


<p>Project: <b>'Reflections of trauma, challenges, and healing: An oral history'</b>          Respondent: Maggie          Year of Birth: 1964          Age: xx          Connection to project: Member          Date of Interview: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022          Interviewer: Indira Pole          Recording Agreement: Yes          Information &amp; Consent: Yes          Photographic Images: No (Number of: 0 )          Length of Interview: 52 minutes and 6 seconds          Location of Interview: Kirkintilloch          Recording Equipment: Zoom H4n (internal mics)</p>			
Time (from: mins/secs)	Description	Transcribed Extract (from- to: mins/secs)	
0.34	Respondent was born in Bellshill Maternity Hospital. Respondent lived in the Battlefield area of Glasgow and now lives in Bishopbriggs.		
1.04	Interviewer asks the respondent about her childhood.		
1.12	Respondent had a happy childhood, she was very close to her Father and also spent a lot of time with her two aunts and grandparents. She has a younger brother who she is also very close to. Her mother didn't really feature much in her life and this caused problems with her self-esteem. She attended Battlefield Primary and Shawlands Academy.		
	"I didn't do well at school. I didn't like school. I truanted a lot. I was always in trouble. I was put out of the class a lot and was expelled for small periods of time. But, looking back I was looking for attention. I felt I didn't get any attention from my Mum. And, now, looking back, that was what I wanted and because of my bad behaviour I had to check in with the guidance teacher four times a day. And now I can see that I liked that time because it was focused on me and nobody else. Although it wasn't a good way of dealing with it that was how I dealt with it."	2.45-3.53	
3.55	Interviewer asks the respondent whether she has siblings.		
3.56	Respondent replies that she has one brother who is a year younger and whom she has always been good friends.		
4.34	Interviewer asks the respondent about her teenage years.		
4.43	Respondent said that her mother and father divorced when she was around eleven and her mother left the family home, later taking both children to live with her and her new partner. The respondent found the teenage years very difficult.		
	"For example, if we went on holiday...My Mum and Dad divorced when I was about eleven, I think. And my Mum was having an affair and she left the home	4.47-5.54	

	and left us with my Dad. But, then later on she took us to stay with her new partner and she didn't introduce us at all. We were taken to the house we were staying in and met Robert. And we used to go away on holidays and at the start of the day Murray and I would be given money to go and do whatever we wanted. And then we wouldn't see them again till tea-time. And then, after that, at night time they would go out drinking. So, that's why, I think, Murray and I were so close. We looked out for each other."	
5.56	Interviewer asks the respondent what she did following her teens.	
	<p>"When I was eighteen I got engaged to somebody I was going out with at that time. We did buy a house. He'd a good job and we did buy a house. But, I was far too young and that broke up. That didn't last. The reason I wanted to get married was to get out the house. Because I didn't want to stay With my Mum I couldn't see any other way of doing that. At twenty one I got married to Dougie. Being completely honest; I didn't really love him. But, I saw this of my way of getting out of the house. I got pregnant very quickly after we got married and that was all that I wanted; or, thought that was all I wanted was somebody who would love me unconditionally for who I was. And that was one of the main reasons why I did have a child so young."</p> <p>"Two years later I had Scott and then two years after having Scott I had Katrina. And after I had Katrina I developed post-natal psychosis and was hospitalised for six months. So, obviously that affected my relationship with my children. Because I was away from... Especially...Well, all of them. I think, but especially in my bond with Tina. Because I was away from her for so long. Nearer the end of my stay in hospital she was...I was allowed to have her in for wee, small periods of time and then eventually got home. And three years after I had Katrina I had...I was pregnant with twins and at twenty seven the twins were born. Jamie was stillborn and Jack they didn't think he'd survive because he was so early and he had different issues. He was in hospital about four months I think before I got him home. That was a really difficult time juggling...Trying to be with Jack up in the hospital. He couldn't feed because he was so young. So, I would go up and express milk and feed that to him. And then I would come home to the children. And then I would go back to the hospital at night time. So, that was a very difficult period as well."</p>	<p>6.03-7.34</p> <p>7.36-9.47</p>
9.47	Interviewer asks the respondent how she coped during this time and if she found the experience traumatic.	
	"They were traumatic. It appeared to everybody that I was coping. And, over the years as a youngster, I used to put my face on and my Mum always said to us-'Never talk about what happens in the house and when you're out always smile. Don't let anybody know that there's anything wrong.' So, that was my go to. And, but things really came to a point where I just couldn't do that anymore and I was admitted to hospital again for six months. When the children...they were still really young and my Dad stood in. He'd retired and looked after Tina and Jack and that was a God send that...My Mum never...Wouldn't come to visit at the house or anything but whenever I was in hospital she would appear like the loving Mother. And she would always make	9.59-12.42



