood of their success in the future. The behaviours of the caretakers at the care home where Bronė lived were seemingly obviously that they did not respond to needs of importance to her, which would assure security, trust of others and assistance in living through the feelings she experiences. Berger and Luckmann (1991, 150) observe that a child’s initial socialisation, as an “ontogenetic process”, begins from birth and continues throughout an individual life pulling him “into the objective world of a society”. According to these authors, initial socialisation is specifically the meaningful foundation laid in a person’s life for later adopting what is transmitted and interacting and identifying with significant *others* by adopting the roles and views of those significant *others*. That way the world can be strongly entrenched into a person’s consciousness.

I sensed that Bronė held a great distance between us by her unwillingness to dig more deeply into the details of life. She had an angry tone of voice and she would rush to answer what I had asked and doing so quite formally during the entire time of our talk. Such behaviour by her seemed to substantiate the observation by Zohar and Marshall (2004, 50) that “angry people seldom feel like cooperating” and, when they are feeling badly, they are likely to “blame someone or something for that feeling.” Čaplinskas and Mårdh (2001) also claim that it is difficult to find respondents working in prostitution and motivate them to participate in research, because such women are afraid of revealing their own (or maybe their procurer’s or client’s) identity. Bronė, as though sensing my bewilderment and the tension hanging in the air during our talk, notices in justification of herself: “As a teenager I was aggressive, nasty, rough. Even now my character is complicated” (B14.1-2). I felt as though some still impassable wall divided Bronė and me. This bothered me no less than it did her. To overcome this, we would need more than one meeting. At times it would seem as though she was behaving

just as coldly with me as she does with her clients. I would feel as if I was the one who was “buying” the services she was “selling”. Aside from the sensed anger, restlessness and a certain sort of aggression, it seemed as if she had no other feelings. This was different from the talks with Diana or Kotryna, who seemed to me were wanting to share their experiences and talk things out, even though it was not easy for them to do so. I remember Diana would stop talking often and cover her face with her hands saying, “*Oh, I’m so ashamed*” (D152.1). Zbarauskaitė (2008, 158) asserts that a sense of shame “protects the inner, private sphere”, advises “what can be shown and what is better left to oneself” and restrains a person, once the person senses his/her certain behaviour or desire “could be unsuitable”. This is what indicates the difference between the self and another person.

Diana and Kotryna live alone at this time. It is important for Bronė to have another person around, because she is *afraid and she does not believe in her own abilities to live independently, the same way she had not believed in them earlier*. She indicates this by saying, “I felt that he’d still take care of me, because I wouldn’t be able to do it myself” (B30.5). Such behaviour by a woman who is becoming more dependent and less independent manifests as the incorporation of “unconstructive actions that do not benefit self-adaptation” (Pukinskaitė, Maskalkova, 2009). In other words, it is the psychological defence brought on by the subconscious turning back, seemingly to some earlier level, an earlier stage of development of emotional adaptation. This way psychological defence helps in satisfying Bronė’s wish for coping with her inner conflicts and in her adjusting psychosocially. Kast (2006) claims a person must first comprehend fear to overcome it. According to her, this is the only way possible to polemicise threats leading to fear. Obviously Bronė has not understood her own fears completely until now and, therefore, she chooses the kind of friends in life who not only consider her unimportant but who even exploit her. Sartre (2009, 10) provides the testimony of Antoine Rokantena regarding the meaning of recognising fear in a person’s life in his own words, “If I knew what frightened me, it would already be a big step forward.” Therefore, by being afraid that she would not be capable of living independently,

Broné becomes more and more dependent on others. This is the reason she constantly changes her cohabitant or, as she also refers to such a man in her life, her “friend”, “job-provider” or “panderer”. She says, “With my earlier panderer I don’t associate now, there’s another one” (B38.1) who presumably “takes care” of her. Nevertheless, it is clear that, as far as the so-called “friend” is concerned, Broné is merely an *object for satisfying one’s own needs*: “Everything with the ex was over, when he sold me to a whorehouse in another country” (B38.2). In childhood Broné never satisfied her ongoing *need for safety and close relationships* after she lost one of her “care-takers”, as she calls them. This need pushes her again to look for others who will be capable of taking care of her, as she understands it, and will assure close relationships. This way helps her assuage the fear she constantly experiences. Pieper, Heineman and Pieper (2003, 9) emphasised several “ways” by which people who are *addicted to unhappiness* “prevent themselves from being the person they want to be” or “from having the life they want to have”. According to these authors, a person’s state of being an *addict to unhappiness* appears when he/she is “consciously seeking only happiness, but unknowingly requiring some degree of discomfort to maintain a sense of inner balance” (Pieper, Heineman and Pieper (2003, 231).

Diana, differently than Broné, remembers experiencing *help, concern and love from her grandmother*: “Later my granny, my mother’s mother helped, because she raised us like we were her own children” (D162.3). (...) “Granny loved me very much” (D172.1). (...) “She’d go to the school, did the duties parents do. And she’d talk with the teachers. She’d go to the parents’ meetings” (D178.7-8). She had experienced her grandmother’s concern and care, or as she said, “That she’d come over, watch, stay, at times, spend the night (...) I liked it, her being at the place, at home” (D178.4-6). Despite this the woman always *missed having mother*: “I missed mama all the time” (D180.3). Bowlby (1982, xxvii) holds to an essential principle when discussing the relationship between a child and mother by stating, “What is believed to be essential for mental health is that the infant and the young child should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his mother in which both find

satisfaction and enjoyment". He claims, based on empirical observations data, that "the young child's hunger for his mother's love and presence is as great as his hunger for food" (Bowlby, 1982, xxix). As we spoke with Diana about mother, often emotion overcame her, and she would quiet down and go into deep thought. There were times during our talks when it was obvious it would not take much more before she would start crying. Another thing indicating that Diana "*misses mama*" is that, now that she's pregnant, she intends to name her child after her mother "to remember* mama" (D180.7).

Diana's *relationship with father* has a dual nature. Even though, according to her, her father, the same as her mother, rejected her when she was little, she says, "I loved him more, than mama" (D182.2). Despite this she also says, "I associated more with mama" (D182.1). However, now Diana remembers with pain the *abuse she experienced* from *her father* and his *cohabitant*, her so-called "*stepmother*": "She'd really pound on me (...) along with father, both together" (D188.3). Another thing that caused Diana pain, especially in childhood, was that her father lived with another woman. Certain studies have revealed that girls with non-resident fathers have weaker bonds than boys do and are particularly likely to disengage from their families (Hetherington et al., 1998). Additionally non-resident father involvement and parent-child closeness "tend to decline during adolescence", and this causes girls [to] "be particularly at risk of not being close" to them (King, 2006; King, 2002; King et al., 2004). In Diana's opinion, she did not like her father's woman, because she "took mother's place" (D186.1). That was specifically the reason why, as Diana says, *the contacts and associations with father were episodic*. "We don't associate and then we associate again." She explained, "I'd try to keep in contact with him, but, when I didn't like his women, who used to be with him, well then we wouldn't associate" (D184.4). According to Diana, the relationship with her father has not changed, not even now. She tries to keep up the relationship with her brother and father, the last remaining members of her family; however, she refers to father as "an actor" and says, "The last time he, father, promised to call and go somewhere, but he didn't call" (D184.3).

To Diana as much as to Bronė, life in institutional care homes for children or “internment” homes⁶⁶ brings to mind many more painful memories about hurt and anger than about experienced care, security, love and trust in others. Bronė is convinced that others would have a hard time believing and understanding what she had to go through living there: “Whoever I tell no one believes it. They say, I made it up. But I didn’t make up anything, it’s the real truth” (B10.1). Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 160–161) state, “*All healing occurs in relationships*” and “to be *healed* means to acquire the confidence”. However, it is clear that Bronė does not succeed, even now, at getting curative trust any better than she ever did. She feels pessimistically misunderstood and disappointed in the trust or faith of others in her, which tears down and shackles her “I” all the more as she tries to overcome the hopelessness and failures that follow one after the other.

According to Bronė, the *experience* that was especially *painful and affective* on her future life and that “pushed her into prostitution” was *living in the institutional “internment” home* where, it seemed to her, she “*lost herself*”:

It’s very painful to remember my childhood. I went through a lot of experiences. The cruellest ones were, when I moved to the *internatas* {“internment” home}. They’d shave us bald for disobeying. Also they’d have us walk in the halls naked. That happened to me too. After that experience I completely lost myself; that’s how hard it hit me. Image, everybody looking and laughing, including the caretakers. I can’t justify that. All those things gave me a push into the prostitution business. All those years until I left the *internatas*, I lived that kind of a cruel life (B16.1-7).

66. Lithuania maintains several systems to care for children without parental guardianship, which include two types of institutionalised care homes, referenced herein. The institutional care home provides residential services for some number of children; however, the children attend normal schooling outside the home. The other type, the *internatas*, referenced here as “internment” home, is where children receive “special” education within the residence facilities, as do, for example, disabled children; in other words, the children have little contact with the outside world.

The woman remembers that the *punishments* inflicted for transgressions such as disobedience were *cruel* and left deep *spiritual wounds, pain, grievance, hopelessness* and *disappointment in others*: “The least disobedience and they’d shut you up in the cellar and keep you there a whole day. There it was dark, full of mice” (B10.2-3). Pearce and Pezzot-Pearce (2001) assert that the ability to overcome pessimistic or biased beliefs and expectations about the self and others will depend on the behaviour with a child in an institutional home, the kinds of relationships woven and the conditions formed to help a child live independently. What lessens and burdens possibilities for successful recovery are inadequate behaviour by caretakers with a child, poor training at responding to a child’s needs, frequent confrontations with a child exhibiting shocking or outraging behaviour, the neglect of a child and/or violent abuse against a child. Diana also only recalls depressing experiences of life at the institutional care home with negative judgement: “It wasn’t very good there... I didn’t like it there” (D192.2). Meanwhile Bronè still has phobic reactions, to this day, about how painful life was in the care home and about the consequences of her traumatic experiences: “It was a huge trauma for me. I avoid dark places up to this day, I’m still afraid of them” (B10.4). Certain phobias can simply be results of day-to-day stress that has not been overcome (Bandura, Adams, Hardy, & Howells, 1980) or they can surface due to a traumatic experience, and later the object of the phobia can be cognitively transformed (Bandura, 1986). Bronè’s experience points out her vulnerability and substantiates the harmfulness of the former situation.

Clearly, at the care home, both Bronè and Diana *lacked attention and caring supervision* by people or caregivers with childcare expertise, *love and sincere response* to their needs as children and *close affiliates, safety and trust in the self and in others*, which assures *relationships*. As the woman recalls, she was under continual stress: “We’d constantly catch it in the ass, we’d run away from the home and complain, only nobody listened to us” (B6.3). Therefore, she explains, “There wasn’t even any desire to study, they’d push me away anyway” (B6.1). Bandura (1986, 339) asserts that a person’s “degree of change accompanying self-monitoring will partly depend on whether successes or

failures are being observed”. Broné, who is more observant and notices her repeated failures at being understood and heard, thusly experiences disappointment, grievance and anxiety for the unsatisfied needs in childhood and constantly faces fiascos. As per Bandura (1986, 339), such “repeated failures is discouraging” for effective behavioural changes in the future. The woman said that she was a “poor” student, and that “teachers didn’t like me either” (B4.3). She points out her lack of desire and motivation to learn or behave well as a “lack of gentleness, the abuse” (B4.1). With pain she ironically recalls her experience, which she referenced as “on another level”, of knowing her “one and only ‘gentleness’—the abuse” (B4.2). Schofield (2009, 257) states, “Sensitive, available, reliable caregivers, who provide practical and emotional help (...) reduce anxiety and free the young person to become more competent and confident in tackling new challenges (...)” Despite the evidence provided by theory and research accentuating the importance of secure, supportive relationships in adolescence, “these needs are often underestimated or minimised.”

Kotryna grew up, differently than Broné and Diana did, with her single mother, four brothers and sisters and grandparents in the same house. The woman knows nothing about her father, to this day, because, according to her, “mama never agreed to talk about that” (K4.1). She told her youngest children that father had died. This subject is and remains taboo in the family, the same as whether or not her brothers and sisters were born of the same father. People gossiped that grandfather is the father of Kotryna and her brothers and sisters. However, the woman claims that grandfather is not her mother’s real father, but merely a stepfather. Still, Kotryna says, “People are still talking now, that we were all the fruits of abuse” (K2.7). Kotryna was *stigmatised* by the constant talk of people around as the “kid of a *merga* {transl. note: a somewhat demeaning term for girl implying inferiority}” and this *made her feel different* from the rest: “It’s stuck in me real hard, I can’t forget it, even if it was a long time ago” (K2.8). In the opinion of Miller and Major (2000, 244), stigmatised people are more likely to experience derision, exclusion, discrimination and violence from others, which increases “the frequency and/or threats to the self”. Thus Kotryna still now remembers how she had felt due

to her painful childhood experiences: “Going to school, I’d always be thinking – who’s going to be rude to me today” (K4.4) and that, according to her, “did its own” (K4.3). It would seem that Kotryna has nothing to complain about in her childhood, because “the main things were taken care of and whatever, what I needed – I had” (K2.1). As she said, “I was mama’s good child” (K4.5) (...) and “Sundays I sang in church” (K6.2), but “I didn’t study very well” (K6.1). The singular thing she distinguishes as fact meaningful to her future life is *continually experiencing the label placed on her by others* as the “kid of the *merga*” along with “grandpa is my father” (K4.3). Van Laar and Levin (2006) notice that the effects of stigma depend on a person’s individual characteristics. Miller (2006, 26) presents the “stress and coping model” by separating three major components of coping with stigma: “appraisals of stigma-related stressors, coping responses and the identification of prejudice”. Thus, in Kotryna’s case, her personal characteristics determined what she perceived as threatening and what resources she had and chose to use in order to cope with these threats.

Both Bronè and Kotryna painfully remember until now the difficulties, *senselessness, loneliness and anxiousness experienced* in those times, which caused feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness and worthlessness. According to the woman, there was no one with whom she could talk about what was hard for her and what made her happy: “And don’t you try telling somebody, cause that’s nothing but chilling your mouth for no reason” (B2.12) and added, “How should I have told mama about it?” (K12.4). Cashmore and Paxman (2006) notice that relationships based on mistrust and rejection by family members or foster care providers are associated with a number of children’s problems (including behavioural problems). The non-existence of *openness and an affiliation* with close family members or care home employees was pushing these women into isolation, withdrawal and loss of initiative and causing fear, self-blame and, consequently, telling others falsehoods about themselves: “So how was I supposed to say, that now because of my irresponsibility schooling has to get paid for? I was scared” (K12.10) so that is why “I used to lie, that I was studying real hard, getting ready for exams” (K12.5). Fear leads a person into avoidance, withdrawal

and passivity by inhibiting, isolating and destroying a person's spontaneity when avoiding blame or criticism or when sensing threat or powerlessness (Zohar, Marshall, 2004). Therefore Kotryna, who was hiding her true emotions and feelings while living, according to her, in "constant tension" (K12.10), started "drinking even more" (K12.11). Eisenberg, Fabes, Schaller, Carlo, and Miller (1991) assert that appropriate parental care and response to children's emotions and their expressions prompt children's consciousnesses and educate them for self-satisfaction. Meanwhile the opposite, the absence of appropriate response, leads and teaches children to hide their feelings, to withdraw into the self. Obviously it was not customary in Kotryna's home to share feelings and experiences, the same as her mother did not share with her children about their father. Consequently the woman was inclined to resolve the most difficult moments in her life by herself, without sharing them with the people closest to her. When a situation would become entirely unbearable, she would begin imbibing alcohol and later, narcotics, thereby dragging herself into helplessness and hopelessness even more.

The experiences of these women in childhood and adolescence, the lack of supervision, neglect, unsatisfied needs, lack of close kinships, encounters with especially ruthless (in certain cases) and long-term violent abuse and loss of faith in gaining personal support, all revealed that each of them, as Herman stated (1997, 110), "is still a prisoner of her childhood". Further Herman says (1997, 123), "Because of their characteristic difficulties in close relationships, they are particularly vulnerable to revictimization (...). They may become engaged in ongoing, destructive interactions (...)".

6.2. Formerly "left out of life" experiences

The other ten women who participated in this research had quit prostitution, unlike the aforementioned women. The ages of these women ranged from 18 to 37 years, and their duration of sexual abuse in prostitution varied from 2 months to 20 years. Eight of the ten women had been pulled into prostitution in adolescence, from 13 to 18 years

of age. Only two of these women first experienced the sexual exploitation of prostitution as adults (one was 21 and the other, 27 years of age). Five of these ten women had been both prostituted internally and trafficked abroad, and three were prostituted only internally. One of the women was a topless dancer, and another engaged in swinger practices. Two of the ten were solely trafficked abroad. Two of them had been married; one was a widow, whereas the other later divorced due to violent abuse in the family. All of the women currently live alone excepting one who lives with a cohabitant. Five of them had had cohabitants earlier but later separated and/or divorced.

Five women were already holding down various jobs at the time of the interviews. Two others were students, and the other three were not working anywhere but looking for steady work while accepting temporary work assignments from time to time. Three of the women had completed requalification courses and had begun looking for work in their new fields.

Three of these women had completed secondary school education. The other seven had attended upper of secondary school education with or without a vocation. Of them two women had studied at the university level but, unfortunately, one of them had dropped her studies (see Appendix 3).

Six of the interviewed women have children. Of them, four have one child each and two have three each. Only two of these women are raising their children themselves (Algè and Silva). The children of the other four women are either growing up in an institutional care home for children (of Milda and Renata) or living with their grandmothers (of Vilè and Odeta). Milda's two older daughters have been adopted by other families with whom the woman has and maintains no contact at all, whereas her youngest daughter lives in an institutional care home, which Milda does not visit either. Silva and Algè stand out from all the rest of these women by the relationships with their children. Silva has strong ties with her two boys and one girl. As Silva says, "My three children are my family" (S6:1). Algè's relationship with her daughter is also important to her as well: "I'm afraid to lose my child. She's more precious to me than everything else" (A20.3-4).

6.2.1. *"I always wanted to be independent": Towards a strategy of freedom*

The family life experiences of Algè and Odeta differ, even though they were both born into full, nuclear families. Algè's parents divorced before she started school. However, what they both have in common are their experiences of a *lack of autonomy, freedom, trust and security* in childhood and later in adolescence. Figley (1988) asserts that a person who does not experiences sufficient individual autonomy indicates either a lack of or low emotional bonding or cohesion among family members. Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 366) refers to the concept of freedom as "a blend—one which, to use Wittgenstein's famous example, consists of family resemblances" or, "like a rope, held firmly together by many interweaving and overlapping strands". These strands are what the author calls "will", "consciousness", "ego", "self", "time", "spontaneity", "passivity", "autonomy", "self-determination, (...) and on and on". From the perspective of the social cognitive theory, "there is no incompatibility between freedom and determinism"; nonetheless, one or another type of a person's "behaviour is determined by a multiauthored influence" (Bandura, 1986, 39). The subjective experiences that Algè and Odeta lived through reveal what kinds of significant strands have run through both their life experiences, or what sorts of influences they have experienced.

What Algè considers essential and meaningful matters in turning or creating her life are her *family relationships*: "Mama's arrangements are everywhere" (A14.4). As for the family relationships and contacts between her and her parents in childhood as much as in adolescence, according to her, "were" but, with her father, they were "cold" and with mama, "there were various" (A32.1). After thinking a bit, she adds, "(2s) I'd say, they weren't too cold, nor too warm" (A32.2). In reference to the *relationship with her father*, the woman recalls several, seemingly nice albeit also double-sided moments in childhood, "He takes me along to the marketplace, buys something and then lets me go", "he made me a gift of money" (A22.3-7) or he bought "a bike for my birthday" (A50.2). Of the several episodic moments or, in her words, the *moments of "sometimes" associating with*

father, there were some that were very important to Algė: “He was also teaching me how to ride” (A50.6) or “when I was still going kindergarten [transl. note: preschool], it would be that father shows up, I’m not sure myself, only well I remember, that I have a rose” (A52.1). The image of the father that forms and operates in the psyche of a child or later as an adult depends on how and how much the father personally “personifies” a child’s expectations and fantasies. Clearly the degree of “humaneness” of Algė’s father and his ability to maintain contact with her did not satisfy the daughter’s need. Therefore she seems to verify the *lack of contact with father* by denying her father’s participation in her life and by not considering him a member of her family, claiming that her family was “Mama, grandma and grandpa (...) father was not my family” (A32.3). Rukšaitė (2008, 143) notices that important psychological functions, which depend “on the contact between father and daughter”, encourage her to leave “the safety of the boundary of her surroundings (mother, home) into the outside world” and help her to manage life’s obligations and overcome conflicts.

Contrary to her experience of associating with father, the young woman tends to remember the *relationship with mama* more. However, those memories are more painful than they are lovely or warm or ones that might bear testimony of any experienced security, love and mutual satisfaction. Algė’s talks about her mother carry a sense of *grievance* and *resentment* regarding her mother’s behaviour with her as well as of the spiritual wounds hidden deeply within her. These come up in the form of ambivalent feelings—*anger, irony and disappointment*—and, at the same time, a *longing for closeness* with mother: “(2s) Well with mama there was everything, there was anger (...) about money, about schooling” (A34.7). “Mama often scolded me (...) when I’d come home, I’d get hell (...) for slumming around somewhere” (A24.1). Otherwise she’d say, “Well, so mama would love me very much ((laughs))” (A38.1). Pieper Heineman and Pieper (1999, 34) have observed that those parents who suffer from inner unhappiness themselves also form interrelationships with their children based on dissension and distance. Frequently such parents react with violence to, what seems to them, unsuitable behaviour by

their children as “a means of moral education”. Finkelhor and Baron (1986, 75) assert that “a poor relationship with one’s parents is one of the most common correlates with sexual abuse”. The woman remembers until now that she went through a great deal of *fear* and *anxiety* while she was living with her mother: “I remember, often I was scared, that I’d get beaten up” (A40.2). Certain investigations reveal that either maternal control or permissiveness of mothers with their daughters increases in mid-adolescence (McNally, Eisenberg, and Harris, 1991). Even now Algè remembers with horror the *cruel abuse suffered* in adolescence from her mother: “A whipping I remember I got for my studies (3s), because I’m already a teenager, I’m telling you, I already was” (A34.8). “(...) She beat me, cause how come I met with father” (A52.2). “(...) She’d tie up my legs, tie up my hands, so I wouldn’t squirm, and... she’d whip” (A40.1). Baumrind (1966, 896) notes, “Punishment which is severe, unjust, ill-timed, and administered by an unloving parent is probably harmful as well as ineffective.” Such behaviour by parents usually provokes or challenges a child to misbehave or to rebel. Kochanska, Aksan, and Nichols (2003, 960), who analysed “the specificity of the links” between “maternal power assertion” and “children’s socialization outcomes”, such as behavioural and cognitive domains, pointed out that the outcome for a child depends on whom the “maternal power assertion in discipline contexts” is directed. The authors revealed that high maternal neuroticism determining her “power assertion” in the “don’t” context “predicted children’s future antisocial behavior”. Thus Algè would choose the one means she had for controlling the situation—running away from home—to evade her mother’s violence, anger, punishments and cruel and twisted *child “upbringing” methods*: “That’s why I left home, because I couldn’t be there” (A46.1). Bandura (1986) submits that offensive punishment encourages a child to avoid the punishers, to stay at a distance and to condemn the self; it also increases vulnerability and stifles socially desirable models of behaviour. According to Herman (1997, 96), “The child trapped in an abusive environment is faced with formidable tasks of adaptation” to find some security to protect him/herself, a means for controlling a situation that is unsafe and unpredictable. Algè is

also convinced that she would *run away from home* “for the control (3s)” (A46.1) because, according to her, “It was impossible” (A46.2); “(...) I was under her heel all the time (...) and I’m still afraid of that now” (A54.2-3). A child’s experience of violence in the family may manifest in various forms of problems like the impairment of his/her social relationships, cognitive and emotional difficulties and problematic behavioural development. Furthermore the problems may continue to affect that person’s life throughout adulthood causing the impairment of intimate relationships or of occupational functioning (Kashani and Allan, 1998). Seemingly trying to justify the reason for running away from home, the young woman says that, due to her mother’s constant control, distrust of her and use of inappropriate behavioural sanctions, she lacked “freedom”, “having her fill of running around”, “trust” and “safety”. She also adds, “Because, there was a distrust of me” (A48.1) and “I didn’t feel safe at home” (A50.1). The relationship difficulties that arise in a family, between parents and children, which are resolved with “high levels of anger and low anger control” lead to the externalisation of behavioural problems such as “conduct disorder and antisocial behavior disorder” (DeBaryshe and Fryxell, 1998). Algè recalls, “I took money without asking, because she didn’t give any money” (A42.2-3). Thus the aetiology of Algè’s difficult behaviour can be linked with the *problematic relationships in the family*, between her and her parents. Since the daughter could not bear the mother’s overly expressed control and use of physical punishment against her daughter, Algè chose to run away from home. Such behaviour seems to be a means for Algè to get what she needs—freedom and autonomy. When she was asked if she remembers any good moments in her childhood or adolescence, she thought a long time and named, “Only two birthdays were special” (A22.1), one “which mama arranged” and one “which I arranged myself in agreement with my father” (A22.6-7). The birthday arranged with her father in secret from her mother indicates the problematic relationships between the parents in the family. As King (2006, 912–913) asserts, “A close mother-child relationship is a key factor in accounting for children’s ties to their fathers.” Moreover, “a positive relationship” between the biological parents strengthens

ties between a non-resident father and his children and, contrariwise, frequent conflicts between the mother and non-resident father destroy it. Perceptibly, considering the tense, conflictual relationships between Algè's biological parents, the woman describes her relationship with her father by saying, "There was (...) this kind of associating with dad sometimes" (A22.2), but now "there's none" (A22.5).

Algè remembers that her mother frequently manipulated her by *dragging her into decisions regarding the interrelationship between wife and husband*: "Mama later needed that alimony that was awarded to her by the court, so she demanded, that I do the calling. That was cause, when mama would call, then he wouldn't talk" (A34.2-4). Therefore, even though Algè says that her mother primarily raised her and cared for her and she also associated with her grandparents (her mother's parents), there was a lack of sympathy, understanding and peace in the environment: "Mama screamed, grandma screamed at me (...) Grandpa was the only one who didn't scream" (A36.3-4). Algè was *lacking close relationships* with the people close to her. Consequently she experienced, what Moustakas (1961, 35) refers to as, "the need for contact (...) temporarily unresolved" and "the need for ultimate relatedness" manifesting in the experience of painful loneliness. Therefore, even now, Algè clearly wants to leave her mother's home as fast as possible and live away from her: "I don't want to be with mama", the same as "I didn't want to be at home before either" (A12.1). Such behaviour substantiates the statement by Finkelhor and Baron (1986, 76) that abused girls "may be more likely to live without parents".

Differently than Algè, Odeta lived in a full, four-member, nuclear family. However, when the woman was talking about the *relationships and contact with persons close to her* in her past life, she said ironically, "I know that I didn't live for some 27 years, that I was just gathering experience. That's what I have behind my back. That's the most precious treasure I have" (O45.1). Usually *father as the most important figure* in her life predominated in Odeta's memories, even though her father worked a job that kept him away from home months at a time. Since father was continually travelling on the job, all the childcare fell on mother. Now, when she is recollecting

her past, Odeta distinguishes the relationship with her father as important and meaningful to her life more so than she does with her mother: “Father always loved me very much and always tried to protect me in life” (O18.3). Nonetheless, the woman’s conscience bothered her about her earlier behaviour. She regrets, “Only now the understanding comes, about how I ‘eased’ their life” (O18.5) and lays all the blame on herself alone. Alekseičikas (1980) claims that a person’s conscience reproaches when reality does not correspond with an ideal or when the person’s worldview becomes detached from reality. When a person’s “I” is overly subjective, and the person has character deficiencies or an erroneous perspective on the world, the conscience is unable to protect him/her from making mistakes. Odeta holds the opinion that her mother especially experienced a great deal of pain due to the difficulties she had in her own life and that all that contributed to quickening her death. Consequently the woman continues feeling *guilty*:

Mama... now I understand, how much poor her had to go through and suffer through...and the selling brought on her death a lot faster. (...) Sleep now, mama. be in peace. It’s too bad, you can’t see, how I’m getting up on my feet. And how I’m succeeding beautifully (O18.1-2).

Odeta, as much as Algè, considers *father as the most important person in her life*, although, as Odeta says, for her, *close relationships were lacking* with him: “Regarding my father I understood, who he is, only after mama’s death” (O33.20). Algè also describes the lack of a relationship with her father the same way: “There wasn’t much associating” (A22.1-4). Odeta remembers being an active child or, as she says, “I used to get into doing crazy things” (O33.2), probably because her father, according to her, “was constantly afraid, so something wouldn’t happen to me” (O33.3). Now she looks back on the relationship with her father, at his, in her view, “insanities” and his unfounded fears with humour and irony: “If there was only one single car in town, then you dear daughter, will surely fall under it” (O33.4). Odeta also ironically remembers that the reason her father never let her have a bicycle in town, only out in the country, was “just so nothing would happen” (O33.5). At the same time that she

remembers her father's *inept worry* over her in childhood, inside she also reproaches him, "He protected me very much, but he still didn't save me, what happened and even the more horrible" (O33.6). The *ambivalent feelings for her father* have also existed for a long time: "I love my father, truly love him, I love him and at the same time, I hate him so much" (O39.3). These feelings cause her *anxiety*, and she tries to overcome them by constantly analysing her life's experiences and past events, as she says, "back to my birth" (O39.11). From time to time, *pangs of conscience* and a *sense of self-blame* would come up: "I'm sure some good 'gift' myself" (O33.17). She constantly thought about the relationship with her father: "I was hurting him too, I was making a lot of problems for him too" (O39.9). These thoughts drain her and make her depressed. Then she feels "very lost, some kind of scattered and more and more angry" (O41.1). Sometimes she feels actually some sort of stiffness over her whole body or, as she puts it, "some kind of stupor came over me" (O41.3). Rukšaitė (2008), who analysed the importance of the relationship with father to a woman's individuation, notes that stable and long term contacts with father are an important condition for mental health, inner balance and satisfaction with life. Thereby Odeta feels bad about blaming her father for the lack of a relationship with her and she tends to *blame herself*: "I have no right to blame him and much less to condemn him for something" (O33.16) —"it's my fault everywhere" (O39.12). *Grievance* and *disappointment* come up more often for her, because father does not admit his own fault and, according to her, does not even try: "I understand that and recognise it, but he doesn't" (O39.14). Odeta's ambivalent feelings substantiate that she has had to live through experiences of a *deficiency of love*, *presence of a close person and contacts* with persons who are meaningful to her along with painful *neglect*, *separation from significant others and loneliness*. Consequently this causes her, according to Moustakas (1961, 28–29), "a smouldering but helpless rage and a desire for revenge for being 'left out' of life". The thought going through her is that "he'll still be sorry" (O39.35). This seems to ease the anger at her father as does her belief that everyone pays a certain price for everything one does in life: "Without a doubt, we'll get what we've earned"

(O39.31). Odetta is convinced that her father will also get what he deserves: “I simply know, that I will still be necessary to them in life” (O39.36). The same way, in her opinion, she also gets what she “deserves”: “Seems like I’m already getting it, it’s nothing, I earn for myself” (O39.31). Such a state of mind burdens the woman’s already depressive condition regarding her past relationship with her father even more. This pushes her into withdrawal, alienation from others and isolation.

6.2.2. “I’m a garbage man’s daughter”: *Self-expressions of stigmatized identities*

The experiences of Irma and Julia differ from the other research participants. One had been a topless dancer in a nightclub, while the other had been involved with swingers. They were both prostituted only internally, in the country. Both were also *incest victims*: Irma experienced long-term sexual abuse in childhood from at the age of 7 until age 16 by her older brother, whereas Julia—by her real father.

Both spent their childhoods in full nuclear families. Irma suffered no less than Julia did from *stigma* experienced by the relationships in their families as well as with their age mates. Later, after their family situations changed due to their parents’ severed interrelationships, they both experienced *neglect and loneliness*, the painful sense of being *cut off from contacts with close people, love, tenderness and recognition*, a *lack of closeness* and feelings of longing. They were both treated like objects more than once, irrespective of their wants, opinions and feelings. They were, according to Moustakas (1961, 60), seemingly “left out of life” which, consequently, left them “imprisoned by self-estrangement, by extraneous values and standards, by a mechanical and machine-like existence”.

Of her early childhood experiences, Irma remembers the *conflictual, tense family relationships, her parents drinking heavily, not getting along with each other and often physically fighting*. Furthermore, when her father was away on work trips, her mother often searched for the *companionship of other men*. Now Irma remembers, “I any- way from the very start saw actual fighting and, that my parents

drink, that they beat each other up, that's all, I didn't see anything else" (I200.6-8). When Irma was about five years old, her parents finally divorced because, up until then, as she says, "Separating became simply unbearable already like that with the (...) fist fights (...) screaming (...) my parents one on top of the other (...) that's how it was, then they'd make up again" (I214.1-4). Lobato (2001) affirms that the family, the home is the place where individuality forms, where a person becomes a personality under the influence of relationships based on interpersonal love and familial devotion. Children will only fully mature and have the ability to make use of freedom correctly on their own due to the efforts of parents who are devoted and dedicated to their children and who act as a teacher and sculptor, encouraging their children to improve while respecting their choices. Irma remembers that she only better understood her parents' conflictual relationships and, later, the reason for their divorce after she was a teenager when she witnessed for herself her mother's unfitting behaviour with her father and understood what was happening in their family. Furniss (1991), who has researched the sexual abuse of children, notes that a mismatched emotional and sexual partnership between parents relates to conflictual relationships in the family. The process that reveals such relations becomes important in laying the foundation for further interrelationships within the family. Sexualised behaviour can manifest in children who have lived in such an environment when their later lives become identified with their childhood experiences, especially when they need emotional care and receive no response from the family. Consequently, as Furniss (1991) has noticed, such boys can have a tendency towards sexual harassment of others in adulthood. Meanwhile girls who have gone through inappropriate emotions and sexual experiences in childhood can later allow themselves to be drawn into prostitution or a dissolute lifestyle.

There was also *no harmony or concord between the parents* either in Julia's or in Irma's family. Julia talks about the relationships in her family unwillingly, grievously and disappointedly because she did not feel well within it: "They always looked at me like I was a child (...) not wanting (...) to accept me as a grown up person"

(J152.4-5). Furthermore, as per Heineman Pieper & Pieper (1999, 48), she was “regularly feeling slightly ‘down’”. According to Julia, a *paternal cult* predominated in the family. She describes, “I’m the head of the family, so you have to listen to me” (J162.6) and “His opinion is the most important one and it has to be exactly, like he said” (J160.3-4). Meanwhile, in the family, mama “usually didn’t have an opinion of her own” (J158.1). Fromm (1965, 165) claims that several “*sadistic tendencies*” emerge in a family based on authoritarian relationships such as making “others dependent on oneself, (...) to rule over others, (...) to exploit them, (...) to make others suffer or to see them suffer”. As Julia was attempting to open up within the family, she would immediately confront opposition from her *authoritarian father*, including his *humiliations* or even *threats*: “When I’d try to say something, (...) he’d tell me not to talk at all, that I have no right to tell him anything, or else, I’d get it” (J162.8-9). Consequently, since she did not feel safe, she would try to adjust to that sort of constant climate of threat: “For a long time, practically until I was eighteen years old I would try to listen all the time” (J168.2). As Fromm (1965, 168) relates, a child who grows up in a family with that sort of care or “is put into a golden cage” and that sort of fatherly desire to “protect” the family will be afraid of love in the future because that child associates it with jail.

As a child, Irma claims she did not understand much of what was happening in the family. Why were there arguments in the family? Why did her *daddy beat her mama*? Why did her parents divorce later on? Why *didn’t mama allow her to meet with her brothers or father* when they came to visit after she was living apart from father? Now she recalls that for her *mother was the most important member of the family*: “The closest person to me was mama” (I210.1). Irma always sided with her mother: “I always went on the side of mama (...) Mama was everything to me” (I210.2-4). Julia also remembers *mama as the most important person in the family* during her childhood and adolescence: “Everything that involved the family, mama would take the care about it” (J162.1). Later, while Irma was living with her mother, she experienced her own *neglect* and learned about her mother’s *betrayal*: “All in all she started drinking every day and I was

sort of not needed anymore (...) She wouldn't let me into the house (...) where there was the same fighting, only with different men" (I210.7,8- I212.3-5). Even later, after her *mother's falsehood* became clear after a long duration, Irma renounced her conviction about her mother. Irma was already an adult when this happened, and a lengthy period had passed since she had lived with her mother. She is still angry with her mother ironically remembering the time when her mother reappeared in detail:

I was really furious with mama, when she reappeared after twelve years, because everybody over there had said, that somewhere in Leningrad mama had died, with some man. So for twelve years I don't know anything, she calls me after twelve years, 'hello dear daughter', but I remember then I was eighteen years old, I was getting ready to go to the last Foje concert, that's how I just sat down ((laughs)). You know, that really anyhow surprised me, although actually later on we did go with my brothers to visit her in 'K'⁶⁷ (I220.1-7).

Irma's negative opinion and feelings regarding her mother's behaviour have not changed until now. When she talks about it, the *anger and rage about her mother's behaviour* towards her can be felt: "Mama acted badly (...) going off to other men (...) while as for herself she'd try to cause the most beautiful scandal at home" (I232.10). Both Irma and Julia lacked those moments that are so important in every person's life when, according to Moustakas (1961, 60), every person "strives to break bread with his fellow man, to share the heart-breaks and joys of life, to awaken in the presence of the human touch". Irma shares the long-lasting *pain and lack of mother's closeness*, "In the very beginning, when she'd call, I'd always cry, and she'd cry, and as I talked I'd tell her, 'mommy, I miss you so much' (...) It seems even now that I'd also say, 'mommy, I really need you so much'" (I226.2-6). Julia assured that mama was the one who handled all the household matters: "So that we'd be fed, that we'd have clothes on our backs, that finally there'd be something to live on, or to pay for the apartment, and something for school let's say"

67. 'K' denotes the first letter of a name which, for confidentiality reasons, is not spelled out.

(J162.2). Nevertheless, as the young woman claimed, she did not receive either warmth or love in the family from her parents: “I simply missed my parents’ warmth, I missed the love, I missed something that I probably did not get in my own home” (J150.1).

Now, when mother refers to Irma as her dear daughter, Irma feels *grievance and disappointment*: “When you know, that your mama left you and you never mattered to her” (I224.3). According to her, “Those words dear daughter sound repulsive (...) She’s a stranger to me” (I222.3-4). Remembering the heartache and the painful events she had experienced, the young woman chooses not to reply to her mother, not to speak to her on the telephone when mother attempts to re-establish her broken ties with her daughter after many years. This way she expresses her rage with her mother, which is the product of her long-lasting, internal dissatisfaction and the disappointments and grievances she has suffered: “Now I don’t even pick up the phone, because I don’t want to talk (...) I say ‘K’⁶⁸, I’m not here, well, because I don’t want to talk” (I228.27-28). Julia, differently from Irma, tries to excuse her mother since she feels the *grievance about father* and *blames him* for the reproofs her mothers throws at her: “If she would try let’s say to stand up for us, father would always say – ‘you look here, how you raised them, what they’re like’” (J158.2). Pieper Heineman & Pieper (1999, 158) assert that isolating a child or withholding parental love and affection do not educate your children morally and do not help them to “become an adult who can tolerate frustration and consistently respect the rights of others”.

Even now it is difficult for Irma to describe her former family relationships of those times: “I can’t say, that it was a harmonious, wonderful family, because, it’s that I didn’t see it” (I200.4). However, as a counterbalance regarding family relationships, she at once rushes to provide lovely remembrances about the time spent with her brothers in childhood:

68. ‘K’ denotes the first letter of a name which, for confidentiality reasons, is not spelled out.

I can't say, that my childhood didn't make me happy (...) despite how it was, there are happy things, playing in the snow, playing with my brothers, then going out to the woods with guns, doing it all in a hoop, it was simply childhood (...). out sledding in winter down the hill on those tins, oh how much fun it was, we'd well actually look forward to those days (I202.1-5).

Thus Irma does not feel that she lost her childhood due to the *complicated relationships in the family*: "Sure maybe it was sad to see, that my parents divorced, that my parents probably drank, that they beat each other up, that was really unpleasant, but, that I completely lost my entire childhood, that I couldn't say" (I204.6-7). Quite the contrary, she was delighted with her relationships with her brothers and the inventive games they had played together. This had provided a good deal of joy in childhood and it seemingly pulled her away from the unpleasant experiences regarding the relationships with her parents. As Pieper Heineman & Pieper (1999, 48) note, "The presence of inner unhappiness does not prevent children from appearing to be cheerful and 'sunny.'" For this reason, Irma and her brothers found other means of self-expression: "We used to be ingenious (...) We built ourselves a house in the swamplands, we'd look into that swampy area, to see how to get in there, there anyway we were like these extremists well, because it's really deep in those swamps, you could drown" (I202.12-14). This sort of behaviour was realistically dangerous to their health or even to their lives. However, what she did with her brothers happened seemingly unconsciously, like manifestations of the course of their inner unhappiness.

Irma compensated the *lack of security and close contacts* from her parents by her *relationship with her oldest brother*: "He'd go on our side, he'd protect us, wouldn't let anybody harm us" (I208.2). Julia remembers, the same as Irma does, experiencing *sisterly support* during the difficult times of conflictual situations with their parents in the family: "She'd try not to get into all of that, only after some kind of shall we say conflict, it would be she'd walk over to me and tell me, 'I actually agree with you'" (J156.1). However, Irma notices that the ties between her brother and her were exceptional from their youngest days. When her father brought her back to his home, because the court had restrained her mother's motherhood rights, her brother,

according to her, “was the first to run over and hug me (...) This attachment was the kind, where like that he was always waiting for me” (I212.13). Now it seems to the young woman that the *need for close relationships* during those times was satisfied with help from her oldest brother. Irma claims that, back then, between her brother and her “the relationships weren’t just any old kind” (I208.4). She understood and accepted their relationship as concern, care for her, love and warmth: “I’ll protect you, then I’ll be with you and always love you, and that was enough for me” (I208.10-11). Now, as she remembers all this, she seemingly tries to justify her behaviour. At first, she said, “There was a lot I didn’t understand” (I336.8), and everything that happened between her brother and her was seemingly “like a game” (I336.4). She explained that she had succumbed to her brother’s enticements and promises: “I’ll always be good to you (...) I’ll buy you this (...) I’ll buy you that” (I336.6-7). That was how he talked her into performing *acts of oral sex* with him. Later, when Irma was 14–15 years old, the so-called “games” she played with her brother matured into *regular sexual relations*. It is still hard for her to remember and talk about that now. The frequent sighs, pauses and avoidance of eye contact during the time of the talk show how difficult it was for her to talk about it. Nonetheless, now that Irma has shared this experience with several people (a couple of friends and the psychologist), it is easier for her to talk about this, differently than before when it was a secret just between her brother and her. However, Irma’s still feels her *conscience gnawing* at her all the time: “Inside there’s still that well gnawing on me, that how could I have acted like that” (I346.12). There is *self-accusation* that, as she says, “It still doesn’t give me that peace that sort of well, that guilt (...) how you acted that way” (I346.13-15), “you could have said no” (I346.17). Even now, the woman’s self-accusations conform with those thinking patterns that Herman (1997) considers characteristic of traumatised people of any age when one attempts to explain what happened to them. As she talked during our meetings, I could hear her anger, self-hatred and self-disgust: “I am so disgusting” (I346.13) as well as her attempt to justify her behaviour: “It was always disgusting to me” (I336.5) so that “I’d even shake it off of myself” (I346.14). When

talking about the experience of her relationship with her brother, Irma avoids words such as sexual abuse, sexual relationships or intercourse. At first she referred to it as “that”, “it”, “something”, “what I would do” and “I used to be”. When asked later what that meant, what did she have in mind so saying, she unwillingly names those words, “that”, “it” and “something” as meaning sexual relations with her brother. Later on, seemingly excusing herself, she says, “I blamed myself for a long time, for being with my brother” (I332.3). As she now understands, “That’s not normal (...) unacceptable (...) It cannot be like that” (I332.5). However, back then, as Irma says, “I was always afraid (...) well how can I not obey my brother” (I346.20)? It was not until later, when her girlfriend started saying that “relations should be between guys and girls” (I336.9), before Irma began to understand that those kinds of relations with her brother were not normal. Irma broke off having sexual relations with her brother herself when she had found herself a boyfriend, even though this took considerable time, some eleven years.

