

Mavis

Johannesburg

*I'm part of a study about Apartheid, about ordinary people, like you, and others, who weren't in the TRC, people who lived their lives through Apartheid, and experienced it. We don't want to lose the stories of peoples experiences. A lot of people seem to want to move on, and almost pretend that it didn't happen, but it did happen and it wasn't easy. That this the overarching reason, the big reason why I'm having these interviews. I'd like to know an experience of yours, from when you first experienced Apartheid racism, where you were given the message that someone was racist towards you.*

Must I tell you about something from my culture, what I must talk about with you?

*No, your personal experience, something that happened to you as a child or as an adult, that was your first experience of realizing what Apartheid meant. Like someone treating you badly in a racist way.*

Like maybe....

***Think back to when you were young***

When I was younger, I never grow with my Mum. I never know my Mummy. I think I was 12 years when I know my Mummy.

***So you were already 12 when you met your mother?***

So I just hear that I got my mother, I didn't know what she look like. I was staying with my Granny, my grandmother for my Mummy

***Your mother's grandmother?***

Ja, Ja. She was growing me up. I wasn't have got a dress. You know, when I was grow up, every December, you know a long time ago we was buy the mielie meal with that white material?

***Yes***

Ja, and that material, every year, I must put it in the pot, and put in the water and the soap in it, you can take out all the colour like that, and she make me a dress, my grandmother, every year.

In the middle of the year I was just wearing, you know that Zulu thing that they are making with the...

***The animal skin?***

No the cotton thing with beads on the bottom, it just this little thing on the bottom, and the top, I was wearing nothing on the top.

After that, when I grow up, I grow up, ok, I met my Mummy, she's coming there. My grandmother she said, there's your Mum". I say "it's my Mummy this one" she say "yes, this is your Mummy". I say "you sure it's my Mummy". She say, "Yes, it's your Mummy". "I say ok, I'm glad to see my Mummy". But I never had the life like, you know, the life when you got your family, or your mother or your father. My father, I doesn't know who he was. I just hear, your father, his name, I forgot his name. But I never see him.

***Mmm ok.***

And I grow up there. And I think I was 13 years, you know. You know my grandmother she was staying there, my niece daughter, she's got the.. you know she got the thing, you know it's the thing..

There was a thing that make my heart sore, I never tell anyone because that time, it was a very scary time. It was difficult to say like that thing. That man, the other day, he bring for me, it was a little cake, but I can't remember what sort of cake. He said take this cake, and come, we come to go to the bathroom. And he sleep with me, that man, old man.

***Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.***

I say, "What you doing to me". He say, "No I'm just making you grow up. You mustn't tell anyone". I say ok

***That must have been very difficult for you.***

You know, it make me very sore in my heart, you know, I never, I doesn't know who I can tell. I haven't got sister, I hasn't got.... sister is near to me who I can tell. I hasn't got somebody who is close to me who I can tell. (tearful) I just keep quiet. I say ok.

***Ok***

And the next day, when he try to say "again now, I want you". I say "no, now I will tell my grandmother". Ok he know, he didn't do that for me again. But that thing you know, it gave me a sore thing.

Also, I doesn't like my child, because I've got one child, and she also die 2008. And she left for me one child, a daughter, and she has also got now a baby. My grandchild.

***Where were you Rose. I was in Memel, near the Vrystaat. I don't know if you know where that is.***

I do know where that is. Was it a rural area, where you grew up?

It was a farm, ja, it was a farm there. And I felt that, when I'm big, I don't know how old I was. Because I just left the school because I haven't got somebody to take me to school. I just went to grade 2, standard B, I left the school because nobody's to take me to school.

After that, my Mum's brother, he say I must come to him here in Ladysmith. I go to there to stay with him in Ladysmith. After that I say no, I must, better to find the little piece job, I can just work. I doesn't know how to work. But I'm lucky; I find the nice person what she can teach me. I never know Afrikaans, I never know English, I never know nothing.

***What language did you speak Mavis?***

I speak Zulu and Sotho

***Ok. And when you grow up?***

I grew up as a Zulu, but my proper language was a Sotho. But I'm growing up in a Zulu's place. Ok, when I find that lady, you know when she talk to me, when she say sometimes, go and hang the washing, she was talking to me, you know, like a deaf person. Like deaf people who doesn't talk. She say Rose, she put the washing there. She say go put the pegs on the line. She show me. But she was talking, she was talking Afrikaans.

***Ok, So that's how you learnt to speak Afrikaans***

Ja. She say, ok, Rose, gaan vat die vasgoed, gaan hang dit op die ... so so so so

Ok, I just take one, sometimes I tell her "I can't understand what you say. Just tell me again, I can just know if I want to talk to you what I must say". And she talk to me, she say, she tell me nice and slowly. "gaan vat hierdie vasgoed, gaan haal hom, as dis droeg, gaan haal hom af, en die, as...

And jy moet so maak. And I learn little bit little bit little bit. The first thing I learnt was Afrikaans.

***Were you about 12 or 13 then?***

No, I was 15 then. I grow up, I grow up,

***Did you know about Apartheid then.***

No, I didn't know nothing, I didn't know nothing.

And after that, I just know that I just find a job after I left that person who I was going to. I went to Natal, before that I was in Ladysmith.

And I grow up, I grow up, I grow up.

Ok, I'm old, I never married, nothing. I just grow up like this.

***So you didn't want to marry, or you just didn't meet someone?***

No, I didn't meet someone, a good one who can marry me. But now I say, after that I say, ok it's better that I stay like this because I see people who are married who have got a hard life. Because sometimes they divorce, sometimes the man he doesn't hold them nicely, you know, the man, he's fighting, he just give them the children, and he doesn't feed that children. I say, its better I can just stay like this. And after that I did have my little, that daughter, daughter that passed away.

***Shame, I'm sorry to hear that. What happened to your daughter. I'm sorry to hear she passed away.***

Aah, she was sick, she was sick, she was sick, she was sick. And I thought maybe she's got the Aids. When I look the results, it's not the Aids. I know, sometimes when she is coming with the paper, you know sometimes I can read, sometimes I can't understand what she say. I think she was sick for four years. And I know that she's gonna die.

***When was that Rose***

2004. I was working here then.

***So that must have been a hard time for you.***

Yes, it was a hard time. I took him to the Doctor; I took him to the witchdoctor. I try all the things. But those things they didn't help. And that daughter she has got a daughter who has got a little son now.

***And how old was your daughter when she died?***

She was 36.

**36.**

***Ja, so I imagine that that time was a difficult time. All those 4 years.***

Ja Ja you know. When.... she just die in front of my eyes. You know, I never, I can just say, I can make my heart sore. It's better to go, when you see, she is sick, she is sick. She can't get up. She can't do nothing. What what what force can I use. She can stay with me. I can see she trying hard to be better but she is not getting better.

***It wasn't helpful***

She is just dying in front of my eyes. I take her to the hospital there in Umlazi. And after that that Doctor she say, you know Mama, you can't leave her here, you know she is close now. She is just having a drip, we sleep there, she is just finished in the middle of the night. In the morning I just find a car who can take me home with her. That was a Thursday, and Friday, 9 o'clock, before 9 she is just make a haaaa haaa she is breathing hard, she can't breathe nicely. I can see she is on the way to go now. I'm just busy, keeping busy, for myself, but she is just lying there on the bed. Ok, I just call his friend, I say please just come with me here. I was just busy outside.

Her friend is just calling me, Gogo just come and look at her. She doesn't look for me good anymore. I go in there, I just see, she is just huuugggh, huuugggh. After that she is wanting to close her eyes but she is just looking at for me. After that I say, "please close your eyes". But she didn't close his eyes, ok, I just try to put like this (puts hand out and demonstrates how she gently put her hand over her daughters eyes). Then I make the warm cloth, with the warm water, like the nurse, she say when someone is dying and she never close her eyes, you just take the warm water, and close the eyes gently like this. (she gestures). And when she was still alive, when we was just talking, she was saying to me, Mummy, please, mustn't take for me, if, in case I'm getting die here at home". You know we was just joking and laughing. "You mustn't take me quick, you call me the undertake for me to come fetch me".

Ok, from 10 o'clock I leave him there on the bed. And I didn't even close the blanket, I just put the blanket like this (gestures). When I come in, I just look at it her, like live people you know. I just take it out, because our culture you must take out all the beddings, everything all the things, you must empty out that room. I just busy to take other thing, to put it out of the room. And at 3 o'clock I just go to the other lady and I ask her to go and call me for the undertake to come fetch her.

***So you gave her some time, like she asked you.***

Ja, like she, like she say, told me. It was half past four to five undertake they come. But that time when she go, I can see her leg, he put his takkie on. It's that time I feel sad, when I see her. Real, now she has gone.

***Ja, that's very very hard to watch***

But I say, "God, just help me. What I must do"? I called, if I stay here, I haven't got someone to or give me the money, if I'm staying here with him. I haven't got anyone who must give it to me.

***Mmm***

Ja I must just, ok, God if you take it, ok, I will just do everything, I will just bury him, do everything. I will just look after his daughter.

***Is that what you did, you looked after her daughter?***

Ja, I'm looking after his daughter. But his daughter, she is naughty, she is getting a little baby.

***Mavis, just going back to Apartheid, I'm just wondering if you can remember anything about your life, when you first knew about Apartheid? When you first understood about Apartheid***

Ah Ah, I can't remember anything about Apartheid.

***You can't really remember. Do you remember what you felt when Mandela came in, when the Government changed, do you remember how you felt then?***

Ja, that time, when Mandela took, comes start. I never know what's gonna be happening. I see the people is happy. Ok, now the black person is gonna be president. Maybe we can be free. But know, from the, before, um, Mandela is come, when I start to work by those people. You can sit on the couch, you can't eat with them, with the white's peoples plate or cup or anything.

I remember other day, I was working for that lady, it was a piece job, I wasn't staying there. She was got the..., you know, the jam tin,

***Mmm, I do know what you mean.***

You know also the plate, the tin plate.

***Yes***

And she was keeping them outside out by the tap. It was the first day I was coming to work there. And that lady she said to me I must get changed and she will make me tea and breakfast. She said I must go fetch the cup and plate. I say "outside"? She say "yes, it's a tin there, and there's a plate there outside".

I thought that was the dog's plate, you know. Ok, so I go to fetch the plate, I rinsed it there under by the tap there, and I go and put it by the sink. She put the tea there in the tin, and she give me a piece of bread, on the plate and said I must go and sit there outside on the grass and eat.

***It sounds like you were quite shocked by that?***

Yes, it didn't feel nice for me, you know the thing was that she made me very sore, and other day, because she didn't tell me, you mustn't wash your things inside, in my sink. You must just wash it outside. When you finished you must wash it outside and leave it there. You must not bring it inside my house. Ok, other day I take that plate and that cup when I'm finished. I put it in the sink and I was going to wash it when I wash the other plates.

She comes in and sees it there. Yooooohooo. She told me "what you think what you are. Why you come and wash your bloody thing in here. Your things must stay outside. You mustn't come and wash your things in my house". I say "I'm sorry, I didn't know that. I thought maybe it could stay in your kitchen. I didn't know that I also mustn't wash it in your sink".

That cloth that I was washing it with, she threw away. She said I must wash her sink with steel wool, because I washed my plate in her sink.

***Ooh***

That thing, it make me shocked. When Mandela was starting to be President, I say Ok. In my heart, I thought maybe it would be better. Because you know he can see. Other people, the white people, they are good for the black people. But other one is not good.

***Yes, what happened to you is an example of some very strange beliefs.***

Ok, when Mandela was coming to be President, ok, we vote for him. Ok, I see all the things that he change. Now we can sit on the couch, I can take the blanket on the couch, like when I baby sit, I can sleep on the couch with the blanket. Never could I do that before time.

***So things did change a lot in your view.***

Ja. And after that, eh, the last lady I work for in Durban, not the one I worked for, for 21 years, this other one I worked for, for 8 years. And that lady that time she say, Mavis, now you just look like my Mummy now. That bad thing is over now. That lady was good for me. She wasn't like the other lady. I can't say a bad thing about her. She was very good for me. When Mandela come, now she has seen that we are free now, and she see that and she tell me.

***That's nice.***

***Mavis the other thing I want to ask you about was when your child was young, your daughter. How was that for you? I understand that when she was young you had to leave her, and move away to work.***

Now, you know when I was, when my child was young. The father for my child had plenty girlfriends. And I get my child, and his father he didn't come to see his child. I did write him, that time we wasn't got the cell phone or nothing, we must go to the tickie box. I write him a letter, I say ok, I got the baby. If you want to come see it you can come. But God he give me the hands, I will support my child, till when she grow up. And for real, God he give me the hands and he give me the brain. Before I born that child, I just buy blanket and things for the child.

When I born my little daughter, I just look after her myself. Also just like me, my child she didn't know her father. Still when she is grown up, she ask me when she is grown up, "Mum, where's my father"? I say, "Your father he was from Zululand, near Mandini, but I doesn't know where, he was just telling me". He was working in Ladysmith, and staying in a hostel. I never went to his farm or knew his family. I didn't know if he got a wife there or not.