	<p>a big entrance-And here I am and oh, my poor daughter. But, it was then I think I was...I became aware that I never had any physical contact with my Mum. She never hugged me, she never touched me, she never anything. And, other relations of mine commented on that at the time. And I think they had been aware but I think it was very evident to them that my Mum...I would say just didn't love me. She didn't want me. She did tell me once she didn't want me. She got pregnant and had to marry...Well, she did marry my Dad. But, she did tell me one time that she didn't want me."</p>	
12.45	<p>Interviewer asks the respondent about the treatment she had received from the NHS.</p>	
	<p>"No, I felt that I... I had ECT (Electroconvulsive therapy) when I was in hospital. I had medication and when I was discharged I was still on a lot of medication. I don't think they helped enough with the problem. I think they didn't see me as a whole person; And all the things that I was dealing with. I don't know if that's down to time. I think it partly is the system. I think they don't have the time. They don't encourage you. Once they've done their bit, as they see it, they send you home and that's it. I have been under the care of the community health team ever since. I still am under the care of the community health team."</p>	12.58-14.03
14.04	<p>Interviewer asks the respondent how things have been after this major episode.</p>	
14.11	<p>Respondent said that she found out her husband had been having an affair and he left the family home. She goes on to say that was a traumatic time and difficult financially but that eventually family paid off her mortgage which was a big weight from her mind.</p>	
15.47	<p>Interviewer asks the respondent about the relationship she had with her first husband.</p>	
15.54	<p>Respondent said she felt her husband emotionally and mentally abused her. During the marriage her husband controlled everything including the finances and she felt isolated having been cut off from her friends. As they had children they tried to make the marriage work but in the end they separated.</p>	
17.18	<p>Interviewer asks the respondent how her life went from that point.</p>	
	<p>"My life was much better after he (her first husband) left. The kids were my life. I love them and just having them about was...Although my mental health still wasn't good the...But, because of the kids I had to get up in the morning. I had to get them out to school. So, I think for quite a lot of years I was on automatic pilot. I just did what I had to do. I had to make the dinner. I had to do all these things to look after the children. I don't think I got any enjoyment out of life at that point. I was going through the motions. And even though she didn't stay in my house my Mum definitely controlled a lot of what I did. Even though she wasn't there. Just with the psychological power she had over me that I was still frightened of not doing the right thing. Nothing I ever did was</p>	17.29-19.10

	right. So, I still...And that might sound daft because she wasn't physically there. But, she still definitely had a hold over how I lived my life and how I felt about myself."	
19.13	Interviewer asks the respondent if this traumatic experienced changed her as a person.	
	"Yes, I would (say that it changed her). I didn't trust anybody. I didn't open up to anybody. I didn't want to form friendships because I didn't think, as I say, I could trust anybody. I did...My brother had a daughter by then so, I did spend a lot of time with him at the weekends. So, him and his partner split up. So, he had Lindsey at the weekends. So, she would come and play with my kids. So, that was a good time, looking back, because I liked the weekends. The kids all loved it and I saw my brother. So, that was the one thing that I really enjoyed."	
20.23	Interviewer asks the respondent to tell her a bit more about not be able to trust people.	
	"That was a horrible feeling. I think I was paranoid. I did think people didn't like me. People were looking at me because they knew that I wasn't a worthwhile person. I didn't interact well with people because I just felt...I really did feel let down and I did think-What is the point of all this? And over the period...Well, over a long period on about four occasions I did try to take my own life and was hospitalised, obviously, for doing that. And that is one of my not regr...Well, regret. I regret doing it because it was the kids that found me. And that was obviously very traumatic for them. But, now I think it's brought us all closer because we have talked about it and we have sat down. And we've also sat down and talked about the impact of me being not well when they were younger. Even now the impact that my mental health has on them. And I found that so liberating that we can be honest about things. And I think that is one...out of all the traumas that I have been through I think that has been the best thing. That we can talk about things and how we feel. Although, that took a long time to come. That didn't happen overnight, obviously, but...And happened once the kids were much older."	20.33-23.00
23.01	Interviewer asks the respondent if the relationship with her mother has impacted on other relationships	
	"I think all...Well, not all through my life cause I'm in a much better now. But for a long...a long, long time. And I think especially after I had my children and I loved...I couldn't believe when I had them the love I felt for them. Which did make me question the ability of people to love me because you think your mum is the one person in the world who should love you. And if your Mum doesn't love you, you do question-how can anybody else love me? "	23.12-23.58
24.01	Interviewer asks if the respondent is able to love other people other than her children.	