Both young women remember that the *opinions of others* about them and their *recognition*, especially by family members, were particularly important and meaningful to them in childhood. Pečkauskaitė-Šatrijos Ragana (1998, 17) also substantiates this by claiming that the family becomes the most important, primary environment of a person and the most important factor determining the formation of a child’s personality. Family contacts and the relationships of parents with their children constitute the primary and most commanding model for associating with others. Even now, sighing deeply, Irma remembers how she would try to *obey submissively* to the punishments her father would dole out regarding housework: “If I got punished, that I didn’t do something right, the next time I’d try doubly hard to do it better (...) to fix up the rooms cleaner (...) do something, so dad would praise me” (I32.8-10). Such an expression of her obedience to her father attests to her attempts to gain control over the situation by one possible method—“trying to do better”. Similarly, when she experienced the sexual abuse from her brother, Irma remembers that, in the beginning, a pathological attachment to her brother, an odd sort of adoration overwhelmed her: “My brother is

good, my brother is wonderful” (I336.19) and “How could I not obey my brother? (...) My brother was well he was something (...) well my protector, he’d defend me” (I346.20-21). Later on she remembers that a *sense of powerlessness, a fear of resistance* overcame her. Consequently this manifested in her entire *capitulation* to the *violence* her brother used against her: “But then brother would get mad (...) run me out of the house at night (...) if I said ‘no’ (...) It would be he’d say, if you don’t listen to me, if you don’t do it like that, then I’ll be so furious (...), so aggressive almost like (...). I started being really scared of him (...) although I obviously didn’t like doing that, but somehow I’d do it” (I336.11-20). Her attempts at resisting the force being used by her brother were dampened not only by his frightening anger but also by his aggressive behaviour towards her as well as towards her other brother: “And he’d kick out my other brother, and me” (I336.22). Since she was unable to protect herself, Irma *chose to endure the abuse* by sacrificing her own well-being, autonomy and individuality. To help her do this, she used various means of *psychological defence*: “I’d try sort of to forget (...) and I don’t want to admit that it was like that (...) I’d like to just leave all that behind somewhere far away and not to remember it (...) to leave it maybe like some nightmare, some unpleasant dream” (I346.2-6). Herman (1997) submits that, when an abused person is actually unable to change an unbearable reality, that person changes his/her own consciousness by relying on various mechanisms for psychological defence.

The long-lasting, continually pathological environment and the perverted relationship with her brother forced Irma to form destructive states of comprehending her individuality and her own “I”: “All that time I considered, that I’m sick, mentally ill, that’s why, that well, I... I’d say, that well (...) that way, that a normal person wouldn’t do and wouldn’t act” (I346.9-10). Her already *stigmatised* identity is even more stigmatised from time to time in the family by her father’s words: “It hurt me badly, when dad would say, ‘You’re like your mama’ (...) He’d say that for a long time” (I234.2-3). Stangor and Crandall (2000, 62-63) assert, that “stigma develops out of an initial, universally held motivation to avoid danger, followed by (often exaggerated) perception of characteristics that promote threat,

and accompanied by a social sharing of these perceptions with others”. Even now, after a lengthy period had passed since Irma experienced violence in her family, she continues to deride herself for dancing striptease in a club laying shame and guilt on herself: “Dad doesn’t know, that I was dancing. Then he would have been completely disappointed. Mama went there to the side, there it didn’t matter to her (...) Maybe there was something dad saw in me that was like my mother, since my mama and I actually look very similar” (I234.7-13). Therefore, it was very important to Irma to be good in her father’s eyes, to cover up her feeling of badness inside by hiding her true “I” thereby trying to win her father’s favour.

Julia, on the other hand, was also considered, as she says, a “white crow” {transl. note: i.e., a black sheep} (J152.2) for stating her opinions and for her efforts to protect her own “I” in the home. Therefore, for this reason, she often chose not to say anything, to remain on the sidelines as the better course of action: “If it didn’t give me confidence, then I’d rather try to be quiet about it” (J150.10). Rogers (1961) notes that, when a child grows up respecting his/herself as a unique person, then the child remains the proprietor of his/her feelings and his/her behaviour will be harmonious. When a family fosters relationships that allow everyone to feel their own feelings, then a child will grow up responsible and independent.

Irma painfully remembers the *relationships* with *other people* and her age mates in her childhood. She had experienced *taunting*, moments of *stigma* and *loneliness* and the feelings that accompanied that:

Nobody liked me in school, that’s why I started to avoid people, they used to call me the garbage man’s daughter, that was very painful. I used to like to go walking in the woods alone, but if I heard, that somebody’s coming I’d hide, and when they’d pass, I’d come out and walk on. That fear didn’t come just from nothing, it was simply that all those insults scared me, and, to keep from hearing all that, I’d simply avoid people. They used to call me the garbage man’s daughter, because my father worked on a garbage truck, but not only because of that, I was dressed more poorly than the others, father couldn’t buy me good clothes, nice shoes, everything, what was with me was, these old, ugly things from charity. There were times I’d even have to walk around with torn shoes, and that’s why I’d hear a lot of insults, and they were very hard to bear (I38.4-10).

Avoiding any sort of relationships with others and hiding from others, as she says, “was how I protected myself” (I38.13). As Herman (1997, 162) asserts, relationships with other people by persons who have suffered traumas “tend to oscillate between extremes”—either being constantly surrounded by people or becoming isolated in an attempt to “to establish a sense of safety” for the self. To avoid the *behaviour of others who had insulted and hurt* her frequently, Irma remembers, “I would try to associate less with others, that’s how I’d protect myself from unpleasant situations and I’d feel like a little mouse that nobody noticed” (I38.12). Such a manner of reacting to relationships with others substantiates that she was experiencing *fear, powerlessness and loss of control* as well as a damaged fundamental assumption about the *safety of the world*. Furthermore she suffered the loss of a positively valued “I”: “I didn’t know how to associate with others nor did I participate in any carnivals, nor any holidays, because I didn’t dare, because I used to feel under pressure and I was simply afraid to say anything, so I wouldn’t be jeered at” (I38.11). Acceptance by her age mates was also important to Julia and, when it did not exist, she explained, “While I was in secondary school, I was generally very closed up inside, I never associated with anybody” (J150.7). Since both women suffered inner unhappiness, they, as Heineman Pieper & Pieper (1999, 48) say, “sabotage relationships”. They are unable to tolerate having kindness, friendship or love arise and hold them “at face value”.

The scholars who have studied the formation of a person’s future “I” image claim that the family and the experience within it are important to identity formation in adolescence. One way or another, the atmosphere in the family affects how teenagers orient towards the future and their adaptation to the social environment and the opportunities it provides (Pulkkinen, Rönkä, 1994; Žukauskienė, 2002, 324). These young women felt better by remaining on the sidelines closed off within themselves or, as Irma said, “hiding somewhere” (I38.13), avoiding interactions with others and choosing the role of an observer. Juodaitytė (2003, 134; 150), who analysed the socialisation of children and their upbringings in childhood, notices that many things are learned from the environment as

the “feeling of suitability in society” is perfected, which determines future behaviour. According to this scholar, psychological and social losses in the period of childhood can be so significant that they will be impossible to compensate, even after conditions and relationships essentially changed in the future.

Since they had experienced violence from people around them and constant inner unhappiness, the girls often perceived signs of danger in their relations with others and sought to protect themselves by hiding, becoming as less noticeable as possible and not drawing attention to themselves in any way. Herman (1997, 100) describes the condition of a child who has experienced violence as a “peculiar, seething state of frozen watchfulness”.

These young women are forced to doubt fundamental human relationships, which dismantles the constructions of their own “I” due to their experiences of constant disagreements amongst family members, offensiveness towards them, the taunts of their age mates and being labelled as the “garbage man’s daughter”, “skull” or “white crow {i.e., black sheep}”. Furthermore Pieper Heineman & Pieper (1999, 49) assert that, when children “are exposed to traumatic experiences”, such as emotional or violent in various forms, they are biased towards suffering, which “may be expressed in severely dysfunctional behaviour”.

6.2.3. *“I couldn’t imagine that home but I thought – mama”: Yearning for maternal love*

One essential aspect of the painful childhood experiences of Milda, Renata and Silva links their life stories—*betrayal by close persons, their parents. Mother and father unmercifully abandoned them all when they were still very young and unable to care for themselves. As Milda says, they were taken “to that home for kids” (M124.9). They spent a short period in families with their parents—Milda and Silva about two years and Renata about eight years. Despite Renata specifying some eight or nine years of living with her parents, when she was telling the story about her childhood and the relationships with her parents, she notes that parental closeness was “always*

missing” (R122.1). It seems, even while she living with her parents, she attended a type of “kindergarten” {or preschool} with weekly care, so that her parents only took her home on weekends. Renata claims, as far as she was concerned, such a decision by her parents about her seemed acceptable to her, because “sometimes I liked it there” (R100.1). Nonetheless, at this point, she also protests, “Sometimes I wanted to go, sometimes not” (R100.2). Later, while talking about how her sister and she would frequently run away from the *internatas* “internment” home, Renata accents the *longing for her parents*: “I used to miss them so very, very much, my parents*” (R122.1). She adds, “No matter what my parents are like, they are my parents, they will always be my parents. *To me it doesn’t matter, that they drink, that they left us, I love them and I will love them, I’m telling you, my whole life long*” (R122.3-4). Herman (1997, 101) notices that it is important to a child “to preserve faith in his/her parents” and he/she “must reject the first and most obvious conclusion that something is terribly wrong with them (...)” and “will go to any lengths to construct an explanation (...) that absolves his/her parents of all blame and responsibility.” Still now Renata remembers the *condemning, depreciating, stigmatising, uncaring and unsupportive* behaviours of others towards her: “One housemother, I don’t want to name which one, she told me, she’d say that often, ‘you’re parents are drunkards’::: then you’re such and such, they drink; they threw all of you out...” (R122.6-7). She perceives that the adults in her personal life who are, as Herman (1997, 100-101) states, “the most powerful” and who should be “responsible for her care, do not protect her”. Conversely, they are actually dangerous to her. Such an understanding of the situation drives her into depressions. Unable to change this unbearable reality, she *aggressively attacks her own body*: “And I, like that, that day, when I was poisoning myself, when I drank up the pills, I remembered everything, that that housemother had said, and that day she also said something else about me, and I went into the toilet and drank up the pills” (R122.8). Unrelenting misfortunes, constant painful experiences, repetitive humiliations occurring from time to time and a sense of guilt drive Renata into a state of depressive anxiety and cause gloomy thoughts. As Alekseičikas (1980)

states, depression seems to create a closed circle by making a bad mood stronger and by awakening sad feelings, thereby it affects a person negatively and even prompts that person to suicide. Since Renata has *experienced* repeated *betrayals* by adults, she feels powerless, neglected, separated and seemingly condemned to the will of fate: “Because, that I’m not with my parents,* that my parents were killed,* so everything came together into one to me, that my life is so bad* (...). *Because I have to be here, why do others live better, that I don’t have anything, everything like that is into one pile*” (R124.1-2). As the young woman was talking, I felt her sense of *hopelessness* and *heaviness* that she is still living through, even now. Sighs and pauses preceded her story about her past where she seemingly, unwillingly takes herself. As she remembers and talks, her ever-weakening tone of voice and ever-quieter words bear testimony to the *heavy, oppressive feelings* she is experiencing: “Is it hard for me to talk about mama even now? (6s) It’s really hard, all the more, because I lost them, I don’t have them anymore, and I missed them all the time (15s) (...). Since I loved them*” (R124.4-6). It was as though she had lost hope of having close relations, feeling a commonality with others, because, as she says, “Now I don’t have” parents and, even when they were around, they were always lacking for her. At this time in our talk, we were both able to reach out and touch her vulnerability by revealing her deeply experienced “*loneliness anxiety*” which, as Moustakas (1961, 30) states, “results from rejection or abandonment in childhood”.

Milda and Silva also try to protect themselves with the one *resource* they have available—*psychological defence*. Behind this the threat of an unloving world, the hunger for gentleness and security and the pain of isolation are hidden (Moustakas, 1961). The efforts of these young women to idealise overly much indicate childhood experiences of traumatic events that occurred quite early, when they were still unable to assess their situations and relations with their parents adequately. As a result, they try to recover a connection with their parents that had involved rejection; therefore they experience repeated betrayals. Milda recalls experiencing strong *disappointment* and *grievance* while trying to *find and retrieve the parents who had*

rejected her: “Somehow I couldn’t imagine that home, but I thought – mama (...) but when I found her, I was very disappointed” (M126.12-21). By making use of her creativity and the means she has at hand, she attempts to control her situation and adapt to the existing environment in such a way:

I tried to search (...) I was in the third class (...). All the kids are in the internatas {“internment” home} on Saturday, Sunday (...) Whoever has parents, they all go to their parents, and I, wonder, – how should I find my parents? (...) I was at the principal’s to ask for all my material, well he said nothing, so then I broke into the principal’s (...) I found my file, which had an address written there (...). I fooled the housemother (...) She didn’t know, that I wasn’t allowed home, I was counted as an orphan (M126.2-10).

Unconsciously she *seeks safety* and assurance of *her own powers*, which would refute her powerlessness and, especially, *safeguard her trust* in the people closest to her—her parents. Another, no less important, argument for Milda was to *feel normal*, the same as everyone: “This well this feeling like that, I also have a home, and I can go, well, like all the normal kids, like that” (M126.13-14). Studies by Höjer (2007, 81) show that, for children placed in foster care, “the aspect of *normality*”, to be and to feel “like everybody else” and not be different from their peers, is very important. However, her effort “to feel like all the normal kids” ended unsuccessfully and repeated her traumatic experience once again. After her mother had found her, she did not recognise Milda during their first meeting: “Yeah, she called me by some name (...) ah, not Milda, but some kind of Marina, well Marina” (M128.1). Later the mother betrays her once again:

I remember, I’d say to her and call her mama, well: I say, mama, well, *‘tolko ne pej’* {translator note: in Russian, just don’t drink}, well, I say, I’ll come by more often, just don’t you drink (...) She had promised me, that, well, she wouldn’t drink, but the second time when I came over, she was drunk, and the third time when I came, she was again (M128.4-5).

Meanwhile, according to her, father “accepted me like this, *he says, *‘ty ne moja doč’* {transl. note: in Russian, you’re not my daughter}” (3s)” (M128.10). After this event, when she had tried to reinstate

safety and create a sense of her own “I” by relating with her parents and experiencing a total fiasco, Milda condemns herself by *withdrawing into herself*.

That was it, I ran out, I ran away. I ran with tears in my eyes, that’s all, it was all like that to me [everything got so strange with them and that was it to me, yes that’s all, well it squeezed me, that... Well like that [I started feeling sick, I didn’t want either that mother, nor that father, I didn’t want anything anymore, I wanted to get back to the internatas {“internment” home} as fast as possible (M130.1-4).

Feeling *betrayed, abandoned and neglected* mercilessly by the people closest to her and protesting against the confirmation of her *helplessness*, she tries to change reality by entirely blaming herself. In justification she accepts the error of her own ways: “At that *internatas* {“internment” home}, I behaved in this some kind of way, this kind of, well like::: how can I explain it? (...) I was this kind of BANDIT-KA {transl. note: jargon for “bandit” with a feminine ending}” (M126.3-4) ((brightens up when saying this)). As Herman (1997, 103) explains, she “seizes upon this explanation (...) for it enables her “to preserve a sense of meaning, hope, and power.” As she tells about this, she brightens up on the spot feeling akin to a “hero” because she is able to *confirm her power* over others in an achievable manner. Once again she attempts to adjust to the existing environment and to regenerate her sense of security. This time she associates it not with people but with the only environment she has at the time—life in the *internatas* {“internment” home}: “I ran away and sat down in a bus, all the faster to the *internatas*, at the *internatas*, I already felt safer, well, as I understand, it was safer for me over there” (M130.6-7). Milda recollects that, even later, after she was an adult, she had a *tough time adjusting to life*: “I simply as for myself (3s) I down-graded my own self very much, and that’s all, later on, I couldn’t see any other way out anymore, except that, I don’t have any way out*” (M4.6-7). As she explained, “that” was what led her to narcotics, prostitution and crime, which would land her in jail. This way all her efforts to create a life for herself continue her traumatic experiences. Employing psychological defence, she completely

denies having any opportunity for a relationship with her parents: “Overall I didn’t have either a mother, or a father” (M124.1).

Much like Milda, Silva also *rejects the family* of her parents in whom, as she says, “There’s a real lack of trust. (3s) You could say, all that exists is a lie” (S4.1). She states, “My three kids are my family” (S6.1). *Disillusionment about the relations with her parents* in the past makes it difficult for Silva to recreate her own “I”: “It hurts so much to talk about everything. It’s already the past, and it seems I don’t want to be digging in that, I don’t want to remember anything and pound on my heart all over again. It was as it was*” (S30.1). A sense of *grievance* and *disappointment in her parents* is felt even now, during our talk: “I lacked a mother, parents. I lacked my own family” (S80.1), and the talk alternates between *anger and rage at her mother*. She utters a few words seemingly either to check my reactions or more to check her own feelings for her mother: “The first thing I’d do if I met up with her would be to kill her” (*from the researcher’s notes of 2008 11 26*). The same as Milda, Silva *attempted to reconstruct her relations with her mother* several times. However, the same as for Milda, this *ended in her rejection and recurring betrayal*. She shares her experience about her first meeting with her mother:

The first time I saw my mother, it was when (6s) I had ridden over to see my brother and I had a long talk with the woman my brother was living with. That question always bothered me. I talked to that woman of my brother’s about my past more than once. And I had told her, all I would want was to see her and tell her straight in front of her eyes and ask – why she left me. And so I rode over, (2s) she came out, all drunk, and (1s) my brother said – ‘Mama, do you know who she is?’ She stands there, takes a look and says – ‘No’ (2s). And I told her, – I say (Dana {nickname}), what you don’t know, that I’m saying this name of a child of yours named Silva? (4s) At first she said, that no, but then my brother said – ‘What, don’t you know your daughter Silva?’ And I realised, that after all I was not needed. She even asked, are these her grandchildren? I told her no, I am not your daughter and these are not your grandchildren. So and that was all, I sat down in the car and drove away (S84.1-7).

As Silva recalls, it was not until she was in the seventh grade before she learned she had any parents at all: “About them {*researcher note*:

her parents} I didn't know anything until I was in the seventh class" (S68.1). Even then, she only found out due to a twist of fate: "When we ran away, that math teacher went and she wrote that (1s) statement about us, that complaint that we ran away" (S68.3). Bandura (1986, 32; 1982c) relates that an "analysis of behavioural patterns across the life span reveals that fortuitous encounters often exert an important influence on the course of human lives".

When Silva was living in the care home, information about any existing parents was confidential and held back from the children, the same as in Milda's case. When Silva ran away from her lessons along with the other children there for the umpteenth time, an assistant called them in and told to bring in their parents. Only then Silva learned from the teacher that she also has parents. Had Silva not run away from class and the teacher had not called them in for an explanation and requested to bring in their parents, she might not know to this day whether or not she has parents, brothers or sisters. Then, overcome by a burning desire to know more about her parents and family, Silva, the same as Milda, takes drastic means by breaking into the file cabinet. She still remembers the instant when she had found her documents: "Yeah, so that's when I found out, that I had parents, this was the first time, I found out about my whole family. Then, after I'd read it, I found out about my mother, my father" (S68.6). As she talks, Silva seems to go back to those times again, when she was looking for her papers. She speaks emotionally, gesturing with her arms. She brightens up with happiness from time to time as she tells the story about how inventively she had searched through the documents and how she had organised the other children to be on the look out for any approaching staff: "We made a pact with the kids, purely to watch by the doors or by the window, and in case somebody's coming back to give a sign" (S68.5). Then she alternates with *bursts of anger*, asking over and over several times how that could have been possible: "So and then, and then I busted up that flower in a fury" (S72.4). She remembers being overcome with *desperate rage* due to the information that had been withheld from her for a long time, due to the lie by the "internment" home's housemother when

she had been asked about what parents she had: "She'd tell us—I don't know a thing" (S70.2). Silva releases her pent-up anger:

I remember, since I was so furious, there was this flower hanging at our place, this vine = so I = in fury, I busted up that flower* for the house-mother, because she hadn't told me anything earlier, even though I had been there how many times with that question – do we have parents over there? I had given the assignment (S70.1).

Even now Silva actually boils in *anger* remembering the painful instances she had experienced at that time, that were so difficult for her to comprehend. With *grievance* she relates:

It happened that, once I'd read that case, there was this one address in there. That my mother is from Vilnius, there was an address, so I had written a letter using that address. It turns out that, a reply had come in, I was sixteen years old, but nobody showed me that letter and nobody said anything. As I found out later on, she had written back at least three letters to me. I didn't get them, *I hadn't even gotten them... nobody had shown them to me. The housemother came back at four thirty and then she asked 'what's going on here?' And that's when I told her straight forward, that I had opened the drawer and (...) pulled everything out (...) and then I told the housemother – 'Why are you hiding everything from us?' I tell her – 'You said you didn't know anything, but I got into that case, I read my own case.' I tell her I have parents, I have brothers, sisters and brothers, everything, I didn't tell her, that I had taken the photograph. I said all I had to say and slammed the door and walked out. I ran away (S72.1-6).

The painful experiences in Silva's life cause her *anger*, even now. She feels terrible and blames other people, especially her mother: "I thought, that she had only given birth, so she could lose us, why did she have to bring us into the world anyway? To suffer? That's how everything was so painful" (S90.1). The pain Silva experienced when she sensed antagonism and malice towards her caused her to thirst for revenge for her rejection: "Why wasn't I brought up?" (S86.1). She says, "I told her, I'd never forgive for the rest of my life, until I hear an answer from you" (S92.5). Bowlby (1982, xxix) asserts that the consequence of mother absence inevitably generates for a child "a powerful sense of loss and anger". Thus, according to this author, a person's "responses of protest, despair and detachment are mainly due to the

loss of maternal care during a highly vulnerable stage of development”. Silva feels that her need for respect and self-respect were not satisfied and her existence was not recognised. Just like all other children, she also wanted love, warmth, closeness and security from her parents:

I grew up in a children’s care home, though I also wanted to have my own home, my own family, parents, like all normal kids, well like that. And not so, everybody could beat me, pound on me (2s), for them to have, what I never had in my life*. I often dreamed about having a lot of toys, and after I’d get back from school, that mama would greet me, that there would be food made, that she would take care. But I didn’t have all that* (S94.1-3).

It gets easier on her when she succeeds at getting back at her mother, at least somewhat, by not talking to her on the phone or tossing the horn of the phone to the side: “I think she got mad at me then. I sensed her having a cry. But it got easier on me then. I figured, let her cry” (S92.6-7). Zohar and Marshall (2004, 50) state that “frustration of one sort or another underlies most anger”, when a person feels unrequited love, is outcast or denied or remains unheard or forgotten. In these cases, the person who is overcome with anger looks for mistakes, shortcomings and faults in the person who has caused the pain, as if seeking to overpower or somehow punish that person in such a manner.

The studies conducted by Sinclair, Baker, Lee, and Gibbs (2007, 275) about the looked-after children system in England revealed and substantiated that “relationships are the key to young people’s well-being”. Thus, to help all the children who are in this system, assistance and all possible resources “should be directed towards supporting these care relationships”. The painful and quite cruel experiences of Silva’s life in the “internment” home during her childhood and adolescence bear witness that there were no supporting relationships there but rather the opposite—threats, coercion, isolation and secrecy:

Even the housemothers beat us, and we got into fights with the kids, especially the older kids would hurt us (...) Yeah, the housemothers would beat us, like they’d take a ruler and smack us across the hands, with a switch across our legs, all kinds of ways. And they’d beat us so it would hurt really badly (S34.1).

And, if anybody'd drive in, I don't know like some commission, or just anybody'd drive in and they'd want to ask, what was going on here, they'd say that she fell down (S36.1-3).

Silva remembers what certain misdoings or breaking petty rules at the *internatas* "internment" home meant: "If you did something, like if you threw some piece of trash down, or something like that, you 'get yours' for that" (S46.8). Herman (1997, 100) also notices, "(...) violence, threats, and the capricious enforcement of rules instil terror and (...)" destroy the relationships that would afford protection. In addition to all that, in a violent environment, the victims are usually isolated from the outside world by limitations on their social contacts. Such restrictions on a victim become obstacles to experiencing authentic life. Unmerciful punishments were doled out to her, as much as to the other children. When asked about the punishments she had received at the care home, her remembrances are indignant and filled with grievance even now:

Yeah yeah, they'd punish us, and how. It'd be they'd shut us up in this dark little room, when we had done something. And it was real cold in there. And dark. I remember it hurt real bad, it was cold. When they'd let me out, I'd go to get warmed up, I'd turn on the heater (3s). It seems to me, so I could get warm. that they'd let me out before evening (S42.1-2).

Later Silva was transferred to another "internment" home, which she described by saying, "There we grew up like in a prison" (S46.7). More than that, as she said, there seemed to be no limit to the vicious fantasies of cruelty by the people working there:

The assistant was very bad, as well as the principal, and some of the housemothers. The housemother did her 'weaving' in bed, or, if you did something, the housemother would take you over to the principal's, close up in his office and either with that ruler, or with a stick you'd get a beating. It would happen, they'd take your clothes off, sometimes naked, and beat you. It would happen, when they'd dress you down naked they'd walk you naked down all the school's halls. The boys would get beaten across their sex organs, and the girls got undressed. Those were the kinds of well punishments there were over there (S46.8-14).

Later Silva remembers painful experiences as she underwent violence, humiliation, powerlessness, fear and horror:

There was this 'thing' of ours, and one time we went outside the area, in other words we broke the rule about the boundaries of the area. We climbed over the fence, and we weren't allowed to go beyond the fence. That time we were going over by the bogs. The housemother saw, she called us, told us to come over, and I remember we also got it for that. Somehow they gathered everybody up and well... beat us, and they even shaved our hair off in front of everybody and said, 'Look what's waiting for you.' I remember that even now, how I said to her, I even remember my words now. I had said – 'Is that any way to act with people? You think, we don't have parents, so you can act any way you want?' I told her, 'Try doing that to the other kids, who have parents.'

And then they shut me up in this storage room, well this kind of cellar; it was down below, dressed me in pyjamas and shut me up. Before it had been a storage place, well this little storage room of the supplies lady. Three days I was closed up in there (...) That room was really not big at all. It had no windows. Three times that happened to me (...) They'd bring salt, one slice of bread for the whole day and water. And there were even dried peas scattered on the floor. That was, so you'd stand on them. I didn't eat either the bread or the salt (...) One little slice (...) So I'd play with the peas, not only, that I played, but I also ate the peas too. They had me closed up for three days (...) And because of, that I had talked like that. In the morning, it'd be, they'd bring water, at lunch you'd get purely bread, in the evening water again (S48.2-S54.3).

Silva's experience substantiates the opinion of the other research participant about the care home: "I'm even inclined to think, there's cooperative work going on between the pimps and some of the care home workers" (B16.9). The use of such, so-called "upbringing methods" prepared children from a young age for a life of victimisation. The methods applied at the institutional "internment" home for children where Silva lived were destruction of one's own "I", incorporation of powerlessness and fear and restriction of outside relationships. These were meant to achieve her absolute obedience: "The others were quiet about it, but not me, I spoke out, so I (2s) was locked in, they said, you're too brassy and said, what you got wasn't enough to get a lesson, so you get, this too" (S58.1). Herman (1997) notices that the methods used to enforce obedience by children in a violent

environment are comparable to the penalties adopted for political prisoners, which are permeated with control involving entrapments, exaggerated demands, isolation, threats and punishments.

Even though Silva's fundamental trust in others had been harmed by the multiple traumas she had experienced while growing up in a violent atmosphere, she still thirsts for a close relationship with someone who would satisfy her need for protection. One attachment that provided security was a relationship with one teacher. Silva remembers, "There was this class leader. She acted normally with us (...) She was normal, she paid attention to the kids, for example, like I felt, like I was also needed by someone, she'd arrange all kinds of holidays for us. She cared for us" (S44.2). Silva also remembers asking her "wouldn't she like to be my mama?" (S46.3) Such behaviour by Silva, her attaching quickly to a person she doesn't know very well, the same as her repetitive attempts to form a relationship with her mother, who had betrayed and left her and later did not recognise her own daughter, confirms her need for security and belonging to someone. She has one essential question that remains unanswered to this day: *Why did she lose me, leave me?* It remains a mystery to the woman: "Till now it's not answered (...). Why did she drop us and leave us? Why, wasn't she the one to bring me up? What made me so different, while the rest, who were -brothers, my sisters, not. Why did she leave me? (3s)" (S80.2). Moustakas (1961) has noticed that a child experiences great horror when he/she calls for mama but receives no reply. Therefore, the horror Silva experienced when she did not get an answer from her mother remains to this day. Nevertheless, her question—*why?*—in her effort to get an explanation and understand what had lain beyond the present shows her doubt regarding her own assumption of her mother's guilt: "She had only given birth to us so she could lose us (...) to suffer" (S90.1). It does redirect her understanding more realistically: "As far as we actually found out, was that she used to drink before" (S82.1). Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 13) hold the opinion that the most real things in a person's life are "not so much the truth about the way the world is", but what that person "knows to be true" him/herself, i.e., "a world defined around" his/her own "experience".

6.2.4. “We’re easy... We can be used... even bought”: Experiences of doll objects

The stories of the early lives of all three women are quite different although several commonalities link them. All of them grew up in families with four members and were the second-born child. They all lived in families with conflictual, tense interrelationships and experienced physical abuse and neglect from their alcohol-dependent mothers. One commonality in the experiences of Loreta and Evelina was that both *their parents sold* them. Loreta was sold by her mother: “My mama, well you could say, she sold me” (L18.2) and Evelina—by her father: “My father sold me to this man (...) only I didn’t find out until later” (E38.1). Differently from Loreta and Evelina, Vilė considered her *relations with father* as especially important. Father had upheld and provided her with strength during the difficult periods in her life: “Father supported me, especially after my husband’s death, he didn’t let me go anywhere, I didn’t even go to work, I never went anywhere (...) I cried from morning till night (...) I don’t remember the funeral very well (...) I couldn’t take care of myself” (V104.1-2). One significant, sensitive recollection she still has today regards her father’s upholding and understanding reaction to the first signs of her womanhood: “Just as I said, how it was when my period first started, my dad noticed, that there were underpants hanging out to dry all over the bathroom. Then he told mama—‘Go have a look something’s not right with her (4s). Do you understand what I’m saying?’” (V136.7). Rukšaitė (2008, 143) asserts, “Father is the first masculine figure in a daughter’s life”, and this forms her relationship with her masculine side and “with men in general”. The attachment between father and daughter affects a girl’s emotional and spiritual growth and forms her individuality and sense of identity.

Differently than the relation Vilė had, Evelina and Loreta had no strong *attachment to father* from their earliest days. Later, after Loreta’s parents had divorced during her transitory period into adolescence, the contact with her father broke off entirely: “When I was almost fifteen, they divorced. After that, I didn’t see father any more” (L22.1). The research performed by Santrock and Warshak (1979,

120) also show that children who remain under the care of their mothers associate with their fathers less and are “more demanding with their mothers”. Loreta, who remained living with her mother and continued hoping for changes in her family, testifies about her *loss of trust in her mother*: “I believed, that everything would change, that mama would stop drinking, well in one word there were many reasons, why I stayed with her” (L22.3). However, the trust she had in the most important member remaining in her family, her mother, was broken: “Obviously she didn’t quit drinking, everything kept going on, and there was even more” (L24.5). As Stern (2000, 6) notes, “A subjective experience of a sense of self” depends on what we experience in our relations with others that later form “a cardinal perspective of viewing the interpersonal world”. Loreta notices that, at that time, she did not have anyone else to believe in with whom she could be open—there was no contact with father and her brother lived with him, so her relationship with brother also broke off at the time of the divorce. According to her, “Well and who could I confide in? To the mother who was doing the same thing? Well and so on, you know, that you can’t do anything, you have nobody to confide in about it, how it is, and you do, that, that you know best” (L24.4). Grigutyte (2008, 107) claims that when “a child’s needs are not satisfied” and he/she is “cast off”, what forms is “a negative view of the world and the self”. The child feels unsafe and unworthy and believes that the world “will behave with him/her the same as mother had”.

The earlier experience Evelina had, when her parents had cared for her, had not helped her gain *either a sense of security or a fundamental trust in another*, not by her *relationship with mother* nor *with father*: “My parents drank and they didn’t care much, where I am, what I’m doing... I didn’t trust not my father, nor my mother. Even when I was a child, I didn’t feel well” (E48.2-52.6-7). She felt neglected, lonely and devoid of any humane care for her from the people closest to her: “I didn’t feel like a member of the family. I was more like a maid (...) I was a nothing in the family” (E52.1-2-4). When Evelina was asked what that meant when she said “I didn’t feel well”, it was hard for her to name her feelings. Her answers were usually terse and

she only drew her surroundings in gloomy, gray colours. Alekseičikas (1980, 44) notices that feelings are not aroused in children who were inappropriately taught and raised in childhood, who had insufficient attachments with people close to them and who grew up without supervision or with alcohol-dependent parents that did not pay sufficient attention to them. An insufficiency of feelings tends to be “less stimulating for cognitive interests, the intellect, will and the overall level of activity by a personality”. According to Herman (1997), alienation and separation, including the belonging to a community later imbue a person who has acquired such negative relationships with his/her closest family members.

A recollection comes up about the first meeting I had with Evelina. I met this young woman at a social welfare institution for temporary housing. She had a petite body build and pale face with the features of a likeable girl with a good character. Evelina appeared frightened, lost and incommunicative. We began our talk with my expressing pleasure that she had agreed to share her experiences and open up, even though she knew it would not be easy. She already had some information about me from the social worker who had helped to make this contact. (I had asked this worker to speak with Evelina about her possible participation in this research. The worker claimed she had agreed most happily and willingly.) During our talk, Evelina’s answers were very brief with frequent pauses of silence and her thoughts “jumped” from one event to another (at times it seemed she had either not heard my question or had not understood it). Herman (1997, 100) writes about persons who had suffered traumatic experiences and their resulting intense emotions “incapacitated the ‘synthesising’ function of the mind”. I felt as though Evelina was in a constant state of alert, something that perplexed me and caused me anxiety. It could be said that I did not know her at all. She had merely agreed to talk about her experiences due to her conviction (as she later confirmed herself towards the end of our discussion): “I’d advise, asking for help, talking about that” (E70.1). She believed that, by being open, she would help others (that was seemingly her explanation for why she had agreed to participate in the research). At the time, I thought it was important for her to talk

about what she had experienced. However, by the same, I also felt her fear regarding how much she could trust me and open up to me. I also sensed that, during our talk, it was extremely important to her to disregard distance and to gain mutual understanding. This would help her to reinstate human contact and open up while helping me to understand her better. From time to time, it would seem that she was afraid to say too much or not the right thing. Her anxiety was contagious to me as well. At different times, I sensed that it was not easy for her to return her memories to the past and that I wanted the talk to end more quickly. However, as soon as I sensed such thoughts on my part, I would become distressed fearing that she could also sense my own state of mind. On my way home after the interview, I considered that this had been more difficult than the meetings with all the others had been earlier. It was emotionally difficult to hear the sorts of traumatic experiences this woman had gone through knowing what it means to be abused and the consequences of it and how difficult it is to open up to another person, even when seemingly wanting to do so.

Vilė, the opposite of Evelina, was sufficiently talkative. She willingly agreed to share her experiences: “If it’s interesting to you and you think, that it might help somebody” {researcher’s notes on 2007.01.14}. Herman (1997) claims that a person who has suffered trauma regains the usual psychological characteristics like trust, initiative and autonomy, which had been harmed or deformed by the trauma, by renewing relationships with others. Therefore Vilė’s openness and willingness to participate in the research seemed to confirm her successful healing process that had started when she had quit prostitution. She had already formed another family, had a job and had a *close emotional contact* with her neighbour with whom she was able to talk out matters. As she said, “I can really chat well with her. Sometimes we both cry a bit together (...) She cries a bit, I cry a bit, that’s how (2s). Sometimes we go out for a walk together” (V98.1-2). The experience of having a close, strong tie with another person is vitally important for forming and retaining identity and for functioning (Johnson, 1991; Gudaitė, 2008). Gudaitė (2008) claims that, when a child has failed to experience

or unsuccessfully experienced this symbolic tie during his/her earlier developmental process, that child continues to seek such a tie, to have such an experience. Vilè recalls that she had been entirely different before. As she notices, “I used to be passive for a long time” (V102.1). She connects her *feeling powerless and lacking initiative* to her *lacking contact with her mother* in her life: “I always missed having mama, I missed a lot from my mama (...) I missed explanations about everything, about women, everything, about what something means, what women are supposed to do in life, and what not to do” (V134.1). The results of the research performed by Dix, Gershoff, Meunier and Miller (2004, 1226) reveal that sensitive and supportive parents “contribute to the superior development” of children and “the absence of such support”, which is “regulated by parents”, concerns immediate emotions, and depressive symptoms may lead to problems”, as testified by children. Vilè’s *grievance and disappointment* regarding the contacts with her mother and her mother’s behaviour and feelings for her daughter have remained to now: “If she loved me, then she loved me in a strange way, I don’t know what that means (2s)” (V142.3). As Grigutyte (2008) asserts, a negative constellation of the complex making up mother develops, if a child’s needs are not satisfied, if the child is rejected and if the contact between the mother and child is unsuccessful. Then a negative self-image forms, which distorts the comprehension about the world. Siegel (2003, 38) states that longitudinal attachment studies in children have found that “a number of positive outcomes in their development”, such as “enhanced emotional flexibility, social functioning and cognitive abilities” can be conditional to a secure attachment by children. Not one of these women had experienced a strong attachment or a safe attachment to their parents (except for Vilè, who had a strong contact with her father). Remembering their subjective experiences in childhood and adolescence, they feel more negative than positive feelings for their parents:

She’s simply not interesting to me, *uninteresting, I have no desire to get together with her* (3s). I, it seems to me, that I could get together with her now (1s), completely coldly tell her hello and walk on by (V156.3-4).

I already understood, that I wouldn't be able to live at home (L56.2).

I was ashamed* because I knew, that my parents know*. Actually they sometimes forced me to act that way, so that I would feel shame (E28.2-3).

Pieper Heineman and Pieper (1999, 208) say that a child “experiences the twin disappointment” when something bad happens to a child and his/her parents are nearby noticing it but permitting it to happen.

The *sexual abuse in adolescence* that these women (Evelina and Lina) experienced manifested in various emotional, cognitive, physical and behavioural dysfunctions and caused negative consequences in their later lives. Both of them confirm that this sexual abuse was the beginning, later leading them into prostitution. Evelina recalls, “Well everything somehow started that way*. Yeah, yeah, that was the first time back then” (E74.1). Loreta also confirms that the first instance of sexual abuse had affected her very much: “Well of course that first time affected me.* Well know it affected me and affected me hard*” (L28.1). The studies conducted by Finkelhor and Browne (1986, 181) confirm that an experience of sexual abuse takes a child into a process in which his/her “sexuality is shaped in a developmentally inappropriate and interpersonally dysfunctional fashion” called *traumatic sexualisation*. Loreta's experiences substantiate the claims by these scholars that this is a process which, at the time of the trauma, distorts a child's “sexual self-concepts”, along with the view about the self and about the world: “It didn't happen at once, but later this kind of process started, and I truly did close up inside myself” (L28.2). Rothschild (2003) claims that a child who has experienced sexual abuse withdraws from others, even from his/her own family members, feeling lost, powerless to change anything, neglected and pushed away from human concern and safety. Loreta remembers the feelings she went through after her abuse: “Fear, helplessness, something more that (...) and later on – it was mostly hate. For the entire male sex. Well I was feeling kind of broken up, all full of fear* some kind of depressive*. Broken up, in the sense of, broken down” (L30.1-3). Finkelhor and Browne (1986, 183) indicate that sexual abuse suffered by a child causes that child a *powerless*

feeling when his/her “will, desire and sense of efficacy are continually contravened”. Loreta was sold by her mother and Evelina—by her father, people who were the closest to them, people they trusted who, according to Finkelhor and Browne (1986, 182–3) “treated them with callous disregard”, which instilled the experience of feeling *betrayal internally*. These authors notice that the strength of the betrayal feeling depends on “how tricked the child feels”. Evelina still feels guilt and shame: “After all I could have run away, not let him, do something (...) at least now it seems that way to me (...). At first he told me to be quiet, not to tell anybody anything” (E42.1-E46.10). In addition to all this, the pressure placed on Evelina by the abuser to remain quiet pushed her into isolation and burdened her with a feeling of separateness whenever, as Rothschild (2003) says, “The victim does not feel he can tell anyone what happened.” Additionally Finkelhor and Baron (1986, 76) note, that “when victimisation occurs, it alienates a girl from her parents”. Shame, guilt and a low self-appraisal were the negative connotations that formed due to these women’s sense of *stigmatisation* as well as their fear, distrust of others, especially men, and constant anxiety, which led them to confusion, withdrawal and internal nervousness: “When it happened, there was something I lost, I don’t know myself. I was scared then, scared of myself, scared of the entire male family (...). I couldn’t understand what’s happening to me. Was it maybe just my imagination?” (E78.1-4). Shaffer (2002, 572) notices that children who have experienced trauma “are at risk of a variety of adjustment problems”, including loneliness, anxiety, depression, further erosion of self-esteem and self-confidence and social withdrawal. They face difficulties in adjusting to society.