***You didn't know much about him (paraphrasing)***

***And then when your little girl was small, your daughter. What was her name?***

Lungi

So when Lungi was small, did you have to leave her with someone, or did she stay with you? No, I grow her up till she was, she was also... I can't remember. She was growing up, ag, she was staying with me. I was just going to do the piece job and I come eh by my Mummies brother to stay there. When she was grow up, and after that, ok, my mother she write to me the letter. She say, Ok, you can bring the child to me if you see you see now you can't stay with her now. She is too much, much trouble. Because I'm leaving her with other people, now when I come, I'm getting the trouble. I say ok Mummy, I'll bring her end of the month.

You know, the first time I was starting to work, no, it was the third time I was starting to work. You know how much I was getting? It was the one I worked for, for 21 years. It was R10 per month.

***Ooh, it must have been so difficult.***

You know, everything was different, that time was different,

***Yes, everything was different***

You know, that time, it was a very good time, everything was cheap, the brown bread was 4c, the white half brown was 5c. You know, that time it was cheap.

***It was very different***

Ja ok, my daughter, I took her to my Mum. My Mum was also working, in a kitchen in Vrystaad.

***How did you feel about taking your daughter, Lungi to your Mum?***

I feel sorry, but I thought maybe she is going by my Mum, you know, its, its better.

***Right***

Ja, Ja. I was feel, how to know to miss my daughter. You know, because I know I stay with him. But my Mum she say I must bring my daughter, I just happy, no I just think, its me when I was small, if my Mum she can tell me, ok, come to me, if she was me when I was small. When she say I must bring my little girl to him I was just feel happy inside my heart. And I can't just also blame too, why she didn't eh eh, take me, because she was also have a bad time that time, because she was also got other children, for a different father you know. Ja Ja. She was hard to say to me, I must come to stay with her because she didn't stay the one place you know.

***Ok***

Ja, Ja

***So you were sad when you took your daughter?***

I was very sad, I was very sad. But what I can do. Because I, nobody, can now, wife of my uncle, she was a funny woman you know. She was strict, doesn't, you know, want to stay with my child. You know she



say my child is very very stubborn. I say no, it's better my Mum says I must bring it there. Its better you know.

***How did you manage to deal with the separation? How did you think about it, of having to take her.***

I make sense, you know, I think, ok, what I can do? What I can do.? I can't do nothing.

***So you felt it was your only option?***

Yes, I just think, ok, its fine. Eh, I can just leave my child, but I will just, in my heart, I will think when I come home like you know, I will see the toy, I'll be thinking about him, oh, it's my child. But I felt for my child, she was out for my brain. I just know that every month I go to there, to give to her, to buy for her, sheets and clothes. And I give them the food, mielie meal, sugar

So you went every month. And where were you working then In Ladysmith

***And how did your child cope? How did Lungi cope with that?***

You know, she was also, when she was getting big, my other sister, she was also got the children, you know we Mums, we can't like all the children the children for your daughter or your son. You know this one you like, this one you love, this one you love, but not like the other one. You see what I mean?

When she is growing up, she is saying to me, sometimes when I come there. She say to me when sometimes I come there. You know my Gran she's eh, eh, smack me, she say, you know the children sometimes she's make the weezel, still when she's grown up, she doesn't stop. Especially for the black one. You know sometimes the other one, that is 9 years or 10 years, still make a wee in the bed when she sleep. Now my grandmum, she says she's hitting me, she say I mustn't sleep in the bed anymore. She said she must sleep on the bag, you make the mielie meal in. Because she is making the wee. I was feeling sad that time, but when she was getting that time she was getting the period, when she is starting to get the period she doesn't know what to do. My Mum she doesn't also show him, she say she is naughty. And after that I feel sorry, I say ok. That time I was at, where was I at? That time I was in Durban, ja I was now in Durban. And I was gardening, because that lady I was working for him the 21 years, I move with them in Durban

***Ok***

Ok I say, that lady was making for me a little house, it was a two room. Ok I say, Ok she can come now, but I must look somebody she can stay with him there in my little two room, and I can just go there on the weekends. I can go visit there. You know I doesn't feel nice when I see, I hear when she told me my Mum she is not nice for him. She's nice for the other sister's children, but for him she's not nice. I took him; she's coming there to me. Ok, I put him in school, because now she was go to school but she didn't like the school.

***She didn't like school?***

Ah Ah, she was not? She was naughty.

***Ok, what do you think the problem might have been, why she was naughty?***

I don't know, maybe she was from my Mummy, maybe she was thinking about her granny. I don't know. I was thinking maybe she was confused by his granny. Now she think all the things the same.

***Ok***

Ja ja

***So did she struggle to finish school then?***

She didn't finish it, she didn't finish it. No. She just stop by standard 5.

***Ok. And then did she work, or how did her life work after that?***

No, she wasn't work. And after that she stay long time, long time she wasn't working, she was just stay by my house. Now that time she was getting big. She was find a boyfriend. She was married for him. You know our culture, she must bring the cows

***Yes***

But the first time she must bring must bring, the eh like, I can say, I want the big dish, and the big pot with the three legs, and the eh, a long apron. You know I can say that is for me, that is for my Mum, that is for my sister, that is for my cousin. And she did bring all that thing, that boyfriend. And after she bring the two cows.

***Ok***

And after that she is stop. No, she is doing the funny thing for him. She's got other girlfriend, she's doing that and that. And my daughter she is just left him. But she has already given birth to this baby, Zama.

***SO she had the baby first, she was pregnant.***

Ja, she was the first time to be pregnant with Zama.

Ok, I say ok, ok, what I can do?

***Mm, I see. So she stayed with you while she was pregnant?***

Ja, she was always stay there by my house. She was helping me. I was just always there by the work, I never stay at my home, I was always working.

***She was staying in the two roomed house?***

Ja, she was staying there by the two room when she get Zama. When she was born, she was also stay there with Zama at the house. As Zama grew up, she was always there

***She was always with Zama when she was little?***

Ja,

She was working for another lady and then she left the work for that lady. And I say to her she must get the work. I can't pay for you; she wasn't paying for the rent. I say that I'm looking after for Zama.

***I'm going back to Lungi now, when she was little***

No, there was no one. No people was close with them because... I remember the other day, I was there my friend when I go to the church. She say to me why I don't bring Lungi to her.

I say "My friend, I wasn't to bring her to you, but my Mum, she will be cross. She will come and visit and she will find Lungi here and she will be cross".

She say "OK".

I say she will grow up, she may be like me, I didn't grow up nicely with my mother and my father. I grow just up with other people. Maybe your brain, sometimes see you mess up all the things. If you try to think the good things, if you think about the bad things, you think, you doesn't know what you must do.

***You saying that thinking back to the bad things of your own childhood would be too bad.***

***How long did Lungi stay with your Mom for***

I can't remember... I can't remember... I can't remember... maybe 8 years

***She left your mother sometime about when she was 15. I think she was 12 that time.***

Ooh, long sigh

***When Lungi was with your Mother, how often did you get to see her?***

Yes I go every month, sometimes if I didn't go I just send the money. She is making pap and mielie meal, she makes that every day. I send money for the food.

She used to eat pumpkin too, sometimes if she hasn't got the food there, you doesn't eat the meat every day, you doesn't eat the food that's got the fat, sometimes you just eat the pap, you take the sugar and you put there, you take the milk and you put there, and you eat.

That time it was a good time. That time we wasn't so sick. Now we are sick because we eat now the oil, lots of oil, sugar, everything. You remember that fat for the cows, that thing that was long like this.

Inside there we was just take it, we just take it and cook the morogo, we just cook it, the morogo, we was eating that cows fat.

And you know what is making us sick is this cooking oil. That's why we have got arthritis, we have got this, we have got this.

***And when you would go and see Lungi when se was with your mother. How would she be.***

She was very happy when she was seeing me, but sometimes when we take the bucket to get the water, we got down there by the gate, we put the bucket on our head and go through the fence. Sometimes she go with me and she tell me " Mummy you know what, sometimes when you not here she will hit me with a sjambok, she think that I will tell you the thing she does to me when you are not here".

You know, I doesn't want to make myself sore, I just doesn't want to make myself sore. I doesn't understand the thing.

I doesn't want her to see me upset, I just say, "no you will just grow up, also me, I just grow up like this.

***Mm***

Ja, I was just tell her, I just grow like this. You will also grow up, she give you the brain. Your brain you must work your brain like me. If I was soft I wasn't going to grow up. If I was soft I wasn't going to grow up

I try to learn to talk, I try to learn to work, you know, all the things, I must just think, how I do it. I'm old now. I'm grown up, I now have a grandchild now.

***Well thank you very much for telling me the story. I wanted to hear about how it was for you. When you were growing up, you had the same thing.***

Yes, it wasn't the nice days

I can say, thanks god, I'm still alive, I'm still looking after my grandchild

***What is your grandchild's name?***

Sipho

He is one year and 4 months

Laughs

***And where about are Zama and Sipho staying now?***

They are staying my little house in Umlazi

**How often do you go to KZN.**

I go sometimes, I went in Easter.

You make me open my heart, the story when I was young; I never tell anyone that story. I thank you for letting me tell about that thing?

***Do you think it is going to worry you***

No, sometimes I think, sometimes I hear by the radio, if someone is raping girls. I heard about a teacher that is raping children at the school. I think about that thing, how can a teacher do this thing? You teach the child. How can he do this? What is he going to learn this child?

What he will learn, after she is finished the school, she doesn't know nothing, she just know that teacher, that thing that he did to her. She will never think about the books.

5607 words

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**Tebogo, 46, Johannesburg**

My first born, if I can't forget, I was 19 or 20, and I didn't know what is going on in the life. You know the people, when you grow up, Black people, they are not telling you about what happens when you have a baby, what's going on in your life. And later, when I'm pregnant, I was nervous, I had my baby. I remember when after I had my baby my mother she said to me, now there's no father, and me, I'm not working, what are you going to do? Now its better you sister she come to you, to fetch you, and you must go to look for a job. And I was shocked, now what I'm going to do with this baby, and I asked her, Mum, what about this baby? No the baby's with me, I'm going to look after her"

Ok, we carry on later and then my sister she comes. That time my daughter was 10 months old, and after that my sister when she comes she tell me "No, you have to come with me to Joburg", and I said to her "I can't come with the baby"? My sister said to me "No, the government, you not allowed to bring the baby, cos they are complaining that when you bring the little kids, they are not allowed to mix with their kids, they got a sickness, like maybe they don't want them must to play together like that". And I was so sad, cos it was the first time to see that little daughter for me, it was so nice, and the day when I leave, you can't believe, I was crying.

***I'm sure***

And I find the job in----- and I tell that woman, please I have the little baby, and can I bring her to come here. She said to me "No, you going to look after my baby, how you going to look my baby, my kids and then you have you have your baby. I think you better leave your baby at home. And I said please she is ten months, baby, here the little babies are not allowed to come here. And I was so sad, and I keep asking. I ask her Jan, can I just have your permission to talk to you. My daughter she is at home, she is my first born. She said to me, you know what, black babies, they got the sickness, we don't want them here. They are not allowed to mix with our kids.

And you know, because I didn't go to school, I didn't know nothing too much, what going on. And I was so shocked, and I keep asking, to say alright, I can understand what you say but my little ---, she's well and she is with my mother. And you see what is the problem, I can't phone them, I can't do nothing. And that time we were working for Monday to Saturday. It was no off, you just go home Christmas or Easter. They day when I go home, you can't believe, my daughter she was 1 yr and 3months. When I got to see her, she was already walking. To write a letter, I write a letter, to put it in the post it must go home. How many time it takes to get there.

I write a letter, its taking a long time to get there, and a long time to come back to me. They are just telling me, your baby she is like that, like that, she is growing up, are you happy there.

No I'm not happy, I don't know what's going on with my baby.

***It's so hard***

But later it was Easter, that lady to say you know what she say to me you know what, yes you can go but don't bring that baby of yours here.

I did go back home, she was already big, she was already big. She was then already 1 year and 3 months. You can go for a weekend, and later I say to them, Ok, I think leave there, because that lady she don't like I'm going home to see my baby with her granny.

***They were close to your Mom,***

Yes, No they were very close to my Mom, really

***Were you happy with the way your Mom looked after your children?***

No, I was happy the way she was looking after them, but you know what, it is hard for you when you call your baby, to come and sit with you, and you say give me a hug, and they just look to you like you are a visitor, they don't know you. And I just say, ok, maybe me also, because I did grow up with my mother's sister, maybe I was doing the same.

