

Facing the Aftermath of the Holocaust *WITHIN*
By
Bringing ART and SOUL into life experiences

In 2013 I finalized the making of a documentary film "To Remember To Return". I worked on the actual film making for two and a half years together with Helga van Raan (graphic designer).

It is based on my art work and my inspiration on living life as a work of art.
Living life as a work of art ?

The film ends with this quote by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel:
"Remember that the meaning of life is to live life as if it were a work of art"

This article is meant to give background information about the documentary.
And I like to share insights into the process of FACING and BLESSING all of one's life experience.

This is a process of embracing dark emotions, reactive patterns and self made "truth", opening the form/matter/content/impressions, touching on the energy qualities caught in the patterns, allowing feeling/sensing/breathing and clear seeing to unfold. Discovering the flow of life, the essence. Light. Love. Unconditioned. Touching upon the essential life force hidden in all matters/conditionings. Distilling Seeds of Wisdom.

I address the following:

1. What is this documentary "To remember To return" about?
2. What is this process of Facing and Blessing all about?
3. My vision on Being Human and the Art of Living. Shifting Paradigm.
4. The innerwork and outer confrontations.
5. On Love and Prayer.
6. On Body-sense discoveries.
7. On Choice.
8. On Feeling and Sensing.
9. On the evolution of the individual.
10. Big Questions of PLACE, IDENTITY, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE and SUFFERING.
11. Distilling Seeds of Wisdom.

1. What is this documentary "To remember To return" about?

It is a wake up call to humanity. To choose Life. To stop repeating old stories , protecting wounds and tragedies. Seeing the existential drama and seeing through

the drama. Accessing unconditional Love, to correct, release, reframe and find wholeness in brokenness. Turning pain into joy. Shifting out of the old paradigms. Cultivating compassion and trust.

The content of the documentary is:

The felt but not spoken about aftermath of the Holocaust.

Pieces of my biography and family setting are used to tell "the story". Art works and the music/prayers express the "non-verbal" realm. The soul's longing. I had stored many art works on paper in boxes and folders, and in diaries in my studio. They were waiting to be shown, used, help to communicate the inner journey and "be revealed".

The method, the process shown is:

**The inner journey of self transformation, through Jewish spiritual practices.
The spiritual journey HOME.**

The how, how to deal with trauma, the "imprisoned" emotions and fixed conclusions in body/mind/heart, is:

My vision about healing and wholing, on how to deal with trauma: The documentary is made as a FLOW. Circular, spiraling, associating, returning, unfolding layers in layers. Weaving words, images, sound and breath. Connecting the outer and the inner journey. Reaching high and digging deep. Opening. Seeking and Finding. Stopping and Re-Sourcing. Feeling and sensing. It shows how one's story can be turned into prayer. A prayer for life. To Life.

The film shows how I bring art and soul into the tragedies of life. I journey through the personal story of being born in post war Holland in a devastated family setting, out of parents who just had returned from difficult living circumstances (concentration camp, and in hiding). I journey on through different self images and stages. And share how the choice and commitment to follow my soul's calling helped to face and bless unfinished mourning, deep anger and helped to delve deep and discover hidden treasures. A legacy of loss turned into retrieving the divine inheritance. "Mother wound" (feeling doomed/rejected) got transformed into finding "Mother Ground" (basic Trust and feeling at home, in life on earth), redeeming the feminine principle. Restoring the capacity to feel. Feeling Blessed and able and free to become a blessing. Giving blessings. In return.

This document can be seen as a part of my spiritual memoir. I made it as a tribute to the Spirit of renewal, in gratitude to all my teachers, students, family and friends who contributed and guided me on the spiritual journey home.

In this documentary I explore the roots of my mother's mother's Ashkenazi German family lineage. I re-connect with ancestors, search for traces of their Jewish family life. I face the Presence of the absent and the void left behind. I search for the house of birth of my Grandmother Olga Suskind (born 1872 Oberdollendorf, killed 1943 Sobibor). I search for the well. The waters of healing.

The documentary To Remember To Return turned out to be "a work of art".

Unique and universal. Intimate and intense. It shows my soulwork.

It uses songs and prayers from Jewish liturgy, with male and female voices.

One can say, this is the Jewish Renewal, version.

In November 2013 an other version of the same documentary appeared. This version has "neutral" prayer songs and music, only male voices and a slightly different ending.

One can say, this is the male voice/traditional music version.

This is the beginning of **pouring out my soul**. Sharing the joy of the power of regeneration. Through visual art, (image, symbol and word), through song (music/prayer), through movement (dance/art making) and spiritual intimacy (witnessing/with-nessing).

"Beauty occurs in art and life the very instant you allow your deepest soul truth to be expressed", says Aviva Gold. Artist, teacher, wisewomen and developer of "Painting from Source"

Originally I intended to create materials for a Holocaust education project.

In this present form the documentary is too long and too complex (demands seeing, hearing, reading, sensing, feeling, reflecting, jumping, imagening and questioning, all at the same moment, dialoging with Carola's story and images, the Holocaust and one's own life story). It does contain elements very fit for a more educational, methodical and didactic approach of how to deal with the presence of the absent. How to deal with "no grave", with left-over objects, a few photo's and few stories. How to complete unfinished mourning, search for lost family members and face endings. How to deal with the void left behind and with different ways/rituals of Remembrance. If a more structured educational project will be created out of my materials depends on funds, requests, a professional editor and interest shown by a larger public audience.

Distilling the essence. Creating wisdom seeds.

I am harvesting my life experience, distilling wisdom seeds.

This documentary is not a form of oral history, nor a portrait, nor about the history of my family, nor about my Grandmother either. The family background information is scarce and not balanced (I do not explore my fathers absence and family lineage). 2 DVD's are made in 2014 with chapters from a Visual/oral Depth Interview about the Jewish family (his)story and Carola's transformative art-work, done by Rabbi Pam Friedman in may 2013. This Depth Interview gives context to the "Soul and Trauma" work.

In the future more will be published on transformative art-making and an Art Book may be added. Showing the journey of traveling on, expanding beyond the Holocaust and the dark emotions. Seeding the future.

I hope I can create this all from now till 2016. When I turn 70, I hope to complete this project on Facing and Blessing one's Life experience. Distilling the essence, and creating more wisdom seeds.

I already made a small introductory film fragment for use during a presentation, workshop or for the website. "Return again".

I made a set of cards: blessings from the tree of Life.

I am building a website and archiving my art works to make it more available.

All this is done in co-operation with Helga van Raan, graphic designer.

I gave/give workshops/lectures using the documentary from different perspectives:

- introduction on transformative art making, dealing with dark emotions. Opening "stuck" places.
- bringing Light in the shadows of the Holocaust. Opening to Teshuvah out of Love
- teaching Teshuvah out of love and Kabbalistic meditations.
- sharing personal stories of how to open the gates of the heart. Stop the identification with the Holocaust, history, imprisonments, human tragedies.
- Touching on the power of redemption, waters of healing, moving through difficult emotions. Embracing pain, un-covering Joy. Deconstructing and reframing the stories.
- Serving intergenerational communication On dialogue. Bearing witness.
- Expanding one's perspective through Time and Space: visiting ancestral territory, dealing with left over objects, photo's and what is not said, but implicitly transmitted. Daring to face secrets and taboos. And facing the gaps, holes and void left behind. Inquiring/questioning the Holocaust Remembrance Culture.
- Women's emancipation. The feminine principle. On mothers grandmothers, daughters and sisters and one's self development.
- the Great Turning. Paradigm shift and soulwork.

At the moment the documentary is shown and can be shown in communities, seminars, workshops and dialogue groups. For educational purposes, self transformation, reflection and dialogue only.

My offerings are not just a material or conceptual "thing". Not just a drawing, or painting or work of art. Not just a biographical story or philosophical teaching. I am seeking the essence, God's Face in everything and everybody. Words, images, faces, sayings are like living beings, or invitations to come alive, to be embodied.

The breath of life, sounds, sounding, music, movement and self expression are engaged to bring art and soul into life experiences.

I am not solving problems, healing trauma's, fixing broken pieces. I am not giving answers or building opinions and theories. I am not changing the deplorable "facts" of how people can do acts against humanity.

I hope I can touch the heart, invite self inquiry and exploration.

I hope the body/mind/soul and Spirit are all included in this process of unfolding.

I hope that fears and resistances can be embraced and lovingly allowed to appear and dis- appear in mirror-like Presence. May we all bear witness, face shadows and

devils and obstacles... so that we do not need to repeat the violence of "The I", as Krishnamurti names it..... so that we do not need to fall back into reactivity, self protection and lack of unconditional Love. May we learn from each other to love each other more. Each moment. Here and Now.

2. What is this process of FACING AND BLESSING all about?

a) Instead of the common reaction to turn away from pain and direct the attention "outward", a turning towards and "IN" is called for.

One can learn to turn lovingly towards pain, fear, negative emotions and deep ingrained fixations, allowing a cutting through or a dissolving of the impressions in the body/mind field. This is a process invited by many psychotherapies and spiritual traditions, in different ways.

In vajrayana Buddhism it is similar to working with the mandala , transforming thoughts and emotions into wisdoms, into their essential qualities and energies, into openness mind, resting in mirror-like wisdom. Elements of basic Buddhist practices are related to this basic **Bearing Witness**. This "Being WITH". Experiencing "Inter Being". A process of self reflection. Inquiry. A seeing through the outer, the inner and secret/hidden layers of apparitions.

"Since everything is an apparition, perfect in just being what it is, as it is. Having nothing to do with good or bad, acceptance or rejection.....one might as well burst out into laughter." Quoting the Tibetan Dzogchen Master Longchenpa (14th century).

In the field of transpersonal psychology my spiritual journey home is related to "the hero's journey", "follow your Bliss" (Joseph Campbell), finding "the myths you live by". Finding your soul's purpose. An exploring of all the inner voices, sub-personalities, shadows , "devils" and "helpers" on **the path of individuation**. So called "Reality" is seen as a multi dimensional reality.

From the perspective of Jewish mysticism, and non-dual approaches, there is a direct "knowing" possible. A knowing from a position-less, a free open spacious IS awareness. In Jewish mysticism , the soul (Neshamah) is pure. And the human being is seen as the Light carrier. The Light/Love of the Source of Life is the Light seeing through our eyes.

From this perspective Teshuvah, usually interpreted as repentance, and done out of fear and trembling, can become a clear returning to Source, out of love. Forgiveness flows like a fountain. In the words of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks;
"Forgiveness means that we are not destined endlessly to replay the grievances of yesterday. It is the ability to live with the past without being held captive by the past..... It introduces into the logic of interpersonal encounter the unpredictability of GRACE."

b) One has to awaken the sleeping beauty, the hidden soul. The Heart essence, God Spark. Light and Love Source. Returning to Source, again and again. One has to open doors.