6.3. Summary: Traits and patterns in early life traumatic experiences prior to prostitution

The analysis of the childhoods and adolescences of these women highlighted *certain patterns* in their lives that can be described as follows: *unhappy internalised relationships; inner instability; vulnerability*

in relationships with others; damaged self—low self-confidence and self-esteem; objectified, traumatised and stigmatised identity; vulnerability to sexual abuse; self-destructive or devaluating behaviour; complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD) and addiction to unhappiness.

From a social cognitive perspective, the “model of triadic reciprocity” is the basis of human functioning, whereby a person’s “behavioural, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other” (Bandura, 1986, 18). Pečkauskaitė-Šatrijos Ragana (1998, 19) has noted, “There are no greater and more blessed duties than the duties of parents”. Furthermore, she says that parents who laid “firm foundations of morality in a child’s soul” help that child “return onto a straight road”, even if he/she happens to stray for a time. Karmaza (2007) asserts that children who experience emotional deprivation and lack a sense of love, thereby growing up in isolation and stress, develop more poorly and grow up withdrawn with a disturbed thought development.

Unhappy internalised relationships

Unhappy internalised relationships applicably describe the states of being of the women in prostitution who participated in this study. Additionally, as I discovered, the study also revealed an atypical *pattern* in their childhood or adolescence. Pieper Heineman & Pieper (1999, 238) uses a term *inner unhappiness*, which they define as the “unstable inner happiness” of a child when his/her “developmental needs are not adequately met”. Since important needs were not satisfied in childhood and conditions were not formed for these women to express their feelings and painful experiences. They were vulnerable, and this pushed them into further maltreatment.

The experiences of the participants in this research revealed that they had had a shortage of mother love and the satisfaction of a close emotional contact in childhood or adolescence. All of them experienced a *lack of support* or *caring love* from their parents as well as a lack of *safety* in their family or other close surrounding. Pileckaitė-Markovienė and others (2004) assign an exceptional role to mother as a link between the events in a child’s life and that

child's mental state. These authors claim that a child's major experiences, worldview, relationships with people and the quality of sociability depend on mother. The emotional tie between a mother and child and their interactions provide a child with a sense of safety and encourage trust in others. As Pieper Heineman & Pieper (1999, 2–3) put it, a child's "primary happiness becomes unshakable" when she/he feels certain without a doubt about caring love, and this is what leads her/him to "stable secondary happiness", which is "generated by everyday activities" lasting until the end of adolescence. Siegel (2003, 37) asserts, "Children are born with an innate need to be attached to their caregivers", and this "creates a triad of developmental processes", such as "proximity seeking", "safe haven" and "secure base". All these elements that are provided for a child help her/him develop secure attachments, which are "generally associated with a child's development of emotional competence, a sense of well-being, and interpersonal skills".

Fromm (1965), who considered the family a psychological agent in society, also notices that the very earliest experiences a child lives through and the values transferred by parents have a fateful effect on personality formation. The author notes that a child yearns for everything any person could want—love, security, information and material values—and this appears in that child's character as a reaction to her/his associations and relationships with others. When conditions are not formed for a child to sense her/his own power in such an experience, it paralyses her/his self-confidence and initiative. Fear appears and antagonism develops, which the child may not be permitted to express. However, when love and care from parents are conditional and the child obeys, then the child develops an attitude of refusal to overtake the world actively. Such a child directs all her/his own energy to outside resources in expectation of fulfilling all his/her wants.

In addition to all that, these women had no protection from the "ups and downs" of everyday life, neither in childhood nor in adolescence, and their developmental needs were not adequately met. It made them *vulnerable* and caused unstable inner happiness. These women experienced painful inner unhappiness when they could not

make choices for themselves. Their responses were by behaving in a way that meant *ignoring rules*. As examples, Bronè, Milda, Renata and Silva ran away from their institutional care homes and skipped school. Toma ran away from home. Algè, Milda, Silva and Toma skipped school or their homework assignments. This also involved *choosing friends* that made them miserable, such as Bronè, Diana and Silva, who ran from school with their friends to smoke or buy cigarettes, simply to the movie theatre or to go, as she says, “slumming around somewhere”. Another was *getting in trouble by illegal actions*: Algè stole money from her mother, Silva, Milda broke in searching for documents about their parents, and other, younger children gathered the money Milda needed for the club. They attempted different methods to retain their, as Pieper Heineman & Pieper (1999, 193) say, “inborn wish to lead a life of happiness, fulfilment, and close relationships”. Toma and Algè *ran away from home* to get attention from their mothers, when their mothers indicated no forthcoming, appropriate response regarding their displeasure or disappointment about the existing situation and the relationships at home. Unfortunately, this did not bring them any of the well-being they desired. The experiences of all the women revealed that their emotional needs during childhood and adolescence were not “adequately met”. This led them to many *learning difficulties* (all the women), *navigating among various temptations* (Bronè, Diana, Evelina, Irma and Loreta) and *engaging early in sexual intercourse* (Diana, Evelina, Irma, Loreta, Renata, Silva, Toma and Vilè). An extreme expression of inner unhappiness was *attempting suicide* in adolescence (Renata and Vilè).

Therefore, as Bandura (1986) explains, a person who is guided by erroneous concepts about her/himself and the surrounding world is likely to choose and understand the events happening in her/his life erroneously, for various reasons (for example, experienced distress).

Inner instability

Additionally certain authors (Saarni, 1999; Karmaza, 2007), who base their work on modern theories on emotional development, notice that appropriate assurance of children’s emotional expressions provides the foundation for them to achieve certain goals in life,

to grow intellectually and to develop social relationships along with solid, spiritual and physical health.

These women did not have a chance to cultivate *inner equilibrium* since they were growing up in various environments that were unfavourable for expressing emotions, either positive or negative feelings. Karmaza (2007, 112) observes, that “children with the most problems come from detached families” in which they are “socially neglected by parents who are only interested in themselves and their own problems”. The behaviours of such children later are “likely to be inappropriate (...) — antagonistic, egoistic and protesting”. If parents wish to raise a healthy and happy child who is skilful and self-confident, they must be gentle, sensitive and devoted to their child. All the women participating in this research experienced in their childhood or adolescence *all sorts of long-lasting neglect in their immediate environments*, in one way or another. They formed *antagonistically inclined personalities* later in any sorts of their relationships, protesting against any demands or other efforts placed on them to adhere to rules. Even more, such life’s circumstances caused *a state of continual anxiety*. The participating women in prostitution who had suffered traumatic experiences of one sort or another in their early lives, in childhood or adolescence, revealed their *inner instability* substantiating that they had not resolved their traumas—i.e., they *lacked trauma resolution*.

Fosha (2003, 223) states, “Just *one* relationship with a caregiver” having “a high reflective self function can enhance the resilience of an individual”. As the research participants attested about their experiences, they indicated that specifically this was lacking in their lives, this “*just one*” *relationship or contact* with a person close to them, which would have helped them become stronger at overcoming life’s future challenges.

Most research participants (Bronè, Diana, Evelina, Irma, Loreta, Milda, Odeta, Renata, Toma, Vilè and Zita) assured that the significant changes in their lives that led them into prostitution happened specifically due to *painful, traumatic events they never overcame*. Herman (1997, 59) asserts, “The experiences of women who have encountered a rapist suggest that the same resilient characteristics are protective (...)”, which can show their internal strength and

reactive strategies. The very same characteristics of resilience can help in successfully preventing rape as they can in surrendering to rape. Of the fifteen research participants, nine women experienced sexual violence and assault from various people— father, stepfather, brother, friends of parents or husband or a housemother at an institutional care home. Of the nine, only one, Zita, experienced rape as an adult, and only one, Milda, experienced attempted rape as an adult. The other seven were sexually assaulted in adolescence (from the ages of 13 to 16 years), and one, Irma, was abused incestuously as a child (at age 8 years and later). Only one of the nine women evaded a sexual assault by employing *a strategy of active resistance*. The woman bears testimony about her experience of resisting abuse:

... I look out that window. Whatever happens is going to happen – I was so scared! I don't know that kind of fear, I thought all three were going to rape me? (...) I'm thinking I'm going to jump now, so I gave such a bang on that window, I remember, Jesus, I cut myself all up. Well what it is is this second storey (...) I was all bloody I remember from the glass, (...) I jumped like, well like this here, on my knees, well, everything was bruised, and here, and here. (...) But, Jesus, then I didn't feel the pain, not anything, I felt the fear! (M174.6-12)

Milda and Silva also used a strategy of resistance by breaking into a file cabinet for documents about children's families when they did not get information about their own parents. The girls living in institutional care homes often resisted the abuse they experienced by running away or simply by ignoring the existing control by various means.

The *phobias and temper tantrums* that some women acquired attest to their lack of *inner equilibrium*. Bronë says she avoids "dark places to now". Algè mentions that fear hits her "simply by a hand raising". Silva's *temper tantrums* against her mother are accompanied by her much repeated words, "The first thing I'd do if I met up with her would be to kill her" (from the researcher's notes of 2008 11 26). Irma simply refuses to associate with her mother thereby expressing her anger for betraying her, for leaving her. Meanwhile Algè finally decides not to live with her mother. Odeta's anger at her father manifests by her episodically associating with him to try getting revenge.

Moreover, the participants of this study also confirmed experiencing many *health problems*. Two of them are HIV infected. Five, Bronè, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita, mentioned having constant problems due to sexually transmitted diseases, and they are still using drugs because they are still in prostitution. Only three of the fifteen women, Algè, Irma and Renata, did not use drugs during their prostitution periods. Only one of the fifteen women, Algè, did not drink alcohol. Another drank alcoholic beverages as an aid to bear her abuse and lessen her inner anxiety. Certain authors found strong negative relationships in their analyses of direct or indirect links between childhood maltreatment, posttraumatic stress disorder and women's physical and mental health (Lang, Aarons, Gearity, Laffaye, Satz, Dresselhaus, Stein, 2008). Many of the research participants had *difficulties learning in school* during childhood or adolescence. Only *six* participating women completed secondary school consisting of twelve classes. Only *four* completed secondary school consisting of ten classes of which two attended and graduated night, secondary school. *Two* women never graduated secondary school—one had completed only eight classes.

Vulnerability in relationships with others

Herman (1997) notes that the defence traumatised people learn in childhood becomes a great obstacle later when attempting to form safe, adult relationships. All women during their childhood or adolescence experienced multiplex betrayal by intimate people. *Mother had rejected* most of these women (eight). Bronè, Milda and Silva had been left at institutional care homes for children before reaching the age of one year. To this day, they suffer painful, deep wounds due to this trauma. During the time of our talk, Bronè continues to have *difficulties trusting* persons she does not know very well. She noticeably kept her distance from me during our talks, and I could feel her anxiety and anxiousness. As soon as I made an effort to approach her more closely, she would withdraw at once. As I spoke with her, I could sense that the best way to retain contact with her at this time was to help her keep a safe distance. Milda and Silva were my clients. Therefore, by now, I had gained their trust, and they were quite open with me. I understood this by their sharing very intimate

matters with me and behaving quite freely now, during our talks. However, I remember how long it had taken before they had begun trusting me. Diana had been left at the care home for children from the age of two and Renata, from the age of five years. They always felt *betrayed by the person closest to them—their mother*. Milda recalls the hurtful and traumatic experience, when she attempted to make contact once more with her mother and father. Mother as well as father had rejected her: “I ran out, and that was all, and I didn’t want either mother, or father (...) I ran in tears, everything, everything to me was so [everything got strange with them and that’s how everything to me just everything, well squeezed, so that...” Obviously, this is why she said that “all in all” she had “neither mother nor father”, that “unnecessary for those people (...) inside everything, was so strange (...) so dark.”

Irma and Julia also had *difficulties trusting others*. They often *chose the position of an observer*, watching their age peers from the sidelines, saying they felt safer that way. Vilè also no longer cares about her mother, who had never cared for her, not in childhood and not in adolescence, and who had betrayed her several times by leaving her to resolve difficulties on her own when she was pregnant, when she fell downstairs and when her husband died. Furthermore her mother had stolen her personal items and her money to buy alcohol. Since Vilè feels wronged and disappointed in her relationship with her mother, the woman says, “I don’t want to see her (...) She’s simply not interesting to me (...) I can very coldly say hello and walk on past her.”

Differently than Vilè or Irma, Renata and Diana *long for relationships with their mother*, which were always lacking for them. Later they experience traumas in their relationships with close persons, mistrust others and avoid any more intimate relationships. Otherwise, like Bronè, Evelina, Odeta, Toma and Zita, they enter into *deceitful entanglements with others* hoping to satisfy their need for closeness. Clearly their earlier relationships in the family or in another environment with significant persons, which had unfolded to their disadvantage, continued. This was the kind of sphere where they opened up and formed and retained later relationships with others.

Damaged self—low self-confidence and self-esteem

They had suffered a lack of parental love, a lack of the usual child-care, insecurity, tense relationships and frequent conflicts in the immediate surroundings. They had also experienced divorce, which involved anger, aggression and abuse from family members or others in their immediate surroundings. Thus they felt as if they had been “left out of life” or “condemned to life”. At times it seemed to them that they were *capable of controlling everything*, which had happened in life. Some research participants, Irma, Milda, Silva and Toma, Zita, sometimes expressed their inner, disguised, low self-confidence by a *desire to dominate* among others, which would result in conformance to the environment or the social order. Contrariwise, other research participants, Bronè, Diana, Evelina, Julia and Renata, would focus on the weaknesses in their personalities and surrender to them. Bandura (1986, 395) claims that how a person betters or worsens her/his own “psychosocial functioning” and creates her/his own future depends on that person’s “self-percepts of efficacy”. Fromm (2003 [1947], 16) asserts that a person is able “to adapt himself” to any sorts of unfavourable conditions. However, consequently, this will cause “definite mental and emotional reactions which follow from the specific properties of his own nature”. Kohut (1985) distinguishes the significant meaning of self-concept as a central organiser of a person’s psychological development. In the opinion of this author, inadequate motherhood can interfere in a child’s self development. All the research participants, the women engaged in prostitution, had problematic relationships with their mothers. The mothers of eight of these women had harshly rejected them in childhood leaving them at institutional care homes for children or with relatives. Even though some did have relationships with their mother, these were often conflictual. The mothers of three of these women abandoned them. Only four named their relations with mother as *ordinary*. The mothers of nine participants were *alcoholics*. Seven women stated that their mother’s behaviour with them had been *violent*. Consequently, from their early childhood to later adolescence, their sense of self became vulnerable and immature. Solomon (2003, 329) describes people with “self disorders” as being

“avoidant, ambivalent” or having a “disorganised insecure attachment” due to the “high level” of their experienced anxiety.

The women participating in this research reveal a *lack of or low self-confidence* in various other day-to-day situations. All of them often evaded sharing their emotions or feelings by demonstrating great resistance or aggressive behaviour, such as Algè, Bronè, Milda, Odeta, Silva and Toma had demonstrated. Either thoughts about suicide in the cases of Evelina and Vilè or suicide attempts in the cases of Renata and later Julia also substantiate the damaged self of these women. Different forms of psychological defence mechanisms also attest to these women’s damaged self—*disassociation* (by Julia, Milda, Silva and Zita), *denial* (by Milda, Julia, Loreta, Renata, Vilè and Zita), *splitting* (by Evelina, Renata and Milda), *isolation* (by Julia, Loreta, Renata and Vilè), *rationalisation* (by Odeta and Zita), *idealisation* (by Julia, Renata and Silva), *suppression* (by Algè, Julia, Loreta, Milda, Renata, Silva and Vilè), *repression* (by Algè, Silva and Vilè), *sublimation* (by Vilè), *compensation* (by Kotryna), *negative introjection and devaluation* (by Milda), *projection* (by Milda and Silva) and *transference* (by Silva). Others aspects indicating their damaged, fragile sense of self were their quick-tempered reactions to various events in their lives such as running away from home, auto-destructive behaviour, depressive emotions, retreat and withdrawal. They often expressed their weak, immature self by their struggle to control a situation or by their compulsive behaviour to depend on someone or to be needed and important to someone. Such a principle for organising their personalities to adapt to their environment led them to *forming their consciousness* into, what Herman (1997, 114) terms, “*doublethink*’ and ‘*a double self*’” which, when facing a different environment, “are worse than useless in a climate of freedom and adult responsibility”.

The pain of betrayal in childhood and adolescence felt by the participating women would transform into surrender and continuation of, as Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 305) say, “more of the same (...) far from recognising that their values are wrong”.

Even more, they devalued themselves, as though accepting the entire weight of life’s crises even more deeply into themselves,

consequently, becoming overcome with sadness. Sometimes the pain of betrayal would be projected against their own self, manifested by anger and self-contempt, onto others, by blaming them. Finally, most of these women had begun drinking alcoholic beverages in adolescence (14) and using narcotics (12) seemingly to try to suppress or deny their self-hatred or to pretend it did not exist.

Objectively traumatised and stigmatised identity

They seemed submissively to accept an *objectified, traumatised and stigmatised identity* after experiencing public condemnation by their close persons or having labels like “trash”, “worthless”, “a doll” or “some thing” placed on them. Thusly, according to Herman (1997, 103), they were trying to “search for faults in their own behavior”. This author notices that, due to the varied abuse and violence suffered in childhood, assault victims tend to have a “deeply inculcated self-loathing” and “seem most disposed to direct their aggression at themselves” (Herman, 1997, 113) while defending the abuser.

The women experienced stigmatising views about them from various people—from age peers, mother, father, children’s care home caretakers or simply someone in their surroundings. Usually they would be blamed or demeaned publicly and openly, with everyone hearing, such as in the cases with Bronè, Diana, Irma, Julia, Kotryna, Renata and Zita. Rather frequently these women experienced stigma in a disguised form. For example certain girls would have their hair cut equally short so they would be obviously distinguished from the other children at school. Another was that an abuser would insistently demand secrecy about their relationship, such as in the cases of Bronè, Evelina, Irma and Toma. Such instances carried powerful messages about guilt and shame. Some of the women, specifically Evelina, Irma and Julia, suffered stigma in their own families in childhood as much as in adolescence, hearing constant humiliation from their father or mother. Such behaviour with them by others gave them the idea that what they do is taboo and deviant. Such a belief about themselves increased even more later as others strengthened it from the side, which seemed to instil a sense of stigma that they are different, that “they are what they are”, that

they have already “acquired such a situation”, that “it’s already inside of them” and that “life is already over”. For five of these women, use of alcohol and drugs was and continues to be to this day a means of escape from experiencing difficult and depressing feelings.

Vulnerability to sexual abuse

Based on studies performed earlier, Finkelhor and Baron (1986, 72–73) notice that the risk of becoming *vulnerable to sexual abuse* seriously increases in the future lives of girls who grow up solely with their fathers. These authors believe that “the background factors” indicating “the strongest connection to sexual abuse” relate “to parents and family”. They separated these factors into four categories: (1) parental absence and unavailability, (2) poor relationship with a parent, (3) parental conflict and (4) presence of a stepfather. Only *four* of the fifteen women, Evelina, Julia, Odeta and Vilè, grew up *with both parents* until adulthood. Nonetheless, the relationships in the families of Vilè and Evelina were conflictual and involved continual drinking parties and neglect of their children. Another *seven* women, Algè, Diana, Irma, Loreta, Renata, Toma and Zita, grew *with both parents* from the ages of 4 to 8 years. Later, after their parents divorced (in the cases of Algè, Diana, Irma and Loreta) or died (in the cases of Zita and Toma), some of them remained living with their mothers (Algè, Loreta and Toma), one with her father (Irma) and another with her grandmother (Zita). The others, Diana and Renata, were handed over to institutional care homes for children. Only *one* of the women, Kotryna, grew up *solely with her mother* until adulthood. *Three* women, Bronè, Silva and Milda, lived *solely with mother* for less than one year of age when, according to Bronè, they were “simply lost” by giving them up to institutional care homes. All the women indicated a poor or more distant relationship with mother or the “non-existence” of mother as a significant factor. Some of them, Algè, Evelina, Irma, Kotryna, Loreta, Toma and Vilè, experienced various forms of violence inflicted by their mothers including psychological and physical conflicts or emotional coldness. The women who had lived in institutional care homes for children accentuated the influence of a violent environment, various emotional disturbances, alienation

and stigmatisation. All the women who had suffered sexual assaults in adolescence as much as in adulthood experienced conflictual inter-relationships between their parents, different types of abuse, alcohol-dependent parents, neglect, poor relationships in the family and a stigmatising outlook about themselves.

Self-destructive or devalued behaviour

Certain authors (Finkelhor and Associates, 1986; Herman, 1997; Salter 1988) indicate that problematic behaviour associates with sexual abuse in childhood or adolescence. Freyd (1996, 129) notes, "Pain, including the pain of detecting betrayal, motivates changes in behaviours to promote survival." Hostile, aggressive behaviour by children or teenagers associates with their experiencing violence in the family or another immediate environment, teasing by peers or adults or humiliation from an early age (Kashani and Allan, 1998; Schore, 2003). All the women participating in this research experienced abuse of one type or another, both in their immediate environment and beyond—8 of them experienced *emotional violence*, such as *humiliation*; 5 – *restrictions on outside relationships*; 8 – *devaluating language, such as being "put down" or made to feel bad about themselves*; 7 – name calling; 3 – being frightened; 4 – public mockery with others watching, 4 – intimidation; 8 – *physical violence* like beatings and such punishments that sometimes included, according to them, being "viciously beaten up"; 2 – being kicked; 14–12 – being insistently offered or forced to use alcohol or drugs and 7 – sexual violence and assaults, including being forced to engage in sexual behaviour against their own will prior to adulthood or being treated like a sex object.

Complex post-traumatic stress disorder

Herman (1997, 119), who analysed the consequences of rape, observes that a person manifests multiplex, prolonged trauma as a "complex cluster of symptoms". The author accents, "Survivors of prolonged abuse develop characteristic personality changes, including deformations of relatedness and identity. Survivors of abuse in childhood develop similar problems with relationships and identity; in addition, they are particularly vulnerable to repeated harm, both

self-inflicted and at the hands of others.” The experiences of all the women research participants revealed and substantiated the characteristic traits of this syndrome (see Appendix 9, Complex post-traumatic stress disorder).

Addicted to unhappiness

The analysis of the early life experiences of this study’s participating women in prostitution revealed their “*inner turmoil caused by painful moods, feelings and emotions; lack of “good care” and lack of being “loving and loveable” by a significant other; distorted, “unsatisfying relationships based on conflicts”; “inability to follow through on heart-felt resolution”; lack of “genuine pleasure found in a well-founded inner certainty”* (Pieper Heineman & Pieper, 2003, 4–8). As children or adolescents, all the women consequently became confused in their search for an “inborn wish for relationships pleasure and inner happiness” as opposed to re-creation of “the familiar sort of unhappiness”. This was often due to their confusing the choice between *real* and *false happiness* that often came disguised. All that caused their state of being “*addicted to unhappiness*”, a *particular behavioural pattern manifesting in childhood* and continuing into adulthood up to this moment. The term adopted here, “*addicted to unhappiness*”, as coined by Pieper Heineman & Pieper (2003), characterises and explains the behaviours of women in prostitution or their responses to the events in their lives. The authors describe *addiction to unhappiness* as a person’s state or behaviour of “consciously seeking only happiness, but unknowingly requiring some degree of discomfort to maintain a sense of inner balance”.

Zita experienced several significant, personal losses in her life (her parents, later her grandmother and even later, her child) from which she unable to recover. She sought a close relationship, which was important to her, and she rushed into marriage expecting this was her way to inner happiness. In childhood *Irma* and her brothers were prone to dangerous and risky games “in the swamplands” where, according to her, “It’s really deep in those swamps, you could drown (...) everything is swaying, and we’d be walking and it was fun like that” (I202.14-I204.1). She called her brothers and herself

“extremists”. Later, while she was still an adolescent, she agreed to dance in a striptease club saying that she liked to dance. She felt pleasure because, as she said, “I can let myself a lot and I have a lot” (I98.8). By the same, seemingly in justification, she says, “Getting over myself sometimes doesn’t come out” (I82.2). On one hand, Irma was worried about her family finding out, especially her father who, in her opinion, would condemn her for this behaviour. However, the pleasure she got from what she was doing overcame such a threat. *Vilė* explains her unappeasable desire to be doing something all the time: “Now I was going to that job, it didn’t matter to me, to do something, be active at something. I have to be doing something (...) This may be a bit of a way to calm down nerves, because even at home I can’t simply *sit and do nothing* (V130.3-4). She understands that she works too much but, for the time being, she seemingly cannot stop, feeling that it seems to “calm her down”. *Milda*, *Silva* and *Renata* remember running away from their institutional care home frequently, which would lead to their landing in a juvenile incarceration camp and they would run away from there as well. *Renata* tells about how she went to live in her brother’s garage after running away from the juvenile incarceration camp. This was because, as she says, “With Tadas everything goes best for me, of well all the kids (...) the best, well, I associate with him all the time *we’ll never separate” (R102.1-R104.5). Thus the act of running away by the girls not only relates to their inner dissatisfaction regarding the order of matters there but also to their attempts at experiencing a sense of satisfaction, the pleasure of a relationship with a person who is close and important to them and, thereby, experiencing inner happiness. *Odeta*, who had been out of work for a lengthy time, finds a job; once she has found it, she decides to quit saying that she does not like it and tries to look for work abroad. This way she ends up in the hands of people engaged in human trafficking. *Julia* has trouble forming close, meaningful relationships. Once she meets a boyfriend, she attaches to him, even though he obviously does not care about her, involves her in a circle of swingers and later encourages her to undertake prostitution, so she can support them both in this way. Similarly *Toma*, *Diana*, *Loreta* and *Kotryna* get involved in

abusive, questionable relationships that drag them into a quagmire of alcohol and drugs and later into prostitution. Such relationships, as Loreta says, “Then it seemed normal” (L20.2). *Algè*, who was unable to bear the conflictual relationships at home and “to bounce back when things go badly” (Pieper Heineman & Pieper, 2003, 9), runs away. Keeping it a secret from her mother, she becomes enticed by people she does not know well to take a job abroad where, as a result, she ends up in a house of prostitution. *Bronè* had kept in contact with a panderer from adolescence who was presumably her caretaker. Later she agrees to live with him believing that he will care for her and about her. However, she faces disappointment, when he sells her abroad, like a product for providing sexual services. *Evelina*, who was frequently bothered by unpleasant emotions and feelings while living at home, seeks inner happiness by getting involved in an abusive relationship with her father’s friend. He acted, according to the woman, “then so nicely with me. (...) And we with him... well... then we made love” (E46.7-8).

7. Pathways in decision-making: Breaking free of the prostitution circle

I've learned that making a 'living' is not the same thing as 'making' a life.
(Maya Angelou)

Discussions regarding choices made by women in prostitution by the public or by experts involve various viewpoints and ambiguous interpretations. Ruškus et al. (2005) notice that one position claims women make an independent choice determined by inborn biological or psychological explanations manifesting in an overly expressed need for sex. Another position, according to these authors, accents the influence of an unfavourable environment (poverty, neglect, experiences of violent and painful relationships and emotional deprivation) into which such women were born, grew up and matured and the traumas they experienced albeit never overcame as determining the choices women in prostitution make. Yet another position brings up the issue about the meaninglessness of the idea of “choice”, the deficiencies in the use of this term and the inaccurate, misleading or even abusive usage of it within limited and constrained contexts (Jeffreys, 1997; O'Connor & Healy, 2007). O'Connell Davidson (2008, 62) questions the “yes” of women in prostitution as constituting an agreement: “We should not respect ‘Yes’ as meaning ‘Yes’.”

Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 49–50) note that a human being does not operate like a machine, i.e., “auTomatically”. These authors hold the opinion that one sort or another action by a person involves some certain kind of consciousness. That means a person makes one or another choice among alternatives. As per the authors, there is the “we-could-have-acted-otherwise” because, after all, the stance of a person regarding a choice states that “all states of consciousness—including those we ordinarily call ‘choices’ as well as those we like

to term ‘inevitable actions’—disclose a core experience of free will” (ibid., 49).

This chapter endeavours to reveal and highlight the *specific patterns* in the personal experiences of women in prostitution in their pathways of *making a choice*. What specific patterns or traits in the life stories of these women reveal their decision-making pathways regarding their quitting or not quitting prostitution? What essential factors in their lives or existing internal and external resources constitute a decisive part of their decision-making? What reasons direct or influence the decision-making of these women? Additionally, what sort of portrait is drawn of such a woman by the choice she makes? What does these women’s decision-making contribute to their lives? What sorts of difficulties do they face?

The existential outlook on a person’s life experiences was the basis in searching for answers to these questions. The proprium (or individuality) of women in prostitution, which is continually interacting with their surrounding worlds and in a ceaseless process of change, can only be comprehended as merely provisional at times. Therefore I considered it important to take the specific traits and circumstances of the worlds in which these women lived into account in the effort to understand their personal experiences. The analysis of their life stories could not disregard their personal experiences, the specific context of their material conditions, the kinds of emotions they had to go through in their interrelationships and the matters that constituted or created their worldviews and systems of values, which guided their choices in one way or another.

I sought to reveal the *specific patterns* outcropping in the personal experiences of women in prostitution that I then attempted to transmit in the manner of creative synthesis (Moustakas, 1990). As I synthesised the most pronounced moments in the personal experiences of these women, I made use of the insights and knowledge from my own personal experiences and my own tacit-intuitive awareness arising from the process of immersion, incubation, illumination and explication. Various scholarly insights and selected theories on which I based this work assisted in explaining the essence of the life heuristics of women in prostitution.

7.1. Self-deception vs. consciousness: “I was afraid this was just a dream and everything would end soon... What’s most important? – It’s making money.”

Bandura (1986) asserts that it is impossible to convince a person of something he/she knows is not true. I have always doubted the existing view for condemning and negatively judging the behaviour of women in prostitution or them themselves under the auspices that they know what they are doing. It raises the question: is what these women are doing—“selling their body”, as they say—actually acceptable to them? Also, do they consciously agree with it with full realisation of what they are doing? Tomura (2009, 52) notes that definitions of the word *prostitute* “exhibit unmistakably negative values (i.e., ‘debased’, ‘corrupt’, ‘demeaning’ and ‘dishonourable’)” towards woman in prostitution. Thereby I raise an assumption: in these cases, the women seemed to understand consciously or were internally certain that there was nothing dishonourable or immoral in what they were doing, much less that it was something that demeaned their dignity or their human rights. The experiences of these women attest as much. They believed that what they were doing, “selling their own body”, was *not* “immoral” or “depraved”, that there was *nothing wrong* with it, that it was a *temporary way to “quickly” and “easily” earn money*, that it would *not cause them traumatic consequences* and that they would *be able to quit* as soon as they wanted:

At that time maybe there wasn’t any of that, that this is immoral, because it becomes what’s normal (J86.8-9).

I thought, that really and truly I would pay the fine and no longer do that anymore (J92.11).

I was looking for a quick and easy way to make money, so that’s how it all turned out (K14.2).

We’ll make money, we thought and go back, and that’s all (R18.4).

We’re not doing anything all that bad (I86.3).

There was talk, that they do whatever they want with those gals over there, rape them, jeer at them, but when I went over there I didn’t see any of that over there (I76.4-5).

Nonetheless, these sorts of outlooks and stances taken by the women were more akin to their own self-deception. In self-deception, although a person is not entirely confident about the actuality of what he/she is doing, he/she, after all, at least has some inkling or, as Bandura (1986, 386) says, “Deep down’, people really know what they believe.” Moreover they had to be sure that selling their bodies was in line with their values and that it does not infringe on their human dignity and self-respect. Thus, if they did so believe but did what they did regardless, then it actually constitutes a gap in a rational evaluation of the situation and an erroneous understanding of the self and the surrounding world. Irma assesses her own situation at that time, “When I started dancing, there was a lot I didn’t know (...) I always protested about that, I said, that we are not easily bought and that it’s completely impossible” (I72.2-I86.6). Julia remembers the changes in how she appeared to herself since that time and how conscious she actually was regarding it: “At that time, when you engage in that, you no longer comprehend, what’s happening to you and how your thinking is changing, how everything all around is changing” (J74.2). As van Deurzen-Smith (1997, 47) notices, “Our consciousness is the key both to the illusions and errors of our ways and to more self-reflective alternatives.” Indeed, but how is it actually? Did these women have the least bit of conscious conviction that “selling” their own body is normal and that it corresponds with their own self-evaluation? How much did they doubt/believe their own convictions? How much did they avoid seeking out attestations due to such doubts/convictions due to their realising that then they may crumble? However, it may be possible that, believing they have no other opportunities, they seemingly conspire with their own self-deception by becoming victims who are easy to manipulate.

Ruškus et al. (2005, 81) note, “Usually the young women who become victims are those who experienced emotional and physical violence while growing up in a family”, ones who “grew up socially isolated under conditions of pedagogical neglect.” Obviously constant shortages, poverty and difficult economic situations accompanied the environments of these young women where, according to

these authors, no one ever developed conditions for “forming necessary work and family values.” Vilé claims, “If I were to have difficult moments even now (...) and also (...) if offers were made for me to go away somewhere to work, certainly I’d go” (V2.1). This simply substantiates the consequences of experiencing continual shortages and the need for a better life financially, a need that has remained until now. I was surprised nonetheless to hear her say that she would continue to accept work offers despite her having suffered so many times from panderers and rapists. Such reasoning by the woman is partly understandable since, as another research participant, Toma, says, “I wasn’t inclined to sit on somebody else’s back, so I agreed” (T6.13). Only, naturally, the question that comes up again is whether the earlier painful experience will help the woman choose suitably, so that she does not suffer as she had suffered earlier. As the experiences of the research participants, which were discussed in the earlier chapter, substantiate, at that time, they were unable to resist their environments and the negative influences that predominated in their interrelationships with the persons or panderers who were abusing them. Additionally the lack of a safe contact connecting them with other people who cared about them precluded them from fostering a sense of their own worth and autonomy, i.e., their own separateness in their relationships with other people. Herman (1997, 53) observes, “The traumatic event thus destroys the belief that one can be *oneself* in relation to others.” Therefore, since they were attempting to adjust and trying to get a grasp of their own capability for controlling situations and the events in their own lives themselves, they were inclined to surrender to the illusion being formed about a better life. Thereby they would land into a web of prostitution or human trafficking.

The life stories of the women who participated in this research revealed various factors inducing *self-deception* that landed them into prostitution. These were *unsatisfied material needs from earlier times* (money, better apparel, food shortages), *warped understanding of the self and one’s own “I”*, *need and quest for intimate relationships*, *negative feelings—anger, hatred, vengeance—about men who had abused them and irrational and inadequate understanding of situations.*

Nine of the fifteen research participants accented *money* as the most important factor determining their involvement in prostitution, whereas some of the others (Irma, Kotryna, Odeta and Zita) named “fast earnings”. Thus money and its pursuit seemingly give these women meaning to the experiences they went through and become significant symbols and incentives in a strategy for their lives. As Irma explained, “Money was a lot to me. Everything was money” (I10.1). Bandura (1986, 18) states that symbols provide people with “a powerful means” by becoming their “guides for future action”. Believing in this as being “work” offering a “fast” way to earn money, these women surrender to the conveyor of self-deception. They do not comprehend the possible consequences of their actions very well, capitulate to standards and willpower cast upon them by others and become instruments. Seeming the pursuit of earning money guides their actions towards a goal for which they pay the high price of contempt. More than once, I would recognise the reasons for my own annoyance at hearing a judgement about the behaviour of these women or about them themselves. What I sensed in this was not an effort to understand the context of their lives better to help them but the opposite—it was casting blame on them to “write them off” as quickly as possible. Obviously it was not difficult to assign a label of “guilty” on them alone, since even the testimonies of their personal experiences indicated and seemingly substantiated that their singular goal was “money” and “fast earnings”:

I knew I needed money (T8.2).

We only think about how to get money (D158.4).

*For fifty litas I gave it up *(R64.2).

At the time, yeah, I simply did not have money to live on (J14.10-11).

[It's already simply like automatically (...) money, [money, sweet money [transl. note: money in the diminutive] and you never saw anything else (I12.10).

The continual shortages of basic, everyday household necessities and the lack of conditions for a better life were such that, according to the women:

There weren't conditions for how to keep on living (R18.3).

(...) I didn't have any bread, there was nothing to eat at our place, nothing.. (R64.1).

Here we don't have anything, in that flat, nothing, there's no electricity, nothing (R46.2-9)

As Toma related, this is what forced them: "Earn enough for bread and for little brother, so I could buy something" (T8.8).

According to van Deurzen (1997, 46), that would be called "bad faith", which is necessary for a person "in order to keep herself from having to make a decision". Thus a woman "can manipulate her own focus of consciousness in order to achieve the best conditions for herself at that moment". Since they want to feel better, they direct their "own focus of consciousness" to the acquisition of external items and, by manipulating that, they choose a "bad faith" strategy; however, by the same, they are seemingly fooling themselves. Bandura (1986, 18) asserts, "An advanced cognitive capability coupled with the remarkable flexibility of symbolization enables people to create ideas that transcend their sensory experiences." Thereby the women rather chose to disregard many things, people, circumstances or even themselves in their efforts to satisfy their needs and adjust to the existing situation and the vagueness and ambiguities of life. That was why, according to Toma, "I would earn a living by selling my own body" (T6.7). Such a choice and behaviour by Toma merely substantiates her erroneous understanding of herself and the surrounding world. Consequently she continues erroneously selecting happenings. Now she remembers the beginning of her road into prostitution this way: "I was very vulnerable at that moment, psychologically drained (...) but mostly I needed money, so I became a prostitute" (T6.12-14). Zita's experience also bears evidence about the reasons for her choices when she says, "We choose this area not because it's profitable but because the circumstances force us to" (Z28.4).

However, as van Deurzen (1997, 46) says, in such a case, a person has to fool oneself "of rocking oneself to sleep, of contenting oneself with illusions (...), to select and betray truth", in other words, of deceiving the self. The experiences of the women at that time indicate that they did not understand, did not comprehend their true

state of reality and that such a choice to “play” by covering it up as “temporary” and as “big money” was merely an illusion:

That was just a game, what was most important was to pull the money out of it (I148.2).

Actually you earn, well on average that's (3 to 5 thousand) and that's considered, (...) that's really big money (I12.3-4).

I didn't have anywhere to go, I didn't have money for renting a flat, I didn't have anything to live on, I couldn't find work because, as I already mentioned, those were debts (J58.1-2).

What I was seeing was only (...) bills (I12.7).

The promised money was also tempting, which I never did actually see (B26.3).

This type of activity that the women considered rational in terms of their own subjective judgements merely substantiates how erroneous their foundation is. Therefore, since they are unprepared or incapable to see the reality of their lives, they claim they see no other possibilities except one—to earn money as fast as possible. Sartre (2009) claims that human existence denies future transcendence under conditions of defence or prohibition; meanwhile, in certain cases, her/his existing social reality simply becomes the only reality—the *No*. As per the author, a person can only embody *No* until death. The reality of the lives of some of these women (Bronè, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita) at that time seemingly substantiated their *No* by choosing to refuse changes in their own lives and by seemingly saying *Yes* to where they are. As I listened to Diana's words, all I could do was merely raise an assumption about what circumstances were encouraging her to judge her involvement in prostitution this way, not some other way: “Well anyhow that doesn't mean anything to me, to me it means nothing” (D158.3). Meanwhile Irma remembered her experience and equated herself as follows: “[like an adding machine” (I12.8). This was different from Diana, who now notices how irrational her behaviour had been at that time: “Money, it screws you in so much (...) I was screwed in by money, screwed and (...) there was a lot I didn't see anymore” (I12.1-6). Thus, as the women claim, in the name of “money” or “a “quick and easy way

to make money” (K14.2), they choose to deny themselves and deny other possibilities saying that “there was simply no other way out” (J4.4). A presumption comes to mind that they dream up a pretext of being more different than they actually are. However, this sort of strategy also lessens numerous opportunities to choose for these women. The personal experiences of these women attest to the betrayal of themselves and their own human nature:

All I was thinking, was about was how to work off the money for them, while everything else was actually unimportant to me (V58.1).

I didn’t even think, that I was pretty, so many men would look at me, telling me compliments, I would feel better, sometimes like a queen (I108.3-4).

By engaging in prostitution, there really were thoughts, that I know this the best and that I would not be able to work at another job, and that I would not earn this much doing other work. (...) And that already becomes like the norm (J86.1-3).

I wouldn’t have been able to do anything else, because I don’t know how to do anything (B30.8).

One way or another, something would happen to them, and they would start thinking they were “easily approachable, [that] (...) it’s OK to make use, even to buy” (I86.5).

The assumption could be made that such a self-evaluation by them is the result of their agreement with the world—the events, people and the relationships that have formed. Consequently they did not seem to sense their own self-worth, dignity and individuality and they did not believe that other could respect or value them.

In addition to all that, just as some of the women did not see any way out of the existing situation, some of the others—Julia, Milda and Toma—did not acknowledge their own reality at that time, which was their being engaged in prostitution and denied it in various ways. Toma recalls that she simply did not think about it: “I didn’t think that, here I am, a prostitute” (T8.1). Milda thinks that even now, during the time of our talk, she continues to believe she did not behave like a “prostitute”: “*I don’t know*. (6s) (Laughs) (...) [that’s how it seems to me, WELL I DID NOT ACT LIKE A

PROSTITUTE?” (M18.1). Julia assures that it was hard for her to admit as much; thus, by making use of psychological defence,⁶⁹ the same as she did then, she attributes that to somebody else, but not to herself even now: “It’s that unwillingness to admit, that I used to be a prostitute, that I did that. (...) I will probably never realise, that it was like that with me, to me.” (J72.1-6). “Even up until now I sometimes joke around, that it was not me doing that.” (J38.5). Lloyd (1986, 375) points out, “We prefer self-deception to facing a belief or truth too painful and threatening to accept.” Additionally some of them (Milda, Julia and Irma) attributed prostitution to “work” or “an engagement”, a likeable one:

This is my work, so and well now, this here is work (...) it’s this feeling (5s) (...) I was into it, that it’s WORK. (M40.7-M42.2)

You grasp it, like a normal job (J86.4).

I was trying to explain to him, that I ONLY DANCE (I88.4).

The renaming of reality in this way was also their specific form of defence. Herman (1997, 102) points out that a person who is “unable to escape or alter the unbearable reality in fact (...) alters it in her mind”. Therefore Milda, who is seemingly excusing herself, says, “Well, how can I a drug addict, how can I refuse so well” (M104.4). This way she chooses a different reality – “I a drug addict”.