***Are you still close to your mother's sister?***

No, we are still close. Cos my mother, she passed away in 2000, and we are still close with her, cos we are not staying far. We just greet her, until now, it's like it's our mother, but we taking her like a granny and our mother, we did take ok, this is our mother, this is our granny. Even now, when we have a problem we phone her, to tell her this this and this. But it's the way we did grow up, she was good for us. We and she did, all of us, we were 7 kids for our mother, but she did look after. She was kind. My mother she did come to bring the baby, and she go back to... she was working to this woman, since when I... she did work in Kimberly, with her last born, with her first born. Coughs

And until the end when she come back home. Coughs.

And really, you can see when you grow up, us also, we close with that woman. Coughs. Sometimes you back and you see, ok, she's mother, but that love, the most it's going to the person that you was staying with.

***Sure***

Cos you see like sometimes when they fight with her (aunty), I get pain, to say to him, you know what, if that woman she did look after us, it's that woman who was washing us, to giving us food when we go to school, even when we come back to school.

***She was your carer?***

And my mother, my kids, they did grow up the same, the way I did grow up. You can see that love, it was there. I was just like somebody, and

I don't know why it was supposed to happen like this, to separate a child with the mother.

***Do you think it had something to do with Apartheid?***

Ah, ok, there way they are saying, they say like that. But for me, when I start to see, why you see, with 87, the Apartheid it was still there

***Very much so***

They way people they did take me, and I start to think, no man. ok Apartheid is Apartheid, most people when you talk, like maybe you blame me, you can say, Ah it's the way the black people they do, ok I'm going to say, no it's the Apartheid that made me do

But why those people they didn't treat me like that? In 87 I'm talking about 87, not 93, when I have my baby boy it Thepiso, it was 93, with those people, but you can heare, she was changing, just to say to me, Tebogo, you can come back to work because I m not happy with your cousin. But, if you come here with your baby boy, you not, like you not staying here. You gonna do a piece work.

***Mm***

And I said ok, maybe I'm back there, she's not, she's... these other people they don't like people.

***Any people?***

Let's put Apartheid behind, little bit, let's see. OK, Apartheid is there, the others they use it. It's Apartheid

With this I don't like it

Like this woman she said to me, Pat, she say "I don't want to be in this country in 94, because I don't want a black president".

***Ok***

You can see where it's going. But in your house if you want people, if you don't want, maybe it's the Apartheid, maybe it's not, you don't like people, but when you say like those ones, they say to me, our government they don't want you bring the little kids, black kids in this place. You can hear it's the Apartheid. Because they got disease. I didn't know what disease they did have. So we not allowed to mix our kids with your black kids. Now there, it's Apartheid. You can hear somewhere someone talk, ok



there is Apartheid, that's not Apartheid, there's some men who don't like people, there are others who are using that words to say ok, we are not allowed to

Cos she tell me straight, our government they don't want black kids in this white country.

***That's going back quite a long way isn't it, it really is.***

They say like when you like Now I say to you, to Valdi we use everything, my kids they...., you know Valdi, even the blankets, where he sleeping, she give you the blanket, you can use this one. Even when I have visitors, she say to me, are you alright there, can someone come to sleep here (in the house) But you know the kids, they are just nervous, they just say no, we happy here.

It's going, ok it's there, it's not there. Even today, maybe the others if I say no, Apartheid its finished, the others they are going to say to me "you are joking, you don't know nothing". Maybe they are going to come with another story. You can hear no, there is Apartheid. But when you greet nicely, then... it's finished, really it's finished.

***It depends who you are dealing with***

No it, yes, but, it's finished. Because, really even with you, with the white people, we like them. But even when you can see, even the black people, the others, they have got Apartheid. Just maybe I'm walking to that person, she can do the same thing to see you, you know what, now they felt to change too.

I have a friend, you know that friend for me, she say you know what, I'm working here (but she's still a young). You know where I'm working, but now where I'm working, I'm not allowed to have the kids for this house. Before she was jumping, the place.

I was saying no, no, you can see, it's not, now I said her to her ok, now you think it's the Apartheid. She say "Yes". I say no, it's the Indians, it's not the Apartheid. They are thinking that you are going to steal stuff when they are not here. I say Apartheid, it's... we can see the way it's working. They are telling you straight, we don't like this because you work like this like this. But those, the Indians it's not for maybe, it they are just thinking you are going to steal when they are gone cos everything they keep it locked.

But she say to me, "Me, I was thinking maybe it's the Apartheid". I say ah, ah, it's not Apartheid. She's not sure what it is.

***She's not sure what it is.***

***Do you remember your first, the time you were first aware of Apartheid. An experience you had about racism***

Well I remember it was at home. But, ok we didn't take it, even there I didn't take it. When like the adult when they talk, that place where I'm staying, it was full of the white people. Afrikaans people. In our place, most of them, we grow up we speak Afrikaans.

**Oh**

English we learn here. Ok now its changing, cos now they are teaching English. But they were teaching mostly Afrikaans.

When they sit and they say you know what,. They did have the town, they call it Taaung, and they have a town, and it was mostly white people that own the shops. And I hear when my sisters Mum, she's talking with her husband, she say "you know what, that shop, they going to close it. There is a time when Mangope is going to coming to take the country". They say no, now Apartheid, its there. You can hear, these people, all white people, they are moving to other places. They are moving, they are running to go to Kimberly and Cape Town. When you sit and listen to adults, they say, no they have Apartheid. They are moving because they don't want a Black person that can control them. When you go to the shop, you can see the way they are control you. Before you didn't go in, you was standing behind here, but then when we stand on the queue, that white people they stand there. They send the kids to the shop, they stand that side, we going to that side, Black people. But later when they moved, Ok, we, we start to think, you know kids? We think they are leaving because they have Apartheid. They are leaving this place because Mangope is coming to con.. take this country.

**Oh...**

You know, Francie, even now, there is no White people in our place. All, they did go. There you can see it was Apartheid because they was saying, they are moving. This is the first time I was seeing it. Before I'm coming to do my work, domestic.

When I was a kid

**How old were you then**

I was 20.

But when I'm starting to be pregnant I was 19.

**Ok, so it was around the time you had your baby...**

Yes, It was 82 when I have my baby. There it was true, because even when you walking on the street, my sister she teach me, when I'm in Joburg she say don't walk on the street the way you want, because they gonna catch you.

**Mmm**

And you know, kids, when you still young, like to go go to.

**Yes, you like to go everywhere**

Sometimes I was going to the soccer, we like to watch Kaiser Chiefs in Orlando, we go with the other friends. She say to me, one thing when they catch you, I don't know who's going to take you out. But I say why they have to catch us, we didn't do nothing wrong. She say "no, its Apartheid, they don't want us to go the way we want here". I say "oh".

But always when you go you have to make sure where you are walking. And later when you come back, make sure before you go, they catch you on the street.

**It sounds like you noticed all these things about Apartheid, and they just never made any sense to you.**

No, I didn't take it too much seriously. Cos you see at school, when they are teaching you, telling you about the Apartheid, the teacher, I remember that woman she was teaching us, she was saying, but when you grow up, maybe you going to be lucky. She keeps saying "its going down". Its not like before. And you can hear the way my mother she is explaining, when she is sitting with us And you know, when you are kids, they are telling you something you ignore it. But I was notice, now its happening to me, with my baby girl. And I was starting to see, this is Apartheid, this is the way it is happening.

**Mmm**

And I was saying, why this is happening to me. And I have to leave my baby there, even when I ask, they are saying to me maybe my baby she's got the disease (stressed). And I ask..

**Yes, what sort of disease would that have been...**

And I keep saying "she's not sick" "NO". They say, "even when she's not sick, you Black people, you've got disease, and we are not allowed to mix our kids.

**It doesn't make any sense.**

There I was now to start to say "ok, its the Apartheid, like people they are telling us. But first when I sit at home, and even there, when we see the white kids when they are standing there at the bank, we didn't care, we were kids. When we see the White kids we stand and look, and we see that they go there, and we go there (here). And we didn't care, yes, we just think, us, we just think that that is the way the life is going.

**You didn't question it,**

No, we didn't question it. But sometimes when they talk, they are saying they are moving, they are moving there there there.

There was one lady we did like, her name was Rhona. When she see the Black kids, she gives us sweets. If they not sending me there, to her shop, I'm not happy!

Laughs.

She gives me sweeties. I think I'm going to have sweets, I don't care about Apartheid, us, she is giving us sweetie.

Us we did struggle. When I see me, the way we did struggle. I think of my mother, all her kids, all us kids, we did live with her sister. She was working in Kimberly. I remember we go and visit her there and we had to hide.

***It didn't make any sense.***

No it didn't.

Interview ended, participant took call and had to leave.

**Mahlodi**

**Northern Province**

***I am interested to know (thanks) about your memory of your first experience of apartheid?***

First of all, I would say, my name is G, I am from Tzaneen, in Limpopo. And My first experience was that , the place where I am from is a village, we had neighbours with the who are Tsonga people, we are the Bapedi's.

***Ok!***

We were neighbours with the Tsonga people, my first experience was that, when I grew up there was a place where the Tsonga people are staying, and then we were staying in our country, and there was a fence, a fence and then we were not allowed to go in the Tsonga place, if you were caught in the bush maybe hunting or picking up the wood for the fire, you were going to be taken to jail

***By the Tsonga people?***

Yes, by the Tsonga people

***Did the Tsonga people had their own jail?***

They were having their own jail in the rural areas, the village, with the chief or Induna. You were taken there and put in jail, and then your parents or family would have to come and pay a fine of R100 to realise you

***Even with children your children?***

Children like me when we were growing up, we were beaten when found there. We were not allowed to go in their village, in the place where they were staying because there was a huge fence. A huge fence so we were not allowed to go in their place(where they stay), so that's the first experience of apartheid. But now things are well, Tsonga's are staying with us, some of us are married to the Tsonga people, so now things are well enough

***So when did it change, when did the fence come down, and things changed?***

Actually the fence did not come down, it is cut off change, it was not cutted-down, but now it is free for everyone to go in their place (their village), and for them to come in our village. visit the village, and then to me back to our village

***Ok! And was it the Tsonga people rule that your people couldn't go in there, or was it an apartheid rule?***

It was in the apartheid rule because the work that we stay in are the ones who were the Afrikaans people. So They divided the country in villages, so that from here to there stays the Tsonga, and the Balobedo, or the Bapedi people stay this side, and that's why....

***So it was actually, an apartheid rule?***

Ok, I understand, so it was the apartheid rule to keep people separate

Yes

***And how old were you? You were born there in Tzaneen? and did you go out? how old were you when you left there?***

Yes (was born there). I left there from, actually I didn't live, I came here in Joburg for work. I live there from 1991 (Ok!), but everything was getting better and was okay, like now everything is okay (Yaah!)

***And can I ask you which year you were born?***

Actually, I'm born in 1968 (Okay!). But my ID says I'm born in 1970 because my parents were not at the kind of people who knew how to write or to do what . So we got the IDs at school (Oh!), and so when I came to check my ID, it was there where there was a law at our school, where people from home affairs came to our school and registered us for the IDs, so when I take that ID with the year , from 1970, the ID is written 1978.

***But you were born in 1968???***

Yes.

***And do you remember how you felt about the separation between the Tsonga people and the Bapedi people***

Actually it was a shame because you know in rural areas, a place where we stayed, we were not staying near a forest where we can go and fetch the wood to cook or do everything (Oh!), and the only thing for us was to go in the village in the forest

***So you had to go there, but you were not allowed to go there***

No, we were not allowed to go there, because they said we mustn't cut those wood and we mustn't fetch wood from their field

***Oh! So it made life quiet difficult for you?***

Yes life was quiet difficult, quiet difficult, very!

***So did your parents explain to you in a particular way, did your parents explain to you why because like, did they explain it was apartheid, what did they think about this?***

I think it was, they didn't explain anything to me because I think it was their knowledge when they even grew up they knew that they were not allowed (even them they were not allowed) to go to their place, the village. So we grew up knowing that we mustn't go there. If we were caught in there, we knew if we go there and we were caught we would go to jail.

***So you were beaten?***

We the children we were not taken to jail, we were just beaten and left alone, but the big men were taken to jail because they said those men were taking their animals, so they were taken to jail.

***It didn't matter if you were boy or girl, you were still beaten? (Shooo!)***

Yes (you were still beaten).

***..And is there something that happened to you?***

No! I remember one day when we go there, we went there to fetch some food, so I was with my friends and when we go there someone came with a shambook, he came and said we must go out of here, so we were children and we left.

***So you were quiet quick to respond, so you never get caught?***

Yes, we never get caught. But some of my friends, some of our neighbours were caught. (Shoo!). Even some who were, they were the men who do the (what can I say?) who do the forest (forestry workers?) yes, they were the men who, our people (men) were the ones who do the circumcision, the Tsonga people did not know how to do the circumcision.

***So there were bigger boys who do the ritual circumcision when they are teenagers?***

At our place they don't only do the bigger boys, they do the children from 12 years up wards (Okay!). So if you would go there from 12 years it's allowed to go there. The Tsonga people didn't know how to do the circumcision, it was us.

***So you were the experts, your people?***

Yes, but from 19??, actually things came right from 1994 because even the Tsonga people were coming to our areas to do circumcision (Okay!), yes, so they came to our areas.