A fourfold vision is possible:

- seeing with the eye: The facts. No depth. One-dimensional. Physical reality, out there.
- seeing through the eye: The mind's eye. Personified images. Emotions. Thoughts.
- Psychic realities. The inner reverberations. and interpretations.
- seeing creatively: Thought in emotional form. Deeper laying values, myth, archetypal patterns. The transpersonal, collective, timeless laws of manifestations.
- seeing through God's eyes: Direct seeing. Mystical perspective. Experiencing the Potential. One-ness-consciousness. Prophetic seeing. Receiving Redeemed Reality.

Imagination is the vision of the soul. William Blake says "Art IS life, a unique personal creation that is enriched by imagination and infused by spirit". This is about living creatively, this is not about being an artist.

Al Pesso's psychomotor psychotherapy approach helped me access my inner world and turn the inside out. In a reframing, healing and unifying way. Validating imagination, intuition, memories, sensations, unrefined raw impulses and reactions/protections.

In 1978 I stepped out the formal traditional western psychotherapy way of looking at life, as starting in the mother's womb and often focusing on the early developmental years. Seeing one's own past and the parental situation as the source of all troubles.

For me, "working on problems and family dysfunctional dynamics" appeared to become a falling, almost a drowning into "a mer à boire", the bottomless pit of misery. Again and again. At a certain point, I refused to go back into painful memories, to "correct" them. And refused "to work on myself".

I turned towards "the Spirit" as the LifeForce through Time and Space. The "logos" as Victor Frankl called it. That force that is not wounded. That "seeing" and "loving" underlies All manifestations. Cannot get sick, contaminated or killed. That what IS. Presence. Unconditional Love. A state of Being.

The Source of Life.

This co-incided with my first visit of an Asiatic culture, Indonesia. An alive Buddhism and Hinduism, the tangible presence of "the Unseen", the traces of the past of my father who had lived there, the search for his mother's grave, the abundance of nature..... all filled me with awe and joy.

The past became a field of experiences to see through, to release, set free, and dig deeper for patterns, roots and treasures. The past was not anymore a problem to solve. I stopped looking at "faults" to correct, and parents to blame. My "homesickness", soullonging, hunger for beauty and love for life lead me further on the search for what it means to be a human being. Searching my true Self.

c) Re-turning, re-aligning and Opening up. Again and Again. A letting go and turning upside down, downside up. The outside in, the inside out. Drawing blessings in, lifting the burdens up.

The process of **doing teshuvah out of Love** became my core practice in bringing art and soul in tragic life experiences. Remembering this core practice as Grace. Transmitted to me through Time and Space. Rediscovering its beauty, joy and redeeming power.

Traveling, spiraling in and out, up and down. As Ibn Gabirol describes the path:

- beginning from, returning to SILENCE
- LISTENING
- RE-MEMBER-ING
- PRACTICING
- TRANSMITTING

My documentary does not show a psychotherapy approach, and is not about trauma problem solving. My documentary is about **growing into Love**. Facing "a lack of Love" in my parents, their upbringing, and in my fellow Jews, and therefor in myself.

Born on the ruins of the Holocaust my life started uprooted, displaced and wounded. Life could be re-invented and rebuild with courage and will power. One could work hard to "make" life , to become a success and be happy. This longing for the Good Life, and for renewal and a better future was strong. Life was lived, full of striving and pushing forward. Full of a Promise. Full of practical "be realistic" thinking. The war was pushed under, the impact held inside. "Being Jewish" was a fact and an invitation to hide and fear. It was a burden and a target for rejection. Frozen fear just surfaces as perseverance/rigidity and headedness/reasoning. Sensitivity and tenderness could not exist in this atmosphere of fighting. Control was the coping style, there was no room for spontaneity coming from Source. Eros in captivity. Imagination seen as fairytale land, "luilekkerland". The Holocaust did not exist either. The word came in use very many years and tears later (around 19...). Judaism was dismissed. I had to work my way in, into Judaism and Jewish living. Found an entry via philosophy, pedagogy, psychotherapy and liturgical music/prayers (Buber, Heschel, Fromm, Frankl, Freud, Perls, Pessu, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and Reb Zalman and many more).

I saw myself as a left-over homesick Jew. Seeking God's Face. With Grace and help of friends and the creativity of my babyboom personal growth generation I found my way. And became a member of the Jewish Renewal Movement, and as student of Reb Zalman I was initiated into Chassidic and other Jewish mystic teachings.

d) Taking on and in, transforming and Shining and Giving out.

Self expression and the embodiment of Spirit are both vital "acts" of living life truthfully, just and in beauty.

A daring to face layers of self images: the false selfs, the authentic selfs and the true SELF.

Understanding the process of flow and obstacles in the flow.

.....energy(impulse).....movement.....contact/resonance/interaction/polarization/resistance.....satisfaction.....

(DRAWING OF CIRCLES.....)

Art making as a transformative, expressive healing process became part of my psychotherapy personal process and training and was part of my body awareness practice. From early on (gestalt awareness, sensory-motor drawing, body-sense expression, visual diary writing and drawing, Rudolf Steiner and other anthroposophist's approaches with art therapy). I used it as a professional trauma specialist for clients. I used it for myself as a centering and deepening practice. To learn to listen/feel /see the non-verbal hidden inner world as real. To trust intuition, imagination and the self regulating mechanism of the body/breath/heart/soul.

Through this documentary making process I come to appreciate and validate transformative art making as the most essential skill I learned in the process of Facing and Blessing all of life's experiences. Especially the power of dealing with "the Beauty and the Beast", dealing with intense passions and emotions, with shadows and darkness's. Channeling unwanted strong impulses, fears and pains. Allowing Love and light in. Engaging in watering and healing through color and touch. Through art making I could bodily feel and see this dance of life through "me": **the melting, the changing, metamorphosing. A process of transfiguration, of destruction and regeneration, playing itself out.**

In a safe meditative deep listening way, me, witnessing and containing and dialoging. Evolving, unfolding.

I like to share how I came to make the documentary and how this transformative art making helped me to travel through "tight" matters, opening the gates of the heart.

3. MY VISION ON BEING HUMAN and THE ART OF LIVING. SHIFTING PARADIGM.

ON THE ESSENCE OF BEING ALIVE

"Savoir Vivre", The joy of living. Seeing and living Life as Art.

That was seen as a very desirable human "goal". By my parents. (They were both born in 1906). It was a far away ideal. The stress and challenges of life demanded

reason: "use your head well" and a creative adaptability that pushed intuition and tender sensitivities "under".

They had to deal with horrific persecutions and difficult second world war circumstances. They "returned". At the end of 1945, after the defeat of the Nazi-regime and the end of the occupation, they tried to build up a decent life on the ruins of the Holocaust in Amsterdam. Not being welcomed back and in. Everything stolen. The family members who were still alive, were very sick and feeble. And many had "vanished". Were killed or disappeared. My parents tried to pick up their high western civilization culture ideals and tried to make life successful and happy again. But this "savoir vivre", what is that when one needs to prove one is a human being. When survival dynamics are asked for. Can one "make it happen"?

Especially when one is denied to live according to one's own desires and moral standards. Still, in difficult life circumstances one can keep smiling and try to do one's best. And not despair. Indeed "never despair" (Reb Nachmann of Breslov). But, is the joy of life makeable?

To be human, against all odds. This title of a book by Frederick Franck says it all: To long for love, Light, Beauty, Justice and Well Being (for all man-kind) means at the same time daring to face shadows and darkness. Inside oneself, the personal level. Between each other and all life species, the inter-personal level and seeing one's self as part of all living beings. And also on a collective and trans-personal level. Facing the sacredness of life AND facing the violence, the acts against humanity. And there is the challenge of facing the complexity of "the violence of the sacred" too. (Renee Girard).

Trained as a social psychologist and body-oriented psychotherapist I served in post war Netherlands as a pioneer in the fields of humanistic psychology, inter-group conflict management, "the planning of change", "learning by doing", and "sensory awareness". Serving women's emancipation and developing new creative male-female dynamics in management. Serving the democratization (anti-authority movement and renewal in education and learning in groups). And developing a multi-dimensional approach in personal growth, psychotherapy and Self awareness. I also pioneered in bridging East and West approaches of self reflection, meditation, body awareness and soulwork. In between 1972-2000, through travels/pilgrimages and trainings/retreats, I explored the eternal questions: Who am I, what does it mean to be a human Being. What is life all about. By what Gods are we living?

I traveled from Esalen, the west coast of the USA (starting in 1972 with Gregory Bateson, Alan Watts, the Gestalt School and different Body approaches) to Indonesia, India (Kasmir Yoga), Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan and China/Central Asia. I lived according to the many traditions. As quest, practitioner and fellow human being.

"Savoir vivre" did not stay a concept or ideal for me. It became a search for the essence of the many life styles and wisdom traditions I encountered. And by "putting on" and "tasting" the daily practices I could sift out which one's I could truly

make my own and were nourishing my soul. Cutting through the survival conditionings. Remembering Wholeness. Absorbing Goodness.

For the second generation, post war Jewish community I offered classes on Jewish Spirituality and Jewish meditation. Bringing heart and soul back into their lives. At the same time I offered my expertise with war trauma, childhood abuse , dysfunctional family dynamics and "the Presence of the absent".

THE ART OF LIVING

The art of living is very much connected to the following ingredients:

- A commitment to Love. A Loving, coming from Source, which is unconditional .
- "BEing LOVE", love not as an object or doing.... but a resting in Love, compassion, kindness and calm abiding as the core "qualities of being". A Beingness beyond, beneath and behind thoughts and emotions. At the same time embracing all self/ego manifestations. A non-dual openness. Presence. I AM ness.
- Flow consciousness. "do not push the river". Being in a state of Joy, Bliss.
- "It is what it is".
- Being at ease with life. In "ease".
- surrendering, letting go.
- Basic Trust. Basic Goodness.
- Being fully alive, visible, erotic, shining. "Out there", Presence, naturalness, Grace.
- Recognizing the gifts of life. Practicing choice. Choosing life.
- Being not dependent on demands, needs, expectations. Not dependent on something or somebody. Experiencing the fullness of life "in freedom" and "in Love".
- The Play of the Divine, the Great Mystery, the Miraculous shines through tragedy and beauty alike.

Ohhhhh, how can that be found and embodied and expressed? Realised ?

This" art of living" is not about belief, or opinion, or a truth to preach. It is not about "living from the outside in" according to a system/school/philosophy/holy person. And it is not compatible with the art of surviving. That too is an art and a way of living, But "the art of living" is a living out of love. And "the art of surviving" is a coping with life out of fear. And when there is a huge fear for Love, one needs to dig even deeper or reach far and wide for the hidden river of life, waters of healing/wholing. To feel connected, supported, loved by Life. The Flow and the Source. And "feeling held" not feeling overwhelmed at the same time. Overriding the fear to be swept away. The Ever Present Origin (Jean Gebser) is what it is..... a Being With..... Presence.

Joy and creativity come naturally flowing from this "Spring", "Well", the Source.