I remember how her words had surprised me: “I was a drug addict, I agree. Yes, for sixteen years. But that I was also a prostitute, well no. I don’t agree with that.” {Field notes, May 2007}. As Bandura (1986, 387) states, people are “concerned about how they appear in the eyes of others when they engage in conduct that is morally suspect”. The testimonies of the women also substantiate the existence of internal conflicts and the action of their internal censure, when a “threat

69. Psychological defence, which is now referred to as *defence mechanisms*, is a paradigm used in psychoanalysis. It appeared in Freud’s earlier research on hysteria. The functions of these mechanisms, which are part of the psychic structure of the *ego*, are to protect the *ego* from threats against it, which induce anxiety. The psychological processes due to defence mechanisms remove or reduce dangers (Fhanér, 2005).

alarm” seemingly switched on informing them that, after all, what they were doing was not all the same to them:

Do you think it’s psychologically easy? You’re wrong! (T18.1).

Sometimes it was truly painful, that I’m doing that (J76.2).

I truly felt like a criminal (J102.1).

I was ashamed because of that, even though I knew, I was not doing anything wrong (I74.3).

That life truly shamed me (E112.5).

It was really very unpleasant to me to be doing that (D158.10).

These statements indicate they were experiencing negative, unpleasant feelings reflecting the difficulties they were going through and the threat they were sensing. The women recall the various feelings they went through while they were engaged in prostitution: internal difficulty, self-blame, shame, fear, hate, self-loathing, internal stress, disorientation, emptiness, apathy, powerlessness and a loss of the self. As Alekseičikas (1980) maintains, feelings, as psychological processes, reflect an individual’s relationship with one or another, external and internal manifestation of reality. Additionally feelings ready a personality for varied understandings that prompt a woman’s psychological disposition for action. Feelings can also make the psychological life of a person more difficult, causing that person to be overly subjective and distancing her/him from external reality and comprehension. It can be assumed that the feelings, emotions and negative sensations that women experience while being engaged in prostitution also seem to prompt their responses to what is happening by activating their self-defence reactions. Once facing the need to accept overly painful or frightening events, they would give priority to self-deception.

Questions also arose for me during the times while I was helping these women. How should I act in the face of their self-deception myself? Should I pretend not to see anything but the way they do or should I say that I see differently, nonetheless? After all these women are seemingly balancing on the edge of a making a choice—to be or not to be, to remain in or to get out of prostitution. It seemed to me

that my revealing or sharing my categorical and subjective opinion and my own position about sensing or suspecting self-deception by them or obviously seeing such in an untimely manner could end up being the critical provocation regarding the choice the women may make. I would face an inner dilemma—how should I act? In my relationships with these women, I sensed that their self-deception was a temporary matter. For reasons that were only understandable to them alone, this was “beneficial” to them, here and now. I recall one of the first cases in my practice when I found myself talking to a young woman that the police had brought. What disturbed and surprised me at that time (and, naturally, gave me some valuable lessons) was the behaviour of this young woman. She would turn away from me urging me to finish the talk as soon as possible as soon as I would begin to direct our conversation about the topic of prostitution. At the time, I still had no strong contact with her nor had I gained her trust in me. However, I sincerely directed our talk to matters of importance to her that were painful to her at the time—her family difficulties (her mother was in the hospital, grandmother was old and also ill and she was shouldering the financial concerns). This had a positive effect, and I sensed her seemingly “coming closer” to me, and our interrelationship changed. Then I understood that she was not ready to face her self-deception, especially since she had not sought help on her own; she had actually been “forced” into this by the police. In other words, help for another is only effective, when she/he is seeking help, is open to it and prepared to accept it. The famous Adolph Meyer phrase quoted by Yalom (1998, 184) is most appropriate here: “Don’t scratch where it doesn’t itch.”

I came to another important conclusion during my interview with Milda. She was quite disturbed about her habit of cursing a great deal when she talked. After our talk, she asked me if her speech had disturbed me very much. I remember I was surprised since I had not felt any interference in our discussion by her swearing. Furthermore, in general, it could be said, there really wasn’t as much as I had expected, since she had told me, “I really swear a lot. I’m simply used to doing that.” Nonetheless, this was information for me about how strongly her own negative self-evaluation has a hold on her.

What I read into her behaviour was her desire to please someone else. For her this meant, “Don’t be what you are or what you want to be but as you should be, so others will like you.” One more, seemingly significant thing caught my attention—Milda’s concern for me. I understood this was also important information as well as a signal about her own need for concern. Rogers (1961, 167–168) notices that often a customer is inclined to hide behind a facade, “to move away (...) from a self he is *not*” due to various misgivings or vacillations. According to this author, “He regards himself as too awful to be seen.” I shared this with her, and it brought mutually pleasant warmth to our relationship along with an extended talk.

Herman (1997, 52) asserts, “The traumatized person loses her basic sense of self (...) when a secure sense of connection with caring people (...) is shattered.” Still, as I listened to the testimonies by the women, I considered what happens to them permitting them to be pushed into self-deception. How and when does this happen? Why did some of the women tell me:

I had to satisfy the needs of men, to me it wasn’t any kind of trauma (B22.2).

We all work here, (...) Here it’s not really so, it’s not all that bad (V24.4-5).

At the time it seemed like a normal job. (...) [or] sometimes all in all I didn’t think about it (J76.1-3).

I looked at it all the time now then (2s) well like at a thing, well like a thing for me? It’s all WORK to me (M42.1).

Personally I’m not risking anything (Z24.1).

The experiences of other women testified about a formerly obvious defensive reaction to the difficult and painful moments they were going through:

What kind of feelings can there be there. I just relax, onward I don’t think about anything, because it’s of no interest to me. (1s) I think (1s) just so everything ends as quickly as possible. (2s) (D148.1-5).

It’s easier to think, that it’s some else’s life, somebody else’s history, that it’s not me doing it (J72.7).

I assumed that this kind of psychological defence, which these women employed, helped them lessen their internal censure. Thus it distorted their comprehension about themselves and about the reality of their lives.

The experiences of the women indicate the loss of themselves, their own internal humaneness, honour, their own “I” and proprium (or individuality), which seem to corroborate their becoming akin to an object. Julia talks about her experiences back then with the disgust and the anger she had felt for her abuser and her self-feeling of powerlessness: “To kneel before the man, go down on him [oral sex], or to lay down, or stand up on all fours – that’s disgusting. When you can’t do anything” (J72.5). Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 349) note, “The person who is guided and directed toward an externally anchored self-concept has relinquished and lost his freedom; in truth, he has lost himself.” There was a time, after all, when they thought differently about themselves. As Julia says, “Some time ago, I had once said myself that, no matter what might happen, I could not have a place to live, not anything to eat but I really would never do that. Those were my own words” (J74.7-9). Bandura (1986, 386) asserts, “Self-deception is often invoked when people choose to ignore possibly countervailing evidence.”

The testimonies of the women themselves reveal several assumptions regarding an awakening of self-deception. For one it involves the *need for intimate, safe relationships*: “I liked the attention he paid, his gentleness, I started feeling needed, he’d buy clothes, something to eat” (B18.2) and “I simply thought, that he loves me, and I was afraid (...) to lose that person” (J104.12). Also there is the *desire for independence*: “I always wanted to be independent. Do you understand?” (O26.1). Plus there is a desire to live better: “I’d like to live better” (I156.5). There is an *aspiration to confirm one’s own self and one’s own ego and to feel one’s own power thereby negating one’s own powerlessness*: “My own power, I wanted to show my own bodily kind of power, when that was taken advantage of” (E116.2), and “To me all men were under my feet. And I used to feel very good. (...) They didn’t say anything to me (I110.2-3). Furthermore it involves *the achievement of her own selfhood, the sense of liberty*: “Like a ruler. However I wanted,

that's how I would act. (...) Men would do that, as I wanted" (I110.1-I148.1). *There is self-blame for morally suspicious behaviour*: "Going drinking and running about with guys is what mattered" (K12.2). It involved *revenge, anger and hatred of men for the wrongdoings, pain and abuse suffered*: "I hate the entire male race. This is how I get revenge on. For that, that they had acted like that with me" (Z18.7-8). It had to do with a non-existing self-consciousness: "Somehow I did not realise it, that realistically it had been like that with me too" (J16.5). Barnes (1990) describes the way a person lives: "I retrieve a sense of ego (...) that I actually exist as an entity in my own right. This happens when I begin to notice that I am the one acting in the world." Thereby, projecting "out into the world, relating to it (...) I become who I am by doing what I do" (van Deurzen, 1997, 48). Thus the satisfaction of these women's own needs was, for them, the confirmation of their own individuality, their own "I" and their own ego, no matter how odd or unacceptable this appeared to others from the sidelines. As some scholars note (Slavin and Kriegman, 1992; Denet, 1995 in van Deurzen, 1997, 185), "... the capacity for denial and self-deception provide powerful adaptive advantage." In this manner, the women were inclined to abide by a misleading and distorted evaluation of themselves and the surrounding world or its events.

7.2. Reconciliation as a choice: "You've got to come to terms with it; you can't come to terms any other way — at least not for a while..."

Abuse and the exploitation of another by force employing various means create relationships of an exceptional type manifesting as the rule of power and control on one side and on the other side—powerlessness and obedience to that power. The experiences of the women participants in this research indicate that they were unable to resist their long-term violent abuse. Consequently they were inclined to *reconcile* with the existing reality in their efforts to *adapt* to the existing situation by accepting a position of passivity and seemingly rejecting the choice of any other possible alternative. Sartre (1957, 41) asserts,

“What is not possible is not to choose. I can always choose, but I ought to know that if I do not choose, I am still choosing.” What van Deurzen-Smith (1997, 50) notices is that it is not easy to choose and that we are more inclined “to believe in determinism and fatalism”. In the opinion of Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 52), “... all acts are free choices”; however, this is difficult to understand due to their unpleasant and painful alternatives. It is no wonder that, during our interview, Milda asks me, “And what would you do in my place?”* So then, now your situation would be like that. What would you do in my place” (M8.3)? The belief that there are seemingly no other alternatives also misleadingly leads to self-deception. The question she gave me prompted me to think more about this. I presumed the choice these women had made had been something more akin to empty, self-destructive efforts at denying their own human nature. Thus they were seemingly hopelessly reconciled with the existing situation. As Lobato (2001, 125) claims, “A choice is always highlighted by a mark of rationalism” but it is not a choice if a person’s “action is not free and not based on advance decision-making.” The author notices that, when there is no decision and no choice, then wilful action does not exist, because a person chooses “only by free and intelligent decision-making”. Thereby, as Loreta recalls and analyses how she first landed into prostitution, she considers how much of it involved her own free will and her own choosing and how much had not: “Well after all nobody stuck me into it by force. (...) Although I felt like I was being raped” (L20.5-9). However, right at this point, she contradicts herself by saying, “You [do it] sort of like it’s free will but sort of like it’s forced too” (L24.3). However, right at this point, a question naturally came to me: just how rational was her decision here? Bandura (1986, 19) says a person’s “rationality depends on reasoning skills”, which cannot always be “well developed or used effectively”. In Loreta’s case, her decision to provide sexual services was prompted by her mother, who was already doing such and, thereby, reassuring her daughter that this is normal. As Loreta recalls, that evening her mother simply could not meet a man she got together with for money: “She made me the offer, because she found out, well that I had already started with guys, (...) and she (...) says, not any kind of demands.* Except for this and this, you’ll

get to lay there” (L18.3-4). In this case involving Loreta, although her activity subjectively does seem rational, it could be judged as not very smart and even more—as the result of the distress she is experiencing.

Thus it may not be by accident that the public is divided in its considerations regarding these women’s own free choice. Were their choices influenced by certain reasons regardless? Kierkegaard (1974, 110-113) had noticed that every person has something in that partly precludes the ability to recognise him/herself fully. This author holds the opinion that a person can incomprehensibly be caught up in life’s circumstances upon which that person has no bearing. When a choice is postponed, then a person chooses either unconsciously or as impelled by “dark forces” Kirby (2004, 256). This refers to Kierkegaard’s theory of the self, which points out, “A conception of the self [consists] in the balance between three polarities (finite – infinite, necessity – freedom and temporal – eternal). Tekosis (2008) asserts, “... there is no individual who’s chosen oneself absolutely.” Therefore, as soon as I started providing psychosocial assistance to prostitute customers, certain question kept coming to my mind: *If it is so, then how voluntary is their choice? How much constitutes freewill? How are matters with their own “I”? How much do they feel or remain true to themselves?* These and similar questions or issues were discussed many times in various seminars and conferences. Different scholars raised such issues in academic publications (Acus, 2001; Barry, 1995; Davis, 1993; Farley, 2003, 2004; Jeffries, 1997; O’Connor & Healy, 2006; Ruškus et al., 2005; Scoular, 2004).

Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 34–35) notice three essential features for describing the manifestation of a person’s free will: “spontaneity, self-determination and choice”. These authors believe that a person’s “actions and inactions may be *thought of* as externally determined, and not spontaneous, but they are *experienced* as spontaneous”. The testimonies of certain women (Irma, Julia, Loreta, Milda and Vilè) indicate that their winding up in the quicksand of prostitution seemingly came from nowhere and from nothing; there were no considerations, no weighing of the pros and cons and no efforts to somehow imagine its consequences. Thereby an assumption can be made seemingly confirming the spontaneity of their experienced free will:

Somehow I didn't think that (...) I didn't even try to imagine (...) somehow that, <I was living (M110.2-4).

You go ahead and do it, whether you want to or you don't want to (I78.4).

You kind of don't want to do it, but you kind of can't not do it (L24.4).

You suffer through it for a minute, then you think – ach, don't start going out of your mind and don't think about such insanities, go where you're going, do what you're doing and keep on going (V62.5).

You go on and do what's asked (J34.6).

Such a choice of action on their part seemingly does become a spontaneous, individual making of their own. Therefore the judgments and opinions of some of these women that the burden of this decision and the resulting consequences fall entirely on their shoulders are not by happenstance. Certain positions regarding a woman's becoming involved (or being made to be involved) in prostitution claim that a young woman has already "subconsciously decided to become a prostitute before she meets a panderer or another prostitute who pulls her into this business, that she was waiting for the right moment for this idea to come to life" (Acus, 2001, 64). Nonetheless, even in such a position, I perceive the premise that some significant other participates in this process by "pulling" the woman into prostitution. Additionally, when the research participants were sharing their personal experiences by saying, "you go ahead and do it", by the same, they also say, "you kind of can't", "you suffer through it" and "you think". A hearing of the women's testimonies makes it obvious that their acts of "suffering through it" and "thinking" usually follow the first act, "you go ahead and do it". While I was listening to these women's stories, the opinion seemed to keep nagging at me that first they would do it and then think about what they did later. Thereby the supposed thought is that these women perform one or another action spontaneously, however, by choosing, as Kierkegaard (1974, 115) says, "What will be – let it be." In the opinion of Lobato (2001, 128–129), "A personal action unavoidably faces a choice (...) having weighty consequences" to the self as much as to his/her own activities. If, according to this scholar, "the

concern is not for supplementing but rather for depleting human sensations,” the consequences can be “tragic”.

Certain scholars (Davis, 1993; Karras, 1998; Ruškus et al., 2005) discuss the choice made by women in prostitution by assessing the manifestations of free will ambiguously. Karras (1998, 9) writes, “The choice of prostitution as a career is not made in a vacuum; it is a choice among available alternatives.” Davis (1993, 213) purports that choice or free will is a “dubious concept”. Ruškus et al. (2005, 39) claim, “It is often heard in statements made by law enforcement officials that the women involved in prostituting activities selected this life path on their own, independently (...) and that biological or innate psychological reasons determined such a choice by them.” However, what is missing in the considerations regarding these women’s choices, within the context of free will, are outcomes acknowledging a sense of power, of their importance and significance as human beings and as personalities. Even more, these women’s behaviours call forth negative judgements and interpretations during the rather frequent instances when, as Herman (1997, 69) states, she is “acting as though she were free”. In such cases, the author notes, “Women who act as though they were free are often described as ‘loose’, meaning not only ‘unbound’ but also sexually provocative.” However, Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 38) write that the “self-determination” of a person in and of itself indicates “the uniqueness and irreplaceable value” of that person, and the person confers the specific spontaneity of a free act by him/herself. The experiences of Bronë attest that her panderer’s supervision, occasionally softened with rewards, trained her to be obedient and submissive: “Everything was paid to my friend, well as it turns out, to my pimp. What kind of a friend was he to me... Meanwhile I didn’t get anything. Once something was needed, he’d go and buy it himself. Over all that time I got used to it” (B28.1-2). Evelina also recalls her powerlessness and the fear she lived through, when she was dependent on her father with disregard for her autonomy: “I felt bad, and it was terrible. I was dependent on my father. It seemed, that’s how it was supposed to be” (E54.5). The experiences of Julia attest to the disastrous loss of herself, her own “I” and the principles and values of

her own morality: “Those kinds of things, like morality and like that, everything changes. And you become as though you were an entirely different person” (J82.8). As the experiences of these women testify, essential changes occur in a person by employing, according to Herman (1997, 83), “the most destructive of all coercive techniques”—“to betray her basic human attachments”. Thus, as Bandura (1986, 336) notes, “People do things to gain anticipated benefits or to avert future trouble.”

Additionally these women were inclined to accept responsibility and blame themselves for their actions due to their inability to gain power or a sense of importance as meaningful people in their own eyes as much as in the eyes of others:

Regardless, I agreed (...) I went into it consciously. (...) I made the choice myself (L20.2-4).

I used to think, that I was guilty myself (E40.3).

Somehow I came to terms with that, (...) simply I'm not afraid of anything (E32.1-2)

The guilt has remained until now, (...) I *was truly the most guilty* (E28.1).

I changed a lot, when I started having money. I was even uppity, my thinking became different, I started not to value money, what I desired, that was what I had to get (I114.4).

Bandura (1986, 380) claims, “It is difficult to continue to disown personal agency in the face of evident harm following directly from one’s actions.” It is just as Irma’s experience indicates: “I used to play with them, talk like a very intelligent little miss, I’d wiggle and put on airs, and they used to like that” (I114.1). The women’s testimonies also attest to their “learning to live with it” and “accepting themselves” for what they are now, in other words, coming to terms with their own reality:

I’ve already come to terms with that (B44.3).

I am, what I am and nothing more (Z28.7).

What happened, that’s what happened,*(...) and that’s all*. (E92.4).

I already got used to it you know and that’s all (D158.6).

Nonetheless, a question arises. If the women are disposed to accept responsibility and blame as elements of their “free will”, then how does that associate with their lack of a sense of autonomy and individuality coupled with their dependency? Then why is it that some of them claim they are not able to live how they want, they are unable to assess a situation adequately, they do not feel like the mistresses of their own lives and they do not see any future perspective? As they said:

It’s a fact, you can’t do anything, you can’t live the way you want to (V8.8).

After that you don’t understand a lot of things (J82.7).

It seems to me, that once you’ve gone loose inside, then is it possible for somebody to help you (Z28.8).

Lobato (2001, 127) notices that there was always the problem of human existence in the world involving “how to become what, one is able to be, but what one has not yet become?”

Bandura (1986, 378) distinguishes the use of “euphemistic language” as one of the obstacles for perceiving or providing one’s own activity with some other meaning. As per this author, “Euphemistic language (...) provides a convenient device for masking reprehensible activities or even conferring a respectable status upon them.” That way certain human activity is seemingly decontaminated. Women call their sexual exploitation “work” or “business” although they characterise it as “vicious”; however, when they describe it, they say, “[he] acted with me like that”. Meanwhile narcotics are ascribed to “tranquilizers” {researcher note: the women say this ironically}. Such choices of naming “strategies” provide an opportunity to disguise blameworthy actions by ascribing positive meanings to them. Moreover such a renaming of actions undoubtedly wipes away responsibility from the persons performing certain deeds (of the exploiters in this case) and creates an impression that the objects of such deeds should assume responsibility (the women being exploited in this case). Some of the women who participated in the research split up which of their actions they would call by their true names. The way Milda either told her stories by saying “earlier” or “now” seemed to be a way of separating two different periods in

time and indicated that she grasped her situation differently then and now. She shares that then, when she was in prostitution, for her: “It didn’t matter, how I appear?, earlier I didn’t think about or how I would say that there word” (M82.1). “(...) THERE WAS NO SUCH A THOUGHT (...) ai, I figured, ai, it’s good that prostitution” (M110.1-9). Diana, who is still a prostitute even now, says, “I’m going into prostitution now” (D158.7). Julia also confirms how she changed internally compared to back then, when she was in prostitution, by saying, “Simply that’s how strongly the thinking of the same person changes” (J82.6).

Five of the women who participated in this study (Bronè, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita) are still in prostitution. Their unwillingness to change their lives confirms their reconciliation with the existing situation:

That’s a vicious business, it’s hard to run away from it, meanwhile if there’s no one to run to, then it’s entirely impossible (B24.1).

We have to live (K26.5).

Now it’s already too late (T24.5).

With me it has already formed (Z30.3).

You know, that I need that, to be engaged in prostitution. For the money (D158.8).

Such a cognitive naming of their choice and behaviour only strengthens the means for internally developed suppression which, in turn, entrenches them where they already are even more. Conversely the other research participants who chose to put a stop to their sexual exploitation and quit prostitution bring into play, as Bandura (1986, 379) puts it, “cognitive restructuring of behaviour through moral justifications and palliative characterizations”. That way they reinforce that:

That’s truly not mine (I78.3).

That kind of situation did not please me (J14.8).

An idea had come up, that it’s necessary to end everything, that what’s happening here, it’s insane (J52.1-2).

Maybe I did not totally understand everything, what was happening, I just used to think, that that's not normal, what's happening (6s) (E40.2).

I was ashamed because of that, even though I knew, that I wasn't doing anything bad (I74.3).

What used to help me were the narcotics, which I used to get for the caretaker of the brothel, they would take away the pain and that heart-break, which was finishing to finish me off (O10.1-2).

Nevertheless, that same sort of cognitive restructuring was also effective as they were thinking about their imagined goal—money, a better life, vengeance towards men or the lack of another choice:

It seemed, that that's how it has to be (E54.4).

I simply denied that in my mind myself, that I'm not like that and I'd find endless reasons, why I'm not like that (J78.2).

What I used to imagine, was that if I would begin working, the bailiffs [transl. note: in Lithuania these officers are responsible for court ordered debt collections] would deduct everything. I simply did not see any other way out (J52.12-13).

You'd just thing, maybe ...but where can you hide, what will you do. With no money, with nothing, how will you get home, without a passport, your things, everything, what's next. THE DEBT you'll work it off (V6.6).

For me truly all that was important was the money, which they used to give me (I114.2).

Thus, whenever women experienced bouts of bad luck, they sought relief, as Bandura (1986, 357–358) describes, “through behaviour designed to avert or lessen the discomfort”. Alcohol or drugs generally became such means of “self-anesthetization” for them:

While I worked at the brothel, the only thing was – you'd drink, most basically,*you'd drink, you'd drink*, you wouldn't eat much, coffee, a cigarette in the morning and (2s) whiskey, cola, in the first place, and you try to calm yourself down that way until evening. And in the evening you drink some more, you drink with the customers, and then it already doesn't seem like that... (V96.2-5).

I'm not for that, I'd be looking for support, I was more looking for, to smother it down and how to fall asleep, how to put yourself to sleep with those drugs (E128.7).

Five women—Broné, Diana, Kotryna, Toma, and Zita—are still involved in prostitution. They have already contracted AIDS and they are ill from it. Furthermore they take drugs, which burdens their lives even more and blocks out potential changes. At the time of the interview, the hopelessness and worthlessness they are going through as well as their loss of autonomy can be felt. *The sense of powerlessness and the reconciliation with the existing situation* attest to their *loss of power* and *the non-existence of meaningfulness in life*:

To me it seems, it could be even worse. You could just barely getting back on your feet, fall in even more deeply. So then for what should you still be doing something (Z28.9).

So what should you be looking for in that front forward? Is there some kind of my future? I think, that not. I'm already sick with AIDS. Since I've had a whole lot of abortions, I won't have any children either. And even though I'm still young, but I'm already after life... I never thought about that and I didn't want to (T26.2-8).

Bandura (1986, 358) assert that, when people's endeavours cause "a sense of failure", they "renounce pursuits having self-evaluative implications". Both Toma and Zita equally rejected different possibilities in life because they did not believe in them and denied them. Freyd (1996, 23) notices, "[Denial] is a useful and valuable process that reflects the survivor's extraordinary psychological predicament postvictimization." The denial is coupled with the experience of trauma that damaged these women's "meaningful self" or, as Janoff-Bulman says (1992; in Freyd, 1996, 23), "by shattering fundamental assumptions of a benevolent world". Therefore Toma does not even try to justify the situation that has unfolded in any other way except by accepting matters as they are: "That's how it ended up, it was that kind of a situation" (T26.7). Zita also disbelieves in any other possibilities in life because internally she feels she is a "prostitute", "trash" and "worthless" no matter what sort of work she might engage in:

Once you already start doing that, then you take on that kind of a standing. Not that, it's somehow the image, but more the way I feel

inside. Even if I worked at some other kind of job, but inside I'd still feel that I'm a prostitute. I'm worthless, I'm trash. So why blow smoke in your own eyes (Z28.5-7).

The authors van Laar and Levin (2006, 5) assert, "Individuals who are strongly identified with their stigmatised group may be more likely to perceive events as relevant to their stigma, be more attuned to such events, and react more strongly when they occur." The way Zita's comprehends herself attests to the stigma she feels inside herself, which seemingly reinforces her within the group with which she identifies. By doing that, she becomes even more vulnerable. Sinclair and Huntsinger (2006, 236) note, "Self-evaluations are shaped by the perceived views of individuals with whom one has developed a long-term significant relationship."

7.3. State of hitting bottom: "To get a grip, everybody always has to hit bottom, wherever it is for one's own self"

How much or what does a person have to experience, to go through before the person says, "I think I've had enough?" What happens for a person to realise and dare to say to oneself and to others that he/she has already had enough of wherever he/she happens to be, that "this is the bottom for me?" Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 243) assert that a person exists "on the interface between good and evil" and by his/her own "freedom chooses which side to take and how far to go". This consequently determines who he/she is. Bandura (1986, 39/2009, 84) considers that "a contributing factor" is a person's "self-generated influences". In his opinion, people pursue goals by making use of "cognitive guides and self-incentives and by arranging environmental conditions". It is possible to agree or disagree with the considerations regarding whether or not the women make independent or forced, conscious or unconscious decisions about their choices. However, the realities of their lives indicate that where they were and what they did never did bring them fulfilment in life, a sense of happiness or, above all else, meaningfulness:

To me it never did happen (...) that I liked doing that (M4.5).

You take a lot of drugs, use them, so you'll forget all of it all the faster (E124.1).

All of us play with the customers, but each one does it her own way (I152.5).

The personal experiences of women in prostitution attest that their choice, according to Kierkegaard (1974, 108), stuck them with “nothing more than wasted time”; painfully they need to “return to the starting point” once again when they must again choose whether to succumb to their own or to someone else’s willpower. However, as per some of the women (Julia, Loreta, Milda, Odeta and Vilé), they had to “hit bottom wherever it was for one’s own self” to realise that:

I had already run myself down to such a level, so it was already enough for me (L34.3).

I realised, that I was not very far away from the edge of insanity (J46.15).

You go to that kind of a level,* you sense the feeling of fear*. It hurts to die (V90.2).

To myself I seemed like a piece of meat, which isn't allowed to give up the ghost (O10.3-4).

Gailiené (2008) notices that experiencing especially difficult and devastating traumatic events often places a person at risk to his/her health or even life. Merely listening to the experiences and sufferings of these women was not easy for me. Meanwhile they had to live in those situations and for considerable lengths of time, for some of them lasting 20, 16, 11, 10 years and the like.

As I engaged the women in discussions, I kept wondering. What had interfered and kept these women from breaking the chain of abuse against them earlier and leaving such a life? I brought up this question to them as well. As Irma said, according to her own subjective consideration, “It seemed to me, that I could not change, that this is the way I'd always be” (I96.5) and “If you can't sober (...) right away you'll get drunk, everything will be OK. And that's all” (I12.13). Obviously the woman in the existing situation drinks

alcoholic beverages as her so-called “help” to ease her state of being. However, as Bandura (1986) states, such an altered state of being does not permit a person to assess future consequences adequately due to the weakened behavioural cognitive control. As Odeta, Evelina and Julia say, they felt powerless to do “anything” when they could no longer bear the horror, terror and abuse they were experiencing, when they had lost themselves and when they were drinking alcoholic beverages and using narcotics:

I was beaten up so much, that my face could hardly be seen, and my body was blue and it ‘wasn’t mine’ (O8.15).

I felt so powerless, that I couldn’t do anything, and others used that (E116.1).

To me it was strange about myself, I simply did not understand myself (J74.6).

The life’s events that scholars designate as the most earth shattering in a person’s life are shock, inability to control a situation, isolation and long-term physical, psychological and spiritual damage to the personality (Calhoun, Tedeschi, 1998; Gailiené, 2008; Herman, 1997).

Therefore, according to Herman (1997), by completely capitulating, the women surrendered to self-destruction and self-annihilation and became indifferent to what was happening to them:

Very simply it was all the same to me (M82.6).

The one desire I had was to die as quickly as possible (O12.1).

I didn’t want to leave my friend {researcher note: her panderer}, I didn’t want it to be painful for him (J104.6).

Ah a lot, it was OK, it means everything got done. Used to be I could spit on it {transl. note: meaning it doesn’t matter in the least} (I12.11-12).

If you already want to go home, you work off that money for the boss, as much as possible, work all the faster, to earn back the money (V36.5).

Herman (1997, 83) notices that the final point of enslavement occurs, when a victim is forced “to violate her own moral principles”.

Julia's experience provides evidence about the changes in her personality as she was losing her earlier self. She could not understand very well herself, how this happens: "All those kinds of rules on morality disappear, those, which I might have had. Not might have, but I really had them before then. There's simply no longer that kind of understanding. It seems to have disappeared somewhere (J86.5-7). Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 256) refer to morality as "a transcendental phenomenon associated with the operations of the center of pure consciousness, and of freedom". According to these authors, a person's morality indicates his/her firm, assured stance "toward life, self, and values". These women's experiences indicated that they were lacking specifically such a firm stance toward life, self or values. Renata sold herself for money at a time when, according to her, "there wasn't enough to eat": "We didn't have anything to eat, to me that was clearly very revolting, later I hated myself, even until now I hate it,* (since I can't, to me it's disgusting)* (R66.1-3). For Diana money was important to have for a living, whereas for Kotryna—it was to pay for an education: "I don't feel well. I think, that I should just get the money faster and that's all (D146.1-2) and I needed money to pay for schooling" (K12.11). Milda also did that for money because she constantly needed it for drugs. She said, "I was feeling, that I was not capable of anything else, because I'm a user" (M4.1). However, just as Toma told it, they were never sure that they would be paid their money: "That's how the work of a prostitute goes, you do it, and you don't know, will you get paid or not" (T12.4). It is no happenstance that Odeta describes women in prostitution as, "A garbage dump of sold dolls" (O6.5), when "pimps drove in from all over the country. They chose and drove away with them" (O6.6). According to Herman (1997, 83), "... when the victim under duress participates in the sacrifice of others," that is when "she is truly 'broken'." As she was talking about the aggressive, vicious and callous behaviour of her panderer with the women who were "working" in the brothel, Vilè remembers with horror her own forced participation in the execution of another young woman's rape: "In front of about five other people, he raped my girlfriend

with a dog. Do you understand? He forced her to bend over and the dog, this pit-bull, raped the girl, while he stood there laughing” (V14.1-2). Bandura (1986) observes that convincing threats and especially painful experiences can put a stop to prohibited behaviour. It is possible to presume that the vicious behaviour by the panderer with Vilè’s friend right before her very eyes encouraged her to think over her own situation more seriously and resolve to terminate her so-called “job”.

The testimonies of the women explained that the panderers usually took their documents intending to subjugate them more: “The documents were all taken in the beginning” (V20.1). These were only returned when it was felt, as Vilè said, “When you started working normally, started to keep from kicking {transl. note: not kicking means not resisting}” (V20.2). There was constant, overly exaggerated control over the women: “At the first brothel where we worked, there were even bars, you won’t be getting out during the daytime. Bars with a little nightlight” (V18.1). “He was always alongside and without him I went nowhere, not even to the store did I go without him” (J16.8). Humiliation, contempt and inconsideration of them as people were relentless: “He said, you’re drug addicts (...) and that’s how we have to act with you, and you’re already not the first addicts with whom this is the way we’ve *acted*” (E118.4). Customers can behave violently: “After all you’re a prostitute, I pay you money and you have to do that, whatever I tell you” (J30.4); “Once I was tossed out of the car in the actual sense of the word. The type, I’m not paying anything” (T12.2) and “They’d come into the room to take a look, kick and piss on me. So what more could I feel” (O10.5)? Not only were the women not permitted to think about other opportunities, they were pushed even deeper down into what they named, their “bottom”. When they would try to resist the abuse and their ceaseless oppression, any sort of hope would be taken away from them immediately: “He said, over there who’s going to listen to you the whore {researcher note: use of the word ‘*schlampe*’ from German for whore}” (V10.4). This sort of reality experienced by the women revealing behaviour by others towards them as if they were objects also seemingly attested to their own lack of understanding and their

drifting away from their own dignity, all of which was pushing them towards the “bottom”. According to Lobato (2001, 36–40), “A person is dignified first of all because he/she is a human being. When an understanding exists of what harms human dignity, (...) a person does not permit behaving with him/her like an object, like a tool.”

Therefore the women being unable to withstand the abuse and vicious behaviour with them attempted to survive and adjust to the existing situation “somehow” by drinking alcoholic beverages and using narcotics. Herman (1997, 44) states that “traumatized people who cannot spontaneously dissociate” grab onto alcohol and drugs “to produce similar numbing effects”. However, the consequence is, as Kotryna says, “And that’s it, I can’t stop anymore” (K16.4). Additionally the use of alcohol and narcotics not only did not ease their suffering exploitation and abuse but had the opposite effect—it made their existence all the more difficult: “Later on* the health got to feeling (...) I was feeling so bad, I already couldn’t get this done, already not that” (M110.15). That’s why Loreta said that, by using drugs, “for over three years, I looked like, maybe for after forty years” (L34.4).

Added to all this, six of the women (Bronė, Milda, Odeta, Vilė, Julia and Renata) let it slip out during the interviews with them that they had considered suicide or actually even attempted such. Julia told about how she arrived at the cruel decision about herself after she was unable to bear everything that was happening to her and feeling completely broken and destroyed: “Yeah, recently I thought about suicide more than once... And there were attempts. I tried swallowing pills, once I tried getting under a car, getting an electric shock in the bathtub, but I didn’t have the guts, though as I now understand it, it wouldn’t have taken very much more (J60.1–6). The continual anxiety experienced by the woman manifesting in post-traumatic symptoms bring her to a final breaking point and, added to everything else, take away her desire to live. Herman (1997, 85) describes such a state of being in a person as the “irreversible stage in the braking of a person”. The actions by the woman revealed during the time of our talk clearly attested to her having reached the stage of the “bottom”.

Indeed these women’s experiences revealed that winding up in a long-time, traumatising environment and suffering through feelings

of horror, powerlessness, fear, outbursts or suppressed anger, guilt and shame led them to the loss of identity, loss of the integrity of their personality and loss of their dignity, which they referred to as the “bottom state”. While speaking with the women, I intermittently sensed their tremendous lack of self-confidence and their inability to accept themselves as they are including the especially obvious contempt some had for themselves, all of which attested to the unusually deep wounds they bore. As the research participants testified, each one of them had her own unique road to the “bottom”, which depended on numerous circumstances relevant to the women themselves as well as to their situations. By associating with the women, it was possible to sense the difference between those who were prepared or were already climbing up from the “bottom” and those who remain there nonetheless. No matter how much I did not want to believe it, my intuition seemed to tell me that they had already chosen to remain there for a long time or, possibly, until the ends of their lives.

7.4. Reality and understanding actual horror: “I am – a victim... I am a product that someone can let himself buy and do whatever he wants with it. It’s horrible!!!”

Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 12), while discussing the comprehension of reality, deliberately raise this question, “What is real and who decides it?” Thus, naturally, I also came up with the same question. Who can decide or who decides, what is the reality in the lives of women in prostitution? Moreover, why is it so important for them to understand the actuality, the reality of their own lives? As Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 13) assert, “What is most real in our lives is (...) what we know to be true, which is a world defined around our own experience.” This means that every person’s individual experience is his/her subjective truth and, by the same, his/her reality. As van Kamm (1966, 62) notices, “Reality has an inexhaustible possibility of meaning.” Thus the women in prostitution clearly could have imbued their own personal experiences with various meanings and did so as best as they understood and believed

in the surety about what they had gone through and experienced. The mutual relationships formed with these women, our talks and associations or simply being nearby allowed me to see better, subjectively sense, experience and understand *their* reality. As van Deurzen-Smith (1997, 237) notes, “Versions of our reality are alternative ways of conceiving of our experience.” Thereby the various versions of the experiences of women in prostitution and their subjective references were important to the women, so they could better understand their own reality and the events occurring therein. It is possible to raise this assumption—a broader and truer comprehension of their own life and the reality of their own experience helped these women to change, to move from the point where they were previously, something they had been unable to do before. Indeed, what did the women in prostitution consider as “similar to their own truth” regarding their personal experiences in life? How did they describe what they considered the truth? What revealed the “truth” about the reality of these women’s personal experiences? My own conviction is that it is first important to understand and accept the reality of these women (i.e., another person) as they understand and interpret it themselves at the time of sharing it. Only later, having understood and accepted their reality, there has to be a response to their needs. By being alongside these women and hearing out the subjective interpretation of their reality, I was able to understand better *where* and *how* they are at this time and *what* help from me or someone else they do or could need. As Kočiūnas (2008, 209) claims, “It is only possible to help a customer within the bounds of his/her own authorship of difficulties.” Thusly, at this point, it is important to understand the relationship of the women in prostitution with their grasp of their own reality and the difficulties they have as well as their own boundaries of such.

Rogers (1961, 111) asserts, “The way in which the individual determines the reality in himself— that when he fully experiences the feelings which at an organic level *is*, ... then he feels an assurance that he is being a part of his real self.” Therefore the women in prostitution first grasped their reality via their own experiences and the multi-faceted *feelings* manifesting within them. They experienced

various forms of abuse, cruel behaviour, exploitation and degradation. As Julia explained, “I wasn’t taken into consideration, they did whatever they wanted with me, jeered at me” (J114.3-5). Such matters drove them to the point of the *loss of their identity, destruction of the positive value of their “I” and their objectification*. For one, Algè’s statement, “A payment was made for me [a payment equal to two thousand euro, because I had a more expensive price than Asta” (A2.6), shows that not only did others have a warped view about her, but she also did about herself. Clearly this is the consequence of what she had experienced in her earlier relationships with intimate persons. I made the assumption that her statement, “I had a ... price”, attested to her judgement of herself as an object. By saying “I could be priced” or “I have a price”, it is as though she believes, “I could even be sold”, as a thing, as a product. As I was listening to Algè, I seemed to sense an odd sort of pride on her part that she “had a more expensive price than ...” Such an objectification of herself seemed to attest that Algè had lost her sense of personality, whereupon a person’s own “I” is also lost or no longer sensed. As Herman (1997) relates, such a state of disassociating the consciousness involving the loss of critical judgement, subjective distancing and distortion of reality seems to ease the effect of trauma felt by a person on one hand; however, it interferes with successful health recovery on the other hand.

As Pieper & Pieper (1990, 7) state, “Each individual’s private experience of personal existence rests on this innately determined sense of self-esteem and self-worth.” The stories of the women in prostitution revealed that the traumatic events they had experienced had *destroyed* their natural *sense of self-esteem and self-worth*, which depends on the sustenance of contacts with other people. This not only occurred with persons close to them in an abuse-permeated environment but later as well, when they experienced crushing relationships either entering or already participating in prostitution:

Yeah (laughs) like a thing? Well so there, that he’s looking at me, there was no shame (M42.5).

You’re just a small tiny doll in the hands of a hefty man (J38.7).

I had to humiliate myself too, to get the money (I104.3).

(Laughs) Men would do that, what I want. I'd put them down, play around, until I'd get my own, and I'd let them out barefoot to go home (I148.1-3).

The experiences of the women attest to their poor evaluations of themselves, their own steadfastness and their own “I”, along with their losing their own sense of integrity and surrendering to being submissive and to being “a thing” or the opposite—to becoming *aggressive* as if attempting to fortify themselves, sensing their own power. Finkelhor and Browne (1986, 193) state that, as per their analysis of the impact of sexual abuse of children, “victims, (...) re-enacting their own abuse (...) try to regain the sense of power and domination that victims attribute to their own abusers”. As I associated with these women, I would intermittently feel their aggressiveness breaking out along with its manifestation of suspiciousness, a hostile attitude or demonstrations of overly pronounced cautiousness or anger. Shore (2003, 108) notes that a person’s “early traumatic attachment experiences” are directly connected with an “inability to regulate [his/her] emotional state under stress”. The author indicates two types of possible aggression: one is “an uncontrolled and emotionally charged response to physical or verbal aggression initiated by another”, and the other is “controlled, purposeful aggression lacking in emotion” (ibid. 135). Thereby I understood that such behaviour by these women, even with me, is their self-defence, which probably derived from their past and, ostensibly or not, “saved” them during the difficult moments in their lives. Such behaviour continues manifesting as “impulsive” or “defensive” even now. Nonetheless, the aggressiveness would ebb away when I responded by letting them know that I can sense how difficult it is for them at this time. It was no happenstance that Evelina describes her life as akin to a *dual* life. She evaluates it as having been *difficult* due to, what she calls, its “double-faced” nature, “Well it this kind of, two-faced kind of life. It truly is hard. Well like a second life” (E112.3). Later she adds that everything that happened was her “like (...) a secret” (E112.4), since it was necessary “to live through it and that’s all” (E92.5). Evelina’s organisation of such a dual life manifested as a defensive adaptation on her part seeking to change the existing albeit unbearable reality of the situation.

In our talks with the women, some of them contended feeling tremendously *angry* with men resulting in their wanting *revenge* against them (and, as some said, they actually did so) for what they had experienced and lived through:

I say you are going to pay me the money not for nothing? (...) It was this some kind of hatred I felt (M28.1-2)

So if we're guilty already, then guilty to the very end. And those 'victims' {researcher note: sarcastically calling men 'victims'} we turn them into victims for real. And I'm not sorry for them in the least (Z28.17-19).

I'd like to kill that man and defend the woman (E94.9).

I was humiliated many times, then I wanted to humiliate somebody the same way, so they'd feel just as horrible, as I felt (I144.3).

Humiliating a customer was also important sometimes. It was something like revenge (I152.8).

One possible assumption is that such a reaction by the women was the outcome of the depressing feelings and emotions they were going through, which appeared internally due to their experiencing an "insecure attachment", something Neborsky (2003, 292) referred to as "*primitive-aggressive self organization* (PASO)."⁷⁰ There are instances where women in prostitution were described as behaving aggressively. Most likely that was an expression of their *retaliatory rage*.