***So things changed then?***

Yes, things changed

***That's nice, so then you say the Pedi and Tsonga people are marrying each other, and joining together?***

Yes, (giggling)

***So how is, are people much happier now? It works now***

Yes, they are much happier, they are happy

***And your family, are they still in Tzaneen?***

Yes, but my dad, my father died 2007

***Oh! I am sorry to hear that***

***What happened to your dad?***

He was having a cancer (Oh, sorry!), and my mom actually in our family of my mom and dad we are 10, they gave birth to 10 children, 7 girls and 3 boys.

***And where are you in the 10 children?***

My sister, I am the second one, my sister was born in 1964, then 1968 my sister, then my fourth brother 1972, the other one 1975, My sister Miriam 1976, so, until the last born of 1991

***So, (1991) that's the year that you left Tzaneen and came to Joburg to work?***

Yaah! (Yes), we were very poor then, there was no money to take us to school because my dad was not working

***Okay, so did you go to school at all, or did you miss school***

I missed school in grade 10.

***So you went until grade 10?***

Yes...

***And the decision that you made to come to Joburg you said it's because of work, and did you come on your own?***

I came with my uncle, my mother's brother. He is the one who took me here, and from there I found my sister in Joburg (who comes after me), and then he found the job

***So, now how many of your sisters are here working***

It's my sister Emily, my sister Elsie, my sister Miriam, and me

***So, it's four girls?***

Yes, four girls, and two boys

***You are all in Joburg?***



Yes

***And do you see each other more often?***

Yes, it's like we stay, it's like I stay here and my sister stay somewhere there, and the other one there (giggle)

***And where do you stay?***

At Ivory park, next to the station.

***Oh! Okay***

***And then I want to ask you about your children as well, the situation about your children because you said you, one of the things I'm interested in is about your children, were you separated from your children? Tell me about your children.***

I have got 4 children, and then the 1<sup>st</sup> one was born in 1986, and the second born is a girl 1989, and then the 3<sup>rd</sup> one is a boy 1998, and the last born 2005. So the two were staying with their father until last year June. Last year after finishing matric, I took the first one, is staying here with me, but the other three I left them, because the 2<sup>nd</sup> born is, after getting pregnant, the father said you must go and stay with your mother, I can't support you and your child, so you must go and stay with your mother. She came to my place in Tzaneen, from the other village to my village and she stays, and that's where I took the other two children to stay there.

***So, they are?***

They are at Tzaneen

***Okay!***

Yes.

***And here in Joburg you only got the big one?***

Yes, I have the big one with me, so that I can struggle to them to college.

***Okay. And when you left them with their father, tell me about that period, what was happening?***

It was after, you know our people (black people), after getting pregnant, actually after living school and then I have to go to the farmers to the company called Mapikwe, in Magoebaskloof in Tzaneen. So I had to go there and work, and from there I got involved with the other guy, his name is Joseph and he got me pregnant, and my dad said I do not want many children here, I have got my one, so you have to do your own things because you are now a woman, I can't support you with your child, so you have to go with your husband. You must go and stay with him with the child, that's where I told the man, and he took me, we stayed together.

***How was that for you, when your father said you must go? Were you...***

It was difficult for me, but I can say it's a law because with us the black people, if a boy gets you pregnant they have to fetch the neighbours, or someone they trust to take you (the girl) to the boys house (to the parents) to tell them that you are pregnant with their child's baby, how does he respond. If he is naughty, then he can say no I don't know her, she was staying with this one or that one or that (Okay!). But if he is honest and his parents, then he would say it is me. They will say it's my wife and we will see where we go. I was still young at that time; I was 18 to 19 years old. So I stayed there, it was in 1985 when I got pregnant (Yaah!), then I stayed there in 1985. It was in 1986 early in March, April, so I stayed there until 15<sup>th</sup> of November and stayed with my 1<sup>st</sup> born child. Then it as 1986, 1987, 1988 I was pregnant with the 2<sup>nd</sup> one and at that time there were no, at our clinics there were no prevention tablets, that's why, even if they gave you a prevention needle or tablet after you had a first born child where you were not asked if they can give you an injection. They would just give you

***Ok, you were injected?***

Yaah, you were given the injection for the pains, after giving birth, and then you were given the prevention injection

***You were not asked?***

No (giggle) not asked, so in 1986 November after giving birth to my second child I was given this injection, and a small card to a clinic with when I take the child to the clinic so that I can get another one(Okay!). I made a mistake with my friend, you know with the girls if you are a group. My friend said since they gave me the injection I can't see any period, I can't do anything, so they said you must use the injection for two months so you can get the period, and then after that you can go back and get the injection. So I didn't ask, actually I never had an idea that those things were only happening to my friend, maybe they won't happen to me, that's where I left the injection (Okay!), and then in left the injection in 1988, from there, it was 1988 August, September I also got pregnant and I was not seeing my every month period, so I got pregnant without seeing any period, and I hear the baby going around the stomach, after that I go to the clinic and get checked, I was pregnant with the second child (right!) until 1989 the 9<sup>th</sup> of August I gave birth to her. So I stayed there with my boyfriend until 1991, I said things are not going well, I am going to be a granny with many children, what am I going to do, I don't have money, and also this man does not have money, he is working on the farms and we use to suffer.

***You were struggling?***

Yes we were struggling, I said no, and that's the way I made mistakes, and then I was staying in a house at home, and he was staying at the farms with some other girls, I got angry, packed my things and left.

***And you left the children there?***

Yes, I left them. He said to me I must live his children and go alone.

***And who did the children stay with***

They were staying with his mother (Okay!)

***And how were they when you left?***

(Sigh...) the 1<sup>st</sup> born was 5-6 years, the 2<sup>nd</sup> born was 2 – 3 years. It was so painful

***It was painful when you left them?***

Yes, it was like if I don't want to live those children, then I want to suffer because I was not getting any food. He was not buying anything to eat, because he does not love me anymore.

***And the children, did they get any food?***

Yes the children got food because his father was still alive at that time. He died in 1991. His father was still alive so every month when he was getting pension money he was buying mealie-meal for his mother and then the children were supported with the food bought by his father

***But you never got food, from that food?***

No! (Okay) I said no I have to go and work for myself now. That's how it came. When I got home my uncle was there, he was working at Isando, at Blue Ribbon Bakery (Okay!), so when I got home my uncle was there, I told him that I want a job in Joburg. He said no you can't work, you can't work in Joburg, they are going to kill you there. Then I said if I have got a place to stay, then I will work for myself and then he said wait I'm coming next week. The following week he came and he came home and told my mother. He did not find me I was at the worship centre, he told my mother that tell G that tomorrow, I'm leaving with her, we are going to Joburg. I was so excited (giggle). I remember then I couldn't sleep, I was so happy to go to Joburg, even in my journey to come here I never slept (laughter). I couldn't sleep. I wanted to see everything, all the lights on the street, so my uncle brought me here and put me in Natalspruit in Katlehong (***Katlehong, I know that area***). Most of the people are there, and the Sothos from Lesotho are there

***That was 1991? It took time***

That was 1991, yes

***The 1990s had lots of riots, 1994s 1995s.***

Yes, when the Inkatha people were killing people there

***There was a lot of violence there. And you were still there then?***

Yes, my uncle took me to Katlehong to a house, it was a house, and the owner of the house was a man who was having a shop. He was having a big room like a garage, he was selling food, it was like a supermarket, then we were working there.

***You worked in the supermarket***

Yes, I worked there in the supermarket in 1991 August, September, October, November. When I go home December 1991, the wife of that man I asked me to bring a friend with me when coming back

***Oh! I see. The Katlehong shop owner asked you to bring a friend?***

Yes, to bring my friend to work. So when I go home, I got my friend, we came along. My uncle gave us a lift so we came and we worked in 1992 from January until March when one day the wife of that man didn't understand us.

***Didn't understand you and your friend?***

She didn't understand my friend. She was like I can say she was jealous because she was thinking my friend is taking her husband (Okay!). So she said she don't want my friend, she wants my friend to go home. I said if you don't want my friend, it means you don't like me. We got out of the house and we looked for a place to rent and went to other shops to look for a job and then we worked there until one day when we went home in 1992 Easter holidays. We found someone, our friend again, she was staying in Tembisa, she said I want you guys to come in Tembisa and look for a job there (Okay!). When we came back we went to Katlehong and took out things and came to stay with our friend in Tembisa. We stayed there until my friend Mavis (who was not working like me as a domestic worker), she buys fruits and vegetables and sell them. That's where we were having life, until I got this job here in 1993 October.

***You've been here since then?***

Yes! (giggle) yes

***It's been a long time***

Yes, they are just my parents

***So I supposed Christine must have been a little girl?***

Christine was, I can't remember her age, but he was still at primary, and Lauren the second born was 2 – 3 years. So, its been long

***Just going back to your children now, because you left the first born and the second born with your ex-husband's mother. How often did you see them, your children?***

The one I left, I'm going there every month and (Okay)

***And how is it when you see those children***

They are happy and, and happy

***They didn't seem to be upset when you left them again?***

When sometimes, sometimes it's like, when they want to come with me, I ask them you want to go with me, it's cold, and I'm going to wake you up at 6 o'clock and take you to pre-school, and I must be out of the house at 6. And they say no, it's okay, I will stay

***The second boy is a girl, hey?***

The second born is a girl, and the first born is a boy (Okay!). Actually those 4 children of mine, 3 are boys and one is a girl.

***So, the first two, what are their names, the 1st born?***

The 1<sup>st</sup> born is Leslie, the 2<sup>nd</sup> one is Sharon.

***And so they were young children when you left them, but you see them every month?***

Yes, I go there every month to see them, until their father gets another woman to stay there, so she was staying with them until they finished matric. The 1<sup>st</sup> born finished matric, but they didn't pass well, so he registered to rewrite the exam.

***And the other woman that their father got that looked after them, was she his wife as well?***

Yes.

***And how was that, that the 2nd wife was looking after your children?***

I don't know because I was not there, but there were rumours that if you can stay together she will live you. Other people were telling me when I go to see them, their granny would tell me "You know, this wife of your ex-husband, I don't like the way she treats children, sometimes when they come from school, she didn't cook, she doesn't want to cook. And when they ask, those children were taught to say mom to say mom to that lady. When they ask mom where is the food, she says you can go and call G to cook for you, I'm not G" see, things like that (giggle)

***How did that feel, how did they respond to that?***

They can't respond, it was sometimes, it often happens until their granny decided to buy bread for them. You know old grannies can, and sometimes when given bread does not eat it, but folds for the kids when they come back to school

***So she does look after them?***

Yes,

***Do you still see her, his mother?***

Yes, I still go there and sometimes when I go there in Easter holidays I buy her something, if not bought anything I send the children because now they are grown. I give them money to give to granny to buy cold-drink (Okay!).

***So you still send her presents, money and things?***

Yes, even that man, now I don't know where he is because he is grown up, he doesn't shout like before when I was going to see my children. He was sometimes shouting saying want do you want here, because you left, then I would say I came to see my children, I can't live without my children. He would say you left those children, and I would ask who said I must live the children. He would say don't come here, I don't want to see you, then I would say I have to come and see my children.

***So he didn't want you there?***

Yes, now he is cool, and they are like my family now, because now, even that lady the second wife is now having 6 children after me (her own) plus two, the one she came with. She has 8 children. So now when I go there I'm like a family, even that girl I'm like a family to her. Even that lady, I'm like a mother. She suffers; I think I was better than her

***In what way is she suffering?***

Is like, that man, our husband, he doesn't look after her

***Also doesn't give her money, food or anything?***

Yes, he is giving her food, he only buys mealie-meal, and only the washing soap only, then he is finished. But she is lucky because now a days she is getting the child grant.

***And then your other two children, tell me about them, the 3rd and 4th born?***

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> born I was staying with them here until I decided to take them home last year December.

***Is that the same father?***

No, different father, (a Joburg father?), yes, he is from Bushbuckridge

***Okay, did you know him then, or did you meet him here?***

Yes, I met him here (okay), but now he is staying in Mpumulanga, we bought a house in Mpumulanga, he stays there (okay!)

***That's nice, so you bought a house there, so you also stay in Joburg, in Ivory park?***

Yes,

***Tell me about when was the 3rd and the 4th children born?***

The 3<sup>rd</sup> child, actually before getting pregnant with the 3<sup>rd</sup> born, after I suffered from those two, I told myself I don't want to have other children. That was my decision that I no longer wanted other kids. I want to stay, so the problems came. I was using an injection, so since I got the 2<sup>nd</sup> born in 1989 August 9. So it was 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993 until 1997 without having periods, so I told myself that maybe I won't have children anymore. So I decided to leave the injection because I can't see periods, I can't do anything, I know if this injection has been used for seven years in me, then maybe I won't have children. And then I left it in 1997 in May, so I didn't go back to take another injection. It was June, July, then August I got pregnant, without seeing period.