The art of living is an art of resting in Stillness, in Openness.

Tasting THIS, I could learn to deal with obstacles and false beliefs and habit patterns from that "State" perspective at the same time. Seeing and feeling my drivenness.

The ego-building. Holding onto a self imposed status and pride:

These conditionings, for instance:

- Work hard, make it happen, think practically and ahead of everybody. Make something of yourself.
- Be alert. Be prepared. "Behave". Do not stand out, do not create trouble. Be ready to act.
- Be self supportive. And see how others could reject you. Perfect yourself. Be self critical and judgmental.
- Do not trust. Stay in control. Do what you can. Do not get dependent on anybody.
- Keep learning and proving you are a person of noble descent. Earn the Good life. You are entitled to get it. Make your life happy and important.
- Do not show. Make yourself invisible, well adapted and polite. Dress well. Be smart. Make sure: "there is nothing to say about you"

The Holocaust experiences of my parents colored words/thoughts:

"Surrender" means defeat. Danger.

"Choose Life" means stay away from men in power, crowds of people, filthy environments. Take good care of yourself. Do not let yourself be trapped, grabbed, fooled.

"Death" is totally seen as "being deathed, being killed", "life is, or will be taken away from you". There is no connection with a natural death and dying any more.

"Ease", means asking for trouble, becoming a pray for others.

"Trust?", means mistrust. Every body is a potential enemy.

"Life", Life is difficult. One needs to make "it" work. Think, do, strife and grow.

Watch out.

These basic "thoughts" are/were quite subtle and hidden, but functioned as drives to build a strong ego with clear dominant ideas what life was all about. And a life style was developed of being active, dynamic, out in the world, almost "on top" of everybody/everything. With left-brain dominance, upper body forward oriented.

Seeing through these dynamics is/was not enough. I needed to find a way to release attachments, shadows, traces, unfinished mourning, fears and self protective patterns. And stop the willing, pushing and "doing". Return to "Being". Releasing the misconceptions. Dis-identifying the many definitions of myself. And acknowledge the knots and spots of frozen fear in my body..... the left over self holding, deep ingrained in cells and tissues and reflexes. Dropping down the burdens, melting pain, letting the liquidity of my body carry me into flow and aliveness.

Opening the gates of my heart. Drawing down blessings. Letting myself be supported. Finding Ground. Digging deep. lifting up. Presence-ing. Uncovering, dismantling and freeing the creative Source.

Softening. Softening. Softening.....

This is called "the Sweetening" and "karmic cleansing". This is the purification/illumination/unification work, as taught by many spiritual traditions.

4. THE INNER WORK and OUTER CONFRONTATIONS

This spiritual journey of Homecoming starts from within. And might be a life long journey, of growing in Love and Openness.

As Kabir says: "as oil is in the oil seed, so is God within you, unrevealed."

After my mother's death in 1998 I made the commitment to "go inward", discovering the inner of the inner.....the bone and marrow level. The Ground of Being. I could "do" that because I had re-discovered this "Loving Presence" in and around me. In nature, in faces of people, and in the Breath of life. By learning to suspend my disbelief and drama, opening and shifting into this "pointless One point of all points Openness". Discovering the breath within the breath breathing me. And through self reflection, body-movement awareness practices and drawing/writing from Source, my inner world started to unfold worlds in worlds in worlds.....

At the same time exploring the relationship with my mother and her mother's family. Dealing with ancestors and history. Facing the aftermath of the Holocaust. In me. Acknowledging my 7 generations Ashkenazi heritage. Facing the fact that I am "at the end" of this development. Having no children. Completing and releasing, and may be balancing out what was still unlive and unfulfilled. Making space for the Great Shift to happen. Through me and my family. Cherishing Life, as precious and sacred.

"The adventure of life is to learn.
The purpose of life is to grow.
The nature of life is to change.
The challenge of life is to overcome.
The essence of life is to care.
The opportunity of life is to serve.
the secret of life is to dare.
The spice of life is to befriend.
The beauty of life is to give."
(William Arthur Ward)

SELF TRANSFORMATION THROUGH ART MAKING AND THE SEARCH IN GERMANY

Around 2001 I chose to slowly let go of responsibilities, roles and functions as a trainer/teacher and psychotherapist.. To work less, I chose to devote more time to transformative art making myself. And I deepened my involvement in Jewish Spirituality and Soulwork, participated in Spiritual Guidance programs/training and in retreats. In 2003 I began a Feldenkrais Training. Completed the training in Germany in 2007/2008. In 2004 I moved to Almere (a young new town build on the

bottom of the sea half hour north-east of Amsterdam) and started to explore the etching process. Drawing, and printing and all the creative moves and experiments in between. Making mono-prints.

Working with zinc plates and oily etch ink, with biting acids and soft lacquers.

Dealing with time, going step by step and slow and precise.

Dealing with resistance, patience, keeping the paper clean and finding an ordered way of working. At the same time listening in and being true to my own body language, keeping flow and passion moving in a spontaneous expression.

This etching practice became just the right way of dealing with my intense emotions while visiting Germany and looking for the birth place and house of my mother's mother. My Grandmother. She was born in Oberdollendorf, a small village on the right side of the river Rhine, close to Bonn. She was killed in Sobibor. I never knew her in person. I was interested in "the Good Life", how she and her family and my ancestors had lived. Exploring "where I came from". From my mother's few stories I knew that the Suskind family loved life. Enjoyed the abundance of the earth, the fruits and grains. The wine and dancing and eating during all the seasons /festivals. Jewish and local Carnival too. And indeed, I found some houses that had belonged to family members.

I found "the Good Life" in the wine and grain fields, and in memories and visions. And I found secrets, unspoken about feelings and deeds. Traces of nasty Nazi infiltrations and village history. And some family facts, through archives, cemeteries and stories.

But I was not really welcome with my soul search. My perspective, my being a left over alive Jew, a descendant of the Suskind family was dismissed, ignored, overlooked. I was invited to participate in their way of remembering and celebrating (for instance join a Kristalnacht ceremony in a church), but was not asked to speak, share, show my or my families story.

I wanted to show and express my innerwork of transformation through my etchings. No. It could not happen in the village, at an exhibition, in their museum or on lecture evenings. This was a shock.

And I learned a lot about three core perspectives on Life and Otherness:

1. Seeing from the outside in, or from the inside out.

On the personal level I discovered the very deep ingrained pattern of "being a Jew living from the outside in". As an European Jew, always being a minority in a dominant Christian culture, the Jewish identity is very much build around "how one is seen and treated". Either as a good Jew, or a bad Jew, or as a "special Jew like Jesus". But all those kinds of Jews are not living in my deep soul sense of being Jewish. They are "outer adaptations", "masks", they suffocate and constrict and diminish me and confine me in an exiled Jew, or betrayed Jew, or Jew who thought he/she was integrated in western culture, but in essence is being confiscated or ignored/denied.

Through my etching and scratching I could practice the art of being a Jew from the inside out. Cutting through these age-old identities and dependencies.

2. Seeing from an authentic autonomous personal perspective, or from a conventional publicly "correct" perspective.

On the cultural level, and seeing through the lens of generations, my emotional intense art making and my Jewish mystical path are an unique personal expression of an "independent women". How I deal with the aftermath of the holocaust and with ancestral connections is not conventional and not aligned with the collectively accepted ways of remembering and addressing the Holocaust.....it is unfamiliar, direct, outspoken and may be too much confronting the proper public sentiments and opinions. In my outer search for information about the life and belongings of my grandmother's family I encountered secrets, unwillingness to support my search and many discrepancies between official and un-official interpretations about the rising and falling of the Nazi regime and the participation or non-participation of the villagers. My search had to be a personal inner journey. I decided to avoid political implications and I learned to separate my process of remembering and returning from their way of remembering.

3. Seeing Life, Death and Rebirth. The end, the beginning, the whole cycle? All at once, or are Life/Death seen as opposites? Questioning:

What kind of Jews were they? How much of German Culture did they took on ? What were their dreams and men/women dynamics and expectations.

I do feel that I am the fruit of the tree of souls they planted and watered there.

My grandmother was partnered consciously with a Dutch textile trader. (in 1898) She was fetched from this Jewish "kosher" and "traditional" family which was living along the river Rhine for many centuries. They had kept their Jewish identity and customs alive. It is dawning on me more and more that she had the task to keep the Family de Vries in the Netherlands Jewish, create Jewish offspring. I am her off spring. She legitimizes me as a Jew. I am part of her tribe.

Traveling and tasting the Rhineland and environments gave me great joy. A sense of belonging. I was contemplating the impact of my ancestors, visiting their graves and the wine fields. At the same time while participating in the Feldenkrais training I got lots of opportunities to melt with the floor, the bottom, the earth and to meander/ rotate with flexibility (like a river). Unwinding, unbinding. Releasing and peeling off a corset of many generations of conditioning. Retrieving a pure, natural love for Life.

My family story belongs to German history and, at the same time, I am cut off. I am totally "other". My family was victimized in a collective process of trying to exterminate them. Here I stand now. Hineni. I am alive. As me. Not as a continuation of the German Culture. Not as "one of them". And not as an object, a theme for historical research, nor am I a ghost from the past. The village authorities while I was around happened to prepare an exhibition about the Jewish religion and the once alive Jewish community in the village. They wanted to honor the Jewish community as being part of the village, living and praying together in peace with the Catholic church and Synagogue close to each other. For a small period in history , say for 50 years from 1870 - 1920 that seemed true.... the Jews were allowed to have

a synagogue and got equal citizen rights..... What was happening before and after this high flourishing co-existing period, they hardly wanted to mention that. I wanted to be authentic and clear about the journey of my family through Time and Space. From ,16th and 17th century till now.....Acknowledging their growth, expansion and flowering AND their disintegration, falling and disappearing and ending. I wanted to honour their "aufgang und niedergang" as Jewish, butchers, money dealers, grain traders, winegrowers, tanners and textile merchants. And include the Nazi time and expulsions/exterminations/disappearances. And include rebirth and resettlings too. In a way, honoring how life continues, despite acts against humanity.

The dominant Remembrance Culture of the Holocaust in Germany I came to understand as oriented towards "Death", the dead, the murdered and murderers, the expulsions, deportations, collaborations. And towards what has been , and is not alive anymore. The old, the "ex", the "over and out". Dealing with failure, the quilt, shame, and the banalities of war, collaboration, exclusion and ignorance. Remembering through stumbling stones, and many grave-like monuments. Taking care of old cemeteries and archives. Trying to face "the Kristalnacht" and other events and acts done by the National Socialists. I interpret their focus as "Death" oriented. And wonder if this is a deep rooted Germanic perspective: to focus on Death and Punishment. Hegel, Nietzsche and Heidegger, for instance all were fascinated and oriented towards "Death". "Life is a round about way to death" says Freud. Michael de Saint Cheron expresses this perspective in Shakespeare's words for Hamlet, it is a philosophy of "to be or not to be".