Basing his statement on Bowlby's model, Neborsky (2003, 293) states, "The existence of this rage for an extended period of time leads to despair." Thus the assumption is made that some of these women (Broné, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita), who continue being engaged in prostitution and going through hopelessness, do not believe that changes can happen in their lives. Therefore the *hopelessly* reject any sort of thought about leaving prostitution saying "I no longer think about it", "I got used to it", "I need it", "It's part of my life", "it's too late", "I got used to looking vulgar (...) to

70. *Primitive-aggressive self organization* (abbreviated as PASO) is used to describe the complex mixture of unconscious feelings and defences that exist within an insecure attachment (Neborsky, 2003, 292).

me it's nice-looking and acceptable" (B44.6-8) and "How to know, how much is still left?" (T22.9). Some of them who have AIDS have hopelessly neglected caring for their health in a similar way: "If I was sure, that I'm sick with AIDS, then maybe I would think about it, but since I don't know that, then I don't worry about it either" (K26.1-2). This sort of behaviour by them attests to their experiencing anxiety and insecurity, which confirms their vulnerability even more.

The life stories of these women revealed that the views or actions of their abuser frequently outweighed their understanding of reality, surpassed humanness and distorted the naming of ongoing happenings. The experiences of the women attested to their efforts at *renaming* their *reality by imbuing it with another meaning*. Yet these were the same various methods or arguments employed by their panderers, whom they imagined as their "friends," and even their customers, who were using their services:

My pimp kept on reassuring me, that that wouldn't happen again and he'd keep on giving me tranquilizers, so I'd fall asleep. Now I know, what those tranquilizers really are (B32.2-3).

He's a human being without any feelings, he's a beast, he has not consideration for people. (...) If he's mad, he can simply kick you all over. Simply with his feet, with his shoes, kick you all over (V12.6).

That fellow saw, that we don't live poorly, (...) and that's when he offered sister, say here there's a neighbour I know at my place, she knows the work in Italy. See over there you'll have to sit in this bar (...) and start talking with the customers, who come in, drink with them and that's all, nothing else. So we agreed, because there were no conditions for us... (R46.2-7).

They'd compliment, because, they wanted to sleep with us (I84.8).

He'd tell me, that I have to put up with it a little bit more. He'd say, he understands, how I feel, but it's impossible any other way, and it's necessary to stand it somewhat more. (...) And he'd constantly name, how much good he's done for me (J104.9-13).

Obviously the women were inclined to rely on their so-called caregivers or do-gooders, who would "reassure" and "be concerned" presumably "understanding" how they feel, how hard it is for them. Herman (1997) notices that the weight and influence of the

arguments submitted by a wrongdoer for *renaming reality* depends on the power and position that the wrongdoer holds. That sort of isolated understanding of reality often becomes an obstacle for rational and conscious evaluation. Odeta recalls living in a world, “which I created myself, where there was no violence, no evil of any kind (O24.3). Since she had such an idealised understanding of reality, the woman had a hard time imagining and believing that she could be sold, raped or exploited. Therefore it is no wonder that Odeta only grasped reality once the fact had actually occurred. She said, “I understood, that I’ve been sold not at once, only when, they drove me over there, where I had to work and when they told me so openly (O6.7). The ability to foresee the consequences of events, according to Bandura (1986), regulates, to a large part, a person’s appropriate behaviour and can help a person redirect his/her actions to a favourable and effective rather than destructive direction. As this author says, “Forethought is the product of generative and reflective ideation” (Bandura (1986, 19/2009, 47).

However, when the social environment upholds prostitution by naming it a profession or by considering it solely the responsibility of women, just as Zita says, “We’re always to blame for everything” (Z28.16), then what happens to a woman internally is seemingly pushed beyond the boundaries of deliberation. Bandura (1986, 336) claims that “an interplay of self-generated and external sources of influence” regulates the functioning of a person. Toma remembers being beaten up, as she says, “to the point of losing consciousness” (T12.6). The woman claims this was the work of the police: “It seems they also sometimes use the services of prostitutes. They look over while on patrol, apparently, a better one” (T12.7). Thusly I raise the assumption that this sort of behaviour by the providers of law and order with women in prostitution which, quite often, was fortified by their warped view that the women were born that way contributed to the condemnation and isolation of these women. Under such circumstances, it is difficult for women in prostitution to believe that they can be respected and considered as people, not as promiscuous or debauched offenders. I heard the women say more than once during our talks about how hard it was for them to

believe that they could be understood and accepted. As Loreta says, “Such rejection, to you it seems, that you’re not needed by anybody” (L78.13). As I was assisting women who had experienced abuse and exploitation in prostitution, I often came across the devaluation of their experience. Even the news media, a powerful force for forming public opinion and positions, frequently reinforced the policy for devaluing these women by publicly announcing negative views of them.⁷¹ Herman (1997, 9) ascertains that grasping the “traumatic reality in consciousness requires a social context that affirms and protects the victim and that joins victim and witness in a common alliance”. Therefore an effective change in a person’s life is only possible with the appropriate understanding and acceptance by persons with whom he/she comes in contact as much as by the existence of a supportive public viewpoint.

Philippe and Romano (2008), who analysed human trafficking and the experiences and feelings of the victims of prostitution, notice that it is not easy for women to integrate their experience by acknowledging it. It is a process requiring time and efforts. According to these authors, the appearance of “the psychological consequences resulting from the terrible conditions in which these young women lived” causes the complexity (Philippe, Romano, 2008, 322–323). However, it becomes unavoidably important for a person who is seeking changes in life to face his/her difficulties or, as van Deurzen-Smith (1997, 30) puts it, with the “realities of life (...) in order to

71. Skersytė, Ž. “Klaipėdos prostitutės – neišnaikinamos [Prostitutes of Klaipėda – can’t be exterminated]”, *Vakarų ekspresas*, 2007 July 23.

Saukienė, I. “Populiarėjanti sekso vergijos forma – vedybos pagal katalogą [A more and more popular form of sex slavery – marriage by catalogue]”, www.DELFI.lt, 2007 September 28.

Skersytė, Ž. “Prokurorų bei prostitučių santykiai [Relationships between prosecutors and prostitutes]”, *Vakarų ekspresas*, 2007 September 26.

Saukienė, I. “Lietuvių prostitutės: nuo gatvės merginų iki elitinio eskorto [Lithuanian prostitutes: From the street girls to the elite escorts]”, www.DELFI.lt, 2008 November 7.

Saukienė, I. “Aistros dėl prostitucijos legalizavimo: kur stovėti ir ką dėvėti [Passion for legalising prostitution: Where to stand and what to wear]”, www.DELFI.lt, 2010 July 18.

overcome what we are". The experiences of the women who participated in this research revealed that it was especially the spiritual and psychological obstacles, which prevented their recognising what they had gone through; it was not only the physical and social consequences they had suffered. Evelina explained, "It's because it really breaks you psychologically, so later it's really hard to live through it all again" (E100.1). Odeta talks about her feelings and what she had to live through in her effort to comprehend her own reality:

I felt that I was falling into the bottomless, the speed was unreal. There was no feeling of fear, I remember that well. There was this feeling, that I was no longer alive. Then, I remember it as if it was now, I was sitting on the floor and I couldn't stand up. Inside there was emptiness, it was only that empty for me during my mother's funeral. I was in shock, the shock was mixed in with a tremendous desire to kill everybody. To me the hatred was mixed up for everybody and for myself. With every new instance I felt, that I hate myself more than those, who were fucking me, and the further it went, the more I hated myself (O8.1-13).

Clearly, in such a situation along with all the experiences that a woman must go through, it is difficult for her to evaluate everything that is happening critically and rationally. The overwhelming *shock* interwoven with *horror* accompanied by a sense of *emptiness* suddenly turns into tremendous *anger*, directed less at those who are behaving cruelly with her and more at herself. This is what reflects her reality at that time. Additionally *guilt* appears alongside the anger: "I couldn't imagine how I'd be able to walk over and kiss my little girl. I lay there and thought, why specifically me? What for? What did I do that was so bad, that I should end my life that I never even started?" (O12.3-5). As I listened to Odeta's story, I seemed to feel the happenings that had caused her repulsion, horror and rage. Meanwhile she had had to experience all that and live through it. Understandably some of them (Vilè, Julia, Loreta and Odeta) alleged that, being unable to bear the reality of all that horror, they wanted to disappear, run away or, even more, as Julia said, "to kill myself. Nothing else" (J58.6) since, as she explained, she was incapable of seeing any other way out. As aforementioned, the women relied on alcohol, narcotics and various means of psychological defence to ease the difficulties

they had to live through. Another way was simply, as Loreta said, “then I’d close up, (...) I’d simply shut off within myself (L32.1). As Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 248) assert, “Evil is completely unacceptable.” The sort of possible result depends on the sort of relationship a person enters into with evil. According to these scholars, recognising evil prompts a search for the guilty, whereas ignoring it prevents seeing the consequences. Additionally an effort of reaching a compromise with evil causes the risk of losing honour and authenticity. Therefore, I can only make assumptions about why certain women chose to leave prostitution, while others remained where they are, seemingly submissively reconciling with their own reality.

It is possible to state that, of the fifteen women who participated in this study, ten managed to find enough strength within themselves to get together and to oppose their reality at that time. As the experiences of these women attest, they nonetheless attempted “somehow” to find a way out of even such a situation. Realising and accepting that they had been sold, sexually exploited and abused, the women recognised the consequences of their painful experience when they were finally unable to bear the cruel behaviour with them. Odeta shared the important changes within herself, which she discovered: “Relationships with the people around (...) shifted. My behaviour changed (...) The saddest was from that, since I had thought I was stronger. This here was like taking some exam, I saw my weak spots” (O39.23-24). It was specifically this insight into the actuality of her life that put her on the road to the return to her own self, which may not have been easy but did offer hope for a different sort of life. Julia also admitted that it was not easy: “It’s hard to admit it, that I used to degrade myself in front of men that I used to take money” (J72.2). It was not merely by chance that she seemingly brings up a question while I was talking with her by saying, “Maybe it seems all so simple to somebody? You go ahead and get out of it, but...” (J82.11), although, after all, according to her, “there are so many things inside, that get in the way of getting out” (J82.12). Indeed, what are those “things” that “get in the way”? As I spoke with the women, I made an assumption that all those things that “get in the way” of their getting out that are, for the time being, perhaps not awaited, unwanted

to meet head-on, “strange”, albeit “seemingly waiting” to be let in and accepted. Those things or thing that they will have to unavoidably face one way or another are none else than the truth about themselves. A confrontation with the truth is inevitable whenever changes in one’s life are desired or sought. It is no accident that Rogers (1961, 33) says, “Reality seems deeply important as a first condition.” Thus, wanting to meet up with their own reality, the women must desire, dare to choose and do what is not easy. It is as Bugental (1965, 41) notes, “Reality is being faced with never understanding enough while yet having to choose and action the basis of such incomplete understanding. Reality is endlessly coming up against the walls of our aloneness.”

7.5. Summary: Traits and patterns of pathways in decision-making choices

The analysis of personal experiences of women in prostitution on their *choice for decision-making* highlighted certain *specific patterns* in their lives that can be described by the following traits: *Lack of skills for critical reflection, Self-deception facilitates adaptation, Loss of one’s own power and meaningfulness, Reconciliation with a situation as unpreparedness for change, Traumatic exhaustion leads to the state of being at the “bottom” and Understanding and recognising one’s own reality should liberate an effect.* The personal experiences of women in prostitution revealed that they attempted to overcome the different obstacles or threats they faced in various ways as they attempted to satisfy their needs to adapt to life and to sense the significance of their own impact on their personal wellbeing.

Lack of skills for critical reflection

The personal experiences of the women indicated that their landing into prostitution was provisional to their pursuit of “quickly” and “easily” earned money. Meanwhile they believed that this was temporary and not morally wrong or depraved, that it would not cause any traumatic consequences and that they would be able to quit any time they wanted. Such a position and behaviour on their part could

be judged a consequence of a deficit in critical self-reflection about themselves and their lives. When there is a lack or non-existence of self-reflection skills, there is an inability to adequately comprehend and assess the demands of reality, a situation and the environment. Consequently compromises are made regarding one's own personality, decisions are made involving erroneous selections and a person surrenders to self-deception.

Self-deception facilitates adaptation

Money, as one of the women's selections in their pursuits to assure better lives, became symbols providing meaning to their existence and facilitating their adaptation to the environment. However, since they did not develop advanced cognitive abilities, it was difficult for them to assess, pick out or comprehend the events surrounding them and to consider all the different selections and their consequences.

It was important to accept these women's self-deceptions in the same ways that they do in my relationships with them. That was something like an affirmation of their own selves and their own egos, which was far more important to them at that time than it was to cast away their self-deception. Put another way, affirmation of their very essence was important to them and this facilitated their finding themselves.

Loss of one's own power and meaningfulness

The choice made by the women reflects its spontaneity in which, according to Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 37), "lie both the burden and the power of free will". Consequently, they are inclined to undertake the burden of subjective responsibility. They say, "I chose on my own", "I went on my own", "I agreed" and "I was guilty myself". Therefore, it would seem their agreement and choice, which are their own individual makings, do exist. That would mean that the experience of free will participates unavoidably. However, a contradiction appears herein. First, free will helps a person gain a sense of power and importance. Second, free will gives a person the opportunity to feel what it is to be human, to feel his/her own internal completeness.

Reconciliation with a situation as unpreparedness for change

Although, according to some of the research participants (Bronè, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita), they are “already prostitutes inside”, already used to being what they are and they will “work and continue to work”, I was able to feel their hope and yearning for a different life during our talks nonetheless. The women’s observation that “it could be even worse” attested to their dissatisfaction with what they have to experience and go through and what they are today. However, the saying, “who can help”, by some of the women participating in this study indicates their unpreparedness for changes and their effort to transfer responsibility onto others.

Traumatic exhaustion leads to the state of being at the “bottom”

The experiences of the women participating in this research revealed that all except one, Algè, drank alcohol. Meanwhile only three of the fifteen—Algè, Renata and Irma—managed to stay away from using drugs. For all the rest, alcohol and narcotics became the deceitful means of help in overcoming the difficulties and feelings caused by their traumatic experiences. Consequently five of the fifteen women participating in this research (Bronè, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita) continue being dependent on alcohol, narcotics or both. Two of them, Toma and Zita, already suffer from AIDS. Furthermore, some of them deny their dependency, thereby blocking their way towards changes even more. Additionally six research participants (Bronè, Milda, Odeta, Vilè, Julia and Renata) were feeling so completely ruined and broken they not only thought about but also attempted suicide. Therefore the use of alcohol and drugs by women in prostitution became a factor that, contrary to what they had believed, complicated their existence even more. All this merely caused them ever-greater anxiety, which formed the wall that was hiding their wounds accumulated from life, fear, vulnerability, powerlessness and hopelessness.

Understanding and recognising one’s own reality should liberate an effect

The women’s experiences also revealed the effect of influential people around them in renaming their reality, which became an obstacle for

a conscious and rational evaluation on their own. When they experienced traumatic events, they were inclined to take responsibility for the depressing and crushing consequences themselves. Frequently such acceptance of responsibility was also the reinforcement for delegating them with a certain category of persons by others or within the social context. Consequently it is difficult for them to cast off such a burden, to liberate themselves from the identity of a victim and the oppressive weight of such an identity. This involves a process that not only demands efforts by the women themselves but also an appropriate outlook, understanding and assistance from the outside.

8. Meeting the person in the help process

*I've learned that life sometimes gives you
a second chance.*

(Maya Angelou)

Ten of the women who participated in this research have already disengaged from prostitution and are now in the process of healing the wounds from the traumas they experienced. Meanwhile five are still engaged in prostitution. Nonetheless, I would not be inclined to claim that the decision of these five women to remain in prostitution is final and unchangeable. The changing and healing of a person who has suffered trauma constitute a process, the same as help constitutes a process. It starts from the quality of a process relevant to a meeting with another, from the contact made for a healing relationship. The kind of meeting that happens and its contents determine the result to a large part. Life does indeed provide a chance and more than one. It is important to have the courage to accept it and to find the inner strength to try it. It may not be an easy task but it is necessary when seeking essential changes in one's life.

This chapter provides the analysis and description of the need and search for help by women in prostitution within the context of their experiences as well whether they actually received help provisions. The elements that describe and highlight *specific patterns* in the personal experiences of women in prostitution are analysed in the way they emerged and seemed to link or fit together logically in these women's life stories. Here, in this chapter, I raise the questions that would assist in revealing the *specific patterns* of the pathways for seeking and receiving help by women in prostitution: What is important in helping women in prostitution? What kind of help and how much of it do they need? Were they inclined to seek it themselves and how did they do so? What helped/hindered them in

the help process? What happened in the lives of these women after they received help? What kind of experience did the women who received appropriate help obtain and how did their lives change?

By my search for the answers to these questions and the subsequent heuristic methodological follow-up, I endeavoured to reveal specific patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution while they were engaged in the help seeking process. The basis of the focus on relationships and on meetings with another person is the existential viewpoint. These meetings occurred either within these women's environment or with me as a researcher. The focus is also on the importance of the help process in terms of whether it encouraged or hindered changes in these women's interrelationships.

8.1. Non-existence of help and life's difficulties: "There was nobody who could offer advice or support... You're alone, so you do the best you know how."

The personal experiences of women in prostitution revealed their internal as much as external difficulties in their efforts to overcome prostitution, which were also obstacles preventing their disengagement from prostitution. *Suffering through the anxiety of loneliness* was one, causing the women to disassociate from the self as a feeling, conscious person. Others were the consequences stemming from *the lack of self-confidence in one's own abilities, experienced violence*, what the women had termed as "*inappropriate upbringing*", *disappointment in the relationships with close persons, hopelessness regarding future perspectives, presence of a stigma and not having anyone to talk to* about one's difficulties. All these matters kept the women stuck right where they were. They were inclined to talk about all of that; however, they did not always meet sincere "listeners" who were prepared to accept them as they are with no preconceptions and/or judgmental viewpoints. They *encountered the negative views of others, disbelief in them and unwillingness to listen to them* frequently. Such positions by persons close to them hurt and wounded the women the most. Moreover they understood *blaming or simply a lack of attention, deception*

or taking advantage of their existing situation as encouragement and support of what it is they are doing. Thusly interpreting matters in their own way, they would consequently make erroneous decisions. The women especially painfully suffered a *lack of close relationships and contacts* with intimate persons and the *lack of support and understanding* from these people or simply their *harsh rejection*. Some of the women named *difficult economic conditions*—not having where to live and what to live on—as obstacles to change. *Not having information about help* also limited the opportunities for changes in these women's lives. My talks with the women and all the personal relationships they had experienced with others confirmed one essential matter in a person's life—“everyone needs someone to stand by them”. The meetings I held with the women attested that inside they were inclined to talk about the experiences that had been painful for them, even when they were saying they did not want to talk about it.

Herman (1997) notices that people who have experienced painful events, which were traumatic for them, are often independently motivated to talk about this hoping their opening up will provide meaning and dignity to their suffering. Kast (2002) tells us that it is important for a person to experience identity, self-expression, the need to do something, to have ability, to have an impact on someone and the desire to imagine and show this off for others to see. The analysis of the early life experiences of the women in prostitution, during their childhood and adolescence, revealed that what they especially missed were the discovery and reinforcement of their own “I”, having a sense of being a separate individual and self-expression. Consequently a search for identity continues in the lives of these women manifesting as an effort to have an impact on someone and thereby understanding the self better. Pieper and Pieper (1999) notice that persons who acquire “inner unhappiness” in childhood can subconsciously foster an illusion in adulthood about the ability to control and govern everything. Such persons can associate their inner security with various symbols as they seek inner wellbeing and defend their own essence. These women obviously feel an inner urge to talk; it is especially important to them to be listened to and heard out, “seen” and even more, to be understood and accepted.

This way they experience their identity and seemingly confirm their own meaningfulness, which was often lacking in their relationships with intimate persons and those around them in their lives. That is the reason why, as she opens up, Zita says for a long time, she had wanted “to put all the wrongs done to me into words to someone” (Z32.4). I still remember Vilé’s words that attested to the sense of *loneliness* she had suffered: “There was nobody, who could offer advice or some sort of support back then. Nobody was there. You’re alone so you do the best you know how” (V8.5-6). The woman’s going through such a separation from others and her going through the sense of “nobody” being around form conditions that foster her experiencing aloneness or the anxiety of loneliness. Kučinskas (2008, 10) describes the feeling of loneliness as a painful “lack of human contact (...) and their experience of longing”. Vilé’s words clearly show the lack of a close “human contact” in her life. It becomes clear that Vilé’s state attests to her earlier personal experiences about the lack of her needs satisfaction for a close, intimate contact offering her the experience of gentleness, care, concern and security. Understandably it is no happenstance that the wrongdoings against her and the feelings of disappointment break through the anxiety of loneliness that Odeta is experiencing. During our talk, she expresses, “PEOPLE WHERE WERE ALL OF YOU, WHEN I DIDN’T WANT TO LIVE ANY LONGER???” When I hit bottom, when I NEEDED YOU SO MUCH!!! Where, where, where, where???” (O40.7). Meanwhile Milda has this to say about feeling lonely, about feeling “alone”, “Nobody helps, you’ve got nothing, no relatives, no parents, nothing. Nobody will bring you anything, nobody will give you anything, nobody will help, you’ve got to go yourself (M8.4-7). According to her, when feeling unloved, unneeded and devalued, there is a choice of several strategies to try to adjust to life: superficiality, insincerity, aggressiveness, anger and thirst for revenge. Perhaps that is why Zita’s outbursts of hatred and vengeance towards men can be understood as a response to her past, painful experiences: “I don’t have anything more to lose, I’m already sick. And I got infected. So I’m going to get even the same way. I hate men, they’re perverted creatures. And if I infect somebody, it means I’m

getting even for that, what they did to me (Z24.3-5). Most likely Zita is hiding feelings of alienation, hopelessness and the anxiety of loneliness that she is experiencing behind her mask of aggressiveness. Moustakas (2008) explains that distancing from the self and self-denial cause the feeling of loneliness, which is expressed as an undefined and disconcerting anxiety.

Moreover certain women who are experiencing anxiety consider themselves as worthless: “With my schooling, I don’t know where I’d work” (R110.5). Some lack self-confidence: “I know, that, (...) I won’t just quit, I know it’ll be hard for me to quit” (M4.10). Others feel powerless: “To tell somebody about it, what’s wrong, I couldn’t, and I didn’t know what to do” (J58.4). Thus they surrender even more to a painful state of being severed from others. Taunts, demeaning reprimands or harsh accusations coming from their intimates and others who surround them further strengthen their surrendering to isolation and disassociation from other people:

(...) He even said I’m a prostitute and he’s ashamed of me (I88.3).

Criticisms, yup, I’d even get them from my brothers, (...) and from dad, and from friends (I38.1).

Everybody said, I’m the garbage man’s daughter, that I’ll never have anything, I won’t get anywhere, I’ll remain that way. Look at yourself at how you look? (I42.3).

We’re always the ones who are guilty for everything (Z28.16).

Everybody thought, that it’s my own fault (D144.2).

I’ll never forget his words, that I took hold of my mind too late, it’s too late to be learning, it’s too late to start life from a fresh start (O33.29).

The name-calling Irma suffered in childhood—“garbage man’s daughter”, later the label of “prostitute” or the other “prophetic” forecasts regarding her worthless future—as she said, “All that hurt me really strongly” (I42.4). Bandura (1986) notices that people do not only react merely to various allusions but begin to judge them as reliable and, quite often, interpret them in their own way turning them into their own convictions. Thus one possible presumption is that those retorts or allusions from surrounding persons, which demeaned

Irma's dignity and her self-assessment, became conditional experiences acting on her and encouraging her to deny everything due to the conclusions she had drawn herself. However, since she did not have any educated skills of perception, her choices became not only misleading but also damaging to her herself. As she says, "I always wanted to look, the way they do pretty, likeable, have nice things, jeans, that same cute little jacket, cause there never was that (I42.6). So then the woman's goal becomes, as she says, "I'd show everybody, that now I'm different (I98.6). Irma's changed financial situation after she began dancing striptease at the bar strengthened her significance and importance to others even more. Once there, according to Irma, the people close to her simply "began to make use of it, that I have money and earn a lot" (I90.8). That was why she clearly changed after she started working at the bar. She explains, "I got brave (I108.2) (...) I had money and I could buy that, whatsoever I wanted" (I104.4) "(...) I somewhat looked down on others (I108.5). Bandura (1986) explains that people do not restrain their behaviour, if the environment justifies the end results of their yearnings.

Several kinds of acts can unavoidably induce a person to shut off within him/herself and to withdraw from others. One is judging that person critically or accusingly rather than the opposite, by attempting to understand him/her. The other is ascribing that person to some type or category of people rather than the opposite, by trying to help him/her, by lessening the influence of a stigmatising view or predetermined negative attitude. According to Vilè, when there was no help, when "nobody would help, that's why only within myself there was everything, only with myself (V68.2). The outcome was that the woman withdrew from her relationships with other people. Odetta suffers shame and guilt or, as she explains, "To me it appeared, that it's a great shame, to tell somebody about it, it seemed I'm to blame myself (O37.4). This also became the reason for her social isolation, where, as she says, "You cannot be yourself already" (O26.5). Thereby the women feel they have no one to tell about what they are experiencing. They feel different, "imperfect" or unbecoming of society's standards, and such a state drives them into hopelessness and encourages them to distance their relationships with others,

hide within the “self” and become isolated. In the opinion of Crandall (2000), “Stigmatization can have a profound effect on a person and can be a cause to a distorted self-image and low self-esteem of him/her. The stigma that Milda carries and her warped self-judgement were obstacles to open up to another person or to look for help overall: “I can keep from associating, because, since, that due to this my kind of, well: image::, how I look. It’s BETTER *voobshe* {transl. note: sprinkles in a Russian word duplicating the Lithuanian} to be quiet” (M76.4). Since the woman felt not fully worthwhile, she was inclined to accept herself the same way that others considered her to be, reconciling with it, because I am “a junkie” (M14.4), “a prostitute” (M12.1) and “I [I’m simply, really truly, I’m bad” (M4.3). Kotryna also claims, “We’re not the elite, we’re those cheap ones, the simple ones” (K18.4). This way she seemingly identifies with all the other women in prostitution and seemingly eliminates all the “we” from the so-called sphere of the “normal”. Bronė’s experience attests that a person is pushed out of the sphere of the “normal” systematically from the early years of that person’s life: “At the *internatas* {transl. note: ‘internment’ home} it was pounded in every day, that I’m worthless, I’m not capable of anything, I’m subhuman” (B30.6). Women such as these are led into disruptive relationships with others by the way the significant others in their lives considered or consider and understand them as well as by the stigmatising outlook towards them. Such a dimension of insubordinate relationships both in terms of duration as well as capacity was that specific and inseparable feature of stigma that, according to Hebl, Tickle and Heatherton (2000, 277), “may influence strongly (...) [and] lead to increased awkward moments” in a person’s life. Perhaps this is why these women were not inclined to seek help, possibly due to their fear of being rejected, misunderstood or unheard, which had already happened in their lives more than once. It is as Algė says, “You need comforting, but go ahead and wait for it, that too {transl. note: sarcastic implication that it will never arrive}” (A36.2).

The women considered relationships with family members as especially significant in their lives. Nonetheless, the fact that they had experienced deceitfulness, falsehoods and a lack of attention

about what was happening to them from their closest family members pained the women. Even more this prompted intense feelings of hatred and mistrust in them. Toma recalls, “From the very beginning the importance of education was not instilled in the family” (T4.7), and she did not attend school due to “not having what to wear, neglect” (T4.6). Later she experienced sexual abuse by her mother’s cohabitant and she suffered painful feelings of loneliness and neglect when she had no one to tell about it. As she said, “There was no one to complain to” (T4.2). Vilė remembers painfully suffering through one event after another and the traitorous relationships with her mother when, according to her, the closest person to her—her mama—was stealing her personal items. The woman’s personal experience attests to the destruction of the trust she had had in her mother: “When I drove in from Germany (3s), my wallet disappeared immediately, the gold chain necklace disappeared immediately. By morning when my kid and I woke up, the chain necklace was gone and mama was gone. (...) I need to buy my kid a baby carriage, and mama disappeared with her ‘cadre’ {transl. note: the guy she’s ‘shaking up’ with}, with my welfare payout {transl. note: special, larger payout following a birth and meant for a length of time}. What more can I say” (V148.4-13). Besides all that, her mother had pushed her away more than once during difficult times in her life. Therefore her mortification and disappointment in her mother have remained until now: “Sure, there was room for the ‘cadre’, whereas for daughter there’s no room. How to understand that?” (V144.1). That was why the woman had to lean on the help of her friends more than she could on her mother a number of times: “After my husband’s death I lived with one girlfriend, with another girlfriend, but not with mother (3s)” (V140.1). Rukšaitė and Gudaitė (2008, 85) claim that “the complicated relations with mother become akin to internal relations between adults”, which essentially cripple a person’s life. Perhaps that is why I sensed a distance as well as a rather cautious approach in maintaining contact between us while I was interacting with Vile. Several times she noticed, “It’s hard to believe, that someone could want to help” {from the researcher’s notes of 2007.01.24}.

Odeta still has painful recollections about her father's reactions after she had managed to escape from the hell of prostitution: "When I turned up and stated, that I am alive, he didn't even respond" (O16.2). Since father was an authority for the woman and an especially important person in her life, in this instance, after she had overcome her difficulties, Odeta's claim that he "doesn't even respond" is as if she still expects that he will accept and understand her misfortune. Thusly Odeta experiences complicated relationships with her family members, especially with her father with whom, in her opinion, she is exceptionally bound, and feels rejected, which adds to her inner anxiety. The woman thereby feels alone with her pain and her disappointment. She asks, "Why is everything like that? Fact is he wasn't even able to hear me out" (O33.25), and refers to the way she associates with her father as "sick relations" (O33.23). An assumption can be made that she feel devalued and demeaned, even destroyed by her father's behaviour with her. He was significant in her life albeit unresponsive to her needs and he, as she says, "did not adequately respond" at a time, when she especially needed help and support, when matters were hard on her, and nothing came of her expectations. It is hard for the woman to understand such an irrational emotional reaction. Her father's dispensing with her and the depressing misfortunes following one after another, which are difficult to overcome, cause the fear of chaos and difficulties in retaining self-confidence. Consequently her behaviour becomes categorical, demanding and passive aggressive either to herself or clearly to others, including her father: "I wrote father a letter where I said I love him, but it would be better if we don't have any relations" (O33.23). Rukšaitė (2008, 147) claims that a woman's relationship with her father is "essentially related with the processes of adequate self-judgement and self-expression as well as overcoming the world bravely and adjusting to it well". In this case, it becomes important for Odeta to take control of the feelings and emotions that arise due to her relations with her father so that, in the future, she would, as Shulman (1992, 212) states, "be able to manage (...) problems".

Instances of helping Odeta that were meaningful to the changes in her life come to mind. When she returned from the country in

which she had been sold to perform sexual services, relations with her family members had gone completely awry. If that was not enough, when she returned home, she had no documents and the apartment she owned had been taken over by these so-called “do-gooders” who were presumably renting and caring for the place while she was away. Odeta had been firmly convinced of their good, humane intentions. However, when she got back in the country, she faced an entirely different sort of reality. Upon her return, she had nowhere to live, no money, not even for the most elementary food and household products, and her family, which had been so important to her, rejected her as well. When we began interacting, I used to visit her at her home. We talked about all her concerns and difficulties for a long time. It ended up with my providing her with the things most necessary, so she could live in her home. Of course, prior to that, it took quite a “battle” with the so-called “do-gooders” to get them to move out of her place as fast as possible. I told her a number of times that I wanted to meet her family members, but this meeting was always, somehow postponed. However, one day I went over to her place and I was surprised to find unexpected changes there. The floors of her apartment were painted, and only a strip was left for a passageway. Changes were clearly felt in her home. When I asked how all this had come about, I remember that she laughed and said, “I was surprised too. I didn’t expect this. You won’t believe this, but today daddy came over and said, you need your floors painted, and that’s what you see here now. After all Dalia is coming over” {note in the client’s case file by the social worker providing help, 2004 04 18}. It made me indescribably happy to see the change in her sense of wellbeing and the smile on her face. From that time forth, relations between her father and her began to change markedly for the better. I realised that relations between Odeta’s family and myself, though they were indirect, were coming together and developing in a direction favourable for the woman’s healing process.

Evelina also remembers a lack of close contacts within the family and the indifference of her family members about what was happening to her. She said, “It was the same to them. They didn’t

respond in any way. They drank together, and it was all the same to them” (E44.1-3). Silva, who grew up from the time she was little in a care home for children, had to experience a life in which “everybody is on their own”: “Anything that’s better, it’s all for oneself, there’s no relating warmly” (S4.5). Such former relationships with the members of the family or others in the immediate environment pulled the women deeper into the quagmire of mistrusting others. The greatest difficulty for Renata, who also grew up in a care home for children and later embarked on a life of her own, along with her two sisters was not having where to live. Therefore the girls had to spend the night outside, in staircases, in a garage at their brother’s place or with girlfriends a number of times. As Renata tells it, “We didn’t have anywhere to live, so we lived in a garage (R4.1) (...) I didn’t have where to go with my kid, I lived at my girlfriend’s. (1s) (R6.3) (...) For about a month*. We lived outside...” (R16.5). Later, after one of Renata’s sisters acquired an apartment, she was able to find shelter there. However, a frequent obstacle was the direct maintenance of the place—the payments for electricity, water and heating. When the gals did not have enough to cover the costs for the apartment, the water, electricity and other utilities were often disconnected. Shulman (1992) tells that most social agencies or institutions are set up to help resolve the problems that arise for the members of their communities. However, in Renata’s case, the community was more inclined to levy fines than to offer constructive help. Similarly, in Kotryna’s case, as she claims, “the dean’s assistant (...) put out the effort” (K14.6) for the young woman to be expelled from the college where she was studying due to her accumulated debts, rather than helping her to realise the reality of her situation, so she could seek resolution on her own. Lobato (2001, 139) explains that a “person is both an individual as well as a societal creature of a community at one and the same time”⁷² and, to live, a person must live with others and have relationships with others because a person can only find his/her own place by being in a community with oth-

72. Translated to English by Vijolė Arbas from the Lithuanian translation of the work originally written in Spanish (see References)

ers. However, in the words of Priest Zdebskis (1972), when “a universal flood washes over society—*satisfy one’s needs* without paying heed to anything”, then various threats arise for any specific person (Paulavičiūtė, 1999, 162). In the case of Renata and her sisters, their liaison with those who worked in help providing institutions in the community attested to their unmet needs—confirmation of their importance and human dignity through a close contact, compassion, understanding and help. When they did not receive necessary, responsive help from community members, they handled their lives in their own way—as best as they understood. Bandura (1986, 20) notices that a “televised vicarious influence” may eliminate “the primacy of direct experience”. Then a person who learns by observation can adopt the rules for developing and regulating a behavioural model. Obviously Renata lived independently as best as she understood, regulated and encouraged by her own internal standards and influence: “Nobody helped me, alone I didn’t know, I was completely lost. Later I gave birth to my baby, I didn’t know what to do at all” (R110.7-8). The personal experiences of Diana and Silva also bear witness that there was a lack of outside help. According to Diana, “Nobody gave advice at the time” (D144.3), moreover “A lot of people didn’t believe it” (D144.1). Additionally, as Silva said, “When I’d ask somebody, they didn’t answer anything or they would say, what do I know” (S70.4). Such experiences by the women clearly show a lack of any greater attention on them from people around and the help they required. Therefore, they were inclined to believe that “People are very indifferent when it comes to the problems of somebody else” (B6.4), because “Even if you try to tell them about your own feelings and problems, nobody hears and they don’t believe it” (B6.6). Vanier (2006, 172) notices, “The community and the family are the major intermediaries between a person and society.” Thus, if women were to feel greater attention from a community about the difficulties they must suffer through, it would form a more favourable sphere for them to be themselves. Thereby the possibility for barriers hiding their vulnerability would be more likely to fall, and healing and change could be approached. As they said, they did not have “somebody to tell what’s happening” (J58.4), were not

able “with anyone (...) to have a chat about anything ...” (V64.2) or, “What can you say, (...) that you work in prostitution, nobody is forcing me to do it and that’s how I feel” (L26.2). All this brought them to the point of not knowing “what to do”, losing their presence of mind and feeling the anxiety of loneliness. Shulman (1992) takes note that communities, the same as family members, can face difficulties in recognising and accepting problems. Nevertheless, a person who is having, experiencing and suffering through difficulties in such a community can have a tough time overcoming problems all alone, without help from others.

8.2. Need for help dilemmas

An assumption can be made that help was necessary for the women who were part of this study. However, what is more important is how they realised, understood and recognised on their own how much and what sort of help was necessary for them. The talks with the women revealed that they clearly grasped the lack of help from their early childhood. Loreta recalls coming face to face with conflictual close relationships from an early age and experiencing feelings of loneliness and neglect. She feared being left alone: “I never could stay alone like that, I was afraid all the time to end up being alone” (L28.5). Irma and Evelina also speak with grievance about the lack of sympathy, warmth, understanding and support from the people closest to them during the years of their childhood and adolescence. Irma says, “I needed, all the time - warmth, understanding::, (...) that same sympathy (I8.3). Evelina told me, “I didn’t want my parents to stroke me [transl. note: like one does with a pet], but still, somehow to try to understand, to feel for me. (...) I simply wanted some sympathy of some sort” (E84.1-3). Differently than matters were for Loreta and Irma, it seemed that Odeta’s parents were prepared to help. However, that was, as she said, “financially” (O2.4) because, according to her, “my parents were not poor” (O2.3). Despite this the woman wanted to break loose from her parents’ home and their care because she claimed, “I didn’t want to constantly use them and be

dependent on them” (O2.5). This shows that material satisfaction of a child’s wants alone was insufficient to experience truly close relationships with her parents. According to Piepers and Piepers (1999), the most important gifts that parents give to children are time spent together and positive attention based on relationships grounded on wise love along with consistent and caring responses regarding the satisfaction of a child’s daily or emotional needs.

These women’s personal experiences attested to their also lacking in their later lives a close contact, caring attention and relationships that respond to their needs, assure a state of inner happiness or appropriate choices later on: “It’s important, that they would ask, how do you feel, during some or another minute, maybe there are some kind of changes, well like that, *that would have been enough for me*” (E10.1). That is why, even now that they are adults, they react to offers of help sensitively and very carefully. It is as one woman said, “It’s very important how and who is giving it” (E66.3). When they are in prostitution and experience various negative and depressing feelings—fear, guilt and inner hardship—inside they feel a great desire to tell somebody all about it. They explained, “There were times when I so wanted to do something like shout, something like pour out everything, that’s inside” (J66.5); “(...) Mostly I wanted to talk to someone, who would understand me, understand what it is, how I feel” (J128.1) and “There was something inside, that I must tell him, after all he is my brother” (E2.2). Nonetheless, along with their desire to tell someone all about it, they also feel doubt and great fear. As Julia said, “To talk about it realistically, what there was, it was tremendous fear” (J66.6). They do not know if they would be understood or heard out, as two told me, “I don’t know if anyone would understand me...” (E110.3) and “I want to, but I’m scared” (I8.13). It is especially important to the women not to be condemned or judged. They want finally to sense acceptance and understanding, not yet another loss, the same as what they have already experienced so many times before. Therefore the opinions of others and their outlooks on her are important to Irma, the same as they had been before: “The opinion of someone else was important to me” (I18.1) “(...) that I had not done anything bad” (I34.3).

She wants the opinions to refute her own self-accusations and her own negative view of herself. It was similar for Evelina, who says, “I felt somehow different” (E58.1). To her it seemed that every person knows everything about her, that they “see, know, that, well, they could tell a lot about me. That about me people have a poor *opinion*, that I’m bad (E58.4-5). Bandura (1986) has noted that a social order can create or uphold human weaknesses by using them as justification of a person’s flaws or as proof of worthlessness.

Thereby a supportive outlook coming from someone else as well as a close contact with another are especially important for women in prostitution. This condition is essential for regenerating their human worth and soothing the results of experienced trauma rather than the opposite, forcing them to feel worthless or powerless. The personal experiences of women in prostitution revealed the inner conflict they are suffering. Consequently they feel a great need to change everything that lessens their sense of being themselves. As several commented: “I wanted very much to change my life, myself and the surroundings” (O4.1); “I simply wanted to change my life” (J68.7) and “(...) the only thing I wanted, was to run away for all of that” (J146.2). Nevertheless, the fear of being neglected even one more time seemingly clamped down their courage to disclose themselves to another.

8.2.1. Rejecting help vs. being unmotivated to receive it: “How I wish I’d be someone who’s never wrong...”

Five of the women who had participated in this research (Bronè, Diana, Kotryna, Toma and Zita) continue engaging in prostitution for the time being and, at this time, they do not feel motivated to change their lives. Two of them, Zita and Toma, are already ill with HIV. However, the others are not certain whether they are also infected. As Bronè says, “Why should I have to check for HIV. I have not gone in for testing and I don’t promise to” (B46.1). Such behaviour by the woman seems to substantiate her psychological degradation and her state of surrender, when she no longer feels she is able to resist what is happening in her life. Her refusal to be tested,

to have a check-up of her health becomes an odd sort of protest of hers against others or a revenge of sorts for what she has gone through and still has to experience. The woman's refusal to care for her health can be understood as the lack of motivation to change anything in her life, the same as she lacks the desire to disengage from prostitution. Moreover such behaviour by the woman attests to her losing the desire to live. It also attests to another assumption that this is her effort to safeguard her sense of inner control. When we would meet, she would persistently claim, "The way I worked, that's how I work, and how I'll keep on working. After all it's necessary to live" (B48.3). It would appear that her main motive for not quitting prostitution is because "it's necessary to earn a living" (B54.3). During our talk, someone called, and Broné cut our conversation short saying, "Well that's enough, I've already told about everything, as best I could, I have nothing else to add, I need to run" (B54.4). Broné's sudden decision that she "needs to run" seems to confirm how important money is to her at this time. I make an assumption that Broné's "*I need to earn a living*" seems to be the only purpose and value keeping her in prostitution at this time and attests to her deep crisis regarding the meaning of life—believing in nothing, poor self-esteem, non-existence of values and disbelieving any perspective for a different future for herself. Bandura (1986) asserts that values can affect a person's behaviour and motivate those actions that are necessary for protecting those values, which are affected by evaluative internal reactions. Kotryna also chooses not to check her health due to, as she says, the *fears* she has about potential gossip in this small town, if it were to become clear that she was ill: "In this big village, talk spreads fast" (K22.2). The weight of the fear this woman carries correspondingly affects the negativity of her viewpoints, behaviour and emotional state. She attempts to justify the neglect of her health by saying, "With me there's not all that many clients, for me to get infected" (K22.3). She also ignores her dependency on narcotics by saying, "I haven't sat on it all that seriously yet..." (laughs) {transl. note: "to sit on a needle" is jargon for being addicted} (K24.2).