***Were you shocked? Did you feel right***

Yes (giggles), I was not feeling right because I thought I was getting the after effects of the injection because I was eating, it ought maybe because I used it for 7 years if I leave it, maybe I will stay another 7 years without a child. Then I asked the doctors that I just left the injection for 3 months and then I get pregnant, without even seeing my period.

***So your period did not come back and you got pregnant.***

Pregnant again, yes, that was that

***And another nine months without period?***

Yes (giggles), so I said no I don't want a baby, my friend said you can do abortion? I said no.

***So, you didn't want to do that?***

No, but I was convinced to do it, and I phoned my mother at home. It was, there were some cellphones, that's when cellphones started. I phoned next door and asked to speak to my mom, and when I asked her she said no don't do abortion, just bring the baby here. And because that baby is gonna grow like others, like you, because you also grew in a poor family, just bring the baby here. I said its okay, so I gave birth on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 1998.

***And that was a boy or girl?***

It was a boy. My mother said, she phoned me, and she wanted to see the baby, she wasn't sure, she thought maybe I will throw away the baby because I was worried. She thought maybe I will give the baby to someone else, I said no I won't do that. She said I must bring the baby home, and I took the bay home (Okay!), but I waited there for nine months. I gave in 1998, February until December holidays when I went home, then she took the baby.

***And how was that when you left him?***

The 1<sup>st</sup> few weeks, it was hurting, and sad because I didn't know I was going to leave him home. I wasn't prepared to take him home, so I had not stopped breastfeeding, so it was difficult for me. The 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks it was difficult.

***But did he cope then, did your mother tell you.***

Yes, she was phoning me, and I was phoning her every day. Then I was phoning asking how is the baby and he was okay

***Did she then put him on a bottle?***

Yes, when I left him, I went to town and bought him some bottles and milk.

***And your mom kept him on a bottle***

Yes, she kept him on a bottle, but it was for five months, because I think, when I remember I bought the milk three times, and then she said, no this child is okay now, so she started giving him porridge only.

***And when you go visit, how was it.***

When I go visit, you know after leaving the 3<sup>rd</sup> one I didn't go much because my mother said no don't come visit because this child still knows you and if you come month after month, then this child won't be well because he will always remember you. So I stayed for four months without visiting him (Okay!). So the 5<sup>th</sup> month I went there to visit, he was well.

***Did he seem to remember that you were his mother?***

No, he didn't, but before, when I 1<sup>st</sup> came he didn't remember, but before two days, it was coming in his mind that this is my mom.

***How was that for you when he didn't remember you?***

I was feeling ashamed, ashamed of myself and it was reminding me that when I was pregnant my friends were telling me to abortion, and my mom...

***And all that was going through your mind...?***

Yes,

***Were you happy with the way your mom looked after him, and were you happy with his life?***

I was happy with the way that my mom looked after him. Yes because my mother she was that type of a granny that if you left her with the child she makes sure that the child is well feed. She makes sure the child is well feed. She will wake up in the morning, and make the porridge. Make sure that those children are well feed, because it was not only my child. All my sisters children were also there, until



now they are still there with her. Only me and my sister are married, but the other have children at home (Okay!) so life is good

***And then the 4th born, he was born?***

2005.

***So he is only three now?***

No, he is five (oh yes!) So that was not a problem to me because I was also wanted to have that baby because now I was having knowledge about, if I don't want a child, what a man would do. So that was my decision, I told myself that because I have 3 children, in our culture some people would say no you don't have to have three children, you must have four or two or six (giggles), so I decided that maybe. But when I got pregnant with the 4<sup>th</sup> one I thought I will get a baby-girl, so that I can have two girls and two boys.

***So you wanted a girl, were you disappointed?***

No, I was no disappointed (giggles)

***So when you got the boy it was okay***

Yes it was okay (giggles)yes, and now

***So tell me when he was a baby did he stay here in Joburg***

Yes, I stayed with him here from 2005 until last year December

***So he was nearly four?***

Yes, I took them home last year December with his brother

***So the older one was with you as well?***

Yes, because me at home, it was like because my father was having girls (mostly) the place where we stay my father took four or five empty stand because he knows that when you fight with your husband or you are at work. When you go home, he showed us the stands so that if you are at home you must work for yourself and build a house in one of those stands. He says you must build a house for you and your children, so I also did that.

***So you have a child in Bushbuckridge and Tzaneen?***

Yes (giggles), but in Tzaneen , the thing that made me build a house is that I was now having a vision, it's like I know where I am from, so the only thing I knew is that I was maybe too small to get a real marriage, so I don't want to go to the other man with the other children, I knew that when those children are staying with their granny and their father was not well. So I know if I can build my own

house at my stand, then I know when my children come from there they come to my house, and not in my mother's house, so I can feed them wherever I am (okay!). Like even now I can't take them to the other man, I want them to stay in their mothers house, then I can support them. Whatever I have, I will make sure I share with them. So that is where my children are staying now.

***So the two big ones are staying there? And the two young ones***

Now the 2<sup>nd</sup> born and those two small (because the big one is here with me).

***So your daughter and the two young ones are there?***

Yes

***So your daughter also got a child now***

She is still young you know, if you, I can say maybe she was stepping on my steps, where I've left my footstep that she is following. She is doing what I've done. But for me, I can't blame myself, I can blame myself for having children, but I'm blaming her for following my footsteps because she is still a child. When she grew up everything was free. She could go and have free prevention so that she can continue with her studies. But when I was growing up you were not given a prevention injection before having a child, so that's why I say I'm blaming her for following my foot-steps.

***So you are crossed with her for having a baby?***

Yes, I was crossed with her but, it came where I said this is my daughter, I have got no choice, I have to accept her. And guess what, the worst part is that she is pregnant again (Oh!). Now I don't know what she is trying to do (laughs), and she is pregnant with, I think it's the different father from the 1<sup>st</sup> one, but I have accepted. I have no choice. I can't do what my father did (wanting to kick her out because of that?), yes I have to accept

***But do you wish that she hadn't done that, do you wish she had prevented?***

Yes, and I told her when I always tell her "do you see your friends, and you know when you take my steps you won't go anywhere, because 1<sup>st</sup> of all you won't pass your matric and you won't get a job, and you will suffer. Then it wasn't my wish for you to suffer like me, I wanted you to go to school, and one of the good days you will have something better than me, and you will help me when I am old" I thought she was listening, and now I am wondering what is she doing because the 1<sup>st</sup> one (child) is still single and he is a good boy.

***Let me have a look what other questions are there, in case I am forgetting something.***

***Tell me about your relationship with your children between you and your children. You said the big one is staying with you and he is a good boy. He stays with you as well in Ivory Park?***

Yes, he stays with me.

***And your relationship with him?***

It's good

***And with your daughter it's been a bit strange?***

With my daughter, it's not strange, its good because when I visit there at home, she is a good person, she looks cool, but she is not. But when she sees me she acts like she is a good girl, but when I'm not next to her then she does her own things, but

***Are you quit a strict mother?***

Yes, (giggles) yes I'm a strict mother because of the way I've been raised, I think it is the thing that makes me strict?

***In your ...***

In a family of one, not having food sometimes, you know how hard it is to go with your friend to school without food, just drinking water and nothing.

So you remember that, and in what way are you strict with your children because of that?

I'm strict with my children by telling them "You know what, I don't want you to grow up like me, I want you to understand and know what you want in life because myself, I never had a choice because my mother does not know how to write, how to read, even my father does not know those things. So there was no one there to show me or to tell me what to do and in my age once you left the school and go to the farms, it means you are the grown person, and you are going to have those.. even myself I started having sex when I was 18 years old, but I think if I was still at school, maybe things would have been better or if someone had told me that you don't have to do this, you have to do that. That you have to do this for your future, and then in future you would be like this and that, maybe it would have been different. That's why I am strict with my kids.

***You tell them what you think they must do? And go to school***

Yes...

***Because you want them to be different from you?***

Yes, I want them to have a different life from me, yes, I don't know because they gave birth to a child, and don't want t listen and not give birth to a child

So you got hope that they wouldn't have a child

***That's so true. Well G thank you so much for telling me about yourself and your life, it's been very interesting for me to hear.***

(Laughs) It's my pleasure, you are welcome.

***Thank you so much, I am just gonna put this off***

Julie

Johannesburg

***Ok, so it's recording! Thanks Julie for making time to speak to me today. Let me start by asking you if you have any memories that come to mind about your first experience of racism, apartheid racism when you were a child, or a young woman, if you have any memories, and if you are recalling anything we will come back to it later?***

I can say, the worst part was that, when I was a, I'm sure at the age by that time I was about 25- 26 somewhere there, I started to come and work in Joburg, and by that time there was this thing that they called black jack which means those people they were like inspectors in that they are going around for the people who do not have permits to stay in this place and to work, because they were thinking that people who were not working are those people that commit crime, you know what I mean? So one time, I was at my sister in law's place looking for a job, so I was staying there, and one night that was too terrible to me, one night I was sleeping at her room, in the middle of the night if I'm not mistaken it was round about 00h00 - 01h00. Then I heard Ko-Ko-Ko-Ko-Ko, Ko Ko Ko Ko Ko , and when we woke-up, my sister said wow! Those ones are the black jack people that were going around trying to trace us. Hey, what can we do because now they are already in the yard and they are already at the door we can't just run away trying to hide ourselves. By that time I am sure in that room we were about, it was my sister, my brother, me, and who else was there? It was only the three of us, and then my sister opened the door, and they got in and then they said to her, who is this? My sister said it's my husband. And they said, does he have a permit to be here? My sister said yes because my employers let him to be here. And then who is this? This is my sister in law. Does she have a permit? Well no? I am the one who's been take middle of the night to the van, to... what is that place called? Bedfordview police station in the middle of the night. And remember you are not dressed, you only take whatever is near you and get dressed because they are pushing you. Instead of letting you get dressed properly you know, because now you are going out, you know what I mean? They don't just do that, they just pushing you, come-on, come-on, come-on. Even the clothes that you were putting in, somewhere is in, somewhere is out, you know what I mean (yes!).

That was a very terrible thing that I had in my life that time. And then when we get there, there were so many people that were there. When we get there, they called us one by one to the office, I don't know what office was that, to the inspector, whatever, whatever, I don't know what it is, and they would ask you. "How long have you been here" and you would say "Well a year or whatever, whatever". Are you working? No I am still looking, and then they will tell you that they will give you like, let's say 24 hours. They put a stamp on your document to be out of here before 24 hours, just like that. Otherwise they will keep you if the is nobody to come and see if they charge you. You will be put in jail, and give you a stay

to be out in 24 hours, and then if somebody came and pay for you for that, what you call (bail?), bail or something like that and then how much did they pay by that time? It was like R50 – R100.

***It was quite a lot at that time?***

Quiet a lot at that time! Wow, and then my sister came with my brother at Bedfordview police station and then they paid and then they take me, out and then now the only thing that was very bad to me is, from that minute I didn't know where to go now, and where to stay, because now, to go back at my sister's place, one, two, three days they will come back again to check, and you are back again to jail, you know what I mean? Now I had to struggle, going, going like to Sannah now, and Sannah is also going to hide me at your place, because you don't know about me, and I'm not allowed to be here. You know what I mean (Yes!) And then maybe I would sleep at Sannah's one day, the other day I must be on somebody's place again, because they now, Sannah sometimes, she would wait for you to go to work, until I can manage to go out or just to get a bath at your place. He had to hide me so you. Even to go to the toilet, I must go the toilet when Sannah is still in the room because you would know, you would never know that there is somebody else in that room because Sannah would still be in the room, then I can go to the toilet and do what I want to do. Even if I want to have a bath, I must do that while Sannah is still there, quickly just sponge myself. When I stayed in Sannah's room I must always make sure that I find a place, if you are sometimes going around, you mustn't see me. That was very very terrible to us, even in the street when you walking in the street you always got thing "Ooh my God the van can just come here now while, I'm in the street", they would take you even if you are walking. You've got those documents that they were calling "travelling documents". I've forgotten about them, and those things you had to get a permit to have them. They would give you six months maybe, after that six months, that stamp is finished must go back at your place to get another stamp.

***So inconvenient, and expensive?***

Expensive! Tell me today to go to Transkei, when you are going there, a single in a taxi is about R240, it's just a single. It's a lot of money, but that time it was still about, when you travel by train it was much much cheaper (oh?), yes it was cheaper. But that is only by train, not by buses and taxis. Because by that time money was very very short.

***Did you grew up in Transkei?***

Yes, I grew up in Transkei

***And do you go there regularly?***

No, not regularly because now my house is in Newcastle, that's where I married. So going to Transkei is sometimes important to go there. Otherwise now, I have no parents there, its only my sisters. I just go there when there's funerals or when we make a feast, you know what I mean? Otherwise I don't go there very often.