I am seeking Life. And God's Face, in all people. In the dead too. That is very Jewish, and part of my rebirth/renewal orientation. Hannah Arendt as political philosopher calls herself Birth and Forgiveness oriented, versus Heidegger 's "being towards death". Her emphasis is on the capacity of human beings to act, to be responsible and begin anew. Levinas explores this even further. He looks as Life as an eternal life , without death , beyond "being" and "nothing". Focusing on the human task to take on responsibility for Other, and otherness. And " being seen by the face of "the other", I become a human being" . Michael de Saint Cheron names this perspective "Is it righteous to Be?", "Am I righteous?". "How righteous am I?" Levinas' ideas about the holocaust, survival guilt, death, forgiveness and the unforgivable and holiness of life are profoundly helpful in understanding what it means to be a human being.

The Oberdollendorf authorities did not know how to deal with me as a living Jew. Me, a left over family member. A lost and found member of their history. Their culture. They could not see "me", "my story" as part of their story. They could only see their own perspective. And included me as "a Jew who has suffered as much as the Jew Jesus" A very compassionate perspective. Very noble, to include me. And at

the same time, suffocating. I cannot be me as me, they confiscated me as being part of them. By trying to save me they kill my integrity as a Jew again. AGAIN !!!

This generation is not guilty or responsible for killing my family members and sending them "out" of their society. I was not there to accuse them. But, I could not really meet them because they could not see me as me. And they did not realize that their atrocities and history is about me too, not as one of them, but as "other". I speak fluently German, that was often confusing as if I was still living in Germany and never had to leave. Other people thanked me (seeing me as a foreigner) for visiting musea and memorial sights, thanking me for my interest.... Interest? looking for traces/signs of life of lost family members?

My soul's journey includes their history. Their history does not include my soul's journey. And so be it.

I felt again "ausradiert" (sort of meaning: scratched out of the Book of Life.). There. Forced to keep silent. Triggering in me the old pattern of splitting outer and inner worlds. At the same time, this time a wisdom realization broke through : they can not and do not see me, AND, that does not mean I do not exist. I exist. !!! I am alive. I am loving Life. Them, and me, both. And separating out each other's "truths".

By returning to Source, inwardly, dealing with my internalized patterns I went on drawing, etching and creating. Embracing and differentiating the non expressed. The denials and trials. Breaking out. Like weed that does not die. Following the abstract-expressive body/mind language..... purifying the "Entartete Kunst" in me, through me, into beauty, vitality and the joy of being alive.

In Oberdollendorf I kept asking for an occasion to share my grandmother's story. In vain. In February 2008, on Valentine's day I gave a presentation with music and left over objects and stories, about "my mother, my Grandmother and me" for the Association of the Rhineland Jews in Konigswinter. Thanks to Leah Rauhut-Brungs and Gabriele Wasser.

I stored the monoprint series in my studio. Went on with discovering the depth of my soul's journey. And the power of transformative art making. Storing the longing in my heart of wanting to show my etchings as if walking through the street where they once lived. Creating transparent light images of my etchings.... moving on....

MY SOUL'S PURPOSE.

I am born august 25 in 1946. On the Jewish calendar, that is the 28 of Av, Just before Rosh Chodesh Elul and the Shabbat where the piece "Shoftiem" (Judges) is read. And during this Time period many pieces of the prophet Jesajah are studied, as part of the 12 pieces of Consolation and the work of Teshuvah, Returning to the Source. The accounting of one's deeds and attitudes, having the opportunity and the strength to correct and re-align with the Source of Love and Light. In order to be able to receive a rebirth and celebrate the renewal of the world (Rosh Ha Shannah), of life (Yom

Kippur) and the harvesting of being loved, blessed with abundance and togetherness in community (Sukkot). Then The Joy of completing the cycle of reading the 5 books of Torah is celebrated and we begin living the beginning (Genesis) again...

The month of Av is a deep month in which the destruction of the Temple and many other destructions/disasters are remembered. It is a month of mourning, of acknowledging loss and all kinds of Life/Death issues. And it is the month of being invited to open the gates of the heart, to re-align with love and Light.

To acknowledge the bigger picture, the Source of Life, the unconditional Beingness and transcend one's suffering, anger and self pity and self righteousness. Developing compassion and forgiveness and faith. In life. A process of a painful awakening.

At-One-ing. A growing in love and Compassion. Each year a little bit more. Gradually I grew in appreciating and even enjoying the Av/Elul months and the whole Hogh holidays as a cycle of rebirth. The Great Receiving. Receiving a huge blessing to start all over again and again. Release the old, receive the renewing life force. This is a yearly cycle.

And then, while exploring traces of my grandmother's family in Germany and feeling totally misunderstood and unable to express myself, I was called back in deeper, to really do teshuvah, out of love. And I took this soul calling "upon me". Studied the text of Jesajah, the process of receiving consolation, completing the mourning, choosing Life and Light, cultivating compassion. This became my soul journey. In this teshuvah my ancestors are included, their deeds and sufferings and my parents faults, fears and despair. My self -protections and reactive habits, faulty and old paradigms, my pride and prejudices. My lack of basic trust, being shamed and rejected, or blaming and shaming back for many generations. Lifting it all up.

This push to renew, release, correct, re-align and rejoice is given to me for this Life. As Grace. A challenge to use this love for Life, to deal with unfinished mourning, to turn dark emotions into their essential creative energies, to serve life. To cut through limiting and controlling thought patterns, to set the imagination and intuition free. And to do Justice in a compassionate and kind way. Be fully human. A human being created and creating in God's image.

Not a small task. I see this as my commitment and the direction into which I live my life. Now, at 67, I am harvesting and integrating.. Ripening in wisdom. And preparing to give it all away. It: the art of bringing art and soul into life experiences. Me, being a vehicle for redemption and renewal.

That is my soul's desire: to share the power of self transformation, to pay tribute to my teachers, friends and family for life's challenges and blessings. to weave myself back into the web of life. To share the art of stopping. Stopping being self righteous, self protective and caught in conditionings, To share the art of bearing witness of one's soul journey.

To share my art work as a vital proof of the art of living through whatever disadvantage one encounters.
Beautifying Life. Creating meaning. And most of all: daring to be authentic against all odds, opening in True Self.

5. On LOVE and PRAYER

I made the documentary "To Remember To return" "as a flow". As a river of love. The music/prayers are meant to carry and guide the heart in opening. The capacity "to feel" is restored and my life story turned into prayer. Or better: into praying. Not a prayer for something. But prayer as dialoguing with the Source. Inviting "God" in, all the time in everything .

Music, breath and movement accompany the eye/hand/heart/whole body art making. The non-verbal and hidden dimensions (the unconscious layers) can be accessed and revealed.

Who can resist the beauty of the Light?

This is a title of a poem by Zelda. I share it here, it is soooooo deep, wise and to the point.....

"Who can resist the beauty of the light

I bore my anger to show to the light,
seeking comfort in its beauty,
but I was not worthy in its eyes,
I was not worthy in its eyes.

"Why is your life dark? it said.
"You are not in the depths of the pit.
This must be a lack of love."

And I wept.
I wept deeply."

(The spectacular Difference, selected poems by Zelda, translated by Marcia Falk.).

My documentary is about growing into Love. Facing "a lack of Love" in my parents, their fellow Jews, the Judgments and doom and betrayals.... all this laying in myself as well..... This deep feeling of failure and feeling inadequate, seeing the depth of the pit and the lies to cover the desecrations and humiliations was overwhelming at first. Too much to face. But by discovering a way to disidentify, cut through loyalties and attachments to the dead and the lost love, I learned to **REDIRECT my Love and devotion towards the ONE. Re-Align with the true SELF.**

To REMEMBER TO RETURN, ON AND ON AND ON.

Re-discovering the Power of unconditional Love The power of Source emanating/penetrating in and around. The Ayin and the Yesh.

My documentary is about unfinished mourning. Returning to Source. Digging for the Well. Learning to swim in the waters of life. Allowing unconditional love to love me, soften me, embrace me, open me into healing and wholing. Cultivating love, compassion and kindness, and generosity..... each moment, learning to love more.....let go of "lacking", allowing "fullness" to be Present.

Prayer melts the "I" in me. the sense of being separate. And invites God's Presence in.

Moving through trauma, rigidity, self-protection and defensiveness. Seeing through reactive patterns and self justifications. Letting go of enemy-images, of projecting danger and rejections on others, feeling mistrust, shame and guilt..... The inner work is about dealing with shadows, dark emotions inside oneself. Usually these are denied by the ego/self image . And the negative emotions can overwhelm. I was a trauma specialist for many years. "Holding the field" so to speak for second generation people to sort out the misery. To learn to distinguish between the tragedy /drama and defenses AND the deep human right to live, love and be good enough to enjoy life. Transmitting what I received:

"It is Perfect,
You are Loved,
All is Clear.
and I AM Holy"

My parents were targets for dehumanization, rejections, terrorizations and exclusions. I needed to disidentify: "I am not the target" and I needed radically to accept "I carry my parents and my ancestors within me".

I am part of the generation, just after the Holocaust, a child of "THE AFTERMATH". I am here to release and seek peace. And to renew.

My documentary is NOT about the Holocaust as such. And it is not about my parents struggles and fights for survival. It is not about (personal) stories either. It is not meant as an ego document. It is a tribute to the spirit of Jewish Renewal. It is a call to wake up and do the inner soul work. A testimony of how spiritual regeneration can happen.

6. ON BODY-SENSE DISCOVERIES

The documentary shows "**discoveries**". FELT in the BODY.

a) How dimensions of holiness (my Divine inheritance) were hidden, but still miraculously concealed and revealed within me. How the potential of love in me could be activated, cultivated. I had no idea **my body/mind/soul is like a Treasure House**..... The documentary is about the journey Home. Home in the soul, breathing

in/with the Source. Feeling connected. Martin Buber shares somewhere in the Legend of the Baal Shem Tov, how a Chassid sees himself : "As my heart beats in my chest, so my soul breathes in God". God is my word for a Loving Presence. I do not "belief" in God. I experience this Goodness. The sparkling.

b) **How surrender tastes sweet**, whole, a Being at Peace. This surrender, the release of my "I" into the ocean of "I AM-ness" allows me to sense that I am loved. That I am being remembered. Blessed. This gives a total shift in perspective. Seeing through GOD's eyes. Then, one can feel deep pain and sorrow (the woundedness) AND move through "it". One can learn to let the pain open itself into understanding, love, wisdom, joy. The energy of Life can flow. Opening the tears of being human. And then the discovery that this softness, weakness, this vulnerability gives soul strength. IS soulstrenght. That encourages to let go even more. Letting go resistances, reflexes to interfere, hold, withdraw, attack, control..... Letting go of wanting life to be different.

In stead, one can totally open oneself to suffering and disaster and see the striving and struggles.....this is a turning towards, not away from the pain and fear..... to bath the pain in love, let the pain dissolve and empty itself out, bringing in Light and love (the Spirit) and seeing through the accumulations of expectations and disappointments.