The life stories of Zita and Toma differ, but their experiences also have similarities. They both grew up without a father's care, concern

and love. Both had a difficult time learning in school (Zita completed nine and Toma – eight classes). Neither of them had ever worked any other job. Both had experienced sexual, psychological and physical abuse by persons close to them as well as poverty and economic shortages at home. By now they are both ill with HIV and take drugs because, as Toma says, “So the work would be easier” (T16.2), so they can ease their existence within prostitution. Furthermore both do not expect to disengage from, what they call, their “work”, “service” or “business”, because “I wouldn’t know how to do that” (Z28.1), “circumstances force it” (Z28.4), it’s not clear “how much can there be left” (T22.9) and, as Toma and Broné say, “You’ve got to live” (T24.2). However, such a categorical position held by the woman—“how much can there be left” and “you’ve got to live”—seems to clash with her hidden internal need for help: “Where else can I work?” (Z28.1). As I talked with the women, I sensed that, behind their firm positions never to leave prostitution, there was fear and a lack of confidence in the success of making another life for themselves. For example, they said, “So then why should I be doing something. It seems to me, it could be even worse. It could be that as soon as you get back up straight on your feet even a bit, you can fall even deeper” (Z28.9) and “Why look for another job? For somebody to put me down again. No, I’ve had enough (T20.1). Such assertions by the women attest to their experiences of unacceptability, differentiation from the rest and being “different”. After Toma experienced an unsuccessful effort to work as a sales clerk, her public humiliation and, added to that, her termination from the job, she no longer believes that she could have any luck again. That is why, as she says, “I did not resolve to look for a new job any more. I went back to the old one” (T16.7). Therefore the women lose hope for having a different life. As Toma says, “And who will you complain to? There’s nobody” (T14.1). Then the women are more likely to choose accepting what is designated to them, what Goffman (1963) calls “spoiled identity”, rather than trying again.

Once women in prostitution face even more than simply a negative attitude regarding them from persons close to them, they attempt to overcome various, self-regulatory problems. They are

inclined to hide their experience in prostitution from their intimates to avoid even greater rejection and devaluation from them: “Nobody knows much about my prostitution” (E104.1). In Evelina’s opinion, what she experienced and suffered cannot be compensated in any way. Thus she *selectively chooses whom she can tell about it* and whom she cannot: “I didn’t want, for many to know, I knew, that I will never be compensated for that damage (E92.1-2). Milda’s *disbelief in any sort of help* also limits her: “I was somehow:: thinking that (...) neither is anybody going to help me, nor is there any benefit to me from that help” (M82.6). Julia also *refuses offered help* saying, “When I was given a phone, I did not make a call. (...) I refused simply to take that phone at that time” (J112.1). Vilè admits that, while she was working in the brothel, she was *hopelessly reconciled* with any perspective for getting out of there. As far as any help was concerned, as she said, “That time (...) I didn’t even think” (V4.3) since, according to her, “Then I had no understanding at all, I only had a feeling of fear” (V6.1). Loreta also recalls experiencing an instance of a *total lack of motivation for changes*, “I truly did not want to change anything (...) and maybe I had not gotten to that point before” (L54.1-3). According to Philippe and Romano (2008), recognition of the status of a victim is essential because that provides an injured party with a liberating effect, preventing that party from piling depressing and frustrating responsibilities on him/her. Furthermore this legitimises the suffering of a person thereby encouraging requests for help and protection.

Therefore the great fear of self-disclosure was a serious challenge to the women regarding telling others about it. As Evelina said, “I was afraid, that they would turn away from me, that I’d lose those friends (E114.3), whereas, according to Vilè, “You’d be scared, even to think about it in that sense” (V36.3). Julia claims that the most important factor before she was able to seek or accept help from others was, first of all, by *admitting to herself* that it was an evil. As she said, “Up until then, until I hadn’t admitted that to myself, I could be told anything anyone wanted to” (J78.1). Evelina thinks similarly to Julia that, when there is no internal motivation and no desire to disclose oneself to another, it is important for another to

understandingly accept such a state in a person: “If you don’t want to talk about it, it’s better not to get anybody excited” (E102.4). When the woman would face the misunderstandings of others with respect to herself, she was inclined to carry her heavy feelings within herself. When she was no longer able to hold it all within herself, at the first opportunity, she would pour it out onto others: “Right at that moment I was the one who could not speak, I shut off within myself entirely, and somehow that pain, and that anger would be quenched on somebody else (...) or I would quench it myself” (E108.5-7). Rogers (1961, 113) claims that a person can be detached from his/her experiences, and feelings could remain not fully experienced, unrecognised, unacknowledged or unexpressed for various reasons stemming from the past or the present and hiding in the social surroundings. According to this author, it is necessary for a person “to *be* what he *is*” to fully experience feelings and life’s occurrences. It appears that what was specifically lacking for women in prostitution was experiencing their own emotions and feelings and *sensing* themselves for whom they actually *are*.

Consequently the women did not believe they would ever get help from others and were inclined to powerlessly withdraw within themselves: “I actually simply did not see::, I only tried, and that’s how I’d lower my arms [transl. note: lowering arms/hands means giving up]” (M4.6-8). Such a loss of their initiative to change their own situation and the acceptance of passivity distanced them from changes in their lives. This only strengthened the feeling of losing, not winning in the person who has experienced trauma. Therefore those who were overcome by a sense of hopelessness were seemingly inclined to stop with one question: “What for?” (T22.5).

8.2.2. Searching for a way out: “I went to the police cause by then I couldn’t find any other way out.”

As I engaged the women in conversation, I deliberated about what had happened by now. Some of them were determined to change their lives and sought help. Why did they do so now but not earlier? I gave them this question as well. Thinking about why she had not

sought help earlier, Milda said, “Maybe everything hadn’t become so boring yet (4s) maybe I hadn’t been so tired from it all then **” (M106.3). The situation of Irma, who suffered numerous deficiencies in her childhood and adolescence, changed after she began working at the club. She earned quite a lot of money and could, as she said, “allow myself a lot” (I100.6). By helping the persons close to her financially and pleasing them with various things and gifts, she *felt meaningful and important*: “When I started to work at the club and make money, I could dress better. That’s why I wanted to show off, that I had changed and I’m not poor. In my childhood a lot was lacking” (I100.5-8). Irma talked about how her brother’s negative view of her changed by degrees as she earned a lot of money and her financial condition became better. Later he seemed to “close his eyes” to everything that she was doing: “He said, what, couldn’t you find a better job, what had I dreamed up over here. He truly was ashamed because of my work. He said, and if his friends see it, what will he tell them. But later he got used to it and he didn’t say anything anymore. Later it was convenient for him, that I’m working there. He needs money, calls up, and I always gave it to him. You could say, he started making use of this, that I have money and I earn a lot” (I90.3-8). Moreover it was no less important to Irma to *sense her own power over men* as to have a solid financial standing. As she said, “To put them down a little the way, like they used to put me down” (I100.7). “(...) they put me down a lot of times, then I’d want to put somebody down too the same way, so they’d feel just as terrible, as I had felt” (I144.3). In time the woman stopped judging what she did negatively. As she put it, “I no longer wanted to prove anything to anybody” (I98.8). Bandura (1986) notices that it is impossible to stop people suddenly, especially when their behaviour is unrestrained, unless an ongoing process is broken. By diverting attention from themselves, persons lessen the self-realisation of themselves as individuals at the same time. According to this author, a lack of attention towards one’s own behaviour lessens a person’s inner regulation and insight, thus forming a fertile field for environmental influences. I make the assumption that, although Irma’s work at the striptease club provided her with a sense of power, the

feeling that she is her own mistress, at the same time, it diverted her attention away from herself as a human being. Thereby this suppressed her internal regulation. Obviously that is why she says, "Working at the club, I got something, I lost something, but anyway something was good" (I104.5). Thus there was absolutely no need for the woman to seek help at that time. Her attitude towards her friend's offer to visit the centre that was helping women such as her was quite nonchalant, suspicious and distrustful. She recalls her initial reaction to her friend's suggestion to go to the centre helping women, "Well, it turned out strangely. She invited me to meet and told me, there is this centre that gives courses for learning. I asked, how much do they cost, she said, it doesn't cost anything, so I said, that it's not like that in this life, nothing exists for free. I told her, that this is a scam, maybe later on you'll have to do something. I really thought, that it's not like this, until I got here myself (I122.1-6). As Philippe and Romano (2008) have noticed while studying the rehabilitation of victims resulting from trafficking in women for purposes of sexual exploitation, the female victims face essential challenges relevant to an important, inner restructuring.

Now, when Irma speaks to me about her work at the striptease club, she calls it an illusion, which, she says, "lasted very long, until it disappointed me" (I38.16). Now, looking back over her past and wondering why she did not look for help back then or why she did not look for ways to sever all that, she said, "Now I look at it with entirely different eyes" (I18.23). According to the woman, at that time, she had felt "like that little rabbit, like, [like some kind of little animal, going around in that same circle" (I6.10). Loreta, when she remembers her being in prostitution and in dependency on drugs, she assess the experience as self-deception, by which it is necessary to pray to God to free her from these, because, as she says, "It is truly necessary to separate that out, that here the devil is tempting you" (L62.3). Vilé remembers thinking about suicide more than once when she was not able to bear all those difficulties. However, according to her, the lack of courage or the fear to do it held her back. She told me, "I didn't used to want to live, that's a fact, I wanted to kill myself, only so much, as I'd lack the courage. I would thing, maybe

I'd cut myself up with a razor blade here, but I'd be afraid to cut here (shows her wrist) >" (V72.1-2). Thereby the experiences of these women show that, once they were dehumanized and turned into objects for the sexual satisfaction of others, they were unable to seek help on their own, without the help of others. That is when a meeting with *another* as well as *its quality* along with the trust acquired during a contact become especially important. It is as Koestenbaum and Block (2001, 161) say, "The actual experience of being-with."

The women's personal experiences that encouraged them to make the fateful step towards seeking help vary. Renata along with her sisters hated the endless deceptive efforts to sell them for sexual services abroad. Therefore, when *friends encouraged her not to remain silent*, she turned to the police: "That's when we went to the police. We agreed to cooperate with them" (R32.5). With Silva, after she had wound up in the hospital due to a vicious beating she had received from the director of an institutional care home for children, *a hospital physician encouraged her* to disclose her existing situation and talk about how everything had happened: "Then we wrote a complaint and we told everything" (S60.2). Vilè had formed close, intimate relations with *one of her clients* who *helped her run away* from a brothel. She remembers, "If he hadn't of taken me with him, I would have worked there and worked off all those three months" (V38.4). The woman cannot forget the fear she went through when she was in hiding from the panderers after daring to take that first step by running away from the brothel: "I ended up having to hide everywhere, change my area of residence, but I can't change my appearance" (V10.5). When Loreta could no longer bear all of what she refers to as "the bottom", she attempted to seek help independently by going to organisations helping people such as her: "I started looking for that help, (...) I got over to that N organisation, where they would help women, like I am" {researcher note: N references the name of the organisation} (L34.1-2). This was because, according to the woman, "From so much using of that (...) I was run down" (L36.4). The significant push that Julia got for quitting prostitution and running away from her panderer came from the *encouragement by a police officer* whom she nonetheless trusted: "Back

then see, on the last evening I called that officer myself and told him, that I truly could not go on any longer” (J114.4). *Police officers also brought* Milda to the centre providing help for women victimised by prostitution or human trafficking. Toma had dreamed about a different life for herself as well. As she says, “I thought about a different life, otherwise I wouldn’t have looked for a different job” (T24.3). The woman attempted to turn her dream into reality, and she found a job. However, it did not last long before, one day, she was terminated from her job.

Nevertheless, the women’s experiences of looking for help also revealed painful and disappointing meetings with others—help provision experts, police officers or people from the immediate environment. Often what they found was, as Bronė said, “If you happen to be from the children’s home, then all in all they look at you like you were a person not from the right category” (B6.5). They often faced *insulting views of others* or *negative judgements about them*. Ruškus et al. (2005), who analysed the rehabilitation and integration of victims of female trafficking and prostitution, notices that, since Soviet times, Lithuania still has remaining a segregated system of child rearing and care that was the reflection of a specific policy on families and children. The author claims that merely being placed for residency in one of these institutions already has a negative impact on a child’s socialisation. Consequently the children and teenagers who grow up here remain very vulnerable as well as psychologically and socially immature. There is good reason why children describe life in an institutional care home for children as “nothing more than cold storage facilities” (Malarek, 2003). Toma was *terminated from her job* when someone who, according to her, was apparently one of her clients, shouting publically called her a prostitute: “But the essence of it was, that then I was fired from my job” (T16.6). Renata remembers how she had to inform the police officers about the behaviour by the man they referred to as “uncle”. This man had taken their personal documents and attempted to send her sisters and her to another country to provide sexual services. When the women refused, the man threatened them. She tells, “He says, I am leaving you in peace, I will give you back your passports, you leave

me in peace. Take everything, (...) if you don't take it back, I'll chop off your heads, (...) I'll chop off your heads, so see it'll end badly for you, we'll kill you" (R40.2-3). At that time, Renata and her sister were terrified and they recalled their written complaint declarations: "So and when they threatened, we with my sister took back, well we changed our testimonies" (R44.1). However, back then, as Renata claimed, the police officers *investigated for over two years* the complaints the young women had filed regarding their being sold into prostitution: "By then as many as two years had already, maybe even more had gone by" (R36.1). Later on, whenever the young women got a visit from the so-called "uncle", they would call the police. However, again they would face the *indifferent reactions* of the police: "Then we called the police fast and the police came, but he, (.) he wasn't there. < We saw, that he is walking on the other side of the street, we showed the policemen, but the policemen walked slow, and said – ai we won't catch him, and walked off >" (R14.1). Therefore it was obviously difficult for the young woman to believe in the promises made by the officers to help them, because, according to her, "They talk joking around, it seems, that's how it seemed to me, that they are not trying to do anything, they're laughing at us" (R60.1-2). Milda was also open about her *unsuccessful effort to get help or coarse behaviour by police officers* with her and other women: "No matter where I would try to go, I would always get rejected" (M4.4). "(...) *the police would catch me (...) ai it's that prostitute!" (M12.2). "(...) another time with us over there {researcher note: over there refers to being in custody at jail} they'd hold us all night long, especially, so we wouldn't climb over that fence, (...) lock us up specially (M14.1). Philippe and Romano (2008) state that the efforts by women who have suffered from prostitution or human trafficking for sexual purposes to associate with the police can prove more risky than reliable. Frequently the women run into a rather limited viewpoint by the officers towards them, when the officers attempt to hold strictly to the law and ignore humanness. Algè recalls her experience with a psychologist who drove her into hopelessness. This woman was presumably providing help, but she would often complain that she *has no time to meet*: "I don't meet with

the psychologist very often, she says she has no time, there's a lot of work. I don't know what to do. I do not know what to do!!" (A8.1-2). Silva has been similarly disappointed more than once by the *inappropriate help provided to her by experts*: "Not once I've ended up meeting up with employees who say or somehow show, that they're your troubles, you go ahead and solve them" (S20.3). Thereby Silva as much as Toma are convinced: "A person who has no experience in that kind of life cannot understand another" (S24.1) and "Whoever has not experienced this, will never understand us" (T18.4). Moreover, until now, Silva still remembers the *rough treatment by a social worker* she received with pain and anger, when the effort was made to take her children away, presumably for their inappropriate care. The conflict that arose between the two called forth an attack of aggression by Silva towards the social worker. The woman said, "After that time I (2s) never trusted her again" (S8.2-3). Koestenbaum and Block (2001) state that nothing, not any sort of advice, explanations or lectures heal as well as simply a relationship between two people does. It is probably no happenstance that Odeta ironically asks and answers herself while talking about the help she has received from others: "What does it mean, if somebody gives you money? It means, you have to act like, do what, not what you want, but what that person wants, who gave it to you" (O26.2-3). Thereby the personal experiences of women in prostitution revealed that it is especially important who provides help, how it is provided and what sort of help it is. The future perspectives of these women's lives frequently depend to a large part on this.

8.3. Meeting with another as a resource of help: "Thank you for being! For that, cause I'm able to call you. For that, cause you hear me out..."

Koestenbaum and Block (2001) notice that only relationships with people can heal. Meanwhile self-help, which is generally based on human presuppositions and which often lacks authenticity, can only help in rare instances. Kępiński (2008, 207) claims the "best

medicine from the growing wave of psychological traumas in our society is not a legal code but rather greater responsibility for our outlook on another person.” Obviously it is equally as important to women in prostitution to experience a positive, supportive and strengthening view towards them from another person along with a sincere and unselfish desire to help them.

I remember the interview during our meeting with Irma. The entire time she had been telling me about her relationship with her brother and her work experience at the striptease club, she was attentively watching me as well as my reactions at the same time. I could feel her inquisitive glance at my facial expressions and my body language as well as her sensitive listening to the words I was selecting or the questions I was asking. I sensed how important my reactions were to her while she was talking about what she referred to as “not normal” “unacceptable” and “It cannot be like that”. How do I appraise that; do I accept her with understanding or do I judge and condemn her? Several times she notices repeating, “The outlook of people always scares me” (I346.7). I realised that the close relationship I had gained with her during our earlier meetings, my neutrality, my not being judgemental regarding what had happened or exists now in her life and in her experience as well as my expressed empathy *here and now* during a talk permitted her to disclose herself. This provided a great deal of self-confidence in her because, according to her, for her, “it’s important, the opinion of others is very important” (I28.1). Thus the understanding and acceptance of the woman for whom she proved to be something, what she said, was like “kind of a little push a little bit forward” (I34.4), “so I would go further” (I32.11). This helped to strengthen her self-confidence and her relationships with other people without surrendering to hopelessness and to gain more courage in accepting her own reality.

Morgan-Williams (1995) notes that an essential, vitally important meeting between a client and the expert help provider becomes a challenge to both parties. When attempting to help a client, Tyson (1995) holds the opinion that a dialogue is a necessary and irreplaceable means to sense and examine the emerged premises. This author, who bases her work on Maluccio (1979), observes the means

for guaranteeing success in critical situations, which can be a reflective dialogue between an employee and a client. This is especially true, when the effort involves an adjustment and response to the client's expectations, goals or various subjective states. The experiences of women in prostitution attest how vitally significant the healing relationships stemming from help received by expert or other help providers were to their lives. Diana remembers the close relationship she had with her grandmother in childhood and the care she had then received. Even now, such memories are a source of joy and pleasant feelings for the woman: "The most important of that, what grandmother did, was that, that she had concern. Well she used to love me. The way she knew how {researcher note: smiles while deep in thought}. She was my caregiver" (D178.1-2). Irma discovered sincere, warm and friendly relations with the employees of the help centre which, she claims, was missing for her: "I got that, what I truly needed, which is inside [inside, it's what's inside, that was missing for me. And that is a great deal]" (I8.5-6). The relationship Diana had with her psychologist remains especially meaningful to her. Diana misses her even now remembering, "I know I got attached" (D48.1). The woman said she was able to speak openly with the psychologist about everything, about intimate matters of concern to her, her friends and people she called "my loves":

With her I associated the most openly. (...) Yooo, purely everything. (...) She would ask a lot of things, even intimate, and generally all sorts. (...) She knew how to talk well. Well she wanted, that it would be good for a person. She would pull out, well, from deep down. And it wasn't very important about what kind of things, she would pull them out. (...) I miss her. It used to be about a half hour by phone. She was associated very warmly and that's it (D18.1-D36.1).

Obviously the sincerity and authenticity the woman felt in her relationship with the psychologist helped her to disclose herself, have heartfelt talks and satisfy the need for having a close contact and being important to another. Freire (2000) considers associations between people as being true when they interrelate with fundamental human values—faith, love and hope. A person can only enter into searches of the self within such an emphatic contact. Only

then a favourable sphere can be formed for comprehending the self and fostering consciousness. Evelina shares how very important her brother's understanding and support were during a most difficult time in her life. This was after she suffered rape, felt lost, feared telling anyone about it and went through feelings of guilt and shame for what happened. Apparently, at that time, it was enough for the woman that her brother, even though he was the only one, had noticed her changed state and feelings and realised something bad had happened to her and this was very important to her: “*Brother* (3s) (...) kept asking our parents, what is it with me, why am I avoiding even him, (...). He returned one time and said – ‘what is it with her?’ Said she’s not eating anymore. Well our parents were quiet. (...) Well he understood me (E2.1-3). That is why, according to the woman, she still trusts in her brother now and, apparently, it is enough simply to know there is a person who cares about her: “Understanding and support are very important. That’s why I can go to him, even if it’s nighttime. In any situation” (E6.1). “(...) It was enough for me well like that, be by my side, stay with me at that moment” (E8.1-8). Silva was able to talk about her life at the women’s help centre. There she had managed to form an emphatic, close and true relationship of mutual trust with an employee at the centre, which was exceptionally important to her:

Living here I felt warmth and trust (S8.1).

I could talk myself out to her and she morally supported me (S16.1).

I used to feel, that I could even trust in her, (...). (2s) That was a person whom I could trust (S16.3).

That she’s not selfish. (...) I really trusted her and she understood me (S18.1-2).

Odetta described a meaningful relationship she had had with a social worker at that time as “the beginning of my life”:

When I thought deeply, I understood what you are to me, (...) you are – THE BEGINNING OF MY LIFE. These are not ordinary words, here you have to feel it. When I learned to live with heart, (...) I understood, that, words are lacking of THE KIND, which would pass on that, which I feel for you. That is an unearthly gratitude (O40.16-18).

These women's experiences attest to how important it was to them to have a relationship with a significant *other* who was alongside. They also show the importance of what kind of relationship it was and what made it important. They especially valued a relationship in which they did not feel judged or evaluated but rather were understood and accepted for who they are. What was also especially important was a mutually valuable relationship of sincerity and warmth, when a help provider behaved flexibly and agreed to meet, when circumstances warranted, whenever the women specially needed it, when it was important. They were only able to disclose themselves, have more trust in another as well as in themselves, heal and become stronger in a mutual relationship. While discussing dialogic associations between people and the depth of the *I-You* relation, Buber (2001) notes that these are not *solely* associations. This scholar describes it as the bearing people have in respect to one another, their mutuality and their turning around to face and experience each other. This leads to a time when one calls, and a responsive and trusting echo from another manifests. Thus it is clear that the experience of a true relationship was, for these women, a "healing through meeting", as Morgan-Williams (1995, 88) calls it. That is why, when Irma experienced close relationships during the time help was provided for her, she felt as though she had discovered, in her words, a "new family", something she had been missing ever since her childhood. She relates, "Actually, there wasn't even any desire to leave the centre {transl. note: says the word, centre, in the diminutive, endearing form} (I134.4). In the beginning, when I had just arrived, there was fear, now there isn't any, now I feel, that I've got a new family" (I136.4). Milda spoke openly about the authenticity of a person she met who was especially important to her. She had missed having a person like this while she was in prostitution or amongst the persons she associated with while using narcotics or even during her early ages. She says, "At first L. seemed strict to me, we started talking entirely like that, well, but later I noticed some sort of trueness" (M76.3). Diana admits she could have taken lessons from the way the help provider employee associated with her: "From them I liked learning ((laughs)). (...) The way they

interact. (...) I paid heed to certain words of theirs, in and of itself, what they say” (D12.1-3). Thereby an opportunity appeared for the women to form new relationships distinguished by a different sort of quality than they had previously known. This also meant a possibility to get to know oneself and one’s own uniqueness better. As Tyson McCrea and Bulanda (2010) write, matters that lay dormant and unexpressed in words, which were previously unclear, become explainable and obvious through dialogic relationships. The women’s experiences attest that not only was the quality of the relationship important to them but also the aspect of increasing their own consciousness regarding what they were doing: “Giving that, this kind of first (...) step in understanding, why I’m dancing over there, was really a very great deal. It was a kind of support, so to me it was just ugh::, when I left” (I8.10-21) and “After those talks I also tried more to help myself” (D42.1). Clearly the talks were making the women stronger, more self-confident in their own power and abilities, more capable of determination to achieve changes in their life and more responsible in making decisions of importance to them.

It was specifically the sincere and caring attention for a woman as a meaningful and humanely important person, which was the foundation for helping these women to become stronger, to heal and to regain the power that their trauma had destroyed. Herman (1997, 133) accents the testimony of one incest victim who emphasised what was important in help relations: “Good therapists were those who really validated my experience and helped me to control my behaviour rather than trying to control me.” Julia recalls a significant, previous meeting with one police officer who actually stressed several times that it was important for her to seek help at this centre that was helping women like herself: “That was an officer, who directly named, that there is this centre where they can help me. He gave me the phone... Well in that sense he told me, (...) that I can call” (J104.1-4). His sincere, humane advice to the woman became the push she needed at that time to make that fateful step towards changing her life. She explains, “Probably what I remember, it was that single thing, that he simply suggested to me, saying you simply stay awhile, stay awhile over there, have a talk and maybe you’ll see,

that there is a different life, than, the one you're living" (J110.1). As the woman recalls, she could no longer endure her panderer's deceit and abuse. Nevertheless, she still dared to phone that same officer and asked him to help her get over to the help centre he had mentioned. Julia remembers the unforgettable feelings and emotions she experienced when she got to the centre:

My first impressions were those surroundings... They truly left a very good impression. It was very calm, very beautiful and I truly felt well... like I landed... I don't know... into Heaven somewhere that, where I could truly calm down. (...) The best thing was that, that on that day I was free. For me ... for me it wasn't necessary, like every day, in the sense, to engage in prostitution. I simply didn't have to do that and I was glad for that, that at least on that day I didn't have to do that, that I could rest (J122.1-4).

Loreta, who wound up in a help providing shelter and experienced understanding, support and care by the employees there, felt safe. As she said, "For me you know heaven appeared" (L36.1). The safe shelter was the first step for the woman at the time that helped her regain control over her body and her self-confidence.

However, despite the positive emotions and feelings experienced by all the women who came to live at the help centre, Julia also shares what had bothered her at that time. As the woman tells it, it was the tiring, constant, never ceasing talks with the centre's employees, whereas what she wanted at that time was the opposite—peace and quiet, rest and a chance to get away from people. Since her want went unheard or unheeded, this annoyed her and interfered with her recovery: "It was irritating (...) that there kind of butting in, at least from the first employee I met, into my personal life" (J134.5). Moreover, later on, the woman once again had to experience painful disappointments with certain employees at the centre. The behaviour of the employees towards her that insulted and wounded her remains in her recollections until now. This was at a time when, according to her, it caused confusion and a feeling of being lost more than anything else. As she says, "Then I didn't understand...Everything was simply strange and the eyes were wide" (J144.4). Now it is also a source of grievance, annoyance and

anger. The way Julia subjectively tells it illustrates the unsuitable and unsuccessful help, which had disrupted her from regaining inner balance and thereby made her healing more difficult:

What was annoying was not only the employees' viewpoint of you like... like at a prostitute, in other words, like at a second-rate person, who is somehow different, from the others. I'd understand it from the retorts and not from anyone's, from certain talks of the employees, actually even talking with me... I'd hear sometimes... Some certain words... It seemed to me, that it was about me. (...) Well let's say at the time, when I was asked, don't you feel like a prostitute, in other words there... Walking around somewhere in town. (...) Right then it was very painful to me. The same way, when let's say there was somebody talking about intimate things, it would be said that almost I knew best about some kind of sex or something more. Well that used to be disgusting, because I didn't used to want actually to feel like, like I used to feel with clients, actually like some kind of doll, some kind of product, which means nothing more. Simply a thing without anything, without feelings... A piece of trash, a second-rate, filthy person (J136.1-6).

I remember there was this situation, (...) that simply from gratitude. (...) I simply wanted to put my arms around a person and say thank you, and {the person} seemed to pull away from me, like I would have been I don't know... Well some kind of dirty, some kind of stained. It was as though they were afraid even to touch me. The feeling was as though, as though the others around were such goodie-goodies and the kind without any sins, the kind completely righteous and good... Meanwhile I'm the only one here who is filthy and disgusting (J138.1-4).

As Julia's experience showed, notwithstanding all else, the kinds of personal attitudes and views towards a woman in prostitution that a help provider has is highly important. This is in addition to how much and how well he or she is prepared to meet and help another and create a safe and supportive environment, which encourages healing. As van Deurzen (2002, 186) notes, the purpose and focus of a help providing person must be directed at generating a dialogic relationship for mutual interactions. This is the only way possible to help a client reinstate her autonomy, power, self-confidence and other aspects to get back on her own feet and "to discover her own centre of gravity", as opposed to encouraging her "to lean on others".. That is why for Evelina it was important simply to have someone

else alongside, someone who is attentive and caring in hearing out not only what she says but how she feels as well. She explains,

She listened to me, (...) she really listened, to every little word {transl. note: implied in the use of the two words that followed} going so far as to manage somehow. She watched, what was happening to me, actually followed, watched*. That kind of a reaction from her was more acceptable to me, than, what should you rush in to do (E20.1-6).

In the new relationships that were forming, it was also important for Silva to feel herself, her human “I”, which she had clearly lost due to her long-term traumas. What permitted the woman to gain more power and self-confidence were specifically her being important to someone and going through the necessary feelings, knowing that she is of concern to someone. Silva explains, “I was feeling like a person, that I am necessary to someone. Being with her I felt, that I have a close person, I felt, that I am needed, I felt, that I can go to someone for consolation, when it gets hard for me” (S46.4-6). Freire (2000) notices that people only reach their meaningfulness by talking things out and, due to such self-disclosure, saying all that concerns them, including that which is painful and that which is important. Odetta’s sharing about the relationship with an employee that formed shows how important a close contact is for her, not only now but also in the future: “I know, that I matter already by now, and I mattered, and I will matter” (O47.13). Therefore, according to Colombero (2004), a meeting between people is incredibly complicated. It is an act that requires a great deal from everyone. However, only such relating with a person can regenerate matters of importance that a person has lost, which would change the quality of that person’s life. Buber (1998, 80) considers the meaning of a meeting to be solely a direct relationship, which he names by the word pair, *I-You*. This is because, only by means of such a meeting, it is possible to sense true life, which contains “selection and choosing, passivity and activity”. According to this scholar, “There is no *I* in and of itself—there is always only *I* and the word pair, *I-You I-Thou*” (Buber, 1998, 70). The personal experiences of these women revealed what they considered to be healing relationships and what was important to them for their healing by which they could achieve their own

meaningfulness as a human being. They considered that an environment of importance to their healing was where they felt safe, could trust and disclose themselves, receive understanding and sympathy and where they did not feel any pressure or have demands placed on them. It was a place where they had an opportunity to make their own decisions about how to act:

It's where attention is shown to me (...) interact somehow and talk to you openly and sincerely I see and I feel (D62.2).

(...) With her I could discuss everything. Because she was really very good to me. I wanted to associate with her, to be with her (D58.1-5).

She showed the kind of attention, that she understands, (...) she somehow tried to help me, so just for that, that was enough for me (E8.3-4).

You know (...) I am free, nobody regulates me anymore, nobody says what I should do, (...) and that was great, maybe that's why I feel well, calm, stable (O33.32-33).

The last time, well, on the last days, when I was still with that fellow, when 'I was working', he was constantly asking me, is everything OK with me, am I not getting beaten, or am I not being harmed, because if something was bad for me, I could always call him (J124.7-8).

(...) Come, sit down we'll drink tea, that so stuck with me (...) simply so, that I would live (...). The reason these words so stuck with me because, that (...) from me nobody, no how, is demanding anything (I6.2-5).

If there is something lying heavy on my heart, I can tell it, talk it out here with everyone (L44.3).

Thereby it is clear the women could only reorganise and change their lives, heal and regain the power and control they had lost by being in conditions conducive to self-disclosure, mutual trust, friendship, safety and being understood by others. Here Colombero (2004) also accents the significance and meaning of how *to be with* or *to be for*, where he references the means for dialogic relationships with another. There is no room for indifference or formality or casual interactions for such relationships. On the contrary, it means well-meaning happiness at being together, service and giving of the self to another, devoted help by living for another.

8.4. Reconciliation: “There’s no need to change the world, no need to change people; I only needed to change myself.”

Ten of the women who participated in this research have already disengaged from prostitution. Now they look back upon their past as though from the sidelines even though they still clearly feel the consequences of trauma and live through it slowly. I continue to retain close relationships with most of these women. When difficulties arise for them, we frequently talk or get together. Some of them are still at the help centre, whereas others are already handling their own lives independently. *Irma* completed two courses of studies; she is considering continuing her education. She has formed a family and is raising a daughter. *Odetta’s* life has also changed considerably since help was provided for her. She has a job. Her relationships with her intimates changed, and she has become psychologically and spiritually stronger. *Vilè, Loreta* and *Algè* also have families and full-time jobs. Loreta is very pleased because, after all her painful experiences, she managed to complete her studies. *Silva*, the mother of four children, now cohabits with a male friend. At times, when things get hard, she visits the help centre to talk or get some material backup. *Milda* still lives at the women’s centre for the time being while she intensively looks for work. She constantly analyses herself and finds it surprising that, quite often, she begins to cry, something that never used to happen earlier. *Evelina*, who cohabits with a male friend, is continuing her education. She retains a close relationship with a social worker with whom she meets for sincere, personal talks. *Julia* is also working and living independently. The situation is only unclear with *Renata*, since contacts with her have broken off.

Thus the healing of the traumas and painful experiences these women have had to live through are ongoing individually for each one of them, the same as their earlier experiences were also individual, characteristic of each one of them alone. However, since some of them are now making plans for their future, clearly naming the goals in their life and slowly implementing them and turning them into reality, this all substantiates the actuality of their healing. Odetta

says she feels that she is the mistress of her life. According to her, “Everything is in my hands, I am creating my life and from that I feel an unearthly inner power and peace” (O40.11). The woman assesses her experience, which now remains in the past, differently than she did before. Nevertheless, she says, “Nothing goes away, it doesn’t come from nowhere and doesn’t go away somewhere. I’m sold, and that stays with me my entire life” (O22.6). Regardless, she immediately indicates that now she feels strong spiritually as well as psychologically: “If tears used to fall because of that before, then now STRENGTH APPEARS!!!” (O22.7). The woman has a fine sense of humour and she speaks about her past ironically: “Why it’s only sad, that it was too cheap” (O24.11). “(...) I don’t feel bad, that they sold me, it’s unpleasant, that only 400 Euros were given for me, that’s how much a person costs... a person’s entire peaceful, stable life, health and future...” (O42.5-6). At this time, she values the painful experience she had to go through calling it something that gave her many lessons: “(...) I’m grateful, that I remained alive. To me that – I am sold – gave a lot” (O22.8). Alekseičikas (2008) refers to human experience as the consequence of his/her objective and subjective ordeals, odd sorts of torturing and examinations. Thusly the consequence of Odeta’s experience which, as she said, “gave a lot”, was a change in her conviction and comprehension about herself, her situation and the world surrounding her. Now she grasps that formerly she had made mistaken choices, indicating this when she says, “It’s good there, where we are not {transl. note: the Lithuanian equivalent of ‘The grass is greener on the other side’}. I also used to say and think that, and I ran, ran, ran. Everywhere was not good to me” (O26.8-9). Her life experience taught her a great deal, “to understand everything, (...) to fight for myself” (O34.1-4) and, as she now says, “I love myself now!” (O34.5). In Odeta’s opinion, “Nothing happens in this world either too late, nor too early. When a person is ready for something, a situation will always happen, which will teach a person that, which he must learn” (O44.2). The woman is convinced that young women or women who are sold, exploited or otherwise devalued do not become any worse because of it but, to the contrary, as she says, “To me they become distinctly more

humane" (O24.9). Even now, in her opinion, "The possibilities for a person are actually unlimited, what's most important are motivation and DESIRE" (O45.8). Nonetheless, here it is important to remember, as van Deurzen (1997) says, "That the self, in order to become an actuality, needs both the finite and its limitations and the infinite and its possibility." Otherwise, if a person does not understand or, if the person, as the author says, "errs on the side of the infinite, abandoning all concrete secular challenges, becomes so light-headed that everything seems possible" (van Deurzen, 1997, 15).

Loreta, who has overcome her traumatic difficulties, is now convinced that it is necessary to live "according to God's laws" (L62.1). The woman also claims that, when "the devil tempts you" (L64.1), "it's necessary to pray and ask God for liberation (...) from the devil" (L64.2). Alekseičikas (2008, 114) asserts that, in the process of helping a person, acquisition of the fear of God can serve the person to shake off various other, small fears. The reconstruction of a traumatising experience is a long process lasting a year or two in the opinion of Loreta: "This is just (...) the minimum, minimum, so a person could shake free of that dependency, of that past" (L76.6). The woman believes at least three years have to pass before a person who has experienced trauma "(...) would be like all people, well with that kind of thinking and would get used to a different life, would not feel like a reject or something else" (L76.8-10). That is why the woman has gotten involved now in the activities of the centre, which had helped her, saving other women so they can overcome prostitution or drug dependencies. As she says, "For those, who also truly need that kind of help" (L66.7). Loreta remembers living in the help shelter and trying to overcome the trauma she experienced. More than once, she wanted to end it all, break it off and go back to where she had come from: "I say, it happens that you fool yourself, what a scam, (...). That's it, there's nothing here for me to do, I'm better off going to kef {transl. note: feel good/get high}" (L74.10-11). Julia also wanted to terminate her help more than once. As she says, "Later, of course I started to think, that it's not for me and that I don't want it, and that I want to run as far away as possible from all that" (J84.3). Obviously, it was difficult for the women to

accept the demands raised by a different sort of life. Unquestionably this demanded a good many of their internal resources; thus, once these were insufficient, the women would feel powerless and then they would want to break everything off, finish with it and run away from it. However, with the help of others, they would manage to steer clear of, what Loretta called, “the devil’s temptations” and continue the rocky road of healing. Therefore, the woman is also convinced that time heals wounds: “I know, time will pass, and that thinking will change at any rate, all that will be forgotten. It’s necessary, just for time to pass and to suffer through it” (L74.5-6).

Vilė talked about two things that helped her very much in the process of healing her trauma—a tomcat she is raising at home and talking matters out with her landlady: “Now at home, if there are some problems, I have a tomcat and very peacefully to me, I sit and stroke him. I go over to the landlady, we have a talk” (V96.6-8). Milda’s experience shows that, after her some sixteen years in prostitution and the same number of years of being addicted to narcotics, disengaging prostitution is not easy. The woman shares her story, “Those first months were truly hard, (...) you learn to simply hurry up and run from it” (M104.1-2). However, her relationships with her psychologist and with her social worker with whom she maintains contact help her a great deal. She relates, “For me easy with D.?. It means a lot to me (...) how, [how I’m spoken with” (M76.2). Writing a diary, as one employee had suggested, was not an easy challenge for her but a valuable one. With his help, she was able to see the difference between what she feels and what she writes: “I write, I read, WHAT INSANITY, NOT THE WAY, HOW I’M FEELING, IS WHAT I’M WRITING? (...) I would try to have a look like that, how it looks from the side (...) the next day you read it, oh Jesus, what insanities. Am I lying?, lying to myself? Myself, after all nobody reads (...) no, [no, it was so unpleasantly... For who? What for? After all I write for myself, so who am I lying to on that paper,* after all nobody will read it*, I can tear it up” (M122.1-6). This way the woman realised how she was deceiving herself. It is likely this experience allowed the woman to recognise how she deceives herself in other areas as well.

Evelina was especially pleased to have gained the strength to accept the trauma she experienced differently than she had earlier. She says, "Now it's entirely different to me, (...) now I can talk about that" (E108.1-2). Moreover she no longer feels the sensation of heaviness, which had weighted upon her for a long time because, as she says, "Since I, well, I really forgave those people already, (...) and it's easier on me now" (E108.3-4). Herman (1997) assigns the efforts by a person who has experienced trauma to perform an act of forgiveness to efforts by that person to retrieve his/her lost power. Nonetheless, this author asserts that the fantasy of forgiveness can often be deceiving, because it is impossible to drive trauma away from the self, neither by hate nor by love. True forgiveness is achieved, when an abuser seeks to get it and earns it by confessing, having remorse and attempting to compensate for the damages done. Unfortunately, as the author notices, "Genuine contrition in a perpetrator is a rare miracle" (Herman, 1997, 190).

Indeed each woman judged her own experience in prostitution differently, just like each had also experienced all of that differently. Furthermore the consequences were also uniquely individual for each one as well. Interestingly though, each one of them now refers to her experiences as lessons. Irma now states, "Experience comes with life" (I26.4). Furthermore the women say, "Up to now the memories are not the most pleasant, but it's a lesson, because, until you walk through hell, you won't learn what heaven is" (I38.18).

8.5. Summary: Traits and patterns in seeking help

The analysis of personal experiences of women in prostitution in their *seeking for help process* highlighted certain *specific patterns* in their lives that can be described as follows: *Complexity and diversity of experienced difficulties; Non-existence of help responding to needs as an obstacle to change; Fear of rejection blocks self-disclosure; Problem recognition is an important condition for accepting help; The significant other in the process of seeking help; Healing relationships help women regain strength.*

Complexity and diversity of experienced difficulties

The personal experiences of women in prostitution revealed the complexity and diversity of the difficulties they had to face. All of those who had attempted to overcome prostitution or some of those who are still engaged in it experienced loneliness anxiety and a lack of self-confidence in their own abilities. These experiences were conditional, according to them, to the stigma they carried from the abuse they had suffered in their earlier years that, for some of them, continued up to this day. What also caused difficulties in disengaging from prostitution were hopelessness regarding life in the future and non-existence of close persons providing supportive relationships or the chance to talk out their depressive feelings. The psychological, spiritual, social and physical difficulties that these women were experiencing comprised a serious challenge in their ability to overcome prostitution.

Non-existence of help responding to needs as an obstacle to change

The personal experiences of the women revealed that the consequences from the different negative experiences in their earlier lives that had been traumatic to them continue being felt even now. It is difficult for them to disengage from prostitution on their own, without the help of others or, once disengaged, to arrange their own lives independently. As they attempt to overcome the difficulties that arise in life, they face a lack of relationships providing support, responsiveness and strength. They face an inability by others to hear them out and understand them. When they do not receive needed help from possibly existing close persons or from community members and when they lack information about possible help, they attempt to organise their lives on their own as best as they understand and are able to do so.

Fear of rejection blocks self-disclosure

The women in prostitution or those who have already disengaged from it still now feel the need to be heard, understood and accepted, the same as they had during their earlier lives. The women's earlier experiences also attest to their lacking help, understanding and

support in their immediate environments. These women had experienced during their childhood or adolescence judgemental or evaluative behaviour with them on repeat occasions and betrayal, rejection or neglect by close persons more than once. Due to this, they continue experiencing distrust of others to this day and fear self-disclosure. Since they sense their own vulnerability and experience various negative feelings, they react to offers of help very carefully and with great distrust. In many cases, they are more likely to reject help than to accept it.

Problem recognition is an important condition for accepting help

All the women participating in this research had gone through a period in their lives when they were unprepared to accept any sort of help being offered to them. The different ways that these women reacted attested to their rejection of help: keeping their engagement in prostitution a secret, fearing self-disclosure to another in avoidance of devaluation and rejection, disbelieving in the possibility of help, reconciling with the existing situation, not wanting to change anything and withdrawing into the self. Consequently they would ignore offers of help and choose to refuse it claiming they had already reconciled with their existing situation and had no desire to change anything.