***Its only one child you had?***

At that time yes, only one child

***You have more children now?***

Now, I've got three, I've got two more than that one. About three boys (giggles)

***Okay!***

Yes. I've got three boys, no girls

Tell me the story about what happened in your life, where you had your children, you got married then to a new custom

Yes! That's right, they call it "makoti" (bride in English) (laughs and coughs)

***Sorry!***

I've got this child

***Can you go a bit further and tell me about when this child was born , and that sort of thing***

When my child was born?

***Where was your child was born? Just give me a sense of how the history fits together***

I was here in Joburg by that time when I got that child. And my mother was staying here in Turfontein, so I was staying with my mother then there comes the birth, I got that child and I was staying there, and my mom by that time she reported me to her employer, so that I was free.

***And what year was that Julie?***

1976.

***Okay! 1976?***

1976 when I got my 1<sup>st</sup> child. I stayed there with my mom, and my mom said to me now just because you've got this child. I'm thinking of taking pension because now you won't be able to grow up this child here because of the apartheid. So as this boy gets into three months then I will take this child with me back home, and then you stay here looking for a job and work so that you will look after us at home. So really it went that way

***And how did you feel when she said that, did you expected, or was it a surprise?***

It was a surprise because of, most of the mothers when you get a child before you get married and all that, you know what I mean? They get very frustrated because of now, this child is like nowhere,

because you are not married, you just got a child with a boyfriend, and sometimes that boyfriend does not look after you after all this. So it was a surprise to me when my mom takes all this for me (Yaah!), and go home with this child, and go to raise my child, you know what I mean . It was such a big surprise.

***When we talk about surprise, were you meaning that you were very happy that she was willing to?***

And she was willing to do that, you know what I mean?

***Yaah! Because she could have been judgmental and rejected the child?***

You see! That's right! So really it went like that, but I struggled to get a job, and now my mom is at home with my child, what is she gonna eat. How is she gonna survive? Well my brothers and my sisters in law are there, but because now she's got my child there, I always thought that "Oh my God it's me who is supposed to be feeding those two at home, than my brothers and all that, you know what I mean. So now, I haven't got a job, I'm still struggling to get a job, and now I haven't got a right place to stay because my mom now is at home, you know what I mean. I'm doing up and downs, up and downs, until I get a job.

***How long does it take you to get a job?***

Sorry, sorry. Uhh, I'm sure it took me round about 4 to 5 months to get that job, at least I've got a full-time job. That was much, much, much better because of that full-time job its gonna give me a place to stay, than taking a piece work job where they won't give me a place to stay, you know what I mean. So that was at least a relief.

***Uhhh?***

Yes. Then I worked and looked after these two. That was much much better to me to do this.

***Julie, how did you feel when your mom took the baby and left, how did you feel about the separation***

The separation is too bad because of thinking of "Oh my God this is my 1<sup>st</sup> child, and now I won't manage to be with him all the time, somebody had to look after them, and you are here struggling, looking for a job. It was something sore. It is sore because of, when you've got a child you feel like you can do everything for him, he must always be with you, but because of the apartheid, you never do that, never, never. I was very lucky because of my mom had to take him and stay there with him. That was very lucky because most of the time they don't, not at all. You see I was very lucky because of that.

***Did you carry-on staying there while you were looking for a job, or did you have to move all the time?***

No! When my mom left there, I had to leave also.

***So you were searching for a job staying here, staying there, staying everywhere?***

That's it! That's it! It was a difficult time, very difficult to us.



***Yaah! I see the feeling of how soar it was when your mom took your baby, so how often did you had to see her?***

It's like when, because that time our employers didn't even give you a weekend off. We didn't have weekend offs, you only get the off or the leave I can say once you finish the year, then now that's the only time you get to go home. Even if let's say at home there is somebody who died, and then now, you will say to your employer " my aunty, my mom, my day, whatever is dead so please can I go for a funeral?" (Huuh!). It was going to be a hassle because they will count if the funeral it's going to be on the weekend, then you will leave like on Friday, and then Saturday you get there and then it's a funeral day, and then Sunday you must come back, whatever. If you just didn't come back Sunday, and then maybe you will come back Monday or there is a day in between that you were not at work, it's a big trouble. Otherwise you lose that job (shame!)

***So for that reasonable***

Even if let's say your mom is sick, you want to go and see her, or your child is sick you want to go and see her. They will tell you that he or she is sick and then you want to go and see her, what are you going to do when you get there? And then you will tell them, no, I must go and see what's happening there, maybe they haven't got even the money to go to the doctor, so when you get there you can manage to get them to the doctor or whatever. They will tell you" what don't you send the money, so that they will go to the doctor, than going there to see. That was a terrible thing.

***As a mother, it is so hard to be so far away?***

You see! Things like those, that was a very hard time for us, very very hard.

***So did you not see your baby until you say he was like one year three months, one year four months?***

That's right. Only December time, that was the only time you would go home

***How was it where you saw him?***

Laughs, because of 1<sup>st</sup> of all now he does not know me, he knows my mom; me when I go there, I'm like a stranger to him. He does not know what's happening, who's this, even if they told him that this is your mom, you know! To him he gets confused. He does not know what is happening, but when the time goes by he grows so everybody tells him okay, your mom is this one, this is your granny and all that, then that's the only time he understands.

***Then he starts to make sense of all that. And were you happy the way that your mom looked after him.***

Oh shame! Very very happy, very very happy shame

***And she loved her as if she was his mother***

Oh yes, sure. She really loved his gran.

***And how did you feel when he didn't know you?***

(Laughs) Well, you can't feel that much bad because of you know why does this thing happen, you know what I mean? It's just like that minute, " my baby doesn't know me", but what can you do because you have to go to work, and stay far from them

***Did your mom raise you, did you know where your grannies were?***

Me, I was also with my gran because my mom was also working. When we grew up we were staying with my gran

***That's just the way it worked?***

Yes, that was the way it went, before.

***Do you think that was all because of apartheid, the way it went? Or was it more of like a family style? The biggest reason for that, you know would that have been apartheid, or was it the family style that the gran looks after the child?***

It just gets into both because of by that time, even to come in the township places, it was a very hard thing because of there was that thing that you have to have a permit to be on the place, so, which means I can put it as if it was a family, a parents thing because of, even then to be in the city (yaah), it was because they've got those permits. And then your children, they haven't got permits, they can't be with you.

***It was really about the permits?***

That's right; it was really about the permits. Even if you we went for holidays, we had to have a piece of paper from school to say " we are here for holidays for such time" if the holiday is three weeks, they are going to write three weeks holiday so that we come with it. So that when inspectors find us in that yard, there is a permit that this time they have got children here. Let's say you are two or three coming for holidays, you have to have that paper with a school stamp, you see. And then after that you go

***So you were happy with the way your mom raised your boy?***

Very happy shame, very happy, even now that boy, he is a very good boy because of my mom

***Really?***

A very good one, he knows everything. He cleans, he can even make a homemade bread, from my mom. He learned that. He can cook, he can do everything. Today he's got a girlfriend, in that flat where they stay, that girlfriend does nothing, he cooks, he does the ironing, he does everything in the house. I said

to him, you know what, you are spoiling this girl, she is going to be very very spoiled because you do everything.

***What does she do?***

She is lazy. Yes she is working, but she is lazy because of him. He even said to me “ my mom you know what I spoiled her because when we met, I was doing everything, so now she doesn’t know what to do in that room. I said no, but that’s not good, that is not right. She must just wake up and do something. She is a woman! (laughs). He is very very good boy, from that hand of my mom.

***Yaah, and schooling and other things, you went to school in Transkei, and how was it at school?***

Yes, the schooling went well, it went very well

***And the situation with your other two boys?***

My situation with the Zulu boys (laughs and coughs), no its good. Its goo also, otherwise they are together.

***And how were they born, did you raise them yourself***

Yes, those two I raised them myself, because I was here working, and they were with me, and there is no more apartheid. Mandela just took us off the apartheid, so I was staying with them here.

***Okay! Not in this house, it was somewhere else***

No I was somewhere else, I was in Bramley by that time, working Manor taste, yes. I just grew both of them.

***How was that for you?***

That was very very good to us, because now you can stay with your family as much as, because Manor was willing to take, to let them stay with me here, but my husband didn’t like that. When they grew up they must go home, so that they will learn everything like tradition, everything, you know what I mean. Not to grow up in a city, they will never know anything about the cultures, so that’s why after 5 year, something like that they started crèches at home

***Did they? Okay. So then when did they go, did they live when they were five?***

Yes, somewhere there. (Okay) Then they started crèche, and then schooling

***How did you look after them, was that in Newcastle?***

Yes in Newcastle, in Newcastle. They were leaving with my husband’s niece because the parents they were also passed away, so they were leaving there. That was very good

***And how did they cope with going there, and leaving you?***

You know the children, when they started going there, it was hard because they didn't know why mommy comes and put us here in these houses; they are not like the houses that we are coming from we are coming from, and the place. You know it was hard, but when the time goes they just got used to it

***Those two boys when were they born***

My 1<sup>st</sup> one was 1984 (yaah) and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> one is 1988.

***Did they go the same time, or did they stay until they are 5 and then go?***

No, they went, the 1<sup>st</sup> one went when he was 3, he went early. That's the 2<sup>nd</sup> one who went when he was 5.

***Did you have a sense, did you say it was good for them to stay in that type of house?***

Yes, because they would go to the shop and ask me "what kind of shop is this", because they are used to the city one's Otherwise, they got used it

***How did your husband's niece cope with them***

Very well, because she also has kids there you know, she's got about three and then these two, and then five of them. She was also working, she was working a piece-work, going there around 8, around about 12 she is home, so that she can manage to look after these kids.

***Okay. So you were happy with that?***

Yes. She was very good.

***And the adjustment for you, you said your husband said he wanted them to go home?***

It was tough time because my employers wanted them to stay.

***Oh really?***

Yes, because Manor told me that "I can put these children at school" And that was good for me, I felt very happy, but my husband did not like that, now what can I say. He is the head, he had to take them home.

***Schooling and everything went okay with them?***

Yes it went okay.

***Are they still in Natal***

No, one is with me now here, the last born, and the other one is here in Benoni. He is at work. And also this one, he is still doing the training. He is at IBM (okay), the computer school.

***To them, they did establish the relationship, they knew that you are their mother and not...***

No no no, those ones, they definitely knew that my mom is at work and this is our aunty. Those two know, they grew up knowing me, because I went phone very often, very often. Like every two weeks, or every weekend. We use to take Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and come back Monday while they were still young, so that we would see how they grew up there, or to see if the niece is struggling or is still happy, and she was very happy.

***So there weren't any problems?***

No, we didn't get any problem, they were staying very nice.

***So that's about a good experience in a way because you are saying they didn't struggle except in the beginning?***

Except in the beginning you know, about all these things going on " there is no streets here, it's only the dust", you know what I mean (laughs), when they play, they play in the mud, you know, they play with stones, there's no toys, you know they struggled about that, you know, but only few times, it was few months and then it was okay

***And you are close with these boys now, and you said one is....***

Yes, very close now...

***That's nice. Let me check if there are any other questions to ask you. And your relationships with them now are good?***

Very good! No problem.

***Okay, so it was really, so apartheid was a big part of the choices you made, and where your children are.***

A big one.

***Thank you Julie, that was very helpful, interesting also to here***

Pleasure (laughs)

***I appreciate your time, and then I'm going to press stop.***

*Jane, thank you very much for your time.*

Okay.

*I want to just to explain these forms to you. I've got a pen as well. This form here is the information form about the project which you can keep. It has got my name and my number at the bottom and it explains to you what I have told you already, and its for you to keep. If you think of something afterwards and you want to ask a question, you want to tell me something else, you want to tell me, you want me not to use anything you can phone me.*

Already I can only understand Zulu not English. I can speak English, but I can't write, and that's a problem for me.

*Well, keep it any way, if you want somebody else to read it to you, or I can read it to you afterwards or now, but essentially what I have already told you. And this is the consent for me to record the interview and this is the consent form that you take part and what it says here is, you will put your name and surname there. Having read both the information and participant; this is the consent for me to record and the consent to participate in the apartheid archive study. Saying that I understand that my participation is not voluntary, meaning you can decide not to continue at any point during the discussion, at any point you can say "I don't want to talk about this anymore" (okay). And you can withdraw at anytime, that means you can phone me and say get rid of my thing, I don't want you to use it. And it will be anonymous, that means Jane will be interviewee 1 or interviewee 2, you won't be Jane. Your voice won't come through, it will only be in a form of the words that you use. And some of the things that you say could be published, but they won't be under your name. It would be on a special site. Have you heard of the internet?*

Yes I have heard, but I don't understand what is it.

*It is basically a big electronic library. A huge electronic library that happens in a computers, it is a worldwide thing. That means it can go into a special site on the internet, and it could be called an apartheid archive study and people's stories will be there to be read. So instead of going into a library taking-out a book, you can go on the computer (on the computer, oh!). So there is a website, and there will also be a book, it will be published and you can also have your name if you want to, and the quotations from the interview, it's the exact things that you say, like "in 1993 I was on a train and this happened" I might use a direct quote (a direct quote, okay). So that's that, and there's the consent to be recorded, so are you comfortable to write*

I will write in Zulu.