	<p>"I would say now I'm a very loving person. That I think I love and care very much for other people. I try to show the love and care and respect that I would of like to have had. And I try to do that to others. And I also...It's taken me a long, long time and GRACE was one of the main things that helped me to get to this point. And I can say quite honestly that I love myself. I think I'm a caring person. I think I'm a loving person. I think I have my faults. But, I was always...when I wasn't feeling well busy, busy, busy. Couldn't sit down. Had to keep out, out all the time. But now I'm quite happy to sit with myself be in my own company. And I think that is one of the best things that's come out of my journey. Going through my trauma. After the trauma of the accident. All these things I think have been the best for me."</p>	24.11-25.55
25.58	Interviewer asks the respondent what she feels the importance of love to be.	
26.07	Respondent replies that we all need to be loved and needed and to have a purpose.	
26.36	Interviewer asks the respondent how she found GRACE.	
	<p>"I found GRACE through my nurse. My community nurse that...She told me about GRACE and she took me along the first time I went. And the first time I went to GRACE I don't think I said a word. Well, I said hello to people but wouldn't really make eye contact with anybody. And, I can't remember really, but, I think, it was a couple of weeks before I went back. And gradually going regularly. And the best...Or, what I felt GRACE did for me was they accepted me for who I was. They didn't expect anything of me. They just accepted me for being there; for being me. And I think that is priceless in my opinion. Given my background...the fact that they wanted me to be there. They liked me being there. They said it wasn't the same. But that is the same for everybody. That everybody's told that...Everybody's made to feel valued is my experience of GRACE. I have been at GRACE about seven, eight years I think. I've been there a long time."</p>	26.41-28.42
28.43	Interviewer asks the respondent if she still feels a need for GRACE in her life.	
	<p>"Yes, I do. I like it. I like having GRACE in my life. I think I could get on with my life without GRACE. I'm happy, I'm confident, I feel good about myself but I like GRACE. There is something about GRACE you cannot put into words. It is just the people, the ethos, the care. So many things. But, I just like being at GRACE. I like being with the people. I like the atmosphere. I just like it."</p>	28.49-29.37
29.38	Interviewer asks the respondent if in her opinion GRACE is benefitting her mental health.	
	<p>"GRACE has definitely got me to the point where I am. It built my confidence up in so many different ways that I wouldn't have thought. Joining in with drama. I didn't want to do that. Joining in with other things I just thought-No. But that is what...taking that step I think is the...And, actually the realisation going to GRACE gave me was that it's only me that can fix me. I need support like anybody but I relied too much for a long time or expected the services to make me better. I relied on my CPN (Community Psychiatric Nurse) looking</p>	29.43-31.37