The significant other in the process of seeking help

The personal experiences of these women revealed that, for some of them, being in prostitution was a chance to compensate the satisfaction of the needs that were lacking in the earlier years of their lives—thusly confirming their meaningfulness and power to themselves. Only one of the women participating in this research, Irma, was able to earn a good deal of money by dancing striptease in a club. This permitted the woman to feel significant by helping close members of her family financially or by satisfying her own personal needs that, according to her, were sorely lacking in her childhood and adolescence. Nevertheless, at the same time, her being in that place weakened her internal censure regarding what she was doing. The experiences of all the other women in prostitution who were

part of this study revealed their powerlessness and hopelessness in seeking help. Even when they attempted to think about resisting their exploitation, they would face their own internal resistance—what comes later? The women's efforts to seek or ask for help and the frequent instances of having to face a lack of response to their needs would end in disappointment. Nonetheless, there were those who managed to meet and form significant relationships with people who helped them to retrieve themselves and choose a different pathway in life.

Healing relationships help women regain strength

The personal experiences of women in prostitution revealed that the meetings of special importance to them with help providers were those based on the formation of sincere and true relationships, which placed no demands on them, ones that assisted in acknowledging their painful experiences. The meaningful meetings were those providing response to the women's needs to be heard about what was important to them, what they lacked or where their pain lay hidden. Sincere, friendly and secure relationships based on empathy and thorough involvement in matters of concern to the women became the stimulus opening up their hearts. They were only able to disclose themselves when they were able to trust, felt understood and were not being judged or devalued for what had occurred in their life. A change in a woman's life came about, when she felt like she was the mistress of her own situation and made her own desired decisions, not simply submissively following the advice or orders of someone else. Patience and sincere attention from another provided them with the fateful pushes encouraging them to seek help, regain strength and heal.

9 Evaluating the research process on women in prostitution

9.1. Evaluating the theoretical commitment

Social work theoreticians in Lithuania noticed a few years ago, “The socio-economic situation does not favour the development of social work” (Lazutka, Pivorienė, Eidukevičiūtė, 2004). Later Naujanienė (2007, 173), who was, at the time, a doctoral student of social work at the University of Lapland investigating issues in gerontological social work and the practical challenges of social work in Lithuania, also notices that social work in Lithuania “is still quite vague as a profession”. Unfortunately, even today after four years have passed, I can still say that changes are very slowly being entrenched in social work. It continues to lack professionalism and, as a profession, it remains undefined comprehensively. This is particularly apparent when working with women in prostitution or with women who are victims of sexual abuse due to human trafficking. Although social workers engage in qualification improvement endeavours such as trips for professional purposes and seminars sharing the experiences of colleagues from abroad, such newly gained information is sometimes difficult to implement in practice. Therefore changes, if there are any at all, are unfortunately often barely noticeable. Urponen (2004), who reviewed the evolvement of social work in Finland, mentions the essentially important principles of this profession, including social work rehabilitation and, most importantly, the relationship of confidentiality between a social worker and client and the like. These are the two principles that are most lacking in social work practice in Lithuania, particularly the confidentiality relationship.

The numbers of victims due to prostitution or trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation have not dropped. Although it

seemed there was attention from the national government to resolve this issue, I felt it was insufficient in practice. Implementation began of the third, 2009–2012 *Programme for Control and Prevention of Human Trafficking and Prostitution, meant to execute the policy of the Government of Lithuania*. Nevertheless, it became obvious that, in practice, the help for victims of prostitution or of human trafficking was insufficient to respond to the needs of this client group. Cases of women victimized by prostitution or human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation occurred quite frequently. However, rather regularly, the help provided to them met with various obstacles or were ineffective. The NGOs acting as the help providers for such victims competed more than they cooperated with one another in their help efforts. The reason was that the government did not pay sufficient attention to provide the sort of financing required for victim rehabilitation and integration. Social workers were often on the edge of professional burnout as they balanced the difficult, emotionally stressful and complicated work with such clients, the huge caseloads and the poor motivation to change on the part of the clients. Furthermore, even more often, employees faced various failures in their interactions with different legal institutions in the process of providing help. All this caused social workers to feel a sense of helplessness which, in turn, caused an employee turnover problem in help provider NGOs. In addition to all this, these victimised women met with difficulties regarding accessibility to the help they needed due to differing outlooks on them. These women would be delegated into one or another category that seemingly refuted the individuality of their experiences and the complexity of their problems or the multi-layered reality they faced. Therefore social workers searched for counter arguments that might help them develop effective methods of help. Moreover the traditional dichotomic thinking that exists about how a woman becomes a prostitute narrowed the means for getting to know these women and blocked any deeper, personal understanding about them. I am able to state that the negative perspectives towards women in prostitution—their being “different”, “of a lower intellect”, “second-rate”, unworthy of help to change due to their “own choice” and their “acceptance” of their way of life—were

what predominated. Such a situation disturbed me; however, it also inspired and encouraged me to analyse the personal experiences of these women more deeply, to understand their specific life patterns and to pursue answers regarding their goals in life. A discussion about this appears in Section 2.2. of Chapter 2.

Social work practice, as it makes efforts to provide help to victims of prostitution and human trafficking for reasons of sexual exploitation, often faces an ironic attitude towards these women. It would be purported they were born this way, and the value of changing something to help them would be questioned. Many authors on women, femininity or feminism (de Beauvoir, 2010; Elshtain, 2002; Farley, 2000; Gruodis, 1995; Jarosch & Grün, 2008; Månsson & Hedin, 1999; Utrio, 1998) have noticed a plenitude of negative connotations in Western culture. Authors on women, femininity or their strategies for representation in the culture of Lithuania (Daugirdaitė, 2000; Jankauskaitė, 2004; Kavolis, 1992; Tereškinas, 2001) have also confirmed the existence of gender hierarchies or their formations manifesting in an entire array of aspects and in various contexts. The representations of women included their being obedient, weak, dependent and sometimes either childish or even dumb or overly easy-going. Rimkevičiūtė and Šerikova (2007) notice that the roles and images of today's women continue to be more problematic than they are for men under the existing gender hierarchy. Certainly the roles and images of women have been evolving noticeably; nonetheless, the negative stereotypes caused by a contorted outlook have existed since the beginning of history and these continue to persist tenaciously in our society up to these times. Such a conclusion outcrops in the cultural or social discourses questioning these kinds of matters in the creative works of Lithuania, and the mass media especially manifests this. I considered this discourse important enough to present a broader discussion on it in Chapter 2, Subsection 2.1.1.

According to Berger & Luckmann (1991), every society constructs its own definition of reality as well as its related concepts; thus the values and world outlooks of a society have a social foundation. The phenomena of prostitution and of the trafficking of women

for sexual exploitation are no exceptions either. An effort at a better understanding of these social manifestations, according to Christie (1999), requires an explanation of what and why a certain meaning is being provided to them. Social reality, as a continually pulsating acquaintanceship with some phenomenon of intellectual culture, is also important from the aspect regarding the capacity for civilisation of a socio-ethnic system (nation, community, state). Expectations for change in a social environment to safeguard its population from social evils, such as sexual exploitation, slavery and human rights infractions, are only possible upon the recognition of reality. Thereby imperative, positive changes can be instilled, wherever personal abuse occurs in society. It was specifically the phenomenon of prostitution existing in the country as a multi-dimensional social problem as well as the negative view on the women within it that inspired the selection of the theoretical and methodological foundation of this study. Beauvoir (2010, 661) claims that a prostitute's choice to "earn bread for oneself" in this manner is considered a "curse to society". Since I am more of a social work practitioner, I wanted to show (and even more so, to prove) that no matter who a person is or what a person does, that person is not worthy of any lesser respect or greater debasement than is anyone else. Even Vanier (2006, 3) has asserted, "Every person – is a blessed story" who is going through different stages over his/her lifetime. Dividing the world into those who are successful and strong and those who are losers and weaklings merely encourages a splintering in society. Meanwhile women in prostitution are ascribed specifically to the latter category, along with the losers. According to Pruskus (2010), a proponent of conflict theory, women who are inclined to get involved in selling their bodies are economically disadvantaged; they have a poor education and limited abilities and they have experienced violence, causing them to feel helpless. Pajumets (2004, 21) notes that they are "people in a weakened position". Therefore I wanted to show the sort of reality that the personal experiences of women in prostitution reveal and what is needed to help them choose among the possibilities for a different sort of life.

Ruškus et al. (2005), scholars discussing the situation for reintegrating victims, i.e., the women engaged in prostitution and

trafficked women in the country, confirmed the problems that help provider practitioners often accent, such as the unfavourable view of the victims, overly broad services coverage by help provider services, inadequate preparation for the all provider services or a lack of required resources. Furthermore scholars also accent a lack of the type of attention that is required in the educational system, for example, when information about social problems does not highlight the aspect of their origin and attitudes of social sensitivity are not formed. Overall a segregated institutional model existing from Soviet times continues to persist, which continues to generate an environment for victimisation and for potential victims. Subsections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 in Chapter 2, which review the scope, forms, change dynamics and outlooks on this manifestation of prostitution that exists in the country conditional to the national policy, are very important in my eyes. This is what aided in forming a clearer picture of the prostitution phenomenon, its change tendencies after re-establishing independence and what is being done in the country to curb this manifestation. The fact is that the endeavour to assist women in prostitution involves not only help *here and now* but must importantly include an overall social policy in the country, effective prevention and intervention programmes and the assurance of future social support for victimised women (Puidokienė, Ruškus, 2011). Reiss and Roth (1993 in Gilligan, 2007) have pointed out that a concept has been developed that is unified in all respects—legal, social, economic, moral and cultural—regarding violence, exploitation and abuse against another person along with methods of their resolution. Furthermore preventative and regulatory programmes have formed possibilities for support. Such programmes could anticipate and intercede in cases of threatened abuse or essentially lessen violence and its growth amongst people.

It was no easy matter to develop a doctoral study and to select the best, most appropriate path of research, which would help me grasp the reality of these women's lives and understand their inner worlds. I was the closest to these women and their day-to-day endeavours whether I was in the process of actually helping them or merely being “around” as others were helping them. Therefore,

at the time, I thought the ethnographic approach would be best in helping to identify the activities of these women in the process of their disengaging from prostitution. My expectations were that such in-depth research would cause the most significant matters to clarify, in and of themselves. I observed these women's lives in the process of their rehabilitation and continued to visit the working sites of the women who were still engaged in prostitution (out on the streets and in striptease clubs and nightclubs), with assistance from my sociology students. However, at the same time, I sensed that I was drowning in the plenitude of notes from observations and reflections gathered both by my students as well as by myself from all these activities. Obviously it was still necessary to select an appropriate research focus by which, according to Flick (2005, 80), "Its rich data can offer the opportunity to change [it] (...) as the ongoing analysis suggests." Thus the decision made was to interplay between theory, concepts and data. My conclusion was that the interactional model of social work practice, according to Shulman (1992, 9), and its three core ideas (belief in the essential symbiotic relationship, the obstacles women faced and the resources for changes) would provide an appropriate framework for revealing the personal experiences and life stories of women in prostitution. This not only helped to concentrate on the essential factors for providing help to clients but also to reveal these women's being-in-the-world before becoming involved in prostitution or later, when they were seeking help. These concepts caused me to reconsider the appropriateness of the research material in light of the aim of the study, which was to reveal and highlight the specific patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution regarding their *growing up, making a choice and seeking help*.

The results of this study were presented using the heuristic approach described by Moustakas (1990) according to its six phases. Moustakas (1990, 11-15) says, "A heuristic investigation begins with one's "own self-awareness" whereby, through "self-inquiry and dialogue with others (...), I am able to see and understand in a different way." The existential thinking and its main ideas that I had selected helped me to accomplish this. All that is discussed in

Section 4.4. of Chapter 4. As Kočiūnas (2008, 206) puts it, the most important thing in a person's life is the time of his/her life, i.e., that person's "ability to live within time" in which an acceptable present is formed based on the given in the past. As such I sought to become acquainted with the realities of women in prostitution and their capabilities for living in the present as they carry the painful events they had experienced in the past and for acting with an eye on their future. To accomplish this, the selected inductive way for reviewing a manifestation was the best by its assistance in revealing and showing the women's problems from the inside. By making use of the trauma (Herman, 1997) and social cognitive (Bandura, 1986) theories, I was able to understand the experiences these women had to go through at a deeper level as well as the contacts and relationships they develop between the personal and public world and between men and women.

Therefore the inductive way I selected was a process of finding single cases which, in turn, according to Gilbert (1993), led to an observation of the relationships within and amongst these cases. Later I was able to extract the elements in common from many specific events and finally to construct a general theory covering all the cases.

9.2. Evaluating the methodological commitment

From the very start of the research, when I made the decision to discuss the problem of women in prostitution from an academic approach, I was already thinking about who would be the participants in my study. At the time, I was a practitioner in social work providing help to victims of prostitution and human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. A more detailed presentation of this appears in the section on work methodology in Chapter 4. One significant event, which cannot be ignored, influenced me to deal with the problems of women's sexual exploitation, prostitution and human trafficking. This involved an earlier meeting with my former client, which I discuss more broadly in Section 4.1 of Chapter 4. The fact that I ended up meeting the same woman a second

time was an incident I did not consider as coincidental. This was a woman whom I had provided help while working as a consultant on a telephone help line. The chances of having the same person turn for help to the same person previously helping (in this case “the same person” was the both of us), an incident that was unplanned and unforeseen in advance by either one of us, were slim indeed. To me it was a significant motive for wanting to help this woman. What had seemed to me to be a paradoxical manifestation at that time grew into becoming an inexplicable force directing me to delve more deeply into the life experiences of these women. Thusly my acquaintanceship with the problems of women’s sexual exploitation began with this event, which I consider especially significant in the story of my professional practice. Even then I had already understood that, when a person experiences a trauma that consequently leaves horrible, painful and deep wounds, help from *another* becomes especially important. The basis for the kind of help needed is perception, empathy, professionalism and unconditional acceptance of the victimised person and that person’s experience. Herman (1997) claims that, when an injured person (whether an adult or a child) is devalued in advance and no one wants or is ready to hear that person out, it can begin to seem to him/her that traumatic experiences do not exist in reality, because the public does not recognise them. As such the painful experiences of the women I met on the job as a social worker seemingly “set me afire” to search for what can help, what helps and the opposite, what wounds and interferes even more to those who, in this case, are society’s “rejected” and the “ever-secretive”.

Therefore the greatest challenge from the start of the research work was the participants for the study. Intuition told me it would not be easy to find them. The practical side of my work experience indicated that women who sought help were not likely to open up and talk about their painful experiences. One reason was their own negative acceptance of themselves. Julia felt she was different and as she related, “Like somebody second-rate, like a piece of garbage, dirty, immoral and like that.” Additionally others did not accept these women either—not persons close to them, not family

members, frequently not their friends or members of society either. I know from practice in my own consulting work that it is not easy to open up to another. A close contact with someone else and trust in that person is especially important for this to happen. The condition in advance for trusting another person, as Colombero (2004, 61) told, is an upfront and entirely humane meeting. To me trust in another associated with taking a risk and undertaking the responsibility for it (Puidokienė, Ruškus, 2011). Therefore an essential question for me was how to win over/gain the trust of the respondents in me. A discussion on this at length appears in Section 5.1. of Chapter 5. At this point, I also raised a number of questions to myself: Am I prepared to trust in my research participants myself and to what extent? Will I succeed at structuring a safe atmosphere and relationships based on respect with them? What do I need and what must I do to gain the trust of the research participants in me as a researcher? I knew from my practice that it sometimes requires several months or a year to form a close relationship with a client, to achieve a firm contact. Thus I was anxious at first about whether or not I will be able to find the women who would want and agree to take part in the study and whether or not I will succeed at getting objective information about their experiences. The Personal Narratives Group (1989) wrote:

When talking about lives, people lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they are revealing truths. These truths don't reveal the past 'as it actually was', aspiring to a Standard of objectivity. They give us instead the truth of our experiences. Unlike the Truth of the scientific ideal, the truths of personal narratives are neither open to proof nor self-evident. We come to understand them only through interpretation, paying careful attention to the contexts that shape their creation and to the world views that inform them (The Personal Narratives Group, 1989, 261).

My anxiety decreased as soon as I shared my plans for the research with several of my clients. Much to my great happiness, I met with their support and approval, and several of them at once offered to participate in the study. Thereby the secret wish I had harboured internally to include my clients in the research became a reality.

Next I began to consider which of them I should offer participation in the study. It turned out that six such participants were found from my client group (see Appendix 2, Table 1), even though I had about fifteen of them at the time I was working at the centre. There were instances, when a client would ask for time to think over my proposition to participate in the study and promise to let me know later. Usually “later” would turn out to be the client’s refusal to participate. The notes I made attest to the distrust on the part of the women whom I invited to participate (either in me but maybe in their own selves) and their difficulties in making a decision. They would say, “I don’t know if I want that;” “I need more time to think it over;” “Will that change anything;” “I don’t believe in it very much” and “I’m afraid.” Some of the students who had participated in the observation also verified the difficulties they were having in making contacts with women in prostitution. One said, “It was quite hard to ask the prostitutes questions, first of all not all of them want to go and talk about that (...) [Jolanta, from notes by observers, 2005.06.01]. This is discussed to a greater extent in Section 4.3. of Chapter 4. A social work student wrote the following about an effort to make a contact with a woman in prostitution:

I wanted to strike up a conversation by starting out about the weather, about a forecast warming and about the coming summer; however, Kristina gave me the impression that this was not at all important to her. I understood, although I have the kind of person I need, but to “pick my way” through to her is a distance away and practically impossible [Rima, from notes by observers, 2006.05.15].

Therefore I had to remain patient and wait for the women’s decisions regarding their participation in the study in respect of their making an independent choice. Remaining alert was something I considered as particularly significant on my part while studying the personal experiences of women in prostitution. It was necessary to assure that the model of their relationships would not prove exploitative once again. Thus, for more research participants, I had to ask for help from other social workers who encountered these sorts of clients. Unfortunately, I did not always meet up with goodwill. There were instances, when representatives of organisation for helping

victims of prostitution would argue that I do not know their clients, and they do not know me; therefore, they felt all this would merely repetitively traumatise their clients. Social work and sociology students helped by taking several interviews. These sociology students also participated in the observations at various organisations or at these women's "work" sites. A Consent form to participate in the interview (see Appendix 1) was drawn with the women who agreed to participate in the study. The discussion on this in greater length appears in Section 4.3. of Chapter 4.

Nonetheless, my worries were not completely over by merely receiving the goodwill agreement from these women to participate and their agreements, either signed or verbal. Ethical questions regarding the inclusion of my own clients in the study caused me concern. Finally a talk with Professor K. Tyson-McCrea calmed me down, when I learned I was able to rely on *The Declaration of Helsinki*⁷³ that sets the standards for experimenting with human subjects. Although the Declaration of Helsinki addresses physicians, it also encourages "other participants in (...) research involving human subjects to adopt these principles" (DoH, 2008, Article 2). One of the main principles accentuated in the Declaration is protection of human "life, health, dignity, integrity, right to self-determination and privacy and confidentiality of the personal information of the research subjects" (ibid, Article 11). The information I found may have been late in coming, but the declaration confirmed that my inner conviction of including my clients in the research was appropriate. Moreover I was certain that I had upheld the principles accented in the declaration from the start of the research, when I took the interviews.

I based the Consent with the research participants on their independent decision to be in the study as well as to withdraw their

73. The first Article of the Introduction to the Declaration of Helsinki (DoH) reads, "The World Medical Association (WMA) has developed the Declaration of Helsinki as a statement of ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects, including research on identifiable human material and data" (WMA DoH, 2008). Available on the World Wide Web, as follows: <<http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/17c.pdf>>.

consent at any time. I also guaranteed their anonymity and confidentiality. Furthermore I assured help for them in the event their participation in the study caused them to experience a repeated trauma. I promised each research participant that I would send her the results of the study along with their explanations. To assure that I was aligning the ideas that the Ethical Guidelines for Social Welfare Professionals⁷⁴ (2007, 8) presented, I made every effort to follow the main principle of a social worker, "Clients should be helped to identify and develop their own strengths." Social work Professor Stanley Witkin (University of Vermont) has said, "Ethics is equally present in being, interaction, doing and not doing" (The Committee on Professional Ethics of the Union of Social Workers, Talentia, 2007, 10). For a broader discussion, see Section 4.5 in Chapter 4. Thus, with the assistance of the research participants, I searched for answers to questions, which would help to achieve the purpose for this research.

The women relayed their personal life experiences and shared, as best they could, using words that were acceptable to them, which were part of their day-to-day habits. At times it was hard to understand some of their expressions or words during the interviews. However, I would ask at once what that means or what they were trying to say by that. Before I started an interview, I had decided to pay attention and record not only the information the research participants were providing but also to how they did that, how they spoke, where they paused and where their voices were raised as well as the opposite, where their voices dropped, sounded muffled. To denote all this, I applied conventional symbols used for interview transcript citations (Have, 2004; Silverman, 2000 [See Table 1 in Appendix 5]). The symbols used in the work covered the characteristic features of a respondent's speech. They denoted voice intonations,

74. *The Committee on Professional Ethics of the Union of Social Workers (Talentia) provides the Ethical guidelines for social welfare professionals.* The guidelines accentuate the professionalism of a social worker and the importance of the professional identity, principles and values in social work (The Committee on Professional Ethics of the Union of Social Workers, 2007). Available on World Wide Web, as follows: <http://www.talentia.fi/files/4599_Ethicalguidelines-byTalentia.pdf>.

particularly the words or phrases spoken especially quietly or especially loudly; sighing, which would manifest during painful or emotionally difficult moments; time intervals and pauses between words as well as between my questions and sequences of thoughts and speech, indicating an understanding of the question I posed, indicating their catching the point of my question. These denotations also included my own doubts and comments as a researcher or comments during or after the interview as much as it was possible to transfer it into the text accurately at a later time. These notes especially assisted in transcribing the material and later in accurately interpreting and analysing it.

Thus, now, after a lengthy period of searching, I feel as though I had gone down the road of these women's experiences along with them. Moreover I do not feel as though this had been merely a search for certain evidence or a grounding of their experiences. Similarly I am not able to ascertain that I know about or have a help model telling us how to work when attempting to help these women leave prostitution or to be a panacea for healing women in prostitution. The people in my surroundings frequently bring up the necessity of developing a model of help for these women. My view of such reasoning is ironic. This experience provided me with more knowledge or, at the very least, a greater approach to what it means to be a woman in prostitution. What helped me was what was being interfered, when I was forming the sort of contact with them, so they would open up. However, I am not able to assert that what was suitable for one woman could be adapted for another. Even more what was suitable or justifiable in forming a relationship with a woman at the time would not necessarily be the same when working with her another time. The use of the existential viewpoint caused me to realise that it is important not to ignore the complexity of the acquaintance when wanting to get to know or to understand the experience of another. All the dimensions of a person's existence must be encompassed—the physical, social, personal and spiritual. However, as van Deurzen (2009, 84) asserts, "These spheres and world dimensions overlap, interact and flow together as do the troubles as visit us in each."

9.3. Validity and reliability of the research results

The validity and reliability of the research results are what evaluate the adequacy of the research process. Moustakas (1990) speaks about the validity of research by raising the following question:

Does the ultimate depiction of the experience derived from one's own rigorous, exhaustive self-searching and from the explications of others present comprehensively, vividly, and accurately the meanings and essences of the experiences? (Moustakas, 1990, 32).

The issue that this author raised encouraged my self-reflection when considering the appropriateness of the research process for validating the objective of the study. I recalled my lengthy deliberation regarding the choice of the research methodology that would assist in gathering information about the personal experiences of women in prostitution, in as detailed and multi-faceted manner as possible. It was especially important to find suitable resources that would provide the needed data for this study. What I also considered significant was finding appropriate theories to help explain the complicated matters that were difficult to understand revealed by the observations, interviews and other research materials. More discussion on this appears in Section 4.4. of Chapter 4 and Section 5.2. of Chapter 5.

Gilbert (1993, 18) asserts, "There are three major ingredients in social research: the construction of theory, the collection of data, and (...) the design of methods for gathering data." Thereby a number of questions continuously haunted me, requiring me to look for answers. What was it that attracted me to study specifically women and specifically their experiences in prostitution? What did I want to hear in their personal experiences? How will they open up and how deeply will they share what some of them termed, the "disgusting" experiences they had to go through? How successful will I be at "hearing out" the painful experiences they will reveal? Will I understand them and will I be able to convey what they had wanted to say? Will the transcribed material taken verbatim truly reflect the lives of the women? Ultimately how will I manage to get across the essence of all the gathered information? When I write up the material, will

it be, as Plummer (1995, 12) says, "... in his voice, or in my voice, or in his voice through my voice, or even in my voice through his voice?" I sensed this would be a challenge and a huge assignment for me. I recall that one of the women providing information for the study had asked me to allow her to transcribe the interview material herself. I had agreed. Secretly I had a goal to oversee how she would evaluate what we had talked about, including my questions as well as her answers. Once the transcribing of her material was finished, we engaged in a long discussion. She noticed that some of the areas in the interview actually surprised her, that she could have said what she actually said. She told me, "As I was transcribing, I noticed that inside I do not agree with what I had said. However, I had said I would leave everything as it is without correcting it. So I jotted down at the side of it to make what I said during the interview more accurate." [Julia, from notes by observers, 2007.04.16.]

I selected several resources meant to provide as diverse data as possible in reflecting the personal experiences of women in prostitution—observations, semi-structured in-depth interviews and women's letters. There is a more comprehensive discussion on this in Section 4.3. of Chapter 4. Such a selection allowed me to view and to check the manifestation under research from more than one angle. The notion of triangulation in this study allowed me, as Macdonald and Tipton (1993, 199) note, to achieve validity that is seen as "having both external and internal aspects". Furthermore the gathered interview data covered different periods in the lives of the women in prostitution: childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Theory triangulation, which originated as the use of more than one kind of theoretical approach, consisted of the social cognitive, trauma and interactional social work practice models. That helped me, as Tyson (1995, 233) states, according to LeVine (1981), "to take multiple perspectives on a given point". Thus I also applied triangulation to my research results that were based on "some of the central ideas", as Shulman (1992) said, of *the interactional model* of social work practice—obstacles, relationships and "*strength for changes*", which I call resources. Chapter 4 presents this more fully. Such triangulated multiple measures enhanced and deepened the accumulated

information about the personal experiences of women in prostitution, and that allowed me to diversify any bias.

I transcribed the interview material verbatim with an evaluation on the telling and transmittal of the research information as well (see Appendix 5). Nonetheless, despite this tactic, I considered the checking and evaluating of the meaning and essences of the results by the research participants themselves on the information, which they had provided themselves and which I had regenerated in the heuristic investigations, as the most important criterion for strengthening the material's accurateness. Thereby I had made a pact with the research participants to provide feedback on the essence and completeness of their experiences as I had transmitted in my work. This way they would be evaluating the derived research results. This feedback strengthened the reliability and validity of the gained results on the personal experiences of women in prostitution that my study presented. Gilbert (1993) states that one way of thinking about the validity and reliability of a research study is an indicator that links to a concept with observable facts. Thusly I considered what could be that indicator, which would assist in evaluating the comprehensiveness, vividness and accuracy of the depictions about the personal experiences of women in prostitution. One of the research participants wrote upon receiving the material for her feedback, "After I read your work, I could not begin writing for a long time. Different thoughts, feelings and emotions came up. That proves once more that the events you've gone through never disappear anywhere and they keep on influencing life" [Odetta]. Another research participant, Algè wrote, "If you want to, you can give my feedback to the others to read. I've got nothing against that. But, just don't give it to my mama. (...) As I'm reading it now, I feel calm, even though it hurts where it's about dad and granddad because, apparently, that was really missing in my childhood, that ran with mom and dad." I realised that it would take much more time for the wounds from what Algè had experienced in her relationship with her mother to heal. The research participants also shared where they agreed with my interpretation and where they did not in their feedbacks. For example, Milda became emotional about the sentence I

had written in Section 8.1 of Chapter 8: “The stigma that Milda carries and her warped self-judgement were obstacles to open up to another person or to look for help overall (...).” Now the woman wrote down, “This phrase of yours, ‘the stigma that Milda carries’ (...), very much depends on what kind of person is working with you. (...) You know, about the help, I think that a person has to have the ability to help a person. (...) And to talk about what obstacles got in my way, it was the fixed day and time. I felt squeezed in. And, when I feel that way, I don’t want to talk and I can’t.” I realised that it was not only the stigma she carried and her warped self-judgement, which were the obstacles for the woman to open up. That, the same way as Algè’s not wanting to let her mother read her notes, once again confirmed one of the research indicators—every time the women touched upon the trauma they had experienced and its consequences, new forms of its manifestation would be revealed showing how deep the trauma had been. Numerous other scholars (Herman, 1995; Herman, 1997; Herman & Harvey, 1997; van der Kolk, 2003; Rothschild, 2003; Siegel, 2003), who had researched various aspects of trauma manifestations, also substantiated the twofold and manifold nature about traumas in their conclusions.

As I read the feedback about the research results from the research participants, I realised that, when a woman is talking about her own experience, she is talking specifically about what is the most painful to her or what causes certain bodily sensations to her at that time. I understood that the agreements these research participants gave to talk about what had been their secret alone for a long time confirm their discovering certain resources or acquiring the means to resist the power of abuse. It may have been no accident that, after Odeta completed her feedback, she made pronouncement writing, “EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD HAS NOT TWO SIDES BUT CONSIDERABLY MORE! And there is more – only love will save the world.” Odeta was my client for a long time (counting it up, it covers about seven years). I felt we had a strong tie and contact, and her feedback simply confirmed this once again. After she read the work, the woman wrote:

Your help, your being and even your remaining quiet gifted me with life, hope and some kind of light. Indeed ... it was unbelievable important to see and feel, that you understand me and that you were truly concerned about me. Imagine, right now I feel fortunate. NOW, right at this moment, even though the circumstances of this day are really not all that great. But, everything you wrote is truly so; I cannot add anything to it nor take anything away. Everything was like that. Now I feel so happy and I remember that time. But, you know what? That day, when you came over to that psychologist, I had already decided never to attend anywhere anymore and, all in all, disappear from ... Oh God, I remember how you never left me for a single second J. And how we rode over on top of the hill,⁷⁵ and I thought you wanted to shut me up in the psycho house. Realistically the distrust was 100 percent]. [Odetta, 17.05.2011]

Upon reading her thoughts, I felt good inside. Knowing Odetta as I did, I knew that what she wrote was sincere and real. Odetta's sharing this substantiated one more research data indicator of validity and reliability. This was the importance of a close, healing relationship so needed by the women, and the satisfaction of this need led them directly into post-traumatic healing. For change to occur in a person's life, Herman (1997, 241) relays, "The principle of restoring human connection and agency remains central to the recovery process and no technical therapeutic advance is likely to replace it." The words Odetta spoke supported the actuality of the result. The trauma she had experienced was healed. She said, "When it comes to the telling about how I admit my own guilt, whereas he doesn't – I agree with that even now. **ONLY I CHANGED THE WORD GUILT TO RESPONSIBILITY.**" The feedback Irma shared also attested to the changes in her life:

I am thankful to the life and to the fate that put me in touch with the wonderful people from the dear centre. I don't know if I would write that now, not only with gratitude but also with the hope this will be a help to those who wanted to run away from themselves and from life at least once [Irma].

75. "On top of the hill" is the reference the woman used of where the Mental Health Centre was located, the place where the social worker was employed at the time. We were applying there for psychiatric help, which the woman needed at that time.

Milda's feedback also validated the impact of a close relationship and the importance of faith and understanding in the process of a trauma healing and the change in life it brings:

To this day, I recall when I was driven over to the Centre. I was still unable to decide what I wanted and what I should do for quite a while. I didn't really believe that I would get help, that I would be understood and accepted for what I am. Once I sensed that I was really going to get help, I decided to give it a try. What really helped a lot was simply being alongside, when I needed that. (...) The people who worked there, I could see, wanted to help. It doesn't matter to me that sometimes they don't understand me; what's important is that they tried. And, back then and now, that was a lot to me [Milda].

Indeed the feedback that the research participants provided several indicators. These allowed the verification of the specific patterns in the personal experiences of women in prostitution, which the research had revealed, before their becoming involved in prostitution and their getting out or not getting out of it.

Plummer (1995, 12) wrote, "The social scientist is part of the very process being observed, analysed and ultimately written about." Thus I was also part of this process, which was deeply social. The judgment I made as the primary researcher regarding the personal experiences of women in prostitution, as Moustakas (1990) says, "... has undergone the heuristic inquiry from the beginning formulation of the question through phases of incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis." Additionally I was constantly referencing the raw material as I was choosing to concentrate on the pronounced areas of focus and as I was writing up the women's experiences during various periods in their lives. It was critical to select the most appropriate examples reflecting what I was writing about the best. This work was actually interesting and involving even though it was long and tiresome due to the abundance of material from the interviews. It was important to select the sort of material that would convey the phenomenon under investigation fully and truthfully. Certainly, as Polanyi (1969) stated, "What is presented as truth and what is removed as implausible or idiosyncratic ultimately can be accredited only on the grounds of personal knowledge and judgment" (Moustakas, 1990, 33).

Moreover I am also able to confirm on the basis of my own experience how much it means having a relationship that provides help and believing in another person. Time and again, I considered simply stopping and terminating any sort of continuation of this scientific work. However, my supervisors were responsible for causing me to refrain from such a move. They gave me the strength to go on by their especially meaningful support, understanding and acceptance of me when the emotions flooding over me in the process of writing this dissertation were utterly destructive. I always knew that I have support and that I can always talk about what was causing my anxiety. Furthermore I had trust and close relationships with my supervisors as much as with other people close to me. All this permitted me to go on.

9.4. Implications for practice and further research

The research results provide the basis for the following implications regarding the development of social work practice. These are applicable for social workers and others who are aiming to provide effective help to women in prostitution, formulators of social policies, institutions training social workers, scholars and researchers.

Implications for social workers and other expert help providers:

- The experiences of women in prostitution revealed that they face an objectionable outlook towards them by society due to the isolation and stigmatisation resulting from being members of a marginal group. Therefore social workers and other expert help providers for women victimised by prostitution and sexual exploitation must develop their capabilities to understand such women more thoroughly and comprehend the realities of these women's lives and personal experiences. It is essential to consider the difficulties and problems of each woman individually while dissociating from stereotypes, pre-conceived attitudes, labels and clichés about them. Acquaintanceship with their personal, subjective experiences would help to overstep the limitations coming from existing stigmas

and negative outlooks on them and empower the ability to get to know each woman as a person without pushing her away into the sidelines but the opposite—by integrating her.

- The research results indicated that the work related to the process of helping these women is often rather rushed and merely rational and technical, which orients towards instrumental, material support for a client. The work aims at getting fast results without allocating sufficient time for hearing out a client, emotionally supporting her, encouraging her to act on an independent basis or elementary understanding of her humanness. Thus, for effective help and changes in the lives of clients, the necessary condition is forming dialogic relationships and grounding them on equal worth, sensitivity, patience, sincerity, faith and trust, empathy and compassion, respect and caring by respecting the client's freedom of choice and self-determination.
- The research results revealed that the social worker or other expert, who is aiming to help another (in this case, women in prostitution), must first try to achieve self-knowledge, because knowing and understanding oneself is knowing and understanding another as well. The social worker must also have a strong foundation of values. The social worker needs to know these values, have a need to live devoid of hostilities towards oneself as well as towards others, be open-hearted to another person and value and recognise the meaningfulness and individuality of every person.
- The research results also indicated that women in prostitution experienced all encompassing, long-lasting neglect while growing up in high-risk families. Furthermore their need for an intimate, emotional relationship was unsatisfied. The environment during both their childhood and their adolescence interfered with, more than it contributed to, their development, formation and maturation as a person, first as a child and then as an adolescent. Thus it is necessary to organise and develop social work with families at risk and continuously strengthen an empathy-based contact with the family members encour-

aging their self-reflection and analysis of the situation in the family by expanding the limits of their feelings, manners of thinking and behaviour and comprehension of values.

- The research results substantiated the necessity of actively developing more diverse preventative activities in the community, especially with young people who could become potential victims of prostitution or human trafficking.

Implications for formulators of social policies and institutions training social workers:

- The experiences of women in prostitution revealed their lack of skills at self-reflection and their inability to grasp and evaluate their situations and the reality of their lives adequately. Consequently they make allowances for their personal accountability and make erroneous decisions among available choices thereby surrendering to self-deceit. To lessen the involvement of young people in prostitution, it is essential to execute constant educational activities and prevention programmes helping to increase a person's critical thinking and consciousness and to form skills at self-reflection.
- The attitudes on the values conditional to conscientious choices among exiting alternatives need to be trained and instilled in young people by involving the efforts of families, churches and learning institutions.
- The experiences of women in prostitution showed that those who grew up in care homes for children encountered a lack of a sensitive and emphatic outlook towards them, one that is responsive to a child's needs, as well that sort of behaviour towards them. Therefore, it is essential to change the process of institutionalising children who have lost their parents, one which has persisted to the present since Soviet times. Children must be provided with help that is responsive to their needs. Furthermore there must be an effort to safeguard contacts with children's biological parents.
- The research results showed that, in considerably many cases, these women were rejected, neglected and betrayed by per-

sons close to them, such as their mother or father, during their childhood and adolescence. They especially suffered a need for a humane contact. Therefore it is essential to include family studies about the fundamentals of human development and maturity in general education programmes.

- The research results showed that the mass media, which usually writes about and demonstrates negative events regarding women in prostitution, play a significant role in forming a biased and negative opinion in respect to these women. Thereby it becomes important to actively oppose the media that forms and promotes a sexualised image of these women by making use of the same mass informational media to illustrate occurrences of good practice and success in helping women overcome prostitution.
- The research results revealed that the help provided to women in prostitution is merely episodic and usually ineffective. Therefore it is essential to develop and implement clinical social work with abuse victims (including victims of prostitution) as well as with abusers by assuring the necessary resources (human, professional and material).
- Teams consisting of experts in various areas need to be formed and organised with an aim of providing effective help for women who have been victimised by prostitution and human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation to assure successful integration into society and the job market.

Implications for scientists and researchers:

- The research results revealed frequent instances of negative and stigmatising views on women in prostitution not only from the society-at-large but equally as much from experts working in various organisations. Therefore it is important to test the actions and outcomes of the manifestation of such viewpoints when aiming to become better acquainted with the reasons and the dynamics of manifested abuse and sexual exploitation amongst women in prostitution.

- It is also essential to investigate the reasons for the demand for prostitution services when aiming to become better acquainted with sexual abuse suffered by women in prostitution or the phenomenon of prostitution itself. Thus further research should be conducted aiming to learn more about abusers, those who engage in sexual exploitation and/or users of sexual services.
- The experiences of women in prostitution revealed that help for them is often limited to provision of narrow support solely to satisfy material needs. Therefore it is important to discuss whether or not directing help actions to health care for women in prostitution and efforts to control HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases influences or acts on such women to disengage from prostitution.

Concluding epilogue: Heuristics for a creative synthesis in decoding experience

Both as a researcher and as a practitioner, I gained a deeper understanding about the problems I was facing every day in my professional life after I had completed the research for this dissertation. I am convinced this research will influence later scholarly works, my own work as much as those performed by other researchers on this subject matter. The final insights are summarised and presented in a theoretical, empirical and methodological context.

The scientific theoretical analysis on the socio-cultural and historical aspects of the status of women in Lithuania revealed a sufficient degree of discrimination, both open and covert, in respect to women, irrespective of the positive changes in the role of women in society. The interpretation of the phenomenon of women in prostitution and the outlook on the status of women vary depending on the context of a country's culture and its socio-political system. The analysis of the manifestation of prostitution in Lithuania indicated that it is a multilayered social, legal, economic and political problem. Presumptions regarding the growth of this manifestation and the new forms it expresses become entrenched in a country without a clear strategy regarding the issue of women's sexual exploitation for the purposes of prostitution. This problem remains one of the most complicated, social assignments in the country due to its complexity, variety of different views on this problem and the unsuitable legal approaches. The predominance of different viewpoints on those injured or potential victims prevents the development of a unified legal base and an effective social help system. Recognition of the experiences of women in prostitution is a meaningful and necessary assumption for the development of a legal base, the formation of an infrastructure for social help and entrenchment of a

deeper understanding of this issue in society. Therefore my empirical research was constructed on three levels.

Certain *specific patterns* reflecting the complex, multi-layered experiences of women in prostitution became distinguished upon analysing the features of their *personal experiences in childhood and adolescence up to their choice when they decided whether to engage in prostitution or disengage from prostitution* and the characteristics of their *help seeking process*. I divided the period of these women's childhood-adolescence into parts—*relationships, obstacles and resources*.

These women's *experiences in childhood and adolescence* revealed that they went through *unhappy internalised relationships, inner instability, vulnerability in their relationships with others, a damaged "I", low self-confidence and self-esteem, an objectified, traumatised and stigmatized identity, vulnerability to sexual abuse, self-destructive and devaluating behaviour, complex post-traumatic stress disorder and addiction to unhappiness*. The results of the empirical research also revealed their failed internalised, mutual *interrelationships and contact with persons close to them* as well as *vulnerability in their relationships with those around them*. This permitted me to distinguish several fundamental reasons of influence:

- Lack of love, support and emotional and psychological contact with parents or caregivers, intimate relationships (especially with the mother), responsible care and warmth in the family, which has damaged the fundamental trust in oneself and others in a woman's life.
- Lack of a secure attachment with a person who is close causes an attempt to satisfy this need, resulting in attachments with unsuitable persons who also fail to respond to this need, causing a repeat of the previous situation.
- The experience of one's own physical, social, moral and spiritual neglect prompts the need and desire to express oneself yet again.
- The experience of rejection and neglect by the people who are closest leads to feelings of endless grief, anger, hostility and distrust of others or extreme dependency on others.

- The experience of the domination of force, control and frequently repeating betrayals by close persons consequently results in experiences of inner helplessness and chaos, which systematically lead to difficulties in establishing close relationships based on the trust of others.

Furthermore these women's experiences permitted me to distinguish the *obstacles* they faced to achieve positive socialisation in their closest social environment:

- Experiencing brutal violence from others or deeply traumatic sexual abuse from persons close to them consequently results in their betraying their own moral values.
- Being considered a criminal causes them to behave like one, as if justifying the ascribed role.
- Experiencing behaviour towards them that treats them as objects.
- Going through long-term, stigmatizing labelling such as “garbage man's daughter”, “skull”, “white crow {i.e., black sheep}”, “whore”, “empty”, “kid of a *merga* {transl. note: demeaning term for girl implying inferiority}”, “psycho” and “just like mother”.
- Experiencing tense, cold, conflictual relationships in the family or some other close environment, absence or inaccessibility of parents or weak ties to them and the appearance of a stepfather were the sorts of significant, out-of-the-ordinary factors, which caused the women to be vulnerable to abuse and sexual exploitation.
- Experiencing long-term, repetitive traumas leading to deep deformations are ascribed to the states of being or reactions characteristic of complex post-traumatic stress disorder, such as changes in regulating emotions, consciousness, self-awareness, comprehending an abuser, relationships with other people or systems of meaningfulness.
- Lacking inner balance consequently results in difficulties when attempting to adjust to an environment.