***So can I write your name here?***

I am Jane,

***And your surname Jane?***

***Then you can just write your name over there.***

It's not clear (***That's perfect!***) Because I didn't go to a big school, just a little school for farm workers.

***You wouldn't mind writing your name there as well, that's all, then I will fill the rest. That's a z, Mabuza with a z. You come from KZN?***

No, I am coming from Standerton (Okay). Musford, there's a small town, so people don't understand the town. Its a small, small town, I enjoy it.

***You like it?***

Yes I like it.

***Okay, Jane so do you have any memories of when you first heard about apartheid?***

I remember when I registered for the ID, the passbook and when you register you got a paper, a dompas. I got an ID in 1988, and then I came here and then the police (but they didn't catch me) we were standing by the bus stop. The other people were caught but not me with my friend. And then other things, so that man I was working for went to register me. I was now free. He was very nice and I worked for him for 10 years.

***When was that can you recall?***

From Ridgeway in the South.

***Was that 1988?***

Yes, 1988

***That's when you left Standerton and you came to Joburg?***

Yes, I left and came to Joburg

***And how did you feel about coming to Joburg***

I felt nice, because before it was nice. Joburg was nice before. Never mind apartheid, but it was nice.

***You liked it?***

Yes there were not too much Tsotsie's (criminals), but now there is too much Tsotsie's, and there was lots of jobs. We were suffering about money, but there was lots of jobs. But now it's not nice, there are

no jobs. It's not easy to get a job. So I was feeling nice, I'm scared even now. But before you could sleep open, but now everything is going on and on, and things are getting worse.

***And Jane when you were a child did anyone tell you about apartheid?***

No. No

***And you didn't know about it?***

No, I didn't know about it. I heard the Soweto 1976 violence, and I didn't know what it was.

***Can I ask you in what year you were born***

Me, (laughs) 1957

***1957? And you are 52 now?***

***And you lived in Standerton from when you were born?***

Yes, when I was still young I lived in there.

***So did no body ever told you about apartheid***

No

***Was it only in 1988 when you came to Joburg that you realised that there was apartheid (yesss...) or was 1976 when you realised?***

They didn't talk about apartheid. I don't understand what is the apartheid.

***Okay. Has anyone ever treated you badly, anybody because through being racist, through being....***

No, since I was here in Johannesburg, there is nobody

***So it hasn't really come into your life in a direct way***

No, not directly...

***And were you aware of how other people suffered through apartheid?***

Like a family?

***Yaah! Family or a friend or anyone, people who used to talk about white people or white government?***

You know at home we don't understand about this thing you know. I came here and was amazed what is going on, but still I don't understand what is apartheid. I was thinking because I'm working, it is white people who gave me a job, but still I don't understand what is apartheid. Apartheid? I don't know



***I suppose because now we have a new government and a proper democracy. Did you vote in the 1994 elections?***

1994 Yes, I did vote but I was thinking maybe if I vote the black one maybe we will be suffering

***So you were scared of the....***

Yes I was scared (laughs). I was scared. So now I voted for the white one, and then after that I tried, I tried but the white one didn't go through. But now you see I don't understand

***And Mandela, did you know about him when you were young?***

No no no, I didn't know because to the farm, nobody spoke about Mandela. I only heard about Mandela when I was here in Joburg

***And what do you think of Mandela?***

Mandela, he is okay. Now I don't understand who is right, who is wrong . Now I don't think anybody understands who is wrong, who is right. On Mandela, it's okay, it's okay.

***Maybe we could then talk a bit about the time when you had your children, what was happening in your life then?***

I was living in the farm, I was working there for white people in the farm. My boyfriend was working in the farm, my father, my mother, everyone. Everyone was working in the farm

***What sort of farm was it?***

I can't remember (laughs). I can't remember about the farm now, because I heard the man and the lady there died, but they were nice people. They gave us things the mealie-meal, some six rand a month.

***Six rand a month?***

A month. I enjoyed it because it was not expensive during that time. It was not expensive. My mom was having nine kids.

***Your mom had nine kids?***

Nine kids

***And where were you in those nine kids?***

Because the other ones were big, we were so young.

***Were you the young one?***

No we've got the younger ones. Now we are all growing up

***So were you in the middle of the nine kids***

Yes, the only one was the big one (okay), and the big one was working in the farm. So now I remember how I went to school, when I was young

***But you did go to school?***

Yes, but I was reading in Zulu

***You only did Zulu?***

Yes, I couldn't read Afrikaans because they were trying now to prepare the school to the farm. The English, I learned English here in Joburg

***And how did you find English***

I found the other man who was speaking Fanakalo, so fanakalo and Afrikaans its more, at least (asseblief) one language, so I liked to speak English to you, I tried when I'm gone I tried to understand. I said its two, and I'm only one in Zulu, he said "No it was fine" He teached me, the man had patience because I was very young. I found children so early, because then you didn't understand what you were doing with the boy. Just sleeping with the boy, not understanding what you were doing, old ladies didn't tell you what you are doing, that you mustn't sleep with the boy. And realised so now I am pregnant? The old people didn't explain to us.

***They didn't tell you about that?***

No,

***So you were very young when you had your first baby?***

I was very young.

***How young were you Jane?***

I am sure I was 19

***19?***

I was 19 (laughs), I was 19. Ok, and now they taught me. My sister taught me. She brought me here to Joburg. My sister had nice people, they said no you are still young come clean the house, clean the house! Then I learned to clean the house, I learned to do everything without cooking, I couldn't cook (okay). I was not ready. She teached me. I learned cleaning, to do the carpet, to do washing, to do the ironing, and after that my sister died.

***Your sister died***

Yes (sorry to hear that). Now I can't remember which year she died.

***Was it long ago?***

Yes it is long ago.

***So now if I just understood correctly, you were 19 when you had your first baby? And how many children do you have Jane?***

Three (three?), yes its three. The first born is married now.

***And was it with the same dad?***

Yes, the same father.

***And the second one?***

The second one is 16 now, and the first one is 32.

***It was a big gap?***

Yes it's a big gap.

***And then you had another one . And the big one is a girl?***

Yes all girls.

***And then 16 and..***

16 and 14 (okay). So now the father died (oh really?). I am all by myself now

***Did he die on the farm there***

Yes he died on the farm there

***Okay, Oh shame I am sorry to hear that***

Oh well, it doesn't matter, such things happen

***When did he die Jane?***

2006, no no no 2005

***2005, Okay, that must have been quite hard for you then***

Yaah it was hard, but it was easy. It was hard because I was working, seek working, seek working. At least I was working.

***You were already in Joburg***

I was already in Joburg.

***So the first time you came to Joburg to work was 1988***

Yes, 1988

***And then did you use to go home every now and again***

Yes, every now and again because it was cheap. The taxi was cheap. Actually I was using a train, and the after that the train stopped, and now we were stuck in the taxi. Because then the train was very cheap, but now I don't know how much the train is.

***Now you just use the taxi?***

Yes, I use the taxi because the train now goes early, they go late, and now we use the taxi now

***Okay, so your first child, did you stay on the farm with your first child for quite a long time?***

Yes.

***And then, tell me how old were your children when you left, or did you leave before you had the second two?***

I lived with my mom.

***You lived with your mom on the farm***

Yes because it was very hard now . My husband died so now I had no money. With tradition you had to buy a blanket and then the clothes, for everything to give the people for the man (for lobola). Yes, And my man to pay the lobola, like we still young we wanted to live in a nice house, you know. But we couldn't make a nice house; I made a nice house now. It was very hard, but we didn't take notice, it was just happening.

***And you looked after your first child yourself?***

Yes myself. I was living with my mom

***You lived with your mom, on the farm?***

Yes, on the farm

***And when you decided you had to live the children to come to Joburg; (Yes) what, tell me about that.***

I asked my mom, she said okay, I will look after your children and then when you get the job you will give me the money (okay), yes, so I was happy. My children were staying like me. My mom looked after my children like me (okay). When they were sick she took them to the doctor because I gave my mom money because I am working

***Sure. And you decided to live, come work because of money?***

Yes it was because of money, because now the money is starting to be a little-bit. Because before the things were cheap, and now they changed. They were a little bit higher.

***So you felt the pressure that you had to earn?***

Yes.

***That's why you came to Joburg?***

Yes, that's why I came to Joburg

***Do you remember then how old your children were?***

I can't remember now.

***They were little?***

Yaah, they were so little.

***And how did you feel then about living them?***

I was, it was so sad, but every month I was going home

***You went home because of the children?***

Yes because of the children

***Did they still remember you as their mom?***

Yes they did remember me

***Okay, so did you breastfeed your children and stayed at home, and you don't remember how old they were then***

No I don't. But the other one, I breast-fed her until four months, and then I left

***Okay, so you had maternity leave?***

Yes.

***Okay, so you were already in Joburg, you got pregnant, you went home for maternity leave, and that four months, and left them with your mom. But the big girl, the one who is 32 now you were with her for a long time?***

Yes for a long time. She must have been 12 when you left?

Yes.....

***Yaah, and how did she cope when you left?***

She coped because my mother was part of her life growing, she was so nice for the kids, even now. She is very old now. She is very old now!

***How old is your mom now?***

I can't remember because she uses a stick, but she walks.

***Is she over 80?***

Yes she is over 80 and she cries, its soar here, its soar here, poor lady you know

***Yaah! It sounds like you really love your mom, she is very important***

Yes.

***And your girls are all close to her***

Very close, very close!

***Are they looking after her now?***

Yes they look after her now

***And are they still on the farm all of them, the three of them, or is it the big one?***

No, now it's the location now. They moved the farm and made a location. They are no longer on the farm

***Okay, so there is no more of that (the farm)?***

No.

***Okay, so they look after your mom?***

Yes they look after my mom.

***And then you go home every month when the young two were small, and see them and they remembered you as their mother?***

Yes, they remembered me! They would scream "hey, here is my mommy, hey here is my mommy"  
(laughs)

***I am sure you looked forward to that?***

Oh yes, yes! Anything I couldn't remember now

***Do you think your children suffered when you were gone?***

No, they didn't suffer.

***So you were sad, but you were comfortable with the way it was?***

Yes (okay), but when I married, oh it was so sad because now I must move from my mom, but still to the same area. And then to live with yourself now. When you are married you must move and stay there now.

***So you took the children to the new house when you moved?***

No I left them, when I am home I call my children to come and visit me in my house, and Sunday when I go, they go back. They enjoyed it.

***Are they at school now?***

No they go to school there

***How are they doing at school the two girls?***

They are doing okay because the other one, the first born finished matric and now the two are not finished yet

***But they are going to finish matric?***

Yes.

***That's important.***

The young one is very clever, the other one....(laughs) she is a little bit dum (laughs). The other one is clever you know.

***She is doing well at school***

***And you know what their plans are***

Hey, no. I don't know about their plans

***Well it sounds like you haven't had a very difficult experience in a way. You've been happy with the people you've worked for, and you've been happy with the care your children got from your mom?***

Yes

***Things have gone well, except you have suffered the losses of your sister and your husband***

Everybody I was working for were nice people. They were looking after me. Actually the last one I was working for, from Danfair, oh was so lovely!

***In Danfair?***

Yes, and now they moved to Australia, they were so lovely

***You loved them?***

Yes, I loved them, still now they send a message (laughs) . Because I looked after their children, she was born in my hands, and now they treat me like their mother. When they left she was like “oh Jane, Jane!” It was so sad. I sad go my darling

***It looks like it makes you sad to think of them***

Yes, same, sometimes they write me a letter and put in a post box, I find and my children read for me and say Natalie says this, say that ohhh! It was so nice you know. They were so nice

***Did you look after lots of white children, raised them?***

Yes, but the first man had big children you know, they teached me, though he was an old man, they teached me. It was so nusty because I was a lady, but they teached me, said no man she must come and learn, I will teach her, shame. It was so lovely

***So you had very good experiences?***

Yes. (laughs). They teached me shame, and now I am here.

***How long have you been here***

2006

***Okay, so its been three years now?***

Yaah

***And they have got little kids now?***

Yes, but they are growing up now shame. And they would call me Toko, Toko...(laughs). Oh shame, she is so sweet, I love her.

***You love little children?***

Oh yes! Oh dear!

***It's been a good time for you Jane***

A good time, but now I am getting old

***Do you feel like you are getting old (laughs)?***

Yes now, you know the joints (your joints?), yes they are getting soar (laughs), yaah but still I am working



***You are still working?***

Yaah, I am still working

***Yaah! And you still go home once a month***

Yes, but now it's no longer once a month because its expensive to go home (yaah), maybe after two months.

***Every after two months you go?***

Yaah, after two months and then I go home (okay).

***And the domestic work; do you like your work?***

I like my work. I like my work because if I don't like domestic work, where am I gonna work. There is no factory now (yaah), no factory, my factory is this one. The home is my factory (laughs)

***Jane thank you very much for telling me this.***

Okay. I have got a little bit problem, my tears are sometimes coming out, sometimes when I am talking the tears are coming out. I need the glasses (laughs).