This is a "**shifting**", shifting in a ONENESS perspective, this is a seeing beyond dualities and judgments this is an art. I hope the film gives a taste of this healing and self-transformation process..... in the future I will add either an extra visual piece or an article to articulate and refine the "spiritual tools" involved in this shifting... It is hard to "show", because it is a felt body sense. And more an allowing , an inner perceptual shift then an outer abstract behavior concept. The Spirit "IS". Self healing happens.

And the reality is: Pain and the effects of "acts against humanity" are deep, tough, persistent and do not soften and melt easily

Teshuvah, as I see it, is not about repentance and "bettering" oneself. Correcting one's behavior. It is not about forgiving. It is not about good-bad thinking. and behavior patterns. Often it is seen like that. Maimonides describes in detail how one can/must correct one's faulty behavior. Teshuvah, as I discovered, seen by Rav Kook and the Baal Shem Tov, becomes a process of cleansing and purifying and re-aligning while receiving/remembering One is Loved. The Source is a Source of compassion and justice.. This unending Flow of Love is accessible. It is the flow of the body, and in and around the body. Co-operating with the forces of redemption and creation working through this embodied SELF. Sanctifying Life.

As Kabir says:

"It is time to put up a love-swing!
Tie the body and then tie the mind so that they swing between the arms of the
Secret One you love,
Bring the water that falls from the clouds to your eyes,
and cover yourself inside entirely with the shadow of night.

Bring your face up close to his ear,
and then talk only about what you want deeply to happen.

Kabir says:

Listen to me, brother(and sister), bring the shape, face and odor
of the Holy One inside you."

c)**One can learn to stop.** Stop being attached to dysfunctional behavior patterns. Stop the old stories, expectations and demands and woundings from running your life. Stop living "from the outside in", in stead, live from the inside out. One can learn to stop the drama of the Holocaust within oneself, one can pause. Shift out of fear dynamics into calm abiding. Rest in Love. Breathe. And in this spaciousness find new creative choises. One can **complete** unfinished businesses (unattended sorrow, unfinished mourning, internalized aggression). One can reframe self images and **end** the old story. Turn around, turn upside down and downside up. Acknowledging the life that is lived. Moving on, out of unconditional Love. In Gratefulness. Opening to the mystery of Life. Return to basics AND keep the inner freedom Source flowing, to meet Life as it is. **Keep going, uncovering, dismantling and refining and opening.**

7. ON CHOICE.

For healing and wholing to take place, certain conditions need to be met. And one needs to dare to choose for authenticity and being vulnerable. Human. And Holy. Created in God's Image. Self and Other. All of Life. Our societies, the dominant western culture and our "ZeitGeist" are gearing towards self centered, self-defensive inhuman politics. Self made worlds. Exploiting and manipulating. Immersing in thinking, doing, communicating. Action.

The tragedy of fascism and the nazi-thinking is repeating itself all over again: Human rights are violated. Even in the Netherlands. The political parties in the government decided recently to put refugees without "papers" in jail. Not only are they treated as "unwelcome", they are denied their humanness. A little booklet of interviews with young refugees is called " Nobody knows that I am a human being".

A say this, because I was born out of parents who returned from "prison", from a concentration camp', from "hiding". They returned at the end of the war (may 1945), after being persecuted, excluded and terrorized.... by German's, the Nazi leadership

and collaborators and traitors. By the Dutch government too. They were not welcomed in. They were displaced people.

I was born in a very confusing situation. Chaotic. Full of stories, secrets, tensions, and unspoken about tragedies. My parents were not able to turn their tragedies into a joyful loving life. They survived, made the best of "it". Worked hard. They could not release their pain and diss-illutions.

Now it is 67 years later. I can say: My heart knows peace. I am at peace. Love is stronger than death, darkness and deep sorrow. I love life. I love the potential of what human beings can do and be. And I see the need to stop suffering. And I see the need to stop surviving: get out of the stories and reactivity's. Address the shadows and dark emotions. Face and Bless WHAT IS.

I do not see my soulwork as private, as psychotherapy. I see myself facing existential human suffering. I see the dynamics of fear and wanting. I acknowledge the protective mechanism of covering fears and wounds. The building of the persona, the masks of the musts and shoulds. The building of a life of importance, well to do materially and well respected socially. Becoming high achievers. Doers. Attached to matter, form, possessions, status and the content of their minds.

Our Time asks for total new ways of living together. New ways of seeing and creating possibilities for peace, truth and beauty. I like to respond to this call of THE GREAT SHIFT. My process of cleaning up and breaking old patterns, setting the essence of the Life force free, is part of seeding the earth. I see this as a deep inner necessity. And a wake up call to others.

It is possible to stop the violence of the self-centeredness. It is possible to reconnect with unconditional Love, and serve human kind from there.

As Kabir says:

"There is nothing but water in the holy pools.
I know, I have been swimming in them.
All the gods sculpted of wood or ivory cannot say a word.
I know, I have been crying out to them.
The Sacred Books of the East are nothing but words.
I looked through their covers one day sideways.
What Kabir talks of is only what he has lived through.
If you have not lived through something, it is not true."

I have the privilege to live in a relative peaceful time and place. I could permit myself to choose a contemplative life style. Appreciating Stillness, the empty space between thoughts, actions and life's responsibilities. I created time and space to practice, devoting myself to this self transformation through artmaking, prayer, music . Reframing the story.

In my professional working life I did serve and helped many people the best I could. By making the documentary I try to express the power of "inner work".

I made the choice to live the unlived life, hidden in my soul. To listen to the imagination, intuition and body sense. Releasing the accumulated emotional wounds and thoughtpatterns. The hidden story. Stopping the process of keeping secrets and covering secrets with make belief stories. My process is a process of unveiling and "speaking out".

8) ON FEELING AND SENSING

While making the documentary the appreciation for the capacity to feel and sense deepened. And I see now how implicit, unexercised and often unknown this "feeling" modality is. Most people in the west practice their minds, thinking and willing. People like information, stories and drama. "Feeling" is transmitted through music, poetry, art, beauty, sex, eros, intimacy, or through intense emotions. It is usually suppressed or acted out. "Feeling" is often interpreted as "emoting". Feeling emotional about something is mostly not done. Is seen as weak, a problem. Feeling as sensing and breathing. As going with the flow of water, the liquidity of the body is an art. Practiced in certain movement, dance, body-awareness and creative expression work. And artist use "it" as a basic way to embody a text, a song, a character. It is "the artist way".

I am practicing "feeling" all my life through exercises, meditations and inquiries: Sensory awareness (Charlotte Selver), Kum NYE (Tibetan Yoga, Tarthang Tulku), Kashmir Yoga (Jean Klein), Vipassana, Toni Packer inquiring, Focusing (felt-sense , Eugene Gendlin), Awareness through movement (Feldenkrais), Continuum movement (Emily Conrad), Authentic Movement (Jeanet Adler), Marion Woodman's Jungian approach and the body, Embodying Spirit (Rabbi Diane Elliot). In the past I called my orientation "Body oriented Psychotherapy". But the essence is to use this capacity to feel, sense, breath as a turning the attention "inward". Being Present IN, WITH, THROUGH the body/mind field. Letting what appears, what comes up MOVE ME. Not from thinking, an idea or fixed exercise. But from "deep listening what is". From not knowing. From the Source of Love and Light. Unconditional Love. Being. Alive. The Ground of Being. Still and wide. Openness. These are all pointers. I am trying to express the invisible and still present Depth. Experiencing "depth".

This "feeling" is a sort of touching/breathing/cherishing , a taking in the thoughts/emotions/sensations in the Heart-Space. Then "loving" penetrates this inner scanning and listening. Exploring the body/mind field. This "feeling/loving" is like eating and digesting words, ideas, experiences. This "taking in" is a very religious way of knowing, an alchemical process. Distilling knowledge. Form is Emptiness, and Emptiness is Form.

My tendency for melancholy, for disappearing and getting lost in the dark is at the same time a powerful creative force seeking the Light, breaking out, a longing to be seen, to be fully alive. I found this quote, in connection to the process of

photosynthesis of trees and plants (turning Light into Life), and the Kabbalistic work of unifications (by human beings and the Tree of Life) (turning Life into Light):
"Life is seeking the Light
Light turning into Life
Life turning into Light
The cause of death is birthing Life"

9) On the evolution of the individual

My documentary uses a mixture of different ways of knowing. It is its strength and weakness. The music/prayers and art making express knowing through "feeling" and "sensing". Prayer text and some other text point out to deep soul work. The voice-over telling about my journey inward and outward is partly informative, partly descriptive. Often abstract and veiled. A more intellectual knowing.

The feedback of people who saw the documentary is clear: those who are familiar with inner work, self reflection and inquiry, can tune in and listen to their own soul resonance and story elements. And "the aftermath of the Holocaust" is felt as universal, a human tragedy..... connected to "apartheid" and many other circumstances where one feels "not welcomed, not allowed to be who one is". The challenges of ego building and self transformation, and individuation are recognized. Those who like information, historical and biographical, and like to see a portrait or life story unfold did not like the documentary. They missed too much. About this and that. Those who like to know more about the Holocaust, or about Jews, the Dutch, The Germans, they too were disappointed.

Most people are unfamiliar with dealing with the aftermath of the holocaust. Some were very touched. It opened pathways inside them. In The USA the documentary is received well in Jewish circles.

There "the Holocaust" is studied and explored in a wild field of settings, and groups. and from many different perspectives.

In Israel and the Netherlands the documentary is not really appreciated. Or not yet.. Some observations:

- The need to prove that the Holocaust really happened is strong. Politically. Holocaust education is focused on the disaster, tragedy, genocide, acts against humanity, the atrocities. Sharing facts. Real stories. Holocaust art also tends to focus on that side.
- The need to warn, to defend and be alert about anti-Semitism, fascism stresses "we have no choice". "We have no time and inner rest to reflect, to feel through fear and pain." In that view, the aftermath of the holocaust and doing innerwork is seen as a private affair. (For psychotherapy, diary writing, self-care and showing social success stories how one survived. Showing the Germans the continuity of the Jewish Peoples)
- The need to shock, confront and remember the victims/the killings is way bigger than the need to face "the invisible", "the subtle", the non-verbal universal suffering.

- The "aftermath of the Holocaust" is seen as a field of attention for the future. "Now we still need to focus on those who really came through and are still alive to give testimonies." The focus is on the art of surviving, the coping and turning the horrors and powerlessness of the past into defending the right to exist.

- And it is still questionable if "a second generation holocaust survivors" exist. May be the "second generation" just has to deal with dysfunctional family dynamics.

- This version of the documentary is okay for women and children. From a halachic, orthodox perspective men are not allowed to listen to the music/prayers sung by women. The process shown is powerful though and very true to Jewish mystical teachings. Dealing with "7 generations" traces and tragedies is deep work. Well recognized in ChaBad circles, in Kabbalah and Psychotherapy approaches and certain Psychiatric approaches.

Other critical remarks were uttered:

- The documentary is "too feminine": much about feeling, soul, female voices, emotions. It is associative, process oriented, not linear.... (too much left brain) Not enough "about", not enough entertaining and not seeing more perspectives. Too much a "one women show".

- The documentary "draws one in". Is too close for comfort. Too spiritual, and with too much emphasis on images. In a way, too many images. while the art is somewhat abstract, not representational and it is not an art show either. It is more like looking into a personal diary. Almost too private.

- The documentary is about mourning. Where is the "up tone"? It is so much about "ending" and not a happy family story. "I do not believe your joy of life".

My documentary is what it is.

My process deepens, I move on.

I like to address the underlying basic questions of what it means to be a Human Being.

Being, and acting Human. To understand the possibility of choosing to refuse/reject and separate oneself from another and hate..... AND to understand the possibility to choose Life, Light, Love beyond you or me. And unify, inter be and care for each other. Acknowledging differences and deep universal equalities. A Non-dual ONEness perspective of living Life. No matter what, no matter whom.

There is this possibility to see through our limitations and omnipotence.

"Everybody always says we need peace and if there is no peace we cannot find happiness. But how can we have peace? There only will be peace when there is evolution of the individual.

What does evolution mean? Evolution means that we know how our condition is and how many different kinds of limitations we have relatively. If we are not conditioned by them, it means finally we are getting in our real nature." (Dzogchen teacher Chogyal Namkai Norbu Rinpoche)

10) BIG QUESTIONS of PLACE, IDENTITY, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE and SUFFERING.

**The documentary is made as a narrative inquiry. Questioning, Questing:
a) issues of Place**

Where is my place? Where do I belong. What is Home? Where do I come from?

My parents where "displaced persons". Not welcomed back. Their pre war culture wiped out. The family container broken. Their possessions stolen and their house given to somebody else. Friends were lost or turned out not to be friends at all. Still they considered Amsterdam their hometown/base. They did not want to belong to the Dutch Jewish world. My parents divorced. my father re married a non Jewish woman. My mother moved out of the city and city life. I was send to a Christian School. I joined the Gymnasium. Learning to be part of a civilized high western culture. With Greek, Latin, Mathematics, Physics, French, English and German. With a great love for Goethe, Lessing, Nietzsche, Beethoven, Bach and so on.

Paradox: Amsterdam is called "the Jerusalem of the west", and in slang: Mokem. HA MAKOM. The Place. The place where God is alive???? My Sephardic father carried that memory. And the myth of tolerance and freedom was kept alive. My mother's father's textile firm was confiscated, given back and had a short "come-back" and restoration phase. A nephew had survived and led the firm. His son failed in creative leadership. My mother was denied a prominent role. The firm was sold in the fifties. Did not thrive in new developments. Died out. The building was sold and broken down. No traces left.

As a kid I was afraid to fall off the earth. Disappearing. Into Nothingness. I did not feel the earth and others as a safe place, or container. At the same time I liked all the fairy tales where one could make oneself invisible, travel unseen, do magic. Like a Good Fay.

My place on earth and in the family was buried in a glorious successful and happy before the war past. A noble past . In real life I belonged nowhere, am alone in the world (together with the dog)and an "outsider". I could really develop the art of the "outsider", "unconflicted" position in conflict management and process consultation. In the Jewish world I felt myself as a left over Jew. A wanderer. A seeker. Searching for my place? Yes, in the beginning, and then I could really develop the creativity of being unaffiliated. Letting go of the need to belong. Also letting go the need to fit and accommodate and please. No, I did not seek my place in the Jewish community. I searched for God's Presence. And was shocked to see the patterns of excluding and judging and the strategies to make it hard for people to (re-) "enter" into Judaism as their tribe. I was not welcomed in at all in the Netherlands. I just created my "specialty" in the Jewish world. Sometimes recognized and appreciated, mostly neglected/dismissed/forgotten. Not matching the collective culture. A miss fit.

Meeting every spot on earth and my body, as my house "my home". Temporarily. Living as a guest in life. Experiencing being invited in, again and again. May be I lived that pattern: my family was expelled and rejected and not welcome so many times through the centuries.... I tested as it were "others" for inviting me in....I travel and absorb many cultures. Stay as a guest. Enjoy being a guest. Have many friends all over the world. Entered many systems/schools. As a guest. I received many guests. Enjoying this mutual hospitality and generosity tremendously. "Place" is no more an issue. The whole world, all of humanity can be "the Place".

And I invited God in as the Guest. My best Friend. The Beloved. God travels with me, within all of me. Being on the move and at home at the same time.

Place as WOMB forms part of my learning to embrace and nurture and protect all life manifestations. "Holding the Field", offering containment and safety is part of creating a Holy Space for each other. As a psychotherapist, as a spiritual guide, as teacher, mentor, friend, I am very sensitive to "wombing", "empowering" each other. Adding Life to Life. Instead of neglecting, not seeing, not minding, not resonating. Sometimes I am still oversensitive to "not being seen". Then I need to cultivate compassion and practice loving myself more. Bathing myself in "Rachamim Rabbiem" The Great Compassionate Field, the Primordial Womb. There is no separation between inner and outer. Being seen or not being seen.

I dare to be more and more fully Present. Expanding awareness. The issue of "place" transforms into "a full and wide openness". This Place/Space/Stillness allows me to listen, being true to the creative Source inspiring me. Doors open, or doors do not open. May be the time is not yet ripe, may be it is what it is. While Loving Love, Love grows.

I do know and won't forget what it means to be cut off from roots, houses, homes, family and Ground support. To feel unloved. Not welcomed in.

b) issues of Identity.

Who am I. What am I. What sort of Jew? What does it mean to be a human being? What does it mean to need to become a civilized important person? What to identify with, be loyal to or allow to evolve from the inside out???

What sort of person, character, "Mensch", lives through "me". What **Soul** journey am I on? Do I belong to a generation? To a soul family?

What are the expectations/projections put on me as a women? Where do I come from, where do I go to?

These questions live in me. Seems I am born with them. They keep me awake, living the question. Moving through the many different self concepts, self images and soul journeys.

The documentary tries to communicate the shift from ego-building to self-transformation. In a way it is about "ego death" and "a birthing Self". The journey through grief is a journey of dissolving, falling apart, a letting go, a dying into Love and Life itself. To learn to see the difference between 'a false self' and the "true Self", the God spark, soul-essence and embrace both. To learn to disidentify with the historical "I" and the social "I" ... to open to a timeless and positionless perspective.... open, open, opening..... yearning for closeness with the truth communicating through my conscious being.....

At the same time acknowledging my mother's upbringing, expectations and ancestral programming, I learn to see through deep ingrained strivings and habits. I take on the inheritance. I carry my ancestors in my heart. Lift it all up.

I will turn 67 in August. They say that at 70 "a life" is fulfilled, completed. I feel very grateful to have made the documentary. To be able to integrate my psychological, spiritual and body/mind knowledge into a document sharing the process of self transformation. In the documentary I share that my birth date August 25 of 1946 is in the Hebrew calendar the 28 of Av. Just before Rosh Chodesh Elul. "MY SOUL'S PURPOSE" is linked to the parasha Shoftim and connected to one of the Haftorot of Jesajah, dealing with consolation and renewal. Teshuvah out of Love is the gift and challenge. Sweetening life experience the focus; at-ONE-ing, amending, mourning and returning to Source. Again and again. Rejoicing in Joy (Sukkot), in a temporary dwelling on this earth, re- joining with the ancestors and harvesting the fruits of lifetimes.

May I succeed in creating a book and further materials around the film. And offer that all for future generations. I hope, with the help of ??? to find funds to be able to complete this journey part of my soul.

The issue of "becoming an important respected person" transforms into being devoted to follow my soul's purpose. No matter what.

c) the issue of Unconditional Love.

Love was totally contaminated through life experience:

My parents survived the threat of being exterminated by not living together and breaking their "togetherness". **Surviving through Separating.** Hitler liked to send "the whole family" on transport trains to the east....that is "the story" I was born in. My mother (with my sister and little brother) survived the camp setting because she had sent my father back to Amsterdam..... Later, after the war, finding my father loving other women as well.... she could only preserve her integrity by choosing to live her life alone. Separate. Her belief became: "I need to do it alone". She was prideful. There was no "wholeness" in life to trust. She did develop intimate friendships with a few people. And was grateful for all sorts of kindnesses receiving from people. But she had a deep mistrust and was very judgmental. Especially towards herself.

My mother felt "outcast", "expelled" from the Dutch Jewish culture. Like Spinoza. Because of her divorce. Because of lack of money and possibilities to develop herself. She felt humiliated . Rejected. Her response was to invest in her children so they could become important well behaved citizens. To be proud of. Shame and pain she held in her heart. She was severe, judgmental, suspicious, full of pride and social dignity. Willful and forward striving. Socially active for women's rights. One had to earn ones living. She did not remarry. She did not trust men. She did not know tenderness, comfort or gentle softness. She did love me. But love was "possessive" and full of expectations.

She could appreciate nature and the relative peace while living safely in her house at old age. But mentally she was full of negative thoughts about herself and her life's journey. Felt guilt and shame. And unresolved issues. Inadequate. As if it was her fault that none of her children were married. She felt pain, having no grandchildren. She saw herself as a failure. She did not love herself. She loved me "as her second self", she once told me..... She could have moments of inner peace and gratefulness. But her expectations and disappointments were defining her life, till the end. She could not transcend that, nor could she let go of her strong will to do the right thing.....and to take care of herself well..... The last phase of her aging and dying was difficult and painful. Surrendering to Life itself was like a defeat. Wholeness, Oneness as unconditional Love was not an inner anchor for her. Her heart was tight. And broke at the end.

The Will to be "right" and "descent", "correct", "modern" and "elegant" and "not being a burden on others" was stronger then asking, receiving, opening and giving Love.

I became eager to be economically independent and self supporting. I was intelligent and left home, family and the dysfunctional patterns. Went out into the world. Not knowing how deep these fear based patterns and opinions were still programming me in the depth. I had developed many creative skills and practiced unconditional Love as a therapist all the time. That was not enough. I needed to develop a healthy self love and expand "Love" towards all people involved in tragedies, uprootings and humiliations, through Time and Space. The Holocaust and the Aftermath are way to big for me alone to release or to complete.

This documentary making, the showing and "releasing" out there on the screen are all deeds helping me to keep opening and softening and embracing what is. In Love. This healing is not just about me and my story.

It is about others too.

In the Last of the Just, the book written by Andree Schwarz Barth it is "the Broken Heart of God" that heals, weaps, comforts and re-animates our soul.

It is "the broken heart-ness" of every God-Bearer that is doing the healing and wholing.

The feminine principle was wounded, "the feminine" not honored. Or only in specific traditional ways (mothering, homemaking, supporting the man's world).The

masculine principle became the dominant way. The inner world got split off from the outer world. Seeing the feminine through the eyes of the male dominant "ZeitGeist".

I am a child of the women's emancipation and becoming an economically and sexually independent woman. Redeeming the feminine principle. Redefining motherhood, womanhood and relationships. "Future oriented". And alas: cut off from a natural grandmothering and the Ground of Being. So, I needed to dig deep, transcend conditionings, retrieve the Great Mother.

The conditionings are deep:

---The disbalance and splitting the female/male functions, so old.

For instance: I carry a subtle disbelief in "Harmony". Although my soul flourishes in subtle harmonic spheres. I still often choose conflictfull settings which are not healthy for me, but are very familiar to deal with.

---The "outer world" determines, reigns over life/death issues. I learned to be sensitive, prepared, of service, other directed and creative in dealing with outer circumstances. I learned not to be guided by my inner world. Hide. And if my inner world is not mirrored out there, I withdraw, keep silent. In this way I learned to neglect, dismiss and doubt my inner musings and experiences. I learned to use my mind and common sense well. There is more balance now. The feminine principle redeemed. My inner world more trusted and alive. But, how feminine in approach can I be?

How I deal with the outer world though, may still reflect old traces of male dominant conditionings.

It is as if I have still a deep "NO" programmed in me. An instant "separating myself from". A distancing. A not giving and yielding in. Not leaning. As could be a natural feminine way of Being. In the past I had developed a counter dependency. I am/was a polarity responder. And took many "outsider" roles. Differentiating me from the collective. Attuned more to "anti-pathic forces" than "sym-pathic forces" in relationships and groupdynamics. Too afraid for collusions, a folie a deux or betrayals. I was very good at sorting out and uncovering undermining forces. Unmasking and dealing with differences and secrets. Lifting it all up in "At-ONE-MENT". But not really able to enjoy a peaceful atmosphere for very long. I can be a good sparring partner and warrior, and not so much a pliant, docile, tame woman. May be there is a "middle way", a true balance possible. Becoming a gentle clear cutting through no non-sense women, firm and fierce, and at the same time warm, life giving and allowing.

I have a hidden aversion and rejection of being dependent on some one, or group, or collective. That is still too dangerous. A sort of old self righteousness, self protection might linger in the depth: "nobody can be trusted in taking care of you, you have to do it yourself". That "aleness" in me is recognized as a false thought, an illusion and transforms by the Grace of Wholeness and non-dual direct knowing.

Love loves me, and I can Love as well. A healthy self-care appears. And trust in trust . Spiritual Regeneration is possible by releasing attachments, especially the old self protections and self-will. This is an ongoing process. The Dutch Jewish dominant culture I live in triggers old patterns easily though.

Also this pushing, pulling, wanting and striving I can see and soften. Surrendering into feeling and exploring the element water. Flow. Liquidity. I enjoy "continuum movement", "sensory awareness" and gentle movements. In tenderness and softness the true Self comes alive. I "immerse myself in God": Kaveh el Yah..... Hannah Tiferet Siegel sings and translates Kaveh, meaning Hope, as immerse..... For me that is related to the Kav, the Ka OF CA rola. The Lightbeam cutting through all vessels, connecting the LightSource with my light-soul-spark deep inside me..... in my cells.

The Light/Love connection was never broken, just is. The unending well is flowing. I am learning to allow my head to float and bob. In stead of sticking my head out and separating my head/thinking off from the heart and lower body, the sensing and feeling of support.

Water, during my early years and in my mother's body/mind, was frozen. Or too overwhelming. By opening the gates of the heart and body tissues , my "tendency to be self supporting , and to hold myself" can turn into acknowledging I AM supported. Supporting. Blessed. No need to hold onto anything, anybody. Holding nothing back anymore.

Mother wound, turned into Mother Ground.

Jody A. Shapiro writes:

"Imagine. When the Wind Comes, Falling into the Arms of the Great Mother.

..... Let go, lift up, pour forth!

For you are, clearly and without exception, held."

SOUL FAMILY

My family of origin is dying out. I did not create my own family in a traditional way. My life is dedicated to complete the old family traditions and dynamics, and expand "family" into new forms and ways of inter-being.

I do feel part of a soul family. I feel part of a spiritual community and part of a Jewish mystical tradition and have intimate friends as my extended family.

I feel I am completing the family-lineage of my mother's Ashkenazi branch. I feel I am living a full life . A free spirit. A wise creative women. Being in Love with life.

Completing family dynamics and partner relationships based on old paradigms . No more need for manipulations, projections, and needing to fulfill someone else's expectations. Still discovering and opening to a new male/female balance, in myself, and between me and others.

I may still have to face my father's unfinished issues and may need to find a way of releasing and completing that side too. Redeeming the masculine principle as well. That still needs to be done.

That is another film/project.

In that sense this documentary "To remember To return" is just a stepping stone on this journey of renewal, regeneration and shifting into another paradigm.

The Unseen Life is Real too. (Sham eten.... psalm 139). Yes, now it is.

In Love, outer and inner merge as united, balanced, interconnected worlds in Oneness. Integration can happen. Self expression can come from Source. From Spirit. Nothing to hide.

When I was born and during my early years the Unseen was not spoken about and pushed out. At the same time, the past, the dead and the war and lost family members were always Present. Innerly. Symbolically. And "stuck". Hidden. Imprisoned. Veiled in dark emotions and secrets.

The inner subjective world of the psyche was "silenced". And considered a lost fairytale. One needed to be practical and realistic. The unseen world was considered the realm of the dead or as "a song of unquenchable longing", "dreams that cannot become true". Even dangerous: Do not look back, one could be turned into a pillar of salt like Lot's wife. And, (may be related to the story of the box of Pandora, or related to elements in the story of Eros and Psyche) : do not open the box, you may lose "the right to live" and would have to die too. The inner world better be kept silent, closed, a far away fantasy or an unsolvable puzzle.

The curious, open-hearted spontaneous asking and contact seeking child in me kept asking and exploring. I liked "the invisible realm". That is were "Goodness", "God" and the Good Fay are residing. I never lost that inner connection. Just got cut off and diverted and overruled by the rational mind and the demands of the material world.

My whole journey through life has to do with acknowledging the inner subjective world of the psyche. (Starting with studying Psychology, studying eastern traditions, integrating it all through a more Jungian and transpersonal approach, opening into a non-dual embodied spirituality.) To uncover the power of intention, to use the creativity of symbolic thinking, image-making, imagining and inner sensing. To expand awareness. To dare to travel through the unconscious, while being firmly rooted in the body. To explore personal, transpersonal and cosmic experiences. Embodying Spirit. En-spiriting Body.

What a discovery!! The unseen life becomes real by "going deep into the body". Healing and transformation happens through the INTERMINGLING of the physical and the psyche/the subtle, the obscure and the transparent. Form is emptiness. And Emptiness is form. No either/or, and no divisions between real and not-real anymore.

"Let us bless the well, eternally giving,
The circle of life, ever- dying, ever -living.
as we bless the well spring of life, so we are blessed."
(Marcia Falk, Sustaining Life, Embracing Death..... Fran Avni and Linda Hirschhorn).

d) issues of suffering

The Holocaust is too big, too heavy to carry alone.

This might sound a truism and self evident. But in reality tragedies and sufferings become imprints stored inside persons. They cleave. And they are often "buried", and sink in over time. They become embedded in one's personal life. And when trauma's are very overwhelming one can sometimes only deal with them by changing "personality", "country", "lifestyle", "one's connections to family and the collective, and traditions". Literally: Begin anew. Wipe out the past. Deny the past. Create a different future.

Or one can try to restore the past, ignoring disasters and changes.

Whatever way one tries to cope with tragedies, remnants are stored on cellular level. 7 generations long. They become part of one's personal karma/inheritance. And at the same time one is challenged not to "claim" them as one's personal possession.

When I was young "the holocaust" was not a word in use, nor a concept referring to a real disaster what had happened and of which I am a part of because of being Jewish and the experiences of my Jewish parents.

When I was young, "suffering" and "tragedies and trauma's" were not existing. Not part of my education or family history.

I, born after the war, had nothing to do with the past. And was not supposed to know of any difficult past. I was not alive during the war, or before the war. Years later when every body started talking and sharing war experiences, I was excluded from that. "You, you were not there yet, you have nothing to do with this". And at the same time I was attacked and judged at moments when I showed ignorance and insensitivities. "Shame on you, you ought to know how much we suffered".

For example: When I was 11 years old, in 1957 I had to do a test, in order for the school leaders and my mother to decide to which school to send me. In this test there were two questions I failed to give the right answers:

--When was the "Hunger-Winter"? I did not really knew what the question was all about. I searched in my heart and came up with "At Nova Zembla". This Nova Zembla place was the place were the Dutch sailors/world explorers got stranded in the 16th century. They had built a house from their wrecked ship, called it " Het Behouden Huys", translated it means "A safe Home, Our Refuge" But, they starved and almost froze to death. That was "my" "winter of hunger". In the Dutch culture, "the hunger-winter" took place in 1944/1945. During the war, the occupation by the Nazi regime. My little brother was born in July 1944 in a concentration camp in the Netherlands. My mother, sister and this little baby brother barely survived the shortage of food and other difficulties. I did not know about their hardships.

---"Who wrote the music for Goethe's Faust opera?" I had no idea, could not find an answer.

My mother was very angry at me. "How come you do not know this great German writer/thinker and the composer Gounod. Shame on you. you ought to know about this high German civilized culture, you come from." I did not know where I was coming from.

So, I internalized a lot of shame.

I recently read the book " Status anxiety" by Alain de Botton. I realize more and more that the Holocaust/the second world war deprived my parents from their status. The very difficult re-entry in the Dutch society after the war added more shame, and their divorce, lack of money and lack of belonging to high civilized circles added even more shame..... this feeded my mother's pride and push to achieve a high status again. And providing me with the non-verbal, but felt body experiences of shame and guilt and "being shamed". Covering that over with anger and judgments. One had to make sure not to make mistakes, becoming a failure. "Being bad".

This shame and "making mistakes one ought not make" became part of my ego-building, personality make up. Inherent to the process of becoming a good human being.

Many years later , in 1985, when I met H.H. the Dalai Lama in Rikon in Switzerland during days of KalaChakra Teachings and Ceremonies I discovered **the connection between shame and suffering.**

In Buddhism the "four noble truths" are very basic:

- the truth of suffering
- the truth of the origin of suffering
- the truth of the cessation of suffering
- the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

I had studied, meditated and internalized these truths. As ideals. Deep in me I knew I was carrying this endless sea of Holocaust/collective genocide/humiliations inside me. As "a fact". As "a load", or karmic challenge.

Deep down doubting one can stop the suffering. Questioning at the same time, how much of this Jewish collective programming do I need to take on, deal with? Is this "mine"?

And then, in the middle of leading a part of the KalaChakra ceremony while reciting instructions in Tibetan, H.H. the Dalai Lama stopped. A long deep silence descended in the big tent. It was like everybody was holding their breath. The Dalai Lama was browsing through the text leaves. Then, with a deep sigh , a freeing laughter and a radiating face of joy, he said: I skipped pages, I'll start over again. And so he did. I was deeply touched by this long moment of Presence and emptiness, full of joy and laughter. No shame of making a mistake ! H.H. the Dalai Lama carries for me the true face of a human being, capable of "the cessation of suffering". And showing how the cultivation of compassion can became the true path leading to the cessation of

suffering. Encouraging me to stop "shaming" myself. Instead embracing myself lovingly, releasing 'losing face", the fears and pain and judging.

Tara Brach calls this "Radical Acceptance".

In many drawings "faces" appear, of moods and woundings. In my meditative transformative inner listening, the faces express just that: the "Losing Face" . And by this unveiling and un-shaming I learn to return to Source. A turning in, and processing the depth and then turning the inside out. Daring to radiate light out again. Presencing. In stead of a shrinking and dying, a revitalizing and a follow suit, a "kleur bekennen" into the fullness of Life. This transformative artmaking, especially the watercolor directness invites a loving touching shaping and reshaping. A love dance. This is a process totally beyond judgments, self-criticism and the vicious circle dynamics of the drama-triangle (the attacker-victim-savior treadmill). This love dance engages the self healing vital life flow moving through whatever appears in the stream of the mind/heart/body Field.

But this shame, being shamed and feeling indignant and shaming/projecting badness on others happens to be a deep ingrained pattern.

And underneath all the good intentions of becoming a good human being lays the enormity of the sufferings of being persecuted, rejected, betrayed and humiliated. And the enormity of the atrocities and killings. And the fact that human beings can either kill, violate life or choose life and consider life precious and holy. And underneath this lays the pure existential truth that "being human", means being vulnerable. "Alles van waarde is weerloos" says a Dutch poet/painter Lucebert, "**All things of value are defenseless**"

This vulnerability, this fragility calls for a new way of experiencing strength in this openness, feeling protected and supported while navigating in the midst of violent circumstances. and chaos. Daring to fail, fall apart and touch the Source again and again. Re-rooting in the wisdom of insecurity (Allan Watts), in Spirit, indestructible light.

From a Jewish perspective I learned to deal with "suffering' through these basic skills:

---one can separate the holy, the essence from the not so perfect doings and shortcomings. One can take a pause, a TIMEOUT, like Shabbat. In this "Shabbat consciousness" state one disengages from daily work and programs. Dis- engages from suffering, death and disasters too. Enjoys being alive and in the Presence of the Source. At the same time this "Wholeness and Joy and Peace" moment of just Being is part of the continuity of daily life before and after. This is a rhythm. One learns the dynamic of action and rest: the transitions from human action, into "Being With and Replenishing the Life Force" and the reintegration back into action. One learns to pause and acknowledge the miraculous in the midth of the hard work of living and dying, to stay open to wonder, the not-knowing. Also, one acknowledges the Beyond,

the Beyond.... This Absolute Unknowable unnamable Oneness. The realm of spirit, of is-ness. Victor Frankl, Assagioli and all other psychotherapist who centered their work in the numinous refer to "you are okay, I am okay, I am-ness"

---one can correct oneself. And return to Source. God. God is a God of compassion and a vital Freeing Force. Kol Nidre, the evening before The Day of Atonement, is the moment that "old bindings are set free", old vows/guilts are annulled. One commits oneself to return to the Source of Basic Goodness and takes part in the work of purification, redemption, regeneration and creation. One needs to stop the old ways. Release the old outdated conditionings, empty oneself and open up to the spirit of renewal. And re-align with Love and Light.

This I see as a process of stopping to participate/contribute in suffering. The Drama. Either perceived as coming from "destiny", or "the outside". Or inflicted unto myself by habit, good intentions and ignorance. **Suffering manifesting as self-righteousness.** Shifting from a fear-mode into wholeness/Oneness/unconditional Love-mode. In order to make that shift I needed first to receive "You are loved", and "You are forgiven" as truth and really take that in. In a way I needed to move out of a super-ego perspective and attune to unconditional Love. From a place of healthy self-love I could face all the internalized rejections, faults, "bad" deeds and inadequacies I felt/recognized in myself and others.

This is the process of doing Teshuvah out of love.

---one can wake up the soul/pure Godspark in oneself and release the accumulation of emotional wounds, reactions and impulsivities. Embarking on the spiritual path of purifying, illuminating and unifying the small self in Self. Discovering the Tree of Life within and without. Intense emotions are the raw material to touch, engage and open IN. Judaism became a path of transformation and healing for me.

---one can choose. "Choose life, learn to swim", in the words of Rabbi Akiva.

Stopping "missing the mark", or working "against" life's flow. Choose to live with compassion, as Nelson Mandela expresses:

"When I walked through the prison gate, I knew I had to leave the hatred and bitterness behind. Otherwise I would be in prison the rest of my life."

This is expressed traditionally as a "Shiviti": holding the Face of Compassion and Grace continuously before one. Committing to serve humanity and life itself

---one can contribute to healing and wholing. Through doing "Tikkun". Individually and serving "the world", the planet. To bring Peace, wholeness, harmony and balance.

---one can call on "higher" forces: surrender to Stillness, Emptiness, Basic Goodness. Trust. Open the Heart, to attune to the field of Great Compassion. Love. Expand awareness. Lifting it all up, and stepping out a self centered position, reconnecting with Self./Source/love. A Timeless, Placeless Openness. Letting God to be God and Godding. Not a Jewish God or a Christian God, but God as All and Nothing. A Cosmic Is-ness manifesting in the multi dimensional differentiations. as One/Whole.

This is not a projecting out, calling on a "Higher Being" to intervene or stop tragedies. This is an emptying of self centeredness, opening in humility and a drawing in of unconditional Goodness and cultivating a compassionate appreciation for self and others.

The Chassidic basic meditation practice is: rising up, **running**, as close and high "up" into the Light of Nothingness..... **and returning**, drawing down blessings, radiating/giving/ Light in all manifestations. One learns to approach daily life troubles from this Wholeness/Unity of Creation perspective. Seeing wholeness in brokenness. Seeing redemption in bondage/captivity. Light transmuting Darkness.

In the context of the Holocaust and the aftermath of the Holocaust and "this Bigger Picture", I needed to see through the patterning of age-old expulsions, persecutions, harassments and humiliations. And see the fear, reactivity and survival dynamics. I needed to see the "trans-personal", archetypal/mythic dimensions of the master-slave "game", the Life-Death oppositionings and threats, the "being right" or "wrong" dualistic thinking.

I am brought up/conditioned in this old paradigm thinking. And I am part of the generation of pioneers making Paradigm Shifts. From within Judaism (Reb Zalman) and from the new-age "Aquarian-Age" perspective (Joanna Macy, David Bohm, 5th Dimension perspective). The transcendent is Immanent. Form is Emptiness. One can learn to bring Awareness IN whatever appears. It is possible to see beyond dualities as opposites, the excluding and preferring one or the other. Instead an Inter-Being evolves. A weaving of threads/points/planes. Interconnecting. A sensitive chaos. (Theodor Schwenck). And compassionate listening allows a non-violent communication. (Rosenberg).

And during the existential "schommeligen", like eb and flow, the oscillations between constriction (Mitzraiem, ha mitzar, the tsores) and expanding (le merchav yah) it is up to me, to us, to call out and be answered, to stop and step out and be met.

11. Distilling SEEDS of WISDOM

The issue of Suffering is Huge. Many genocides are happening. Many people fight each other or are totally vulnerable and at the mercy of killing forces. Many thought patterns reinforce warfare. Holding onto self/tribe centered rights and projecting badness unto the other/the enemy.

Many unattended fears and unattended pain keep the trauma's alive and feed defensive behavior. The aftermath of the Holocaust is often still lingering unacknowledged.

That can appear relatively harmless, and it can explode and perpetuate exactly the aggression and war-game, that what one does not want to happen. This forms a huge danger to humanity and living together on this planet.

There is a risk in using suffering and the awful large scale of the Holocaust and the atrocities as a motivation to act, attack, defend and continue wars. At this very moment, august 27 2013 the Syrian attack with gass on their own peoples is not only condemned. It might spark off more bloodshed and uncontrollable hate. Hate seeks targets. Victims. Ohhhh. One human rights worker made clear this needs to be

brought to the International Court of Justice in the Netherlands. And not be fought out. May the path of justice be pursued. "Tzedek, Tzedek tirdoff". (Persue Justice, Justice).

Facing and blessing the Fears and Pains. Not to run away from heart breaking truths. Oh how difficult, and oh how very important to create a loving container for staying with fears and pains.... and discovering the power of artmaking and deep listening.

My contribution is like a grain of sand. Very very small. Smaller then small. But forms non the less a building seed for Peacemaking. Showing how innerwork can turn hate and bitterness around and supports the cultivation of compassion and self-restraint , keeping the human heart open. Sharing life's lessons, in order to diminish the suffering and return on the path of lifegiving and life caring.

Renee Daumal describes in the story "Mount Analogue" a spiritual Law one needs to keep in order to make one's journey through life sound and ethical. The task (and spiritual challenge) I remember: When , while traveling, one chooses a path and discovers that that path is not leading to the right direction, or has a dead end, one needs to return THE SAME WAY ONE TOOK, and WIPE OUT the traces of one's path, so that the one's who come after us do not make the same mistakes. And one could also put out signs, like "dead end", or "dangerous side track, not a thoroughfare path".

In Florida, in Sarasota, musing while sitting on a bench on a deck close to a mangrove and cove, this sign was posted: "NO EXIT, RETURN THE WAY YOU CAME".

Adding to this the mitzwe "Lo Michshol", "do not put obstacles in the way", I pray my life experiences and offerings will become seeds of wisdom.

Carola de Vries Robles. August 27 2013, Elul 21, 5773.

"Dance Me To The End Of Love"

***Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin
Dance me through the panic 'til I'm gathered safely in
Lift me like an olive branch and be my homeward dove
Dance me to the end of love
Dance me to the end of love
Oh let me see your beauty when the witnesses are gone
Let me feel you moving like they do in Babylon
Show me slowly what I only know the limits of
Dance me to the end of love
Dance me to the end of love***

*Dance me to the wedding now, dance me on and on
Dance me very tenderly and dance me very long
We're both of us beneath our love, we're both of us above
Dance me to the end of love
Dance me to the end of love*

*Dance me to the children who are asking to be born
Dance me through the curtains that our kisses have outworn
Raise a tent of shelter now, though every thread is torn
Dance me to the end of love*

*Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin
Dance me through the panic till I'm gathered safely in
Touch me with your naked hand or touch me with your glove
Dance me to the end of love
Dance me to the end of love
Dance me to the end of love*

(Leonard Cohen)