- Suffering increased restlessness, a hostile attitude, lack of inner resilience and difficulties in learning later cause health problems.

The second aspect of an empirical cross-section—the women’s ***choice in making a decision on engaging in or disengaging from prostitution***—revealed that they *lacked critical reflex skills, whereas self-deception became a handy means to help them adapt to an environment*. These women had *lost their power and meaningfulness* due to the traumatizing experiences they had suffered for a long time and they were *unprepared for changes*. Therefore they were more *inclined to reconcile with the existing situation*. Moreover long-term *traumatic exhaustion led them to a state of “hitting bottom”*. Ultimately some of these women found people with whom to form close, supportive relationships, which led them into changing. This allowed them *to comprehend and recognise their own reality leading to liberation* from the experiences that had been imprisoning them. All this permitted me to assert that the following features of their life style had formed:

- There is a goal to satisfy the need for adaptation in life and to sense one’s own effect on the meaningfulness of personal well-being albeit being unable to comprehend adequately and evaluate reality and the demands made by a situation or the environment.
- The women have a goal to “quickly” and “easily” earn money, which leads to prostitution, and they believe it will only be temporary, will not be immoral or depraved and will not cause traumatizing consequences and believing one can always disengage from it whenever one wants.
- Concessions are made at the expense of one’s personality, and decisions are made erroneously, thereby these women surrender to self-deceit.
- Deceiving oneself is meant to help oneself to overcome painful experiences and to understand purpose established within life’s reality at the time and provide it with meaning.

- Prostitution is selected as a means of “revenge” towards men while, by the same, it helps to entrench a sense of power and importance.
- Engagement in prostitution leads toward the loss of a sense of one’s own significance when being considered as “just an object” or “a piece of meat that men buy”.
- Powerlessness is experienced, which prompts entering into unequal, deceitful relationships thereby condemning oneself to the risk and threat of exploitation.
- A selection is made to remain where one is without changing anything due to the influence of understanding one’s own experiences as subjective truths and responses to the satisfaction of life’s demands.
- Since they are psychologically and spiritually vulnerable due to the earlier traumatic experiences they had lived through, it is not difficult to manipulate them thereby binding them and entrenching them where they are all the more.

The third empirical cross-section involves the personal experiences of women in prostitution in the *help seeking process*. This revealed how *complex and multi-faceted the difficulties that they experienced* actually were. *The absence of a response to their need for help was a hindrance* for these women *to achieve positive changes* in their lives. All of them *suffered the fear of being repeatedly rejected, which blocked them from opening up to another person. Before these women could accept help, they first had to discover, comprehend and recognise the problem* they had. The experiences of the women in their process of seeking help revealed how specially important the participation of a *significant Other* actually was. Ultimately the experiences of the women indicated that the only thing that helped them *to regain their lost power* was entering into *healing relationships*.

In summary the experiences of women in prostitution revealed various difficulties they face that reflect the complexity and multi-faceted nature of their problems. These can be defined as inner (A) and external (B) dimensions of a problem:

(A)

- *inner states of being*: anxiety of loneliness, lack of confidence in one's own power, grievance, traumatic experiences, stigma, shutting off within the self as a protest against an unsuitable environment that does not offer a response to existing needs, an inclination to deny and refuse to accept help as a covert cover-up of the existing fear of being repeatedly rejected and purported acceptance of the existing situation or the need to change something
- *arising from the relationships with significant others*: disbelief in everyone; absence of a close relationship, support and understanding; inability to hear out another; rejection and deceit of close persons; blame and exploitation

(B)

- *arising from their specific social environment of residence*: economic—having no place to live or nothing to live on and having no help
- *arising from the broader environment surrounding them*: negative outlook on them by community members and existence of a pre-determined attitude towards women in prostitution, insufficient attention for problem resolutions regarding prostitution and human trafficking on a national scope, indifference of persons (experts, members of organisations, politicians) regarding application of means for prevention and lack of information about help for women in prostitution

The empirical research design and process was evaluated. The selected heuristic strategy (Moustakas, 1990; Tyson, 1995) based on the existential viewpoint (Buber, 1998; 2001; Cohn 2002; van Deurzen-Smith, 2010; Kierkegaard, 1974; 2006; Kočiūnas, 2008; 2009; Кочюнас, 2004) was fully justified under the conditions of this number of research participants as well as including the participation of the researcher. The choice and conditions were important in the effort to reveal and transmit the personal experiences of women in prostitution. The reflective process of the research permitted

discovering and distinguishing the complex portrait of the research participants as much as of myself as a researcher and practitioner by accenting the quality and importance of subjective comprehension. Use of the theories, both *social cognitive* (Bandura, 1986) and trauma (Herman, 1997), during the time of the data interpretation permitted identification of the composite effects of the personal experiences of the research participants over various periods in their lives. Furthermore the use of the various contexts of the triangulation method on the selected reflective, heuristic way provided the opportunity for in-depth understanding and for an assessment of the specific patterned events and personal experiences of women in prostitution. The selected methodologies and the reconciliation of the specificity of the object opened up the opportunity for the full-fledged interpretation of the results permitting the crystallisation of resources at applicable levels, which is the foundation for constructing help for women in the situation of prostitution. The resources mentioned are those I wish to present as the specific products of my work:

Physical level resources: finding and assuring a secure location for revealing what a person experienced and lived through, creating an environment conducive to changes in a person's life and healing the experienced traumas, revealing and deliberating the events in life causing tension, realising reality, rejuvenation of the feeling that the body belongs to the self and strengthening physical health.

Social level resources: developing a contact of mutual trust, forming an existential relationship based on mutual responsibilities, severing destructive relationships that harm an individual, developing supportive and responsive relationships, removing isolation and distance from other people and helping to regenerate social contracts that strengthen an individual

Personal level resources: rebuilding feelings of power and autonomy, re-establishing self-confidence and confidence in others, demolishing a negative and objectified identity, lessening the intensity of negative feelings while re-experiencing an event, rebuilding a sense of self-appreciation and controlling anxiety

Spiritual level resources: giving meaning to life's events, raising a goal in life and encouraging its pursuit, reappraising values, being

open with oneself and searching to find and all the more to understand what one wants from life

In general the aforementioned resources at all levels effect each other or, in other words, they overlap. The crystallisation of these resources confirmed once more the value of the research results to me as a researcher. The aspects of the selected interactional model of social work practice by Shulman (1992) as an approach for the practical resolution of issues under analysis make the results especially valuable. The assessment of resources is a serious foundation for the development of social work practice (women in situations of prostitution). The ability to convert resources into instruments of social work for diagnosis, assessment, planning and enacting social help for women in situations of prostitution permits the expectation for an entrenchment of an effective social help strategy.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Consent to Participate in the Interview

I agree to participate in the research “Life Patterns of Women in Prostitution: Pathways for Recovering Roots after Trauma Interface”. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary: I can refuse to continue participation in the study any time and my refusal will not cause any adverse effects.

I have been introduced to these aspects of participation in the survey:

The purpose of this study is to explore the experience of women in prostitution, their trauma and stigma: the social-economic conditions which led to sexual exploitation of women and their survival. I understand that I will be asked personal questions related to my previous life experiences.

The study will be conducted using a semi-standardised interview method, in which: I will provide information from my own life; in response to verbal questions (answers can be taped).

I will provide information on the past experience and feelings verbally.

All of the information obtained during the investigation is confidential. Only the persons involved in the study will be given my personal information. My first and last name will not be published anywhere except in this document. This document will be kept separately from information obtained during the interview; the information will in no way be linked to my name. The researcher will keep the information in safety replacing my first and last name with nicknames.

The researcher will answer any of my questions about the study during the investigation or after it. In case of any questions or concerns I can contact the researcher or the other of the persons responsible for the assistance.

The researcher’s phone number: 8 686 60401

At the end of the investigation, I will receive the results of the study and their explanations.

Respondent’s nickname

Respondent’s signature

Date

Researcher (name, surname)

Appendix 2

Table 1. Interviews performed

#	Respondents	Interview date	Status		Duration
			Client	Not Client	h : min
1	Renata	06.06.2006		x	1:20/0:40
2	Irma	29.07.2006	x		1:28/0:30
3	Irma	05.08.2006	x		0:51
4	Irma	15.08.2006	x		1:00/1:20
5	Algè	10.09.2006	x		1:50/1:02
6	Julia	12.01.2007		x	1:05/1:09
7	Vilè	14.01.2007	x		1:30
8	Vilè	24.01.2007	x		1:04
9	Julia	21.04.2007		x	0:48/0:59
10	Irma	03.06.2007	x		2:13
11	Milda	06.06.2007	x		0:53/1:37
12	Bronè	26.07.2007		x	1:17
13	Odeta	20.10.2007	x		1:30/1:00
14	Diana	23.06.2008		x	1:20
15	Diana	02.07.2008		x	1:37
16	Diana	10.07.2008		x	0:50
17	Evelina	03.08.2008		x	0:40
18	Evelina	10.08.2008		x	1:45
19	Evelina	11.08.2008		x	1:10
20	Kotryna	10.09.2008		x	1:06/0:23
21	Toma	15.09.2008		x	1:20
22	Zita	20.10.2008		x	1:32/0:21
23	Loreta	01.11.2008		x	0:50/0:30
24	Loreta	15.11.2008		x	2:06
25	Loreta	21.11.2008		x	1:10
26	Silva	26.11.2008	x		1:25/1:09
27	Algè	29.11.2008	x		1:40

Note: Clients – Yes 6/No 9

Appendix 3

Table 1. Respondents' characteristics

Table 2. Respondent's characteristics of relationship in family

Table 3. Information about observations – Researcher Field notes

Table 1. Respondents's characteristics

#	Name	Code's name	Age	Marital status during int. period	Occupation during int. period	Education	Children -age	Time of sexual exploitation/year/	Age, when she was involved into prostitution/trafficked	Experience of sexual exploitation	Contemporary situation about prostitution	Drug/Alcohol use	Date of interview
1	Alge	A*	25	Single, had cohabitant	Seamstress, hostess & student	high school with occupation, occupational training, study at university	1-3	1	21	trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	No	10.09.2006 21.11.2008
2	Renata	R	20	Single, had cohabitant	None	secondary school	1-2	5	15	prostituted internally/trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	No/Was	06.06.2006
3	Irma	I	30	Single, had cohabitant	Topless dancer	high school, occupational training	---	9	17	prostituted internally/topless dancer	No in prostitution	No/Was	29.07.2006 05.08.2006 15.08.2006 03.06.2007
4	Loreta	L	24	Single	Student	secondary school, study at college	---	3	15	prostituted internally/trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	Was	01.11.2008 15.11.2008 21.11.2008
5	Vile	V	32	Single, was married (husband dead)	Sales-woman	secondary school	1-14	7	16	prostituted internally/trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	Was	14.01.2007 24.01.2007
6	Julia	J	23	Single, had cohabitant	Student	high school, occupational training, study at university	---	3	18	prostituted internally/swinger	No in prostitution	Was	12.01.2007 21.04.2007
7	Milda	M	37	Single, had cohabitant	Seamstress	high school with occupation	3-1/10/15	16	18	prostituted internally	No in prostitution	Was	06.06.2007
8	Odetta	O	31	Single, was married (divorced)	None	high school	1-7	2 months	27	trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	Was	20.10.2007
9	Silva	S	35	Have cohabitant	Cook	high school, occupational training	3-4/6/9	20	14	prostituted internally/trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	Was	26.11.2008
10	Evelina	E	18	Single	None	high school	---	5	13	prostituted internally/trafficked abroad for prostitution	No in prostitution	Was	03.08.2008 10.08.2008 11.08.2008
11	Korryna	K	23	Single	None	secondary school, studied at college, unfinished	---	4	19	prostituted internally	Still in prostitution	Was/Still	10.09.2008
12	Toma	T	26	Single	None	(8 classes of secondary school)	---	10	16	prostituted internally	Still in prostitution & HIV	Was/Still	15.09.2008
13	Zita	Z	31	Single, was married (divorced)	None	(9 classes of secondary school)	1 (dead)	11	20	prostituted internally	Still in prostitution & HIV	Was/Still	20.10.2008
14	Diana	D	21	Single	None	secondary school	---	6	15	prostituted internally	Still in prostitution	Was/Still	23.06.2008 02.07.2008 10.07.2008
15	Broné	B	27	Have cohabitant	None	secondary school	---	9	18	prostituted internally/trafficked abroad for prostitution	Still in prostitution	Was/Still	26.07.2007

Note: The letter of the code's name means the first letter of the respondent's nickname

Table 2. Respondent's characteristics of relationship in family

#	Name	Marital status of parents	Time, spend in a full family	Children in the family	Relationships with mother or other	Relationships with father	Relationships with researcher as SW	Notes
1	Alge	Divorced	18	1	A lot of control, often in conflict, experienced violence	Good in childhood/teens, later lost contact	client	
2	Renata	Married & later dead	5	7	Alcoholic; ordinary, rejected by mother; grew up in an institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children	Alcoholic; good, abandoned by father	n/c	
3	Irma	Divorced	12	3	Alcoholic; often in conflict; rejected by mother, experienced violence	Good, financial support, took care for daughter, experienced sexual abuse (age 8 up) from brother	client	
4	Loreta	Divorced	15	2	Abandoned by mother, mother involved into prostitution; experienced violence (sexual, age 15 up) from mother's friends	Ordinary, later lost contact	n/c	
5	Vile	Divorced	16	2	Alcoholic; often in conflict; rejected by mother, experienced violence	Dead; good, when he was alive, took care, financial/emotional support	client	
6	Julia	Married	18	2	Ordinary, not a lot care, abandoned by mother	Often in conflict, mostly neutral in care taking, later abandoned by father, experienced violence (sexual, age 14 up) from father	n/c	
7	Milda	Single	~1	1	Alcoholic; rejected by mother, doesn't know mother - saw one time, grew up in an institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children; indecent assault outside institutional home for children	Alcoholic; rejected by father; doesn't know father - saw one time experienced indecent assault (age 14 up) from men	client	
8	Odeta	Married	18	2	A lot of control, often in conflict, experienced violence	Often in conflict, a lot of control, experienced violence	client	
9	Silva	Single	~1	14	Alcoholic; often in conflict; rejected by mother, grew up in an institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children	She doesn't know father	client	
10	Evelina	Married	17	3	Alcoholic; often in conflict, rejected by mother, experienced violence	Alcoholic; often in conflict, trafficked daughter, experienced violence (sexual abuse, age 13 up from father's friend)	n/c	
11	Korryna	Single	18	5	Ordinary, some care from mother, grew up together with grandparents	She doesn't know father; people talked that the grandfather is her father; took care of grandfather	n/c	still
12	Toma	Married, later cohabited	16	3	Alcoholic, especially after husband death; often in conflict, rejected by mother, experienced violence	Alcoholic; often in conflict, dead for long-lasting drunkenness when daughter was 8th, experienced violence (sexual abuse, age 14 up) from stepfather	n/c	still, HIV
13	Zita	Married & later dead	4	1	Dead when daughter was 4th, grew up with grandmother	She doesn't know father, dead when daughter was 4th, experienced violence (assault, age 19 from husband's friends)	n/c	still, HIV
14	Diana	Divorced	2	2	Alcoholic; Abandoned by mother; grew up in an institutional home for children, violent (also sexual-assault) in an institutional home for children	Often in conflict, alcoholic, sometimes took care, experienced assault, age 14, from peers	n/c	still
15	Bronė	Single (2y)	~1	1	Alcoholic; rejected by mother; grew up in an institutional home for children, violent (also sexual) in an institutional home for children	She doesn't know father; experienced sexual abuse (age 13 up) from a housekeeper of an institutional home for children	n/c	still

Table 3. Information about observations – Researcher Field notes

#	Name of observer	Other persons with observer	Observers from	Observation place	Observation time	Observation date	Notes
1	Dovilė	Jolanta	Sociology students	Station area, N str., Vilnius	16:10 – 17:50 pm (1.40 h)	16.02.05	
2	Dovilė	Jolanta, Rasa & Ivetta	Sociology students	NGO, N centre, Vilnius	12:00 – 12:40 pm (0.40 h)	23.02.05	
3	Dovilė	Jolanta & Mantas	Sociology students	Hotel N & Train station area, Kaunas	21:00 – 22:00 pm (1.00 h)	27.03.05	
4	Dovilė	Jolanta	Sociology students	Train station area, Vilnius	16:10 – 17:50 pm (1.40 h)	29.03.05	
5	Dovilė	Jolanta	Sociology students	Station area, N str., Vilnius	10:00 am – 17:50 pm (7.50 h)	30.03.05	
6	Dovilė	Jolanta	Sociology students	Station area, N str., Vilnius	10:00 am – 17:50 pm (7.50 h)	02.04.05	
7	Jolanta	Dovilė	Sociology students	Train station area, Vilnius	17:00 – 20:00 pm (3.00 h)	16.02.05	
8	Jolanta	Dovilė, Rasa & Ivetta	Sociology students	NGO, N centre, Vilnius	12:00 – 12:40 pm (0.40 h)	23.02.05	
9	Jolanta	Dovilė & Mantas	Sociology students	Hotel N & Train station area, Kaunas	21:00 – 22:00 pm (1.00 h)	27.03.05	
10	Jolanta	Dovilė & Mantas	Sociology students	Train station area, Vilnius	16:10 – 17:50 pm (1.40 h)	29.03.05	
11	Jolanta	Dovilė	Sociology students	Station area, N str., Vilnius	16:10 – 17:50 pm (1.40 h)	16.02.05	
12	Jolanta	Dovilė	Sociology students	After revision of the film <i>Lifita 4-ever</i> (dir. L. Moodysson, 2002)	16:10 – 17:50 pm (1.40 h)	05.02.05	
13	Researcher	Giedrė & Agnė	Researcher, Sociology student, & psychology student	Strip club K/ Night club N, Klaipėda	19:00 – 22:00 pm (3.00 h)	18.05.05	
14	Giedrė	---	Sociology student	Night club M, Klaipėda	19:00 – 23:00 pm (4.00 h)	21.05.05	
15	Researcher	Giedrė	Researcher & Sociology student	Drug addict centre, Kaunas	13:00 – 15:00 pm (2.00 h)	15.03.05	
16	Researcher	Dana, Judita	Researcher, Centre's workers & social work students	Night club M, Klaipėda	22:00 pm – 02:00 am (4.00 h)	10.05.06	
17	Researcher	Dana, Judita	Researcher, Centre's workers & social work students	Strip club N, Klaipėda	22:00 pm – 05:00 am (7.00 h)	22.07.06	
18	Researcher	Dana, Judita	Researcher, Centre's workers & social work students	Gay club N, Klaipėda	21:00 pm – 01:00 am (4.00 h)	12.08.07	
19	Saulė	---	NGO, Help centre's social worker	In the meeting with business men, Klaipėda	11:00 pm – 04:00 am (3.00 h)	17.07.08	
20	Researcher	Dana, Silva	Researcher, Centre's worker & client	In the truck station, Klaipėda	17:00 pm – 19:00 am (2.00 h)	24.06.05	
21	Researcher	---	Researcher	Interdisciplinary Local Net group (LNG) meeting, Klaipėda	15 LNG meeting (15 x 2 h)	2007 – 2008	

Note: Following non-maleficence principle was kept confidentiality. All information related to a person's and/or organisation's name was changed or deleted

Appendix 4

Analysis of respondents' personal life

Table 1. Surroundings while women were growing up

#	Women grew up	Number of respondents
1	In a full family	4
2	With mother after parents' divorce	4
3	With father after parents' divorce	1
4	With grandmother	1
5	In an institutional home for children	5

Table 2. Marital status of women's parents

#	Parents marital status	Number of respondents
1	Still married	3
2	Were married and later divorced	5
3	Were married and later both parents deceased	2
4	Cohabited	1
5	Single	4

Relationships status with people from immediate surroundings (mother, grandmother or in an institutional home for children)

- Algè – Often in conflict, a lot of control, violent
- Renata – Ordinary, rejected by mother, alcoholic, grew up in institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children
- Irma – Often in conflict, rejected by mother, alcoholic, violent
- Loreta – Often in conflict, abandoned by mother, mother involved into prostitution (age 15 up), violent
- Vilè – Often in conflict, rejected by mother, alcoholic, violent
- Julia – Ordinary – not a lot care, abandoned by mother
- Milda – Doesn't know mother – saw some times, rejected by mother, alcoholic, grew up in institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children
- Odetta – Often in conflict, a lot of control, violent
- Silva – Often in conflict, rejected by mother, alcoholic, grew up in institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children
- Evelina – Often in conflict, rejected by mother, alcoholic, violent
- Kotryna – Ordinary, some care from mother, grew up together with grandparents
- Toma – Often in conflict, rejected by mother, alcoholic, violent
- Zita – Ordinary, dead when daughter was 4th, grew up with grandmother
- Diana – Abandoned of mother, alcoholic, grew up in institutional home for children, violent in an institutional home for children
- Bronè – Rejected by mother, alcoholic, grew up in institutional home for children, in an institutional home for children

Table 3. Summarized status of relationships

#	Relationships status	Number of respondents
1	Often in conflict	8
2	A lot of control	2
3	Violent (from mother & 1 sexual from mother's friends & 5 in an institutional home for children)	7
4	Involved in prostitution	1
5	Rejected by mother	8
6	Abandoned by mother	3
7	Mother is alcoholic	9
8	Ordinary	4

Relationships with father or other men in family

Algè – Good in childhood/teens, later lost contact

Renata – Good, abandoned by father, alcoholic

Irma – Good, financial support, took care for daughter; experienced violence (sexual abuse, age 8 up from brother)

Loreta – Ordinary, later lost contact, experienced sexual abuse (age 15 up) from mother’s friends

Vilè – Good, took care, emotional/financial support, later dead

Julia – Often in conflict, neutral in care taking, later abandoned by father, experienced violence (sexual, age 16 up) from father

Milda – Rejected by father, doesn’t know father – saw one time, alcoholic, experienced indecent assault (age 14 up) from men

Odeta – Often in conflict, a lot of control, violent

Silva – She doesn’t know father

Evelina – Often in conflict, trafficked daughter, alcoholic, experienced violence (sexual abuse, age 13 up from father’s friend)

Kotryna – She doesn’t know father, good with grandfather

Toma – Often in conflict, later dead when she was 8th, alcoholic, experienced violence (sexual abuse, age 14 up) from stepfather

Zita – Dead when daughter was 4th – she doesn’t know father, grew up with grandmother, experienced violence (assault, age 19) from husband’s friends

Diana – Often in conflict, alcoholic, sometimes took care, experienced assault (age 14) from peers

Bronè – Doesn’t know father, experienced sexual abuse (age 13 up) from a housekeeper of an institutional home for children

Table 4. Summarized status of relationship with father or other men in the family

#	Relationships status	Number of respondents
1	Often in conflict	4
2	Violent (sexual abuse/assault/indecent assault)	10
3	Was trafficked by father	1
4	Good (1 with grandfather)	5
5	Ordinary	1
6	Rejected by father	1
7	Abandoned by father	2
8	Father is an alcoholic	5
9	Doesn’t know father	5
10	Later lost contact with father	2
11	Dead father	3

Table 5. Number of children in parent's family

#	Number of children in parental family (child's position in family by age)	Number of respondents
1	1 child	4
2	2 children (four 2nd and one 1st)	5
3	3 children (3rd and 2nd)	3
4	5 children (2nd)	1
5	7 children (4th)	1
6	14 children (7th)	1

Table 6. Occupation during interview period

#	Occupation status	Number of respondents
1	Seamstress/Hostess	1
2	Topless dancer	1
3	Sales clerk	1
4	Seamstress	1
5	Cook	1
6	Student	2
7	None	8

Table 7. Women's marital status during interview period

#	Marital status	Number of respondents
1	Single	13
2	Have cohabitant	2
3	Had cohabitant earlier	5
4	Divorced from marriage	3

Table 8. Women's educational status during the interview period

#	Education status	Number of respondents
1	Secondary school of 10 grades: 1 – 8 grades & 1 – 9 grades	6
2	Only high school	2
3	High school & occupational training	4
4	High school with occupational training	2
5	College not completed	2
6	University not completed (1 still studying, 1 quit)	2

Characteristics of women in prostitution

Table 9. Age of women, participated in research

#	Age of women	Number of respondents
1	18–21	3
2	23–35	11
3	37	1

Table 10. Age, when woman was prostituted/trafficked

#	<i>A child</i>		<i>An adult</i>	
	Age of woman	Number of respondents	Age of woman	Number of respondents
1	13	1	18	3
2	14	1	20	1
3	15	3	21	1
4	16	2	27	1
5	17	1		

Table 11. Time-frame of sexual exploitation in prostitution

#	Time of sexual exploitation, year	Number of respondents
1	1	1
2	3	2
3	4	1
4	5	2
5	6	1
6	7	1
7	9	2
8	10	1
9	11	1
10	16	1
11	20	1
12	2 months	1

Table 12. Information about women during the interview:

#	Number of respondents	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Still in prostitution	5	10
Use drugs	12	3
Use alcohol	14	1
HIV infect	2	13
Have children	6	9

Table 13. Prostitution experience

Sexual exploitation status	Number of respondents
Prostituted only internally (1 topless dancer and 1 swinger)	7
Prostituted internally and trafficked abroad for prostitution	6
Trafficked abroad for prostitution	2

Table 14. Have children

Number of respondents	Number of children	Age of children
5	1	2/3/7/14 and 1 child deceased
2	3	1-10-15 & 4-6-9

Appendix 5

Table 1. Conventional symbols used for interview transcript citations

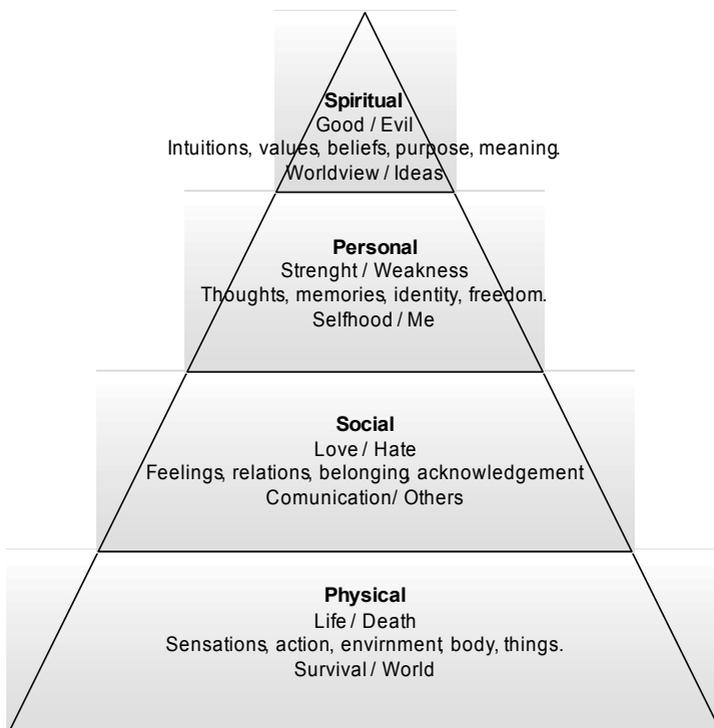
Symbols	Meaning	Sample (LT)	Sample (EN)
Researcher reservations and comments			
()	Empty parentheses indicate that the transcriber cannot hear what is being said during an interview.	„... [ten irgi (), nutaikiau progą a:::: ...“	“... [then again (), I caught a chance a:::: ...”
(word/s)	A word or words in parentheses indicate a guess or reservation about what is heard by the transcriber, which may possibly be wrong.	„... depresija, o tada * (kažkaip tai)* ...“	“... depression, and then * (somehow it)* ...“
(())	Double parentheses contain a transcriber’s description or observation rather than the transcription.	„...šlykštinės, iškart į lovą ? ((juokiasi)) ...“	“...disgusting creeps, into bed right off? ((laughs)) ...”
Sequence			
[A left bracket indicates the point at which a current speaker begins talking, so overlapping another speaker’s talk.	„... Nu taip, [negera pasidarė,...“	“... Well, yes, [I started feeling bad, ...”
]	A right brackets indicates the point at which a current speaker ends a talk that is overlapped by another speaker’s talk.	„... Buvo ::, <[buvo, [buvo, [buvo]> ...“	“... It was ::, <[was, [was, [it was]> ...”
=	A single equal sign, one at the end of a line/phrase and one at the beginning, indicates no gap between lines/phrases, meaning “to catch a thought”.	„...tokia vijoklė = tai aš = iš to pykčio,...“	“...this vine = so I = out of that anger, ...”
Time intervals			
(1s), (2s), (3s), (6s), (15s), ...	A number in parentheses indicates elapsed seconds of silence.	„ir (1s) brolis pasakė...“ „(2s) nu su mama būdavo ten visko...“	“and (1s) brother said...” “(2s) Well, with mama there was everything...”
(.)	A dot in parentheses indicates a short gap (probably no more than one-tenth of a second) between words.	„... aš kaip dabar atsimenu, tas stalas buvo prie lango (.) Antras aukštas. (5s) ...“	“... as I remember now, that table was by the window (.) Second floor (5s) ...”

Speech features			
WORD/S	A word/s in capital letters indicates especially loud speech relative to the general tone of voice.	„... <u>NU NESIELGIAU AŠ KAIP PROSTITUTĖ</u> ...“	“... <u>WELL, I DIDN'T ACT LIKE A PROSTITUTE</u> ...”
word/s	An underlined word/s indicates a certain form of a stressed accent (a singling out), a breadth or distinction.	„...*, ne biškį <u>klystu</u> , nea, aš šešiolikos pagimdžiau ją. ...“	“...*, I'm not a bit <u>wrong</u> , naw, I gave birth to her at sixteen. ...”
:::	A colon indicates prolongation of the immediately preceding sound and the number of colons side by side – the length of the prolongation.	„jūsų tėvai pijokai (tyr. past. žargonas pijokai, reiškiantis asmenį, priklausomą nuo alkoholio)::, ...“	“your parents are boozers (researcher note: jargon „pijokai“ meaning alcohol-dependent people)::, ...”
.hhh	A series of h letters prefixed by a dot indicates a deep breath and the number of hs – the length of the inhalation.	„... man būtų turbūt lengviausia,*siūti*. h hhh (3s) ...“	“... it'd probably be easiest for me, *to sew*.h hhh (3s) ...”
hhh	A series of h letters without a prefixed dot indicates a deep exhale and the number of hs – the length of the exhalation.	„... Paskui. hhh hh kažkaip buvau čia iš kalėjimo išėjus, ...“	“... Later. hhh hh Somehow I was out of jail, ...”
.	A full stop dot indicates a fall in the intonation of the speaker's voice.	Viduj jaučiausi labai žemo lygio . Bet taip, kad ar, [ar * apie mane gerai, blogai galvoja, tai aš negalvojau* ..	Inside I feel like a very low-life. But that, whether, [are * they thinking well or badly about me, that I don't think about*..
,	A comma indicates continuity of intonation (repetition) in a speaker's voice.	„... sako, *ty ne moja doč (tyr. past. tu ne mano dukte)“ *(3s) ...“	“... says, 'ty ne moja doč (researcher note: you're not my daughter)’ *(3s) ...”
?	A question mark indicates a rise in the intonation of the speaker's voice.	„... Nu kaip paaiškint tą jausmą ? ...“	“... Now, how to explain that feeling ? ...”
<word>	A word or phrase bracketed by the less than/greater than signs indicates it was spoken more quickly than the other words.	„...<nieko neturi>, <nei giminių>, <nei tėvų>, nieko. ...“	“...<got nothing>, <no relatives >, <not even parents>, nothing. ...”
*	An asterisk in front or at the end of a word/phrase indicates a strengthened, informational tone of voice reflecting the speaker's feelings of one sort or another about the subject under discussion.	*neįdomi, neturiu jokio noro jos sutikti*. (3s)	*I'm not interested; I have no desire to meet her*. (3s)

Note: Several symbols may be used together in certain places, for example, “... WELL, I DIDN'T ACT LIKE A PROSTITUTE ...” (Use of both capital letters and an underline).

Appendix 6

Dimensions of existence



Resource: van Deurzen, E. 2010. *Everyday Mysteries: A handbook of existential psychotherapy*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 137.

Appendix 7

Questionnaire topics regarding personal experiences of women in prostitution

A. Experiences of life in a family/another environment during childhood and adolescence

Tell about your life in your family/the environment where you used to live?

What was it like in your family/the environment where you lived?

What were/are the relationships in your family/the environment where you used to live? How did you used to feel? What did you experience? What does that mean to you?

What did you like/did not like in your family/the environment where you used to live? How did you come to realise that?

Who did you trust/did not trust in your family/the environment where you used to live?

Did you experience love in your family/the environment where you used to live?

From whom? How did you feel? What did that mean to you?

Did you ever experience hatred, condemnation, rejection in your family/the environment where you used to live? From whom? Tell how that happened? How did you get through that experience? How did you feel?

Tell about the years of your childhood, adolescence (the instances of hardships and pleasures you experienced)? How did you feel when you were a child, an adolescent?

What was lacking/what was sufficient in your life – your thoughts, feelings, experiences?

What did you dream about when you were a child, an adolescent?

Who was the most important person in your life when you were a child, an adolescent?

The beginning and the experience of prostitution

Tell how it all got started. How were you sold/being sold? What influenced your decision to provide sexual services?

How would you describe your life at that time? Was there someone you trusted?

Who? How did you feel? What did that mean to you?

What did it mean to you to be a topless dancer (to be sold, to be in prostitution)? How did you feel at the time?

You say you wanted to quit. Why?

Were you able to tell anyone that you were dancing in a nightclub, were/are in prostitution, sold? What does that mean to you? How did you feel? How do you/ did you consider yourself (at that time/now)?

Of the people who were close to you, who knew that you are dancing (were sold, were/are in prostitution)? What did/does other people's opinion about you mean to you?

Who did you retain relationships with while you were in prostitution? What sort? What did that mean to you? How were you accepted? Did you sense any condemnation? From whom? How did you feel?

Did you feel different from the gals who do not dance in a bar, are in prostitution, are sold?

What is your view of a gal/gals who is/are dancing/used to dance in a bar, who is/are in prostitution, who are sold? Is dancing in a bar or prostitution related to human trafficking/prostitution?

What do you think society's views are about gals who dance in nightclubs, who are in prostitution, who were sold?

What do you think? Is society's opinion about the aforementioned gals important? Would it be possible to change such an opinion? How?

C. Help

Who helped you? What sort of people were they?

What kind of help was it? How would you describe it?

How was the help offered to you? How did you feel? What did you like about it?

What didn't you like about it?

How did you react when the help was offered to you? Did you accept/reject it?

What influenced you? How did you feel?

How did you feel when the help was offered to you—thoughts, feelings, experiences?

What does/did the help mean to you in your life?

What kind of help did you want?

Was the offered help what you expected or wanted?

D. The Future

What is important to you in your life? In your opinion, what should your life be like? What kind would you want? How do you imagine it?

How do you imagine your future? Is this like what you had expected before? What's missing?

What does the word "live" mean to you?

What would provide you with self-confidence in your life?

What do you think you will be in the future? Who would you want to be? How do you see/imagine yourself in the future?

What is the meaning of your life to you?

Appendix 8

Interdepartmental cooperation: local network map

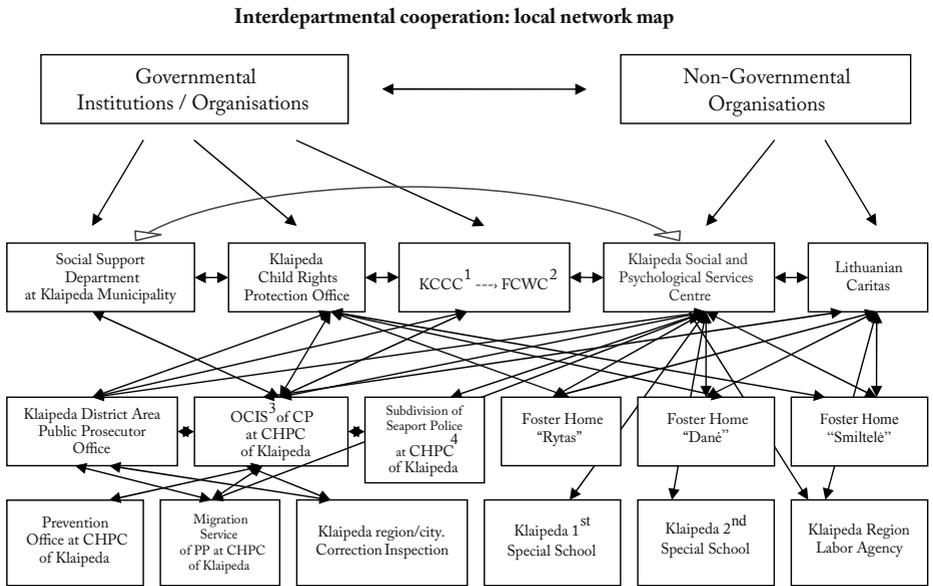


Figure 1. Interdepartmental cooperation of organisations of Local Network Group (LNG) tackling the problem of prostitution and trafficking in human beings in Klaipeda town

¹ KCCC – Klaipeda Children Crisis Centre since 2008 reorganised into BI Family and Child Welfare Centre of Klaipeda town.

² FCWC – Family and Child Welfare Centre of Klaipeda town.

³ OCIS of CP at CHPC – The Organized Crime Investigation Service of Criminal Police of Klaipeda Chief Police Commissariat.

⁴ CHPC – Klaipeda Chief Police Commissariat.

Appendix 9

Complex post-traumatic stress disorder

(by J. L. Herman, 1997, *Trauma and Recovery*, 121)

1. A history of subjection to totalitarian control over a prolonged period (months to years). Examples include hostages, prisoners of war, concentration-camp survivors and survivors of some religious cults. Examples also include those subjected to totalitarian systems in sexual and domestic life, including survivors of domestic battering, childhood physical or sexual abuse and organised sexual exploitation.
2. Alterations in affect regulation, including
 - persistent dysphoria
 - chronic suicidal preoccupation
 - self-injury
 - explosive or extremely inhibited anger (may alternate)
 - compulsive or extremely inhibited sexuality (may alternate)
3. Alterations in consciousness, including
 - amnesia or hypemnesia for traumatic events
 - transient dissociative episodes
 - depersonalisation/derealisation
 - reliving experiences either in the form of intrusive post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms or in the form of ruminative preoccupation
4. Alterations in self-perception, including
 - sense of helplessness or paralysis of initiative
 - shame, guilt, and self-blame
 - sense of defilement or stigma
 - sense of complete difference from others (may include sense of specialness, utter aloneness, belief no other person can understand, or nonhuman identity)
5. Alterations in perception of perpetrator, including
 - preoccupation with relationship with perpetrator (includes preoccupation with revenge)
 - unrealistic attribution of total power to perpetrator (caution: victim's assessment of power realities may be more realistic than the clinician's)
 - idealisation or paradoxical gratitude
 - sense of special or supernatural relationship
 - acceptance of belief system or rationalisations of perpetrator

6. Alterations in relations with others, including
 - isolation and withdrawal
 - disruption in intimate relationships
 - repeated search for rescuer (may alternate with isolation and withdrawal)
 - persistent distrust
 - repeated failures of self-protection
7. Alterations in systems of meaning
 - loss of sustaining faith
 - sense of hopelessness and despair

Appendix 10

Abbreviations used in this dissertation

English language

Amnesty International – a global movement of people fighting injustice and promoting human rights;

Amnesty for Women – a non-profit organisation, established in Hamburg 1986, as a counselling centre and international meeting point for women;

Anti-Slavery International – works at local, national and international levels to eliminate all forms of slavery around the world;

BHWC – Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition;

CARAM – Coordination for Action Research on AIDS and Mobility, Cambodia;

CARE International is a global confederation of 14 member organisations working together to end poverty;

CAST – Coalition Against Slavery and Trafficking, Los Angeles;

CATW – Coalition Against Trafficking in Women;

CETS – Council of Europe Treaty Series;

COE – Council of Europe;

CPTSD – Complex post-traumatic stress disorder;

CSW – commercial sex worker;

EWL – European Women's Lobby (Brussels);

EU – European Union;

EUROPAP – European Network for HIV/STD Prevention in Europe;

FROST'D – From Our Streets with Dignity, New York;

FSW – female sex worker;

GAATW – Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women;

HEUNI – European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control;

Human Rights Watch – one of the world's leading independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights;

LHRL – Lithuanian Human Rights League;

ILO – International Labour Organization;

IOM – International Organization for Migration;

LR – Republic of Lithuania;

Medecins sans Frontieres – an international, independent, medical humanitarian organisation that delivers emergency aid to people affected by armed conflict, epidemics, healthcare exclusion and natural or man-made disasters;

NGO – Non-governmental Organisation;

OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;

PACE – Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education, Vancouver, Canada

Nueva Era en Salud, Panama;

PD – Police department;

REACH OUT – Rights of Entertainers in Asia to Combat Human Oppression and Unjust Treatment, Hong Kong;
STV – Stichting Tegen Vrouwenhandel [Foundation against Trafficking in Women], a Dutch Foundation
TAMPEP – Transnational AIDS/STD Prevention among Migrant Prostitutes in Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and Austria;
TFP – Task Force on Prostitution, North America
TiP – Trafficking in Persons;
THB – Trafficking in Human Beings;
UNECE – The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;
UN.GIFT – United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking;
UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund;
UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime;
UN – United Nations;
UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
UNAIDS – the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS;
UNHCR – The United Nations Refugee Agency;
WHO – World Health Organization.

Lithuanian language (Lithuanian acronym)

IRD – Informacijos ir ryšių departamentas (Department of Informatics and Communications);
LR ATPK – Lietuvos Respublikos Administracinės teisės pažeidimų kodeksas (the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Lithuania);
LSDA – Lietuvos socialinių darbuotojų asociacija (Lithuanian Association of Social Workers);
LSDEK – Lietuvos Socialinių Darbuotojų Etikos Kodeksas (Lithuanian Social Workers Code of Ethics);
NPLC – Nusikalstamumo prevencijos Lietuvoje centras (Centre of Crime Prevention in Lithuania);
PD VRM VPPT – Policijos departamentas prie Vidaus reikalų ministerijos, Viešosios policijos Prevencijos tarnyba (The Police Department at the Ministry of Interior, Prevention Services of Public Police);
SADM – Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerija (Ministry of Social Security and Labour);
STI – Socialinių tyrimų institutas (The Institute of Social Research);
TMO – Tarptautinė migracijos organizacija (International Organisation of Migration);
TŽŽ – Tarptautinių žodžių žodynas (International Words Dictionary);
VŽ – Valstybės Žinios (Official Gazette);
VRM – Vidaus reikalų ministerija (the Ministry of Interior);

Note: *Child* – The terms child refer to any person under 18 years of age.