***It's not that you are sad, it's just that your tears are coming out?***

Yes.....

***Okay, I see.***

Okay

***Okay then Jane, thank you.***

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Rebecca

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***It's recording. Okay Rebecca, well thank you again for your time and coming all the way from Polokwane to meet with me (yes). I want to start by asking you about the past around apartheid, if you have any particular memory when you first became aware of racism, apartheid racism.***

I came here first I got to Benoni, after I didn't finish school nicely because my father was not working, so I went to Benoni to go and look for a job. I was working....First I was just working in a shop like, shops not chemist before, but because if you are working at the shops, if you are working at the shops, not domestic you must stay somewhere and go to work. So the time when I went to work the police caught me. They caught me and then I went to Modderbee, you know the police station in Benoni. Yes I went to a police station in Benoni, I don't remember the name I slept there and then tomorrow they came and paid for me and then I went out. I still went to look for a job and working, working. The second time when I went to work I was late, when I got there I found the police. They were there to check if people who are working at the shop are being registered. But that day I was so lucky because I was late. The time when I got in the shop I saw the police van and I hidden somewhere. The time when I got there and the police were gone they owner said no I can't keep you because the police don't want to here, so I suffered a long time trying to find a job. Then I worked and worked and worked at the shops...

***Like piece job?***

Like piece job, until I had a baby. The time when I had a baby; I just left the baby and went to do the job and the police caught me again. I was so lucky because I had a baby, they said if you have a small baby, (you are breast-feeding?), yes you are breast-feeding you can't sleep at the jail because of the baby. (okay), so after that I just decided to go and work as a domestic worker because if you work as a domestic worker you are inside the yard and the police cannot catch you. Where I was working in Benoni it was not nice because my cousin was working next door, my cousin she, when I go to sleep; because the police use to come even at night and knock and then they say "Where is the pass", and if you don't have they take you. My cousin, she used to lock me outside and then sleep, in the morning she must come-out and open the door and then go to work. When I was working as a domestic I would close the curtains in front because they just looked through and if they see they come inside and catch you until I go at four. I just that Benoni was not nice and came to Johannesburg and when I was working in Johannesburg; for my side talking as a domestic I didn't suffer, because I worked for the family. I worked for another madam, she had three children, the two were twins. I worked for her for three years, and then she moved to Australia and gave me her sister. I worked for her sister for five years and then after five years she moved to Israel, and then I worked for....

***For Laura?***

I worked for Laura, I worked for Laura for 17 years, she was so very nice to me. To go home, I just went home because of my little girl. She needed somebody to look after her, but I was still happy to work as a domestic worker, really (okay), but the police, I went to jail two times.

***Really, overnight?***

Yes! And that must have being very awful. What happened there?

Because my ID was the one that I took in Limpopo (okay), they just said they wanted an ID from here in Johannesburg so I can take it .But you can't work, and if you work in Polokwane, how much can they pay? (Huuu!). You see, that's why now I left my children and came and worked here. But now they are big. I left my children and came and worked here, but from my side it was for domestic, but before really I did not want to work as a domestic worker because I was just saying it was a big job, what, and what, and what, but after I just see domestic is much better for me because I was just working here and go inside and then at the end of the month; you are going home to see your children. But the bad thing is that I never lived with my children. I never looked after my children, so my children just grew big with my mother. The one that helped me a lot was my mother, but after my mother's death I saw it was not so good, so I feel ...

***So now we are talking about you living your children; so I am just going to carry on about that because it sounds like that was really, even though your mother helped you, it must have been really difficult for you.***

My mother died in 1994

***1994? Before the elections or after the elections?***

Before

***So she never lived to see that first, the elections. Do you think she would have loved to see it?***

Yes, I am sure.....

***Yaah, and you were born and grew up in Polokwane?***

Yes, I am born in Polokwane and then went to school in Polokwane.

***What nation?***

Northern Sotho.

***Northern Sotho. Okay. So you were born in Polokwane or were you born in a rural area?***

Rural area.

***Rural area. Okay***

Even now I live in a rural area. It is far far far from Polokwane.

***Is it?***

Yes. It is far.

***And what year were you born?***

I was born 1957

***1957, Okay. And then you grew up there. Did you have a sense, as you were growing up, did you have a sense of apartheid?***

I was just here, we were just here but because where we were staying, it's a rural area, we are looking after cows and then everybody like there, if you want water you must just have water. There is nobody who can do it for you like here in the location where they build their houses for you, and then do. That rural area you do everything for yourself.

***So you grow your own food?***

Yes, yes. Our parents have been doing everything for us, even at school. Children are lucky now because they have that money that they give them, but for us it was parents who were doing it for you. Nobody could help you; it was just your parents that could help you

***Did your parents work for other people or did they work on their own?***

My father was working in Benoni, that's why first time I went to Benoni

***That's how you knew Benoni?***

My father left a job because he was old (right). That's why I left school, my father was old, and there was nobody to pay for my school, that's why I left school.

***Okay, I see. And then you went to Benoni***

Yes.

***Do you remember how old you were then?***

I was 19.

***19. And then you had some really tough years by the sound of it in Benoni, you didn't like it there?***

It was tough because I was staying with my uncle and then it was tough.

***So you didn't feel comfortable?***

No, it was tough because you know at location everything is expensive. At home is better but even if you have money, at location is. I don't like location, I come from the rural area.

***So you are much more comfortable in the rural areas, than in the township areas?***

Yes.

***And then you made your decision to work as a domestic and things got better, you had a job?***

Yes.

***And how did you feel about how people suffered during apartheid?***

People suffered because even if you want a kind of job that you want, but the ID book, because me I didn't understand well. They said the ID book had what? Number what, number what. Me I didn't understand because my ID book I took from Bogo. They called it dompas. It is the one that I've been using. And then if they put 72. If they put 72, the same 72 hours you must be out of Johannesburg, you must go home. (***right***). And then when you are going home, when you get home you just go to the police station and tell them that my ID book is lost, so you make another one, you see...

***Okay, that's how you get around it?***

Yes, and you get another one. You wait for another one because it takes three months. It use to take three months, and then you must come back again, then you come and look for a job, you see. And when you are looking for a job, they say you have got people that can stay, people that the police can't fetch. So you come from home and looking for a job, you want to work, but you can't take me because my ID book does not allow me to be in Johannesburg, you see (Huuu). Before they used to find people that, like if I work for you and my ID book is not right, they would give you a fine before. You remember?

***I remember. It was very restrictive, the process, yaah. Not a nice time, yaah. And you mentioned to me that you had your first baby and then you took your baby home?***

Yes.

***How many children did you have?***

I've got three.

***Three, okay?***

I've got three.

***Boys, girls?***

I've got girl, boy, girl. (Okay). It was my mother who was helping me to look after them.

***Did you have your baby here in Johannesburg or did you get pregnant here?***

I got pregnant here, and then worked and stayed with the baby in Johannesburg. You know before when you got pregnant and you are working, they said "No you can't work". They just said you must go home.

***So you got pregnant and when you were about to have your baby, you went home?***

Yes I went home.

***And how, what year was that Rebecca?***

It was 1977, I got pregnant in 1976, but I got the baby in 1977.

***So you got pregnant during the June uprising of 1976?***

Yes, I was just arriving in Johannesburg. I had just arrived in Benoni

***Okay, and you heard about all of that. Were you involved in it or not?***

No.

***And then you went home 1977?***

Yes, yes....

***Did you stay for a while?***

I stayed home until when my baby she was 1 year ten months.

***Okay. Just looking after and you were breast-feeding?***

Yes breast-feeding. I breastfeed her for one year, seven months, and then three months just looking at her, and then I came and looked for a job, and then the police said go home again.

***Shoo! How was it when you left her where she was***

She was okay, because the children want to eat. My mother is not working and my father is not working.

***So you were pressured to earn?***

Yes, the one that gave me the baby didn't want the baby. I had to look after her by myself. There was nobody helping me.

***So the father of the baby was not around.***

No he didn't want, he didn't want because the time when I was four months pregnant I just heard he was married. What can you do. It was young.

***You were young. I suppose it must have been disappointing when you found that out. And then you never saw him again or did you...***

No I saw him again, but what can you do, he is married, he is a married man.

***Okay, so that was the end of the relationship?***

Yes, yes, what can you do, he is a married man.

***How did your mom look after your child?***

She was so happy, she was treating her like her baby. Even when I go home at the end of the month, she didn't want to sleep with me. She wanted to sleep with my mom.

***So do you think she bonded with your mother when you left? She bonded with your mother when you left, and your mother became her main... (yes). Did she seem to forget you?***

Yes! You know the baby after two months she, if you see the baby, left the baby for like two months and then when you come back, they will never know you. But after years, after year, she just knew that this is my mom (Huuu). But I look after them now, she is a big girl now.

***And then the boy was born?***

He was born 1982.

***Okay. And also from Johannesburg?***

Yes

***When you were in Johannesburg?***

Yes, but the father comes from home.

***Okay, it is somebody you knew from home?***

Yes.

***And your other child is also from that father?***

Yes.

***Is he still around?***

He is still around, but he didn't want to help, but he is still around. He didn't help me with schooling or anything, I was just working very hard for them.

***So you worked as a domestic and took month every month for the children?***

Yes. When you get paid, you never eat your money. You must just know that your children there at home want to eat. They want to go to school. You must do everything for them, working hard for them.

***So you earned, all the money you earned you sent home?***

Yes, all the money that you earn you send home. You can't eat your money. You live it for your children at home.

***When you were a domestic did you use to eat from the place where you worked?***

Yes.

***And then you sent all the money back home?***

Yes. I sent all the money. Like here I was working nice. Me working, to tell the truth I was working very nice, everywhere. I never been in Johannesburg and not working. Since I came here after when I left my children to come and work for domestic, I never suffered because I was just working as a domestic and then at the end of the month send money home, third month you go home.

***So you went home every third month?***

Yes, you can't go home every month. You send money, send money, third month you go home.

***Okay. And with your second boy, with the boy, how long did you take off before you left him with your mother.***

I breast-fed for one year five months, and then I stayed for like two months and then I came and worked, and then that little one, I just went where I was working. I was working with her, staying with her. I just took her home when they were two years.

***So you mean you kept them with you?***

Yes, I just took her home when she was two years. Two years yes. My mother was still okay, and able to look after them, and then when she was two years nine months my mother died (okay), and then I took her to my sister (okay), and then my sister looked after her, and then after my sister, my own sister, she went home and looked after.

***And how was that, were you happy with that?***

Yes, I was just working here (okay). Yes, the time when my mother died I was just working, but it was very nice.

***Did your little one suffer when you took her home, did she seem to struggle, they didn't seem to?***

My mother, she was very happy to look after her



***So your mom....***

She was still alive, and she was so happy to look after her.

***And then she went to your sister after your mom died? And did that seem to affect the little girl at all?***

No.

***It didn't seem to. Okay, But I imagine she had a different sort of relationship with you because she stayed with you until she was two?***

Yes, she was nice because she had lot of children to play with there, and my mother was very happy to look after her. I was disappointed by her death, but she was very happy to look after my children

***And do you think they enjoyed living there in the rural area?***

Yes, she enjoyed.

***And they went to school there?***

She went to school there, and then she changed and now she is in town now.

***Is she in Polokwane?***

Yes, she is staying in Polokwane. I don't want her to come here in Johannesburg but, I don't want my children to come. I want my children to come to Johannesburg when they are going to work, but I don't want my children to come in Johannesburg.

***What is happening in their lives now?***

Life in rural areas is different.

***How old are they now, the bid one?***

The little one is 18?

***Is she finished at school now?***

No no, she is still at school (okay). She is still at school and I don't want her to come in Johannesburg, to come and go to school in Johannesburg, because life in Johannesburg you see is fast

***Yes, it's very different?***

Yes, Its very different . In the rural areas it's much better. It's good there I think

***And the boy? Where is he?***

He is working now.

***In Polokwane?***

No, here in Johannesburg.

***He is here, and do you get to see much of him where he stays.***

Not ,like, I can see him tomorrow I can see him tomorrow. But I want to go home soon.

***And the big girl?***

The big girl she stays in Honeydew

***Oh, she is the one in Honeydew?***

She bought herself her own house

***It sounds like things are going well for her?***

Yes everything is fine for her. For my side I am happy.

***It doesn't sound like it was so difficult for you to live the children. It sounds like everything went okay?***

It was okay. Well, the time when I had my mother, it was okay. But after, if I didn't have a mother, it would have been difficult. The time when I had my mother it was much better, because my mother is my mother

***Its different when it's your mother, you can...***

Yes

***Yaah! So it sounds like there haven't been major hard things?***

Yes, yes. For my side its, now its fine. I'm fine.

***You are happy to go home again?***

Yes, I'm happy, really I am happy.

***That's good.***

Yes, I am happy now. Well thanks Rebecca for telling about this

***Okay, okay.....***

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