	back too much. And when I came to GRACE I didn't need them as much. I was discharged from my CPN. I didn't need her anymore. And for anybody else, I think, it is just taking that first step. Taking responsibility for your recovery, for your journey. Nobody else can do it. We need to help each other we definitely do. We need support. And asking for support I find easy now. Before I would feel-Oh, you need to do this yourself. But, that's been a big learning curve from GRACE is being able to ask for support. There's no...In fact it's braver to ask for support than to struggle on not coping."	
31.38	Interviewer asks the respondent about the services offered by the NHS Mental Health Team alongside GRACE.	
	"GRACE and the mental health team are poles apart. GRACE sees you as a person and, my own experience is that, the NHS see you as an NHS number. They tick the box that they have done what they are meant to do. But, I think psychiatry, in particular, are very precious of their jobs and do not share information with other agencies you may be involved in. Which is not a good thing because we're whole beings, we're spiritual, we're physical, we're mental... And I...That is one still thirty years on I find that is the case that psychiatry do not want to share information. After I had my accident the brain injury unit tried to get in touch with my psychiatrist when they were discharging me. Just to keep her up to date with what was going on. And they tried writing, emailing, phoning but they never responded at all so...Which gives you the impression that they're not interested in you as a person. Which I do think is the case that they want to do their job and that's it."	31.58-33.35
33.37	Interviewer asks about the respondent's accident.	
33.51	Respondent replies that the accident was traumatic as was the recovery. It has however, made her appreciate every day and the things she has in life which others don't have like a roof over her head.	
35.09	Interviewer asked about the difference between her earlier traumatic experiences and the traumatic experience of her accident	
35.39	Respondent said this was partly due to the support she received from GRACE. She did not have this in her earlier years she had tried to cope on her own. Now she realises that we all need each other and being kind goes a long way in this world.	
36.55	Interviewer asked the respondent about her views on organisations like GRACE in the community.	
	"I think organisations like GRACE are vital. I think without them there would not be as many success rates like myself. I count myself as a success rate. I think they fill in the gaps where the services...the professional services fall down. I think you can't put a price on the services. I think the country relies on voluntary services. And I don't think they get the recognition for all the support. Not only do they give to us as members and that...But, to the country. To the National Health Service to all these things. I don't think they get enough	37.04-37.12

	recognition for all the work that they do.”	
38.13	Interviewer asks how the NHS and organisations like GRACE can come together for the benefit of the community.	
38.30	Respondent said that people don’t know what help is available and there should be open discussions between the professionals in the NHS and organisations like GRACE. Educated people should be willing to change and receive knowledge and listen to other opinions.	
40.10	Interviewer asks the respondent her opinion on whether mental health trauma ever goes away.	
	“I think it’s more manageable. I think I have been given through GRACE a lot of strategies to cope with things in a more positive way. In the past I did self-harm as a release. But I now have other things that I use. I do use. Going out for a walk. I love being outside. Sit in the garden. Being...There’s something healing about being in nature. I also write things down. And I am more honest with people. Before I...I am careful with whom I share information with. I don’t always think it’s appropriate to share everything with everybody. But I think on the whole I think. I Just think...All I can say is I think life is great now. I smile a lot. People always comment on me smiling. My laugh...People comment but it comes from inside. It’s within side me. And I think all these things have made me the person I am. It isn’t the way I would have chosen to do it but I...at this moment in my life I’m happy with who I am. I’ve still got things that are difficult and that I need to deal with. But things I think it’s natural to be upset about. And it’s natural to be upset if your husband’s really unwell. And I feel that’s ok to be upset about that. To cry about that. To voice my concerns. I know I have... There’ll always be challenges I think. Life and my mental health does go up and down. I think that I cope with it better than I did before. And...though the kids might tell you something different. But I think...I just feel whatever life throws at me will not break me now. I think I have enough support, enough inner strength to cope with whatever comes my way. Not through my own strength but with all the things I’ve talked about before.”	40.24-43.24
43.26	Interviewer asks the respondent if her writing is self-therapy.	
43.31	Respondent replies that her writing is self-therapy and that it’s not for anyone else. She finds this helps her get things out and work things out. She learnt about journaling at the self-awareness course at GRACE.	
45.08	Interviewer asks the respondent if there is any other self-therapy that she uses to help with her confidence.	
45.35	Respondent replies that she is now willing to try things and gives the example of giving the testimony at church which was broadcast all over Scotland and thinking what is the worst that can happen.	
46.53	Interviewer asked the respondent how confidence affects our lives.	
	“I think confidence...I don’t know it just makes life easier. I do believe that. I	47.02-48.08

	think if you feel confident....not in an overbearing way. But just within yourself that you feel that you are enough. But I do think the biggest thing for me is what GRACE taught me and Rikki especially through the drama. Try it...try it. What is the worst that can happen? And I think that is a good lesson that, in life, if you feel in a safe place which GRACE is a safe place; that is a great way to try things. And then if you can take that forward with you. I think that definitely makes a difference.”	
48.10	Interviewer asks the respondent when the last time she felt that life was not worth living was.	
48.21	Respondent said that the last time felt that was last week as her husband of three years Paul is very ill. She said she has more good days than bad days. She is realistic and knows that life does throw up challenges. However she said her philosophy is to live for the day. She says that her bad times don't consume her the way they used to do and not for anywhere near the period of time.	
	Interviewer thanked the respondent for sharing her memories with the project.	
 